

ISTITUTO STORICO SALESIANO – ROMA

STUDI - 24

NESTOR C. IMPELIDO

# SALESIANS IN THE PHILIPPINES

ESTABLISHMENT AND DEVELOPMENT  
FROM DELEGATION TO PROVINCE (1951-1963)



LAS – ROMA



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In memory of Fr. Carlo Braga and the first Salesians  
who made the Philippines Salesian

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## PRESENTATION

This study on the first twelve years of the Salesians in the Philippines is a timely work. For this can aid the work of re-dimensioning that the FIN Province is currently envisioning for its next Provincial Chapter for 2007. An analysis of the actual situation of the FIN Province through the method of history can readily complement the other processes adopted to help the work of re-dimensioning.

Moreover, it is a crucial work in order to conserve the patrimony of those who founded the Salesian presence in the Philippines. The fact is that, we are losing little by little our veteran founders. And surely, we do not wish to lose the wealth of Salesianity that they lived for us. For what the study wishes to remember really are not structures, but "Salesians defined by a charism," who labored in the Philippines in witness of their love and fidelity to St. John Bosco. Let us not forget that what we are doing now, are founded in who those confreres and what these confreres did. Theirs in the first twelve years, was their particular context, filled with its strength and weaknesses, its prospects and challenges.

But this work also helps to bridge early the increasing distance from our Founder and the founders of the Salesian Philippine Province. Our Province, which is well beyond its 50s, should accept the fact that it is ageing in its years of experience. Nonetheless, this should keep us striving to be always valid at all times and at any time, capable of reaching the hearts of the young for whom we should be sign of hope.

This study is a contribution to the historical aspect of the first Salesians' "passion for God and passion for humanity" here in the Philippines. For these Salesians were certainly genuine imitators of the Gospel and of Don Bosco. It is a wonderful contribution to the history of the Salesian Society in the world, but most especially in East Asia, as well as to the History of the Philippines Church in the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The *Da mihi animas, cetera tolle* theme of the 26<sup>th</sup> General Chapter for the year 2008 demands not only a reflection of the immediate experience of the Salesians in their Provinces. But it is rooted in their Provinces Don Bosco's spiritual and apostolic programme. I do not think we should ignore operations of those who were before us. On the contrary, we should study their opus, if only to discover their charismatic identity and apostolic zeal. Indeed, it is also true that we can also know Don Bosco by knowing the Salesians who tried to live the "da mihi animas cetera tolle" when they came to the Philippines, in their understanding of it.

For this, I wish to recommend that the confreres Salesians study this book, if only to know their own history. This, not only for the Salesians in formation, who, I believe should consider as basic to know the roots of what they are actually doing in the Philippines, but also for each Salesian who actually labor in the Philippines on behalf of the young. And this includes, too, the other members of the Salesian

Family, who share in the wealth and patrimony of the experience of the first Salesians.

I quote the words of Fr. Pascual Chavez, Rector Major, on the occasion of the Seminar on Salesian History in Hong Kong (December 2004) on "The Beginnings of the Salesian Presence in East Asia":

"We cannot become indifferent to our history; otherwise, we risk losing a part of our being Salesians. The Seminar you are inaugurating should help in going back to our roots; it should challenge to a serious reflection on the present and the future of the Salesian Presence in East Asia. For when you think of the of beginnings of the Salesian presence in East Asia, you delineate what could help to make your present apostolate among the young more actual and more relevant, and thus assuring your continuity and future."

I am almost sure that the work of the author has not been an easy one. But definitely, he is one who is prepared to do this particular work for the Province and for the Congregation as well. I hope that the author will not stop studying the Salesians in the Philippines. I would even like to see him come up with a second volume of this history, covering the period of the creation of the Province (1963) to the 25<sup>th</sup> year of its foundation (1976). Surely, the history of the Filipino Salesians in the period of Fr. Alfredo Cogliandro (1963-1969), Fr. Luigi Ferrari (1969-1975) and Fr. Jose Carbonell (1975-1981) will reveal how the Salesians matured in the Salesian charism and lived the mission began by their predecessors.

There are questions still unanswered, which the Salesians should concern themselves. Who were the first Salesians to come to work in the Philippines? Why the exodus and the repatriation of some? How did each of the first Salesian presences in the Philippines develop when it was founded? What was the impact of their work of education in the Schools, in the Parishes and in the Oratories, which urgently need to be re-invigorated?

Here, therefore, is a challenge to the present Salesians to look back to their past if to become more realistic in their constant effort to evaluate their present actions. But I would also encourage the Salesians to be aware of their history, especially of the places where they are actually at work. I exhort them to think of writing their local histories. Or at least, they should keep archival materials, and write chronicles of their houses, so that these may be documents for the future writing of the history of the Salesians in the Philippines.

Fr. Andrew Wong SDB

29 October 2006

Feast of Blessed Michael Rua

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## ABBREVIATIONS

AMS (Agenzia Missionaria Salesiana)	1
AFC (Archivio Fotografico Centrale)	2
ASC (Archivio Salesiano Centrale)	3
BS (Bollettino Salesiano)	4
GM (Gioventù Missionaria)	5
IN (Inter Nos - Newsletter of China Province)	6
SAFIN (Salesian Archive Filippine Nord)	7
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## INTRODUCTION

There has been an attempt to document the initial arrival of the Salesians in the Philippines. The work tried to present some documents which purported to the offers for the Salesians to go to the Philippines and to their first coming, providing some commentaries in order to highlight a history of the Salesians in the Philippines in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Moreover, it limited itself up to the moment when the Salesians were about to settle in the Philippine Archipelago.

There have also been scattered accounts of the Salesians in the Philippines, mostly found in various issues of the Italian Salesian Bulletin. These were written to present some fragments of the work being done, to make propaganda, as well as to further interests in the particular Salesian apostolate in East Asia. But there has not been any previous attempt to present an early history of the Salesians when they finally started and settled in the Philippines, in a manner more systematic, analytical and critical.

This work wishes to study the beginnings of the Salesians in the Philippines and to write a first history of their presence in this part of East Asia. What were the first Salesian foundations in the Philippines? How were these established and how did they develop in their first years of existence? Who were the Salesians responsible for the establishment and growth of the Salesian presence? What were the initial problems and difficulties they encountered?

In the quest to answer these queries, this work will attempt to trace out a history of the Salesian Society in a country, which had long awaited the Salesians' more permanent stay. This work studies the Salesians and their workings. It is not really an account of the genesis of each Salesian work in the Archipelago, even if this study presents certain elements which show how the Salesians works eventually were established.

Previously, in 1911, a real first attempt had been made by the Salesians to start their presence here. After an initial negotiation conducted by two Salesians who were then in Hong Kong, Turin sent two other Salesians to start the work, but who stayed only for a couple of months. Thirty-seven years later, in 1949, the Superiors of Turin decided to revive the attempt to start the Salesian presence in the Philippines. The uneasy political situation in China had become unbearable so as to favor the opening of new venues for Salesian apostolate in East Asia. The Superiors in Turin thought that it was high time to start in the Philippines. Finally, in 1951, the Salesians finally settled in the Philippines, by taking over a work already existing.

The time covered by the study is the period of the first Salesian foundations. It includes the moments of negotiations, the establishment of the works, as well as their early development. It also takes into account the gradual stabilization of the Salesian personnel who attempted the root of the Salesian charisma in the Philippines.

Specifically, the study covers the first twelve years of Salesian history in the Philippines: the Salesians when they first rooted themselves in the Archipelago as a *Delegazione* (Delegation) (1951-1958) dependent on the Salesian China Province; the Salesians as they grew as a *Visitatoria* (Vice-Province) (1958-1963); the Salesians as they were finally canonically erected as a *Provincia* (Province) (1963-1964). But it also includes the years of negotiations immediately before the coming of the Salesians (1949-1951), as well as the first year of existence of the new Salesian Province (1963-1964).

To give substance to this study, I have utilized the documents which I obtained from various archives: the Salesian Central Archives in Rome, the Salesian Archives in Hong Kong of the Salesian Province of China, the Salesian Archives of the Philippine North Province in Manila, as well as the archives of some of the Salesian houses in the Philippines. I have mainly tried to read through the enormous correspondence that transpired between Manila and Turin, Hong Kong and Manila, Turin and Hong Kong, before and after the establishment of the Salesians. This correspondence was not only between the Salesians, but also with the various persons who wanted the Salesians to cooperate in their own projects on behalf of the young.

Truly, this work has been restricted by the availability of documents, for lack of care of archives at the local level. Moreover, on account of the somehow recentness of the period of studied (1951-1963), about fifty-five years from the first Salesian foundation in the Philippines, we have tried to exercise a certain caution in the research and writing. For a few of the Salesians of the original Salesians named and cited in the study are still alive. Furthermore, some of those cited might still be fresh in the memory of the present Salesians, who might have personally known them.

Clearly, I have wished to document the Salesian work in the Philippines, using the method of history. For this, I have made an effort to base the study on the available documents obtained through research. When the Salesians celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> year of their presence in the Philippines in 2001, I saw in fact the need to give substance to that celebration.

This study is a part time work, which started sometime in March 2001, when the researcher was invited to join the *Istituto Storico Salesiano* by the then Rector Major, Fr. Edmundo Vecchi (1996-2002). The Superior, in fact, had stated that it was now opportune to conserve and to write the history of the

Salesians in the East Asian Region. But this is a study, which I hope would stimulate others to study and to write the history of the Salesian Society in the Philippines.

In the last chapter of the study, I have tried to deepen the account of the first coming of the Salesians in the Philippines in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. I considered as incomplete the previous study on the first attempt of the Salesians to settle in Manila. For this, I have included an epilogue, which I hope would give further light on the issue of why the Salesians left the work, which was first entrusted to them by the Archbishop of Manila in 1912.

This work does not pretend to be a definitive work. But I hope that it would stimulate others to do further research and writing regarding the work of the Salesians in the Philippines. Furthermore, I hope that this work will contribute to the history of the Church in the Philippines in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as well as to the history of the religious orders who labored to radicate and deepen the Christian faith of the young, in this particular period.

Finally, I wish to thank Fr. Francesco Motto for his precise and precious observations to make this work more professional and historical. He has been a source of encouragement and stimulus, to know more Don Bosco and the Salesians. I am also grateful to Fr. Gerry Battad and Fr. Louie Castañeda and the confreres of their communities, who have given me welcome and encouragement when I worked in Manila. To them and to the confreres of my Salesian Province, I offer this study.

Statistics in the East Asian Region. But this is a study which I hope would stimulate others to study and to write the history of mathematics & stats in the Philippines.

In the last chapter of the book, I have tried to sketch the account of the first meeting of the "College" in the Philippines in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. I considered as an appendix the previous study on the development of the Statistics in Manila. For this I have included an appendix which I hope would give insight into the point of why I have included the work, which was first written to be used by the Statistics in 1911.

This work does not pretend to be a historical work as far as I hope that it would stimulate others to do further research and writing regarding the work of the Statistics in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Furthermore, I hope that this work will contribute to the history of the Church in the Philippines in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, which will be to the history of the country's development and progress of the Christian faith in the country in that particular period.

Finally, I wish to thank Dr. Francisco Ferrer for his advice and guidance in the preparation of this work. I am very grateful and indebted to the Dean of the School of Education, De La Salle University, Manila, for his kind and generous support in the preparation of this work. I am also indebted to the Philippine Statistics Office for their kind support and assistance in the preparation of this work. I am also indebted to the Philippine Statistics Office for their kind support and assistance in the preparation of this work.

## Chapter One

# SITUATIONAIRE

## 1. The Salesian Society in the Mid-1900

### 1.1. *Certain Events*

In the second half of the 1900's, we find the canonization of two influential saints of the Salesian Family: that of Mother Maria Domenica Mazzarello (24 June 1951) and that of the boy-saint Domenico Savio (12 June 1954). In September 1953, the World Confederation of Past Pupils was established.

The Salesian Society underwent too in this period several "traumatic events" in its young history. Foremost was the martyrdom on 25 February 1930 of Bishop Luigi Versiglia (1873-1930) and Fr. Callisto Caravario (1903-1930). In Spain, the Civil War (1936-1939) caused the massacre of members of the clergy and religious congregations<sup>1</sup>. This included the Salesians and members of the Salesian Family<sup>2</sup>. In Poland, during the Second World War (1939-1944), two Salesian Provinces lost almost 90 Salesians<sup>3</sup>. After the war, there started the imprisonment of about 300 Salesians of Slovakia (13-14 April 1950). In Lithuania and in the other countries forced under the iron curtain, the Salesians found themselves among the diaspora, under persecution and in forced migration<sup>4</sup>. Likewise in China, the beginning of the communist persecution in March 1950 put into crisis the promising growth of the Salesian presence. The unremitting communist advance led practically to the suppression of the Salesian works in the Mainland<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> In three years, it is said that Spanish Church lost about 4,200 members of the secular clergy, of which 12 bishops, 2,300 religious men and 280 religious women, plus thousands of committed lay people. Cf Morand WIRTH, *Da don Bosco ai nostri giorni. Tra storia e nuove sfide (1815-2000)*. Roma, LAS 2000, p. 383.

<sup>2</sup> It is said that there were about 97 victims among the members of the Salesian Family during the Spanish Civil War: 39 priests, 22 clerics, 26 coadjutors, two Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, three aspirants, three Cooperators, two workers. There were about 350 religious who were imprisoned.

<sup>3</sup> Among these, there were Fr. Jan Swierc (June, 1941) and Fr. Josef Kowalski (June 1940), both victims in Auschwitz.

<sup>4</sup> Symbol of this persecution was Cardinal Stepán Trochta (1905-1974) of Prague.

<sup>5</sup> Cf M. WIRTH, *Da don Bosco ai nostri giorni...*, pp. 391-393.

In this period, the Salesian Society also re-launched its missionary thrust after a lapse of almost eight years (1940-1949) on account of the Second World War. In 1952, with Fr. Renato Ziggotti (1892-1983), the Rector Major, presiding the celebration, and Fr. Carlo Braga (1889-1971) preaching, 125 SDBs and 50 FMAs scheduled themselves to leave for the missions<sup>6</sup>. The Salesians have already begun to establish themselves in East Asia and South Asia: Macao (1906)<sup>7</sup>, China (1910)<sup>8</sup>, Japan (1926), Hong Kong, Thailand and Timor<sup>9</sup> (1927), Myanmar (1938), Laos<sup>10</sup> and Vietnam (1941)<sup>11</sup>, Philippines (1951)<sup>12</sup>, Taiwan (1952)<sup>13</sup> and South Korea (1954).

Sometime in 1948, Bishop Louis La Ravoire Morrow (1892-1987), who had worked in the Philippines as secretary of the Apostolic Delegate to the Philippines, Archbishop Guglielmo Piani (1875-1956), founded the Congregation of the Sisters of Mary Immaculate (1948) in his Diocese of Krishnagar, India, with a membership of about 500. In East Asia, we find the establishment of four religious institutes founded by Salesians. In China, Bishop Luigi Versiglia had established the Sisters Announcers of the Lord (1936). In Japan, instead, Fr. Vincenzo Cimatti (1879-1965), together with the Salesian Fr. Antonio Cavoli (+1972), had established the Congregation of the Caritas Sisters of Miyazaki (1937)<sup>14</sup>. In the same year, Bishop Gaetano

<sup>6</sup> Fr. Carlo Braga preached twice in the celebration destined as a missionary send-off to the new missionaries: in 1952 and in October 1961. Cf M. WIRTH, *Da don Bosco ai nostri giorni...*, p. 522. On the missionary send-off of 1961, which was presided by Msgr. Pietro Massa, 113 SDBs and 40 FMAs were scheduled to go to the missions.

<sup>7</sup> The first Salesians, Fr. Luigi Versiglia and Fr. Louis Olive (1867-1912), went to Macao to start the Salesian work on 13 February 1906.

<sup>8</sup> In China, Shiu Chow, where the Salesians were working, was made into a diocese in 1948. The first Salesians arrived in Peking in October 1946, in the effort to fulfill the dream of Don Bosco.

<sup>9</sup> The Salesians were in East Timor up to 1929, and then again from 1948 up to the present. The Salesian presence in East Timor became the stimulus to start also in Jakarta, Indonesia.

<sup>10</sup> The Salesians substituted the expelled French Missionaries in Laos for two years. This was in the period of Msgr. Gaetano Pasotti (1890-1950), who was also Apostolic Delegate for Laos during this time. The French missionaries at work in Laos belonged to the Society for the Foreign Missions of Paris (founded in 1660).

<sup>11</sup> The Salesians were in the north of Vietnam up to 1954, and then in the south until the present.

<sup>12</sup> A work in Manila was opened in 1912 and which lasted for merely two months. It was included in the Province of the Sub-Alpina of Italy. Cf *Elenco Generale della Società di San Francesco di Sales* (1912) p. 20. Cf also Gregorio BICOMONG, *The Arrival of Don Bosco in the Philippines. Requests Made to the Salesians (1891-1951)*. Makati City, Don Bosco Press 2001, pp. 31-67; M. WIRTH, *Da Don Bosco ai nostri giorni...*, p. 375.

<sup>13</sup> The Salesians were in Taiwan from 1952 up to 1956, and then from 1963 up to the present.

<sup>14</sup> Cf Maria MUKAI CSM, *Brief Historical Notes on the Founding of the Caritas Sisters of Miyazaki*, in Nestor IMPELIDO (ed.), *The Beginnings of the Salesian Presence in East Asia*. vol. II, Makati City, Don Bosco Press 2006, pp. 81-88.

Pasotti (1890-1950), leader and founder of the Salesian presence in Thailand, had founded the Sisters Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (1937)<sup>15</sup>. Later in 1954, another Salesian, Fr. Carlo Della Torre (+1982), founded the secular institute of diocesan right of the Daughters of the Queenship of Mary (1954)<sup>16</sup>.

## 1.2. *The Leadership*

In the mid-1900, we have a transition in the leadership of the Salesian Society: with the death of Fr. Pietro Ricaldone (1879-1951) on 25 November 1951<sup>17</sup> came the election of Fr. Renato Ziggotti (1892-1983) as Rector Major in the 17<sup>th</sup> General Chapter of the Salesian Society (1 August 1952). On 11 October 1962, the latter as Superior of the Salesian Society, participated in the sessions of the Second Vatican Council.

Fr. Pietro Ricaldone was then Prefect General as member of the General Council of the Salesian Society (1922) when he was asked by the Rector Major, Fr. Filippo Rinaldi (1856-1931), to make an extraordinary visitation of the various Salesian presences in the Far East. Thus, from 1926 to 1927, he visited India, Japan, Thailand, Burma and China with the corresponding delegated

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<sup>15</sup> Cf Maliwan PARAMATHAWIROTE SIHM, *The Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary*, in Nestor IMPELIDO (ed.), *The Beginnings of the Salesian Presence in East Asia*. vol. II, Makati City, Don Bosco Press 2006, pp. 89-101. In 1937, Bishop Gaetano Pasotti, founder of the Salesian missions in Thailand, founded a local congregation, the Sisters Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (SIHM) in Bang Nok Khuek, Thailand, with a membership of about 103.

<sup>16</sup> Cf Anna Saksri NGAMWONG DQM, *The Beginning of the Institute of the Queenship of Mary*, in Nestor IMPELIDO (ed.), *The Beginnings of the Salesian Presence in East Asia*. vol. II, Makati City, Don Bosco Press 2006, pp. 102-128. For a presentation of the members of the Salesian family, cf M. Rosaria D'AGOSTINO, et al., *The Salesian Family of Don Bosco*. Rome, Editrice SDB, 2000.

<sup>17</sup> Pietro Ricaldone (1870-1951). Born in Mirabello (Alessandria, Italy) on 27 July 1870; professed in Turin on 23 August 1890; ordained in Seville (Spain) on 27 May 1893; elected Rector Major on 17 May 1932; died in Turin (Italy) on 25 November 1951. Fr. Ricaldone worked for 20 years in Spain. In 1901, he was made Provincial of Andalusia. During this period, he was appointed as Visitor of the Salesian houses of South America. In 1911, he was called to be part of the General Council and was appointed as Councillor of the "Scuole professionali e agricole". In 1922, he was elected General Prefect. During this period, he made the extraordinary visitation of the missions in the Far East (1926-1927). In 1932, he was elected Rector Major of the Salesian Society, in which in less than 20 years, the number of the Salesians and their works doubled. Cf Eugenio VALENTINI – Amedeo RODINÒ (edd.), *Dizionario Biografico dei Salesiani*. Torino, Ufficio Stampa Salesiano s.d., pp. 236-237.

authority<sup>18</sup>. Upon his return, he initiated a “missionary crusade”, in the effort to form future missionaries<sup>19</sup>. In the beginning of 1945, in accordance with the invitation of Pope Pius XII (1939-1958), the Salesians launched a campaign in favor of the street children, the so-called *sciussia*<sup>20</sup>, in Rome and in other Italian cities<sup>21</sup>.

During Fr. Ricaldone’s term, in the period after the Second World War, the Salesian Society continued to grow. From 1949, year when the negotiations for the coming to the Philippines officially began, up to 1963, year of the beginning of the Salesian Province of the Philippines, the number of confreres of the Salesian Society was 17,656; that of the novices was 1,173; and that of the houses was 1,217. In 1950, the Salesians were almost 15,000 in number, and the number of houses had gone beyond the 1,000 mark. In 1951, there were 15,182 Salesians, 1,182 novices and 1,076 houses. But in 1963, there were 20,562 Salesians all over the world, with 1,285 novices and 1,327 houses scattered in the five continents<sup>22</sup>. The expansion of the Salesian Society to the

<sup>18</sup> From Macao, Fr. Ricaldone made a two-day visit to Manila in the Philippines, from 6 to 7 October 1927. He was received by Archbishop Piani, Fr. La Ravoire Morrow and Coadjutor Giovanni Castella (1880-1964). Fr. Ricaldone and Archbishop Piani already had met once in Mexico, sometime in 1913. The purpose of the visit was to see the Church that was being offered to the Salesians (Binondo Church[?]). He also made contact with the Benedictines, Jesuits and Dominicans. He also visited the Cathedral of Manila, where he saw that the devotion to Mary Help of Christians was practiced. Cf Francesco RASTELLO, *Don Pietro Ricaldone. Quarto successore di don Bosco*, vol. I. Roma, Editrice SDB 1976, pp. 419-420.

<sup>19</sup> The following were the “missionary Aspirantates” established for future Salesian missionaries: the Cardinal Cagliero Institute of Ivrea, the Pio V Institute of Penango Monferrato, the agricultural missionary school of Cumiana, the Institute for missionary students of Bagnolo Piemonte, the Conti Rebaudengo Institute of Turin for artisans, the missionary institute of Castelnuovo Don Bosco. These formed the so-called “Ispettorìa Centrale”, from which vocations for the missions were formed. Cf M. WIRTH, *Da don Bosco ai nostri giorni...*, p. 353. Cf also Francesco MOTTO, “Salesian missionary activity while Blessed Filippo Rinaldi (1921-1931) was Rector Major with particular Reference to Eastern Asia”, in Nestor IMPELIDO (ed.), *The Beginnings of the Salesian Presence in East Asia*. vol. I, Makati City, Don Bosco Press, pp. 15-32

<sup>20</sup> *Sciussia* was an Italianized word which combined the English words ‘shoe’ and ‘shine’, referring to the U.S. soldiers who were in Rome during the Allied occupation of Italy in World War II.

<sup>21</sup> This experience definitely influenced the future work among the indigent boys of Cebu City in the Philippines. In 1948, in Rome, the “Borgo Ragazzi Don Bosco” was established on behalf of these children of the streets of the Italian capital. Cf Cadmo BIANATI, *Il Borgo Ragazzi di don Bosco. Una esperienza pedagogica salesiana a servizio della gioventù vittima della guerra*. Roma, Tip. Don Bosco 1978; Alessandro PORTELLI (ed.), *Il Borgo e la borgata. I ragazzi di don Bosco e l'altra Roma del dopoguerra*. Roma, Donzelli 2002.

<sup>22</sup> These were the highest points of the Salesian Society in terms of number of Salesians, novices and houses. In 1967, there were 21,614 Salesians. In 1965, there were 1,198 novices. And in 1999, there were 1,831 houses.



Philippines was part of this general growth of the Congregation. Fr. Ricaldone would be the one who would initiate the negotiations, so that the Salesians might finally go to the Philippines. However, it would be his successor, Fr. Ziggjotti, that the Salesian Society would begin its presence in the Philippines. Nonetheless, the Salesians' advent to the Philippines was also marked by the changes in the leadership of the Salesian Society. Upon the death of Fr. Pietro Berruti (1885-1950)<sup>23</sup>, Fr. Ricaldone had chosen Fr. Renato Ziggjotti (1892-1983)<sup>24</sup> as his Prefect General and who would eventually succeed him. After having visited the Salesians in Western Europe, in the beginning of 1955, he scheduled this time a visit of Asia, in the Middle East as well as in India and East Asia. This visit brought him as well to the Philippines.

In his term as Superior (1952-1965), the Congregation reached its highest point in terms of number: the professed Salesians grew to about 22,000. The Provinces reached 73. The houses increased to about 1,400. He was the first non-Piemontese, the first Rector Major from the Veneto Region of Italy, and the first Rector Major emeritus of the Salesian Society. It was in his term, that the Salesians in the Philippines began the consolidation of the work that they began the year before his election. Consequently, the correspondence with him as well as with his Prefect General was the most numerous by the Salesians in the Philippines.

## 2. The Philippines at the Arrival of the Salesians

### 2.1. Under American Tutelage

At this moment, there was a growing influence of Protestantism in the Philippines, with the advent of American Colonialism. There too arose the rise of laicist legislation, what with the separation of Church and State. With the

<sup>23</sup> Cf Pietro ZERBINO, *Don Pietro Berruti. Luminosa figura di Salesiano*. Torino, SEI 1964. Pietro Berruti (1885-1950). Born in Turin (Italy) on 7 March 1885; professed in Foglizzo on 30 September 1901; ordained in Turin on 29 June 1910; died in Turin on 1 May 1950. Fr. Berruti was a student of the Christian Brothers. He was a missionary to Chile through the invitation of Bishop Giuseppe Fagnano, then Prefect Apostolic of Southern Patagonia and the Tierra del Fuego. In 1932, he was elected Prefect General of the Salesian Society and Vicar of the Rector Major. He was Extraordinary Visitor of a great part of the Salesian world: Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego (1933), Uruguay and Mato Grosso in Brazil and Paraguay (1935-1936), China, Thailand, India and Japan (1937), Spain and Portugal (1940-1942). He promoted the apostolate for the abandoned boys as a result of World War II, meriting the title "Padre dei ragazzi della strada". Cf E. VALENTINI - A. RODINÒ (edd.), *Dizionario biografico dei Salesiani...*, p. 37.

<sup>24</sup> Cf Luigi CASTANO, *Don Renato Ziggjotti. Quinto successore di don Bosco (1892-1983)*. Torino, Editrice SDB, 1995.

newly acquired freedom and with the continuing domination of an alien power in the Philippines, the sense of nationalism grew with the Filipinos<sup>25</sup>.

It was a post-war situation when the Salesians came to the Philippines. The country was still on the process of recovery after the devastations caused by the Second World War. Both the Japanese invasion and occupation and the American liberation of the Philippines had resulted into widespread death and destruction of infrastructures. For this, there was much re-construction effected and which still had to be effected.

The Philippines had recently received its "Independence" from the American tutelage. Many aspects of Philippine society, education, economy, government, etc., were then very much under the influence of the Americans, after that of the Spaniards. The set-up, notwithstanding the previous influence of the Spaniards, was very much American. The coming of the Salesians was an added European influence, this time dominantly Italian.

This being under "foreign domination" was not something new to the Philippines. The presence of the Spaniards for more than three hundred years was a proof of how the country received such influence. Somehow, the country was rather accustomed to the advent of such foreign interventions. The arrival of the Salesians seemingly was another of many "foreign intrusions" into the country. Another religious order starting out its presence in the Philippines was nothing extraordinary or new.

## 2.2. *Socio-Political Situation*

The Philippines was in a moment of transition: from the Commonwealth Government under American tutorship; it was now governed by a Republican Government, which was still in the "teachership" of its former colonizer.

The political leaders were still trying to handle the problem of "collaborationism" during the Japanese occupation of the Philippines. Some of the politicians who were actually in government, including the actual president in the immediate post-war, were known collaborators of the Japanese who established a "puppet government" during the occupation of the Philippine capital.

The political struggle between the country's two main political parties of the land was marked by turncoatism. One easily transferred from one political party to the opposite political party in order to further one's political interest

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<sup>25</sup> Hubert JEDIN (ed.), *Storia della Chiesa*. IX, Milano, Jaca Book 1973, pp. 647-649. Cf Renato CONSTANTINO, *The Philippines: A Past Revisited*. vol. 1, Manila 1975, pp. 314-347; Onofre D. CORPUZ, *The Roots of the Filipino Nation*. vol. 2, Quezon City, 1989, pp. 342-402.

and advantage. The Salesians, in fact, confronted such reality, since they had to settle and negotiate with the political leaders of the country so as to gain support and recognition and accommodation for the work it wanted to do among the Filipino young.

Moreover, the political influence and leverage of the Americans was very much felt and exercised and considered. The Superior of the Salesian China Province had to search for some “Americans” among the Salesians in order to facilitate the transactions with prospective benefactors, especially land donors. Also, English had practically replaced Spanish as the language of the country, perhaps more utilized and studied by the people more than the local language. It was a well-known fact that to be able to speak English meant to be erudite, to have greater possibility to obtain employment, to come from a higher level of society, to influence and to be influential.

One social reality in the Philippines was the wide discrepancy in levels between the rich and the poor. To be rich meant to be politically powerful. It also meant to be proprietor of wide extents of land. It meant the control of the actual economy of the time. The “Hukbalahap”, a resistance movement who fought the Japanese during the last war for liberation, continued to fight those who pretended to own the Philippines at the expense of the poor, especially those who had so little of the land that they worked so hard for<sup>26</sup>.

There was a need of agrarian reform in the country. The Philippines, in fact, was an agricultural country. After the crisis provoked by the controversy on the friars’ lands and estates which actually gifted the already rich with more land acquisitions, the call was to distribute land so that farmers might be able to own what they have been working on for so long already. But the reality was also that those who should have passed laws in order to alleviate the plight of the landless poor were, in fact, the big landowners, who did not dare to contradict their vested interest.

At the same time, however, the Philippines were little by little striving to keep in tune with the growing industrialization in the Asian region as well as in the whole world. The economic powers were in search of new grounds in order to sustain their economic needs. Asia was an open venue to obtain cheap labor and from where natural resources could easily be obtained by the unscrupulous. The Philippines, because of its link with the Americans, were somehow seen as adequately western and updated with its trends and abilities. And so it was considered capable of sharing the industrial capability of the economically

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<sup>26</sup> Cf ROSARIO CORTES – Celestina BONCAN – Ricardo JOSE, *The Filipino Saga. History as Social Change*. Quezon City, 2000. Cf also Teodoro AGONCILLO - Milagros GUERRERO, *History of the Filipino People*. Quezon City, 1977, pp. 489-539.

powerful West. But it needed much help from the outside, from any sector that could meet its demands for workers and technicians for the industrial field.

The Salesians, the majority of whom were from the industrialized West, were ready to make the Filipino young “industrially capable”. Their schools of mechanics, electrical, electro-mechanics answered the call to be industrially equipped. Moreover, their courses of printing, tailoring, shoemaking, and carpentry provided the necessary trades in order to find some employment and thus means of livelihood.

### 2.3. Educational Situation

In the Philippines, there was a sort of a “misdirection of education”, where there were so few who enrolled in the agricultural (5%) and in the vocational (3%) education; the rest, instead, were directed to the professional career. At the same time, the so-called vocational school were not really trade schools but a sort of schools which prepared for entrance to college or for some trade.

When the Salesians came, the Philippines remained prevalently agricultural, with some accent of mechanization, complementing the handicraft industry as well as the metal industry, iron works and electrical engineering. For a real industrialization, there was the want for capital and raw materials, which catered for the medium or small enterprise. The trend, however, was from an agrarian economy towards a balanced agro-industrial economy.<sup>27</sup>

There was still much to be done with regards the situation of education in the country. There was only one state-university at that time; though it was good, it was not sufficient. In the Philippines, the better education was still in the hands of the private sector, dominated by the religious orders whose schools were still the more prominent and sought for. Obviously, only the seemingly economically affluent or stable were capable of enrolling their children to these schools.

The Salesians found themselves standing in the midst of the effort to educate the young, providing for the economically capable good education, but also for those who were financially deprived and unable. They were rather late though in establishing themselves as educators in comparison with the other religious orders. For this, Fr. Braga did not want to be outdone by these other religious. Consequently, he wanted confreres who were not inferior to the other religious. To be so, they were expected to be fluent in English.

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<sup>27</sup> Gianluigi COLOMBO, *Don Bosco's Work in Education and Technical Instruction with Special Application to the Philippines*, ([unpublished] masteral thesis presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of De La Salle University, June 1975). Manila, pp. 105-123. Cf AGONCILLO - GUERRERO, *History of the Filipino People*. pp. 555-580.

One of the Philippine Catholic Church's thrusts in the mid-1950 was the education of the young. This was in order to cope up with the industrialization of the country. The Salesians' coming was somehow an answer to the Philippine Church's call on behalf of the young deprived and economically emarginated in terms of education and future.

The system of education in the country was very much American in curriculum, in method, in means of communication, in books, in sources. The Salesian school surely did not want to be alien to this reality.

#### 2.4. Ecclesiastical Situation

At the time of the negotiations for the coming of the Philippines, the Apostolic Delegate was Archbishop Egidio Vagnozzi (1949-1951); he was later made first Apostolic Nuncio (1951-1958) of the Philippines. The previous Apostolic Delegate to the Philippines, the Salesian Archbishop Guglielmo Piani<sup>28</sup>, had been appointed as Apostolic Delegate to Mexico: but he was Papal Delegate in Manila for more than a quarter of a century. Obviously, his presence had a "Salesian impact" in the Philippines. For this, the proximity of the coming of the Salesians could not but have been conditioned by his influence. Moreover, the requests made to the Salesians have been surely due to the influence he made during his term<sup>29</sup>.

New dioceses were being created and former dioceses were being broken up to give way to new ones, this, in continuation of what had begun in the first half of the 1900's. This had been fostered and encouraged by the former Salesian Apostolic Delegate.

In almost 26 years of zealous apostolic work, Archbishop Piani had almost doubled the number of dioceses, which were now 15 in the Philippines of which 15 million were Catholics out of the 19 million inhabitants. Moreover, two apostolic prefectures had been added to a previous existing one, to do first-hand evangelization of those who had not heard the Good News. There

<sup>28</sup> There is no formal study yet on the life of Archbishop Piani in the Philippines. This has something to do with regards the presence of the Salesians in the Philippines. Nonetheless, there are biographies of this Salesian written in Spanish. Cf FRANCISCO CASTELLANOS, *Un gran corazón Mons. Guillermo Piani*. Mexico, E.D.B. 1991; DANIEL ZURITA, *Mons. Guillermo Piani, Salesiano, Formador, Superior, Delegado Apostólico*. Con notas del P. Francisco Castellanos, México, s.e. 2002.

<sup>29</sup> Cf PABLO FERNANDEZ, *History of the Church in the Philippines (1521-1898)*. Manila 1988; LUCIO GUTIERREZ, *The Archdiocese of Manila. A Pilgrimage in Time (1565-1999)*, vol. I, Manila, editrice 1999, pp. 1-9.

were about 1,139 Filipino and 104 foreign priests; of these, 61 were Filipino and 553 foreign religious. There were about 36 male and female religious orders which cared for the 150,517 catholic students of the almost 296 catholic schools of the country. But there were about three million other students who attend the public schools<sup>30</sup>.

The bishops were in need of personnel and new apostolic presences in their respective dioceses. For this, they sought for religious orders in search of work in the Philippines<sup>31</sup>. And these continued to come on the invitation of the local churches, in continuation of what had been happening in the first half of the 1900's.

In Manila, there was now a Filipino Archbishop, in the person of Archbishop Gabriel Reyes (1949-1953)<sup>32</sup>, who had replaced the American Michael O'Doherty (1916-1949)<sup>33</sup>. This was another concrete attempt to "Filipinize" the Church hierarchy. With the Manila Council from 7 to 25 January 1953, a clearer direction was being given to the Philippine Church. It began to acknowledge its duty to be light of the faith for the region of Asia, with the foundation of the "Mission Society of the Philippines" in 1964. Consequently, the Filipino clergy became further aware of its special missionary vocation<sup>34</sup>.

In the Philippines, there was also that particular attention towards the Chinese. With the communist persecution in China, religious from the area started to come to the Philippines. Some religious congregations, among them the Steyler and the Jesuits, began an apostolate among the Chinese. Of the 129 seminarians who escaped from China and came to the Philippines, 113 were consecrated priests; 66 stayed behind to do apostolate among their co-nationals. Meanwhile, schools, parishes and assistance centers were established for the care of the Chinese<sup>35</sup>.

The Philippine Church showed further maturity as it increased its efforts to increase vocations to the priesthood and the religious life. Thus, there came about the rise of seminaries in the dioceses and in the religious orders<sup>36</sup>. But

<sup>30</sup> GM 26 (1948) 11.

<sup>31</sup> Cf Hubert JEDIN, *Storia della Chiesa. Dalle missioni alle chiese locali (1846-1965)*. XXIV, Milano, Jaca Book 1990, pp. 441-448.

<sup>32</sup> Cf Evelyn REYES-TIROL, *Gentle Shepherd, Faithful Sentinel. A Biography of Gabriel M. Reyes, First Filipino Archbishop*. Manila, editrice 1992.

<sup>33</sup> Cf Martin J. NOONE, *The Cultural Conflict: The Life and Times of Michael O'Doherty*. Manila, editrice 1989; Crisostomo YALUNG, *The Archdiocese of Manila: A Pilgrimage in Time (1565-1999)*. vol. II, Manila, editrice 1999.

<sup>34</sup> Cf M. G. ALINEA SJ, *Philippine Role in the Far East*, in «Worldmission» 13 (1962) 2.

<sup>35</sup> Cf F. BURKHARDT SJ, *Kirche und Chinesen auf den Philippinen*, in «Die Katholischen Missionen» 78 (1959) 108-111; *ibid.*, «Die Katholischen Missionen» 72 (1953) 49.

<sup>36</sup> Cf A. M. GEOGHEGAN, *Catholicism in the Philippines. A Historical Study*, in «Worldmission» 21 (1970) 42-57; «La Civiltà Cattolica» 121 (1970) 367. Cf also H. JEDIN, *Storia della Chiesa*. XXIV, p. 446.

the Church also demonstrated a growing concern for the poor and the emarginated in a society where the gap between the rich and the poor was ever widening. The Salesians' arrival, in fact, was to meet that particular concern of the Philippine Church for this sector of the current society.

Although, one must realize that after the "monopoly" of the traditional religious orders, which have long religiously "governed" the Philippines (that is, Agustinians, Franciscans, Jesuits, Dominicans, Agustinian Recollects) for almost 350 years, new religious orders have come to the Philippines in order to continue the work of evangelization. Among these were male congregations: the Congregation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (1907), the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart and the Society of the Divine Word (1908), the Christian Brothers of De La Salle (1911), the Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers (1924), the Society of St. Paul (1935), the Oblates of Mary Immaculate (1939), the Missionary Sons of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (1947), the Marist Brothers of the School (1948), the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament (1957), the Pontifical Institute for Foreign Missions (1968), etc. The Salesians of Don Bosco was merely one of the new additions. These congregations worked mostly for the education of the very young population of the country. Some, however, were also involved in the missionary work among the cultural minority in the Northern Luzon upland and in Mindanao. A new trend, however, was to involve themselves in responding to the social needs of the people.

One of the realities confronted by these religious orders at the time when they started coming was the religious variation and aberration, which resulted with the coming of the Americans in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. With the Americans came Protestantism with its various ramifications and kinds: Methodists, Presbyterians, Anglicans, Evangelicals, Adventists, etc. These did not include yet the local varieties of religion, which resulted from the departure of Spain and most of its friars and priests, who were at work in the Philippines. Among the local religious sects were the Aglipayans and the Iglesia ni Cristo<sup>37</sup>, which were the more diffused and more active in the work of proselytism<sup>38</sup>.

<sup>37</sup> On Gregorio Aglipay, cf Pedro ACHUTEGUI S. De SJ – Miguel BERNAD SJ, *Religious Revolution in the Philippines. The Life and Church of Gregorio Aglipay*. 4 vols., Quezon City, Ateneo de Manila University Press 1966; Isacio RODRIGUEZ OSA, *Gregorio Aglipay y los origenes de la Iglesia Filipina Independiente (1898-1917)*. 2 vols., CSSS Madrid, 1960. For the *Iglesia ni Cristo*, cf Fernando ELESTERIO, *The Iglesia ni Cristo: Its Christology and Ecclesiology*. Quezon City, Ateneo de Manila University Press 1988, pp. 6-31; Albert SANDERS, *An Appraisal of the Iglesia ni Cristo*, in Gerald ANDERSON (ed.), *Studies in Philippine Church History*. London, New York 1969, pp. 359-365.

<sup>38</sup> Gioventù Missionaria (=GM) (Settembre 1948) 11: "...mentre due nuove Prefetture Apostoliche, con un'altra eretta in precedenza curano l'evangelizzazione di 712,579 pagani. Vi sono purtroppo ancora: 1,581,407 scismatici aglipayani, 419,982 protestanti, 761,790 maomettani".

In fact, one of the main reasons why Fr. Braga saw the urgency of the Salesians establishing themselves in the Archipelago was to help stem the “transfer” of so many Catholics to Protestantism<sup>39</sup> and to other new religions, something that his predecessor, Fr. Luigi Versiglia, had already known when he first came to negotiate for the coming of the Salesians in the Philippines<sup>40</sup>. His mind was that the Salesians should come and try perhaps to “reconvert” these apostates; that they should combat this evil reality. Don Bosco had worked hard for the conservation of the young in the true faith, going against the Waldesians of Turin and Piedmont. Much of the Philippines were being lost to the enemies of the Catholic faith. The Salesians could do something against these, working with the young, who were most susceptible to the influence of other religions.

### 3. The Salesian China Province

#### 3.1. *The China Church*

China was still one of the young Churches in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century Christianity, in a situation of evangelization and missionary work, in which the Salesians were also immersed. However, there was already a concomitant effort to indigenize the clergy of the place.

The hierarchy in China was new. In 1946, there were 28 Chinese ordinaries, of which 21 were bishops. The missionary activity brought 5,005 priests, of which 2,008 were Chinese, together with 1,262 lay brothers and 6,138 sisters. The missionary personnel included 6,748 male and 4,659 female catechists, and 7,799 male and 5,604 female teachers. A Chinese was now included in the cardinalate, Thomas Tien Ken-Sin SVD, Vicar Apostolic of Tsingtao, who would later be transferred to Beijing (Peking). With the institution of the inter-nuncio, there followed the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Holy See and the government of Beijing in this period. Later, the Holy See approved the beatification of 29 Chinese martyrs.

<sup>39</sup> Cf Kenton CLYMER, *Protestant Missionaries in the Philippines, 1898-1916*. Chicago 1986, pp. 11-31; Anne KWANTES, *Presbyterian Missionaries in the Philippines – Conduits of Social Change (1899-1910)*. Quezon City, New editrice 1989, pp. 9-19.

<sup>40</sup> Archivio Salesiano Centrale (=ASC) A351 Corrispondenza (Versiglia a Albera, Manila, 9 febbraio 1911): “Noti Amatissimo Padre che in questi dieci anni circa da che entrarono gli Americani, sono circa 100,000 i Catolici che annualmente si perdono e vanno al protestantesimo per solo fatto di non avere sacerdote che si curino di loro...”; *ibid.*, (Versiglia a Albera, Hong Kong, 23 febbraio 1911): “Il bisogno ne è immenso si contano di anno in anno qui nelle Filippine più di cento mila le anime che i protestanti vanno rubando ogni anno causa la mancanza di sacerdoti...”.



Sometime in 1948, the Church implanted in China presented some of the following statistics: 3,015 foreign and 2,676 Chinese priests, 632 Chinese and 475 foreign lay brothers, 5,112 Chinese and 2,351 foreign sisters, 216 hospitals, 254 orphanages, 4,446 schools of different levels.

On 23 July 1950, however, there came about the communist take-over and the suppression of every "counter-revolutionary activity". This meant the expulsion of foreign missionaries, after mock trials and imprisonment. Rome responded with the condemnation of the persecution of Christians, expressed by Pius XII in the document "Ad Sinarum gentem" (7 October 1954) and the beatification of other 56 Chinese martyrs in 1955. So that in 1958, 30 Chinese bishops faithful to Rome were imprisoned, together with many priests, religious and lay people. The communists answered with the creation of a Chinese National Church separated from Rome and under its tutelage. Consequently, the State proceeded with the installation of 45 Chinese bishops from December 1957 to January 1962, consecrated without confirmation by the Pope. The effective result of this was logically schism<sup>41</sup>. Earlier, the Church and the Salesians of China suffered the loss of two of its veteran missionaries, Bishop Versiglia and Fr. Caravario, who were martyred by Chinese pirates<sup>42</sup>.

### 3.2. The China Province

There had been a significant change of guards in the Salesian China Province. In 1930, Fr. Braga had replaced Fr. Ignazio Canazei (1883-1946) as Provincial of the China; this entered into vigor on the 1<sup>st</sup> of June of that year<sup>43</sup>. At the same time, Fr. Canazei had replaced Bishop Versiglia as Apostolic Vicar of the Diocese of Shiu Chow, which had been orphaned upon the death of its pastor<sup>44</sup>.

<sup>41</sup> Cf Hubert JEDIN (ed.), *Storia della Chiesa*. XI/2, pp. 720-723. Cf also Josef METZLER (ed.), *Storia della Chiesa. Dalle Missioni alle Chiese Locali (1846-1965)*. XXIV, 1988, pp. 328-346.

<sup>42</sup> Cf Domingo LEONG, "The Political Situation in China in 1920-30 and its Effects on Salesians", in Nestor IMPELIDO (ed.), *The Beginnings of the Salesian Presence in East Asia*. vol. I, Makati City, Don Bosco Press, pp. 33-45.

<sup>43</sup> Scheda anagrafica-Segreteria Generale (=SAS) 01B030 Bishop Ignazio Canazei: born in Brixen, Italy (8 June 1883); first profession in Ivrea, Italy (5 October 1901); ordained priest in Foglizzo, Italy (18 September 1909); consecrated Bishop in Caristo (23 July 1930); died in Shiu Chow, China (9 October 1946) at 63 years, 45 years Salesian, 37 years priest and 16 years bishop. He was Provincial of China from 1926 to 1930.

<sup>44</sup> Mario RASSIGA, *L'Opera Salesiana in Cina (Cenno Storico). Parte Seconda (1930-1936)*. Hong Kong, Aberdeen Technical School 1974, p. 1.

The Salesians in China were also slowly rising up from the trauma of World War II, after the sad experience of the Japanese invasion and occupation, which inevitably affected their works. Earlier, it had succumbed to the results of the Sino-Japanese War, in which the Japanese had occupied Chinese territory and treated the country as a colony<sup>45</sup>. Notwithstanding, some of them opted to remain in the war-torn areas<sup>46</sup>.

By 1949, the Superior of the China Province who had been at the helm of the Province for almost the past 20 years<sup>47</sup>, was practically at the end of his 4<sup>th</sup> term as Provincial but who was still raring to go. He was considered a “precious” and a very much appreciated confrere. It would not be easy to find another like him, who was described by his successor as “100 percent Salesian”<sup>48</sup> and as the “Don Bosco of China”<sup>49</sup>. At this time, the provincial council was constituted by Frs. Mattias Kreutzer<sup>50</sup>, Vincenzo Bernardini, Giovanni Guarona and Michele Suppo; the provincial secretary was Fr. Clemente Benato.

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<sup>45</sup> *Id.*, *L'Opera Salesiana in Cina (Cenno Storico). Parte Terza (1937-1935)*. Hong Kong, Aberdeen Technical School 1975, pp. 1-3. Fr. Roozen and Fr. Clifford were in Hong Kong as they tried to check on the safety of the confreres when the Japanese occupied the city. Being Dutch, they were supposed to be enemies of the invaders. Interrogated, they truthfully declared themselves as “Dutch” which the Japanese understood as “Deutsch”; thus they were left unmolested as the Japanese thought they were allies. Later, however, they would be detained and released. Cf *ibid.*, 79-80, 86.

<sup>46</sup> For example, the cleric Schmidt and the coadjutor Tambascia remained to man the Salesian house of Shauiwan during the siege of Hong Kong. Cf *ibid.*, 69. During the war, the religious needed a passport in order to circulate freely for the whole of China. The missionaries had to obtain this document from the local authorities. Cf *ibid.*, 20. The Italian and German confreres were obviously treated as allies by the Japanese. For this, Fr. Rizzato sought the assistance of the Japanese when they entered their mission territory in Namhung. Cf *ibid.*, 55. However after the war, they were seen by the Chinese as collaborators.

<sup>47</sup> Carlo SOCOL, “The birth of the China Province and the expansion of Salesian work in East Asia (1926-1927)”, in Nestor IMPELIDO (ed.), *The Beginnings of the Salesian Presence in East Asia*. vol. I, Makati City, Don Bosco Press, pp. 47-61.

<sup>48</sup> ASC F157 Cina: Corrispondenza (Acquistapace a V. Ricaldone, Shanghai, 5 ottobre 1946). Fr. Acquistapace wrote of Fr. Braga: “Certo non sarà facile trovare un altro d. Braga dallo spirito salesiano al cento per cento, dal cuore grande di amore per la Cina e ricco di esperienza, dalle vedute larghe, dal coraggio intrepido quando si tratta di una opera della gloria di Dio, e dalle conoscenze ed aderenze in tutti gli strati sociali cinesi ed europei soprattutto delle altre famiglie religiose”.

<sup>49</sup> Fr. Saverio Fels had arrived in China sometime in July 1948. Writing to Fr. Pietro Ricaldone, Rector Major, he expressed the observation of the Chinese cooperators and the members of other religious orders regarding Fr. Braga: “Voi, Salesiani, siete benedetti dal Signore per avere un tale Superiore ... Mister Braga is the Don Bosco of China”. Cf ASC F157 Cina: Corrispondenza (Fels a Ricaldone [aboard the boat Wu Kuong towards Tientsin], 7 luglio 1948).

<sup>50</sup> SAS 30B229 Fr. Mathias Kreutzer: born in Bubach, Germany (24 March 1905); first profession in Ens Dorf, Germany (15 August 1930); ordained in Benediktbeuern, Germany (29 June 1939); died in Bubach, Germany (28 January 1970) at 65 years of age, 40 years Salesian and 31 years priest. He was vice provincial for the China Province (1948-1953) until he was expelled from the Mainland. He was rector of Victorias (1956-1957), before he went back to Germany.

In 1949, the provincial house was located in the Salesian Institute of Macau, considered as the margin of the province and outside the areas of communication<sup>51</sup>. But the affairs of the Province and the provincial council meetings were done in Shanghai or in Hong Kong. In 1950, the provincial house was transferred in Hong Kong Island Road Shaukiwan. The Provincial was often "in giro", even for the considerable length of time. This obviously was on account of the vastness of the China Province. Even documents took time to be gathered<sup>52</sup>.

The students of Theology were based in Shanghai Nantao in 1946<sup>53</sup>, while those of Philosophy were from September 1946 in Shaukiwan in Hong Kong<sup>54</sup>. But sometime in 1950, however, there were students of Theology residing in Hong Kong Aberdeen, and later in Shaukiwan<sup>55</sup>.

In 1946, the Salesians were now looking for a new location for the Novitiate, which was currently in Macao<sup>56</sup>. It would be relocated and be joined with the studentate of Philosophy in the same place in Shaukiwan<sup>57</sup>. The houses of formation, in fact, were in continuous transfer on account of the uneasy times of communist pressure.

In the same year, the China Province had several Aspirantates for clerics and coadjutors: in Hong Kong Aberdeen, Beijing and Shanghai Nantao<sup>58</sup>. At the same time, the Salesians were still in the Diocese of Shiu Chow, which was under the pastoral care of the Salesian Msgr. Michele Arduino (1909-1972)<sup>59</sup>.

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<sup>51</sup> Cf Carlos Antonio KIRSCHNER, *Dom Bosco e a China. Contributo para a historia dos Salesianos*. Macau, editrice 1970.

<sup>52</sup> ASC F157 Cina: Corrispondenza (Benato a Puddu, Macao, 9 June 1946).

<sup>53</sup> In 1949, the rector of the Salesian house was Fr. Luigi Ferrari. Together with him were Fr. Emio Baggio, Fr. Pierangelo Quaranta, Br. Carlo Nardin and Br. Nicolino Tambascia. Among the students of Theology, there were Giuliano Carpella and Dante Sacchi who were in their fourth year.

<sup>54</sup> ASC F157 Cina: Corrispondenza (Braga a Berutti, Hong Kong, 19 Agosto 1946).

<sup>55</sup> In 1952, among the students of Theology were Paolo Bahillo, Antonio Battistello and Ercole Solaroli, who were in their second year.

<sup>56</sup> ASC F157 Cina: Corrispondenza (Braga a Berutti, Hong Kong, 19 Agosto 1946).

<sup>57</sup> In 1949, rector of the house was Fr. Vincenzo Ricaldone. The master of novices was Fr. Luigi Massimino. Among the formators were Fr. Ferdinando Rosotto, Fr. Bernard Tohill and Fr. Giovanni Monchiero.

<sup>58</sup> In 1949, superior of the Aspirantate in Shanghai Nantao was Fr. Luigi Ferrari. Among the formators were Fr. Emilio Baggio (prefect/vicar) and Fr. Maurilio Candusso (confessor).

<sup>59</sup> SAS 25B089 Bishop Michele Alberto Arduino: born in Foglizzo, Turin (5 March 1909); first profession in Macao (8 December 1925); ordained priest in Turin (9 July 1933); consecrated Bishop in Shiu Chow, China (29 June 1948); died in Locri, Reggio Calabria (18 June 1972) at 63 years, 47 years Salesian, 39 years priest and 24 years bishop. In 1949, his secretary was the Salesian Fr. Patrick Ryan.

The presence of the Salesians in his Diocese was mostly made up of mission residences, churches, elementary and middle schools and chaplaincies. Fr. Pietro Garbero<sup>60</sup> was rector of the Salesian house in Ho Sai in 1949<sup>61</sup>.

In the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the China Province was in a moment of “expansion” in the British Island of Hong Kong, as it was being threatened by the communists in the Mainland. To add to the existing Salesian works in Hong Kong, among which the trade school of Aberdeen, other works were initiated: in Shaukiwan (1951), an elementary and middle school for both interns and externs; in Kowloon (1952), a trade school, an aspirantate for clerics and coadjutors, an elementary school for interns and externs, a technical school. In Macao (1951), a catechetical center and a center for print media apostolate was established. In the same year, a similar work was put up in Taiwan. The Salesians, instead, was little by little phased out in Beijing, in Shanghai, in Kun Ming and Shiu Chow<sup>62</sup>.

By 1952 until the next year, the Salesian houses in China, originally and recently started, were gradually being occupied. The existence of the schools or houses was labeled in the *Elenco Generale* of the Salesian Society variedly and gradually with descriptions as “temporaneamente occupata” and “occupata”<sup>63</sup>.

<sup>60</sup> SAS 21B027 Fr. Pietro Garbero: born in Turin, Italy (23 August 1901); first profession in San Gregorio, Italy (23 September 1921); ordained in Macao (24 April 1927); died in Manila (14 April 1992) at 91 years, 71 years Salesian and 65 years priest.

<sup>61</sup> Cf Mario RASSIGA, *L'Opera Salesiana in Cina (Cenno Storico). Parte Prima (1906-1930)*. Hong Kong, Aberdeen Technical School 1973, p. 31. Fr. Garbero was assistant of novices under Msgr. Gaetano Pasotti; he was ordained priest on 24 April 1927 by the Bishop of Macao, Msgr. Nunes. He arrived in Macao on 30 January 1926, in a missionary expedition, which included eight novices, seven clerics and a coadjutor. Cf *ibid.*, p. 72. During World War II, he was detained together with Fr. Giovanni Rizzato and Fr. Mario Cuomo. They were really harassed during the Chinese communist take-over. Cf *ibid.*, III, p. 18. He was residing in Tung Haung when the war with the Japanese ended. The guerillas threatened to occupy his residence; they looted and destroyed the Church. The accusation against the missionaries was that they cooperated with the Japanese. Cf *ibid.*, p. 50.

<sup>62</sup> In 1949, the rector of the work (an elementary and middle school, with interns and externs, parish, daily oratory) was Fr. George Schwarz.

<sup>63</sup> In Beijing, St. John Bosco Technical School (also a hospice for university students opened in 1948) was “temporaneamente occupata”; in 1953, it was “casa occupata”. In Shanghai, the Aspirantate and St. Dominic Savio School (both opened in 1936) were “temporaneamente occupate”; in 1953, they were “case occupate”; the superior of the latter house was Fr. Luigi Ferrari. In the same territory, Mary Help of Christians Parish (founded in 1938), with its other ministries, was “temporaneamente occupata”; its superior was Fr. Maurilio Candusso. Cf ASC F157 Cina: Corrispondenza (Benato a Puddu, Hong Kong, 9 Dicembre 1950). Cf also *Elenco Generale* (1955), pp. 420-421.

Bishop Arduino himself had also transferred his base at the Salesian Missionary House at Shaukiwan in Hong Kong. Of the twelve centers of the dioceses manned by the Salesians, only three had designated confreres. These were the missionary residences with schools at Lin Hsien (1919), Lok Chong (1928), and Nam Yung (1937). The rest were merely enumerated in the *Elenco Generale* for 1952<sup>64</sup>. In the following year, all remaining centers did not have anymore a declared list of confreres<sup>65</sup>.

Nonetheless, even before the communist take-over of the Salesian works, the Salesian Society continued to send personnel to China. On 18 January 1947, Turin had sent a list of confreres departing for China to Fr. Braga. In this list, we find the names and the respective descriptions of some who later on would pass to the Philippines when the Salesians started their work there: Fathers Giovanni Righetti<sup>66</sup>, Giovanni Monchiero<sup>67</sup>, Saverio Fels<sup>68</sup>, and the coadjutors Edvige Floris, Raffaele Mrzel<sup>69</sup>, and Francesco Stoppa<sup>70</sup>. In other lists, there was also a certain Pablo Bahillo, a cleric, "in partenza" for Hong Kong<sup>71</sup>, as well as that of a certain Fr. Godfrey Roozen. They never realized that they

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<sup>64</sup> These were some of the Salesian works in the Chinese missions founded by the Salesians and in which they generously gave themselves: Chi Hing Sacred Heart (missionary residence, public churches, elementary school [1927]); Ho Sai St. Joseph Institute (public church, chaplaincy, mission, minor seminary, elementary school [1921]); Kam Kong Mary Immaculate (missionary residence, public church, elementary school [1918]); Ku Kong Mary Help of Christians (central house of the missions, parish-cathedral, procure [1918]); Ku Kong Don Bosco Institute (elementary and middle schools for interns and externs, parish [1924]); Lau Ha Christ the King (missionary residence, public church, elementary schools [1919]); Yeung Shan St. Michael the Archangel (missionary residence, public church, chaplaincies, elementary schools [1921]). Cf *Elenco Generale* (1952), pp. 399-400.

<sup>65</sup> Cf *ibid.*, (1953) 409-410.

<sup>66</sup> Fr. Righetti died as member of the Veneta-Ovest Province, Italy. Cf SAHK Corrispondenza (Benato a Acquistapace, Hong Kong, 2 luglio 1953).

<sup>67</sup> Fr. Monchiero had left for Victorias sometime in February 1952 to help Fr. D'Amore. Cf SAHK Corrispondenza (Benato a Puddu, Hongkong, 20 febbraio 1952). Cf also SAHK Minutes of the Provincial Council meeting (Hong Kong, 28 settembre 1951).

<sup>68</sup> Fr. Fels returned to Italy in order to tend to his mother who was alone by herself; he was the only child.

<sup>69</sup> SAS 38B073 Coad. Rafael Mrzel: born in Ljubljana, Slovenia (ex-Yugoslavia) (14 September 1912); first profession in Radna, Slovenia (4 August 1938); perpetual profession in Girona, Spain (16 August 1941); died in Manila (16 April 1994) at 82 years and 56 years Salesian. He left for the missions of China on 22 February 1948.

<sup>70</sup> Coad. Francesco Stoppa Sady went to the Philippines to be among the first personnel of the new delegation, but later went back to Hong Kong, where he died (22 February 1980) at 67 years and 38 years Salesian.

<sup>71</sup> ASC F157 Cina: Corrispondenza (Braga a Zerbino, Roma, 21 dicembre 1947).

would not stay long in the China Province<sup>72</sup>. They would later be recycled to the new Salesian presence in the Philippines.

There is indeed some truth in the belief that the Salesians who came to the Philippines were mainly from the Salesian China Province. But that they were remnants of those who were persecuted by the communists and who were forced to abandon their Salesian work on account of the persecution is something to be qualified.

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<sup>72</sup> Cf also ASC F157 Cina: Corrispondenza (Berruti a Braga, Torino, 18 marzo 1947). In this letter, Righetti, Monchiero, Fels, Roozen, Floris, Stoppa and Mrzel were destined for Hong Kong. In a later list, only Roozen was supposed to go to Hongkong, while the rest (Righetti, Monchiero and Fels), together with the Coadjutors Stoppa and Mrzel, were supposed to be destined to Indochina. Cf ASC F157 Cina: Corrispondenza (Berruti a Braga, Torino, 24 ottobre 1946). At the end, they were all "diverted" to the Philippines.

## Chapter Two

### DELEGATION (1949-1951)

The Superiors in Turin have received offers from the Philippines since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. They have hesitated somehow to look on these offers and thus have not acted on them. But as the Salesian Society entered into the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it concluded that it was also time for her to go to the Philippines. The presence of the Salesians in the Philippines began after a series of negotiations between Manila and Turin via China.

#### 1. Negotiations

On 18 November 1949, the Rector Major, Fr. Pietro Ricaldone (1870-1951) wrote to Fr. Carlo Braga (1889-1971), the Provincial of the Salesians in China, informing him that he had received two requests for foundations in the Philippines<sup>1</sup>. Because of this, he wanted him to go to the Philippines and see for himself these offers<sup>2</sup>.

Fr. Braga was a man of experience. He had been for more than twenty years Provincial of China. Practically, he was the one responsible for the expansion of the Salesians in this vast mission territory. To pioneer was obviously not new to him; hence, the logical choice for him. Besides, China was neighbor to the Philippines; it was near and very accessible.

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<sup>1</sup> A certain confrere, Fr. Ercole Tiberi (1907-2004), was a member of the China Province, but who later repatriated to Italy in 1995. Cf SAS 23B032. He was in Manila sometime in 1948. From Manila, he sent a letter to Fr. Ricaldone, together with that of Archbishop William Piani, who was then still Apostolic Delegate in Manila. Cf ASC F157 Cina: Corrispondenza (Tiberi a Ricaldone, Macao, 13 luglio 1948). Salesians must have been passing by Manila then, when it occurred to them. They have been travelling by boat, Manila being one of the ports of call. Besides, they were sure to have a welcome and hospitality from the Salesian Apostolic Delegate based in the Philippine capital.

<sup>2</sup> Salesian Archives Hong Kong (=SAHK), Philippine (Ricaldone a Braga, Torino, 18 novembre 1949). To note that another from the Mainland continent came to the Philippines to check on the offerings made to the Salesian Society. Bishop Versiglia was the first to come in 1910 together with Fr. Louis Olive to look on the offer for the Salesians to come to the Philippines.

Fr. Braga was supposed to go with Fr. Modesto Bellido (1902-1993)<sup>3</sup>, the superior in charge of the Salesian Missions. But the latter had already left Hong Kong. Fr. Bellido, in fact, had been in Manila sometime in November 1949 and had met the Apostolic Delegate to the Philippines, Archbishop Egidio Vagnozzi<sup>4</sup>. They had talked about the offers extended to the Salesians. But these remained as mere offers for foundations; hence, there was still nothing concrete. However, Fr. Bellido thought that it was possible and very convenient indeed that the Salesians start some foundations in the Philippines. He had told and suggested to the Rector Major, in fact, that it would be good if Fr. Braga went to Manila to see for himself the offers and thus to negotiate, and that later, he should refer the results of his findings to the Superiors in Turin<sup>5</sup>.

However, in his letter to Fr. Braga, Fr. Ricaldone warned him from accepting any commitment during his overseeing work. Instead, he should refer first to Turin the result of his investigation<sup>6</sup>. Such a specific and direct reminder was no less than a warning for Fr. Braga who was known to be quick in taking commitments even without Turin's placet. At the same time, Fr. Ricaldone had advised Fr. Braga to bring along during his visit to the Philippines a copy of the plans and pictures of the Salesian Technical School of Aberdeen in Hong Kong<sup>7</sup>. He was to present this to one of those who was offering a foundation, in order to illustrate what could also be done in line with the offer and invitation to the Salesians<sup>8</sup>.

Meanwhile, Fr. Ricaldone had also written the same day to Archbishop Vagnozzi, who wanted dearly the Salesians to come<sup>9</sup>. He thanked him for his

<sup>3</sup> SAS 20B010 Fr. Iñigo Modesto Bellido: born in Salamanca, Spain (30 December 1902); first profession in Madrid, Spain (25 July 1920); ordained in Turin, Italy (6 July 1930); died in Madrid, Spain (26 November 1993) at 91 years, 73 years Salesian and 63 years priest. He was councillor for the missions of the Salesian Society (1948 to 1956) and later catechist general (1956-1971).

<sup>4</sup> ASC D875 Verbali (12 novembre 1949): "Manila-fondazioni. Si scrive a D. Bellido affinché trovi modo di recarsi da quel Delegato Ap. (Msgr. Vagnozzi) con D. Braga e sentire".

<sup>5</sup> ASC F157 Cina: Corrispondenza (Bellido a Ricaldone, Hong Kong, 3 dicembre 1949): "Ma penso sarà possibile e molto conveniente, una fondazione".

<sup>6</sup> SAHK, Filippine (Ricaldone a Braga, Torino, 18 novembre 1949).

<sup>7</sup> SAS CB3305 The Salesian Aberdeen Technical School belonged to the China Province. The work started sometime September 1933; the house was canonically erected on 30 August 1933. Fr. Godfrey Roozen was director of the school from 1949 to 1952.

<sup>8</sup> SAHK Filippine (Ricaldone a Braga, Torino, 18 novembre 1949).

<sup>9</sup> Archbishop Egidio Vagnozzi succeeded the Salesian Archbishop Guglielmo Piani as Apostolic Delegate of the Vatican State to the Philippines. In 1951, he was named first Apostolic Nuncio, the Philippine Apostolic Delegation being raised to a Nunciature. Cf ASC D875 Verbali (9 novembre 1949): "Isole Filippine, Manila. Il Delegato Apostolico chiede con vivo interesse al R.M., che i Salesiani aprano qualche opera a Manila. Nelle isole rari sono i sacerdoti e le opere per la gioventù. Non esiste che una scuola laica di agricoltura, entro colà ferve la propaganda comunista. Invita qualche salesiano a recarsi al posto per studiare e trattare".



invitation and communicated to him the decision of the General Council to send Fr. Braga to the Philippines<sup>10</sup>. Moreover, he informed him that they had also received several weeks earlier a letter from Bishop of Bacolod in the province of Negros Occidental, who strongly endorsed the technical school proposed to the Salesians by the owners of Victorias Milling Company (Vicmico), a sugar refinery, considered as the biggest and most important of the sugar mills found in the island of Negros. He also mentioned of another offer in the same place, but which he considered as less important than the first. However, Fr. Braga was supposed to occupy himself with both proposals that Turin had received<sup>11</sup>.

The Rector Major also wrote to the Bishop Casimiro Lladoc of Bacolod<sup>12</sup> on November 1949 in response to the prelate's letter of the previous month of 2 October 1949. Bishop Lladoc had in fact asked the General Council to establish in his diocese a school of arts and trades, in reference to the type of school requested in Victorias. Fr. Ricaldone told the Bishop that his representative, Fr. Carlo Braga, was coming in order to take a look at the proposal and give his suggestion<sup>13</sup>. It was practically an endorsement by the Bishop of the offer of the Vicmico's owners.

Fr. Ricaldone expressed his desire that some foundation indeed be started in the Philippines<sup>14</sup>; no less than the Apostolic Delegate endorsed the project. His emissary was coming with a concrete plan of a technical school at hand. He had chosen someone who was undoubtedly a seasoned trailblazer. Surely, this time, Fr. Braga would not fail the Superior of Turin, who definitely did not want either a repeat of what happened in 1912<sup>15</sup>. The fact that Fr. Braga was asked to do this was as good as it was done.

<sup>10</sup> SAHK Filippine (Ricaldone a Vagnozzi, Torino 18 novembre 1949).

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.* Fr. Ricaldone had also mentioned that there was another proposal in the same locality but "meno importante". This might be the chaplaincy of a hospital found somewhere in the area, supposedly under the care of the Mary Knoll Sisters.

<sup>12</sup> The Diocese of Bacolod was created on 15 July 1932 and was erected on 16 May 1933. It comprises the central territory of the province of Negros Occidental from the municipalities of Hinigaran in the south, to Victorias City in the north. The principal titular of the Diocese is St. Sebastian (20 January) and its secondary patroness is Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary (7 October). Cf *The 2002 Catholic Directory of the Philippines*. Quezon City, Claretian Publications 2002, p. 7. This Diocese was established while Archbishop Piani was still Apostolic Delegate to the Philippines.

<sup>13</sup> SAHK Filippine (Ricaldone a Lladoc, Torino, 18 novembre 1949). Cf ASC D875 Verbali (9 novembre 1949): "Victorias, Isole Filippine, Negri Occidentali, i Sig.ri Ossorio ... chiedono che si apra una scuola professionale per i figli degli operai. Sono disposti a provvedere quanto occorre. Il Vescovo di Bacolod, Msgr. Lladoc raccomanda caldamente quella fondazione. Si manderà D. Braga ad esaminare sul luogo la proposta".

<sup>14</sup> SAHK Filippine (Ricaldone a Braga, Torino, 18 novembre 1949).

<sup>15</sup> In 1912, the first two Salesians who were sent to establish the Salesian work in the Philippines, Fr. Luigi Costamagna and Fr. Giovanni Fergnani, suddenly and pragmatically left the Philippines without asking permission or informing Turin of their decision.

## 2. Braga's First Visit

Fr. Braga immediately acted upon receiving the order from Turin. On 9 January 1950, he asked Fr. Clemente Benato (1892-1959)<sup>16</sup>, provincial secretary of the China Province, the provincial house currently based in Macao, to send him the address and the name of the Apostolic Delegate to Manila, as well as that of the “other bishop who calls us to help” so that he could inform them of his coming<sup>17</sup>. The order from Turin was a novelty for the China Superior. He was not yet even acquainted with the names of the people with whom he was to deal with, as well as with the situation in the Philippines.

### 2.1. Words from Archbishop Guglielmo Piani

To prepare himself for this assignment, Fr. Braga wrote to Archbishop Guglielmo Piani<sup>18</sup>. They have known each other on account of their exchange of visits, in Hong Kong and Manila. Fr. Braga solicited some advice from the prelate and confrere, now based in Mexico as Apostolic Delegate, before he made his first “official visit” to the Philippines<sup>19</sup>. And the ever-good Salesian was generous and quick to share his mind and experience to Fr. Braga.

Archbishop Piani stated that the Salesians were indeed “much awaited and would be well taken cared of” in the Philippines. They were not unknown to the Filipinos. A Salesian in the person of the former Apostolic Delegate had served the Philippines for a quite a long time, and for this, had influenced very much the growth of the Philippine Church which was only beginning to be by itself after more than three centuries under the Spanish Royal Patronage<sup>20</sup>. He had also mediated in extending offers to Turin from interested parties in the Archipelago<sup>21</sup>. Definitely, he was one who had earned the esteem

<sup>16</sup> SAS 25B099 Fr. Clemente Benato: born in Padua, Italy (10 July 1892); first profession in Ho Shi, China (29 January 1925); ordained in Shin Chow (7 December 1930); died in Verona, Italy (6 December 1959) at 67 years, 34 years Salesian and 29 years priest. He was actual provincial secretary of the China Province at the start of the Philippine Delegation.

<sup>17</sup> SAHK Filippine (Braga a Benato, Macao, 9 gennaio 1950).

<sup>18</sup> Cf Francisco CASTELLANOS, *Un Grande Cuore. Mons. Guglielmo Piani, SDB*. Roma, Tipolitografia Istituto Salesiano Pio XI 2005, 8° 97 pp.

<sup>19</sup> ASC D875 Verbali (17 settembre 1948): “S.E. Mons. Piani comunica al R.M. che in questi giorni ha avuto dal S. Padre la nomina a Delegato Ap. del Messico e che dovrà recarsi al più presto, dopo una brevissima visita di congedo alle Isole Filippine”.

<sup>20</sup> SAHK Filippine (Piani a Braga, Mexico, 19 febbraio 1950).

<sup>21</sup> ASC D875 Verbali (8 giugno 1949): “Isole Filippine. S.E. Mons. Piani notifica l’offerta di una Signora che egli conosce nell’isola di Negros delle Filippine. Offre una casa già abitata da Suore Carmelitane. La proposta è molto generosa. Si chiederanno chiarificazione e conferme”.

and respect of all his co-nationals<sup>22</sup>, of the other foreigners<sup>23</sup>, and of the Filipinos as well<sup>24</sup>.

The Archbishop suggested that the Salesians should begin in Manila before accepting a work somewhere else. His motive for such counsel was practical. The Salesians should first be known in Manila. They had to establish a base in the capital. Furthermore, he had a very Salesian advice to Fr. Braga: that the latter should try to make the Salesian Oratory as a special concern from the start; that the Salesian ought to be the heart of the Oratory<sup>25</sup>.

The former Apostolic Delegate also reminded Fr. Braga that the Salesians should make sure that they were free in their actions. It meant that they should not be tied down to some committees, boards of trustees or compromises, which could control and prejudice their operations. They should not even be tied up to bishops to whom, however, they ought to show "respect, esteem, love, reverence...." The Salesians had their own rules and traditions. They had their own Superiors to whom they owed obedience. This was a way of the Archbishop-confreere to tell Fr. Braga not to let the bishops interfere with the work of the Salesians<sup>26</sup>. He surely knew well what he was saying, having had to deal with bishops when he was in the Philippines. His relation with the previous American Archbishop of Manila had not always been smooth<sup>27</sup>.

Finally, the Archbishop assured Fr. Braga that he should not be afraid to use his name when he needed to approach some authority or personality, ecclesiastical or lay, in Manila or elsewhere in the Archipelago<sup>28</sup>. In spite of

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<sup>22</sup> «Bollettino Salesiano» [=BS] 64 (1940) 125-126. The Italian Consul to the Philippines, on 11 February 1940, was generous in his praise of an Italian and a representative of the Holy See: "La casa della Delegazione è per tutti casa paterna in cui trovano consiglio, conforto, raccomandazioni, guida e direzione spirituale ed aiuto materiale.... Le Diocesi, in queste isole, da sette salirono a quattordici, e vi si aggiunsero due Prefetture Apostoliche. Il numero dei sacerdoti indigeni fu quasi raddoppiato ... mentre i Seminari vennero aumentati e rimodernizzati nella struttura e nella direzione interna...".

<sup>23</sup> During the war, the Japanese showed great respect for Archbishop Piani and assured him the freedom of cult, so that the kind prelate could continue his ministry. Cf BS 66 (1942) 141.

<sup>24</sup> In 1947, the Archbishop celebrated the silver anniversary of Episcopal consecration. "La Guerra, che ha portato tanta desolazione.... Ma l'abnegazione con cui continua a prodigare le sue cure all'Episcopato, al clero, ai religiosi, ai fedeli ed agli infedeli ... gli attira l'ammirazione anche dei non cattolici che, nella fausta ricorrenza, hanno fatto a gara nel dargli commoventi dimostrazioni di stima e di gratitudine". Cf BS 71 (1947) 195.

<sup>25</sup> SAHK Filippine (Piani a Braga, Mexico, 19 febbraio 1950).

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> Cf Martin NOONE J., *The Life and Times of Michael O'Doherty Archbishop of Manila*. Manila, 1988, pp. 349-361.

<sup>28</sup> SAHK Filippine (Piani a Braga, Mexico, 19 febbraio 1950): "Non tema di guastare quello ch'io ho fatto, poiché in questo campo ben poco ho fatto!" Such was the humility of the Salesian Archbishop.

such humble estimate of himself, the Archbishop was well respected and esteemed for what he had done to promote the Philippine Church. He was known to have strongly promoted the growth of the local churches in the Archipelago. Definitely, his suggestions would indeed be of great help for Fr. Braga, as he in fact had to deal with ecclesiastical authorities who meant well in wanting the Salesians. He, however, had always been of excellent relationship with the bishops with whom Fr. Braga had to deal with. In all the requests made to the Salesians, bishops and archbishops were very much involved.

Fr. Braga, however, had to postpone his trip to Manila. Upon learning of his coming, Archbishop Vagnozzi of Manila sent Fr. Braga a telegram on 2 February 1950, and informed him of his absence from Manila up to the 22 February. He wanted to be present when Fr. Braga came; the latter rightfully heeded the kind prelate's request to maximize his first official visit to the Archipelago<sup>29</sup>.

On 6 February 1950, Fr. Braga wrote Fr. Bellido from Don Bosco Aberdeen and told him that he was leaving for Manila as soon as Archbishop Vagnozzi returned. And perhaps to emphasize the importance and the urgency of accomplishing such an assignment from the Rector Major, he already expressed his plan to make a "quick visit" to Italy, at least for a month, immediately after his visit to Manila. That was, if the Superiors approved of his plans. This was in order to inform the Superiors of the agreements "reached" and to meet the Provincials of America to ask help for the missions<sup>30</sup>.

Fr. Braga had not even left for Manila, yet he was already making arrangements to go to Turin. He did not even know the results of the negotiations and the terms of the agreements, nor those with whom he was dealing, and he was already thinking of presenting the conclusions of the coming meetings. He was even ready to make propaganda to the other Provincials to obtain the needed personnel for the Philippines<sup>31</sup>. And off he went to Manila, to see and negotiate for himself the concrete proposals made to the Salesians.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.* (Vagnozzi a Braga, Manila, 2 febbraio 1950).

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.* (Braga a Bellido, Hong Kong, 6 febbraio 1950). Fr. Braga had written to Fr. Pietro Pomati, former economist in China, in which he spoke of the foundations offered in Manila, as well as his desire to make a "scapatina" to Italy "per intendersi sui nuovi contratti". He claimed that there was no provincial council to consult on account of the war in China. He admitted that he was not that good with contracts. Fifteen days in Italy would be alright for him, if the Superiors would allow him. Fr. Pomati duly informed Fr. Ziggotti of this plan of Fr. Braga. Cf SAHK Cina (Pomati a Ziggotti, Rome, 21 aprile 1950).

<sup>31</sup> SAHK Filippine (Braga a Bellido, Hong Kong, 6 febbraio 1950). But this request for permission to go to Italy - was this also because Fr. Braga loved to travel, to go to Turin and make his presence felt there among the Superiors?

Notwithstanding the caution given him by the Rector Major, Fr. Braga was only too determined to go one step, and even two, ahead of his Superiors.

On 26 February 1950, Fr. Braga left Hong Kong and arrived in Manila the next day<sup>32</sup>. It was a good trip: "comfortable, rapid, exquisite treatment", as if foreboding the success of his mission. He was met at the port by a certain Cavalier Professor Francesco Monti, a sculptor-friend of his, a resident of Manila, and a benefactor of the Salesians<sup>33</sup>. By six o'clock in the evening, he was already at the residence of the Apostolic Delegate, "a great enthusiast of Don Bosco" and of the Salesians. His impression of that first encounter with the Archbishop was that he wanted the Salesians to start immediately with "a dozen of schools and orphanages"<sup>34</sup>. Indeed, the Apostolic Delegate would be one of the main reasons for the rapid development of the Salesians<sup>35</sup>.

The next day, Fr. Braga met the Archbishop of Manila, Gabriel Reyes (1892-1952)<sup>36</sup> who had succeeded Archbishop Michael O'Doherty (1874-1949), the last non-Filipino Archbishop of Manila<sup>37</sup>. For two days, he moved about to make contact with the ecclesiastical and civil authorities of Manila who were interested with the Salesians. And everything was done to facilitate his movements and visits, as he made to travel with the best and most comfortable means of transport<sup>38</sup>. The "Filipino hospitality" was probably an extra arm to entice and convince him and the Salesians to come.

<sup>32</sup> Fr. Braga arrived at the port of Manila on 27 February 1950, at 16:45 p.m. Cf SAHK Filippine (Braga a Benato Manila, 3 marzo 1950).

<sup>33</sup> Francesco Ricardo Monti came to Manila via the Americas, as he tried to escape the fascism of pre-war Italy. He made a name as a sculptural artist in the 1950s. He was responsible for the relief of St. John Bosco on the high school facade of Don Bosco Mandaluyong, of the sculptural relief of the PMA building in Baguio, of the Santo Domingo Church. He died in a car accident on 11 August 1958. Cf Paulo ALCAZAREN, *Monumental Monti*, in «The Philippine Star Newspaper» (5 November 2005) F-1, 2.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> BS 78 (1954) 453: "A Mons. Vagnozzi dobbiamo il primo grazie se i Salesiani sono giunti in quella nazione... All'ombra benefica di S. E. le opere nostre rapidamente si moltiplicarono e irrobustirono". He was a constant guest of the Salesians: whether to bless new buildings, or to uncover monuments, or inaugurate new presences.

<sup>36</sup> Cf Evelyn REYES-TIROL, *The Gentle Shepherd, Faithful Sentinel. A Biography of Gabriel M. Reyes First Filipino Archbishop*. Manila, 1992. Archbishop Reyes was appointed first Filipino Archbishop of Cebu. He was installed as first Filipino Archbishop of Manila on 14 October 1949. He was born on 24 March 1892 and died on 10 October 1952.

<sup>37</sup> Cf Martin NOONE J., *The Life and Times of Michael O'Doherty*. Quezon City 1988. Archbishop O'Doherty was installed Archbishop of Manila on 14 December 1916. He was born on 30 July 1874 in Charlestown, Ireland and died on 14 October 1949 in Manila. He was appointed Archbishop of Zamboanga in 1911 when he came to the Philippines.

<sup>38</sup> SAHK Filippine (Braga a Benato, Manila, 3 marzo 1950).

## 2.2. Braga's Report

But what happened during Fr. Braga's first visit to the Philippines? In the Salesian Central Archives in Rome, information could be found in this first visit of Fr. Braga to the Philippines in 1950. It is written in a small paper, definitely in scratch, noted by Fr. Salvatore Puddu, secretary general of the General Council<sup>39</sup>. In spite of its seemingly insignificant appearance, this document provides important details on Fr. Braga's visit of February 1950<sup>40</sup>. This information did not elaborate so much on what Fr. Braga did when he was in the Philippines. Instead, it provides a list of what were offered to Fr. Braga while he was in the Philippines.

Fr. Braga had gone back to Hong Kong from Manila and had sent a telegram to Fr. Ricaldone, informing him that he was proceeding to Turin on 26 May<sup>41</sup>. Meanwhile, Fr. Pietro Pomati (1906-1994)<sup>42</sup>, a Salesian who was of the China Province and was actually in Rome, had also written to Fr. Ricaldone on 27 May. He admitted that he was the one who insisted that Fr. Braga should come to Italy even for a few days to report about the negotiations with the Philippines.

For Fr. Pomati, Fr. Braga's personal appearance in Turin would help in order that the contract would be in favor of the Salesians<sup>43</sup>. This was in order to avoid a repeat of what happened in China. The bishops there seemingly invited the Salesians; but they were satisfied in pointing out the "place", but not in helping pay the acquisition of the "place". The fact was that the Salesians in

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<sup>39</sup> SAS 91A097 Fr. Salvatore Puddu: born in Oristano, Italy (21 August 1874); first profession in Torino, Italy (3 October 1891); ordained in Alexandria, Egypt (2 January 1898); died in Turin, Italy (3 May 1964) at 89 years, 73 years Salesian, 66 years priest. He was secretary of the General Council from 1936 to 1961.

<sup>40</sup> ASC F164 Filippine (Braga al Concilio Superiore, Torino, [maggio 1950?]). The document, undated, must have been written sometime in May 1950, while Fr. Braga was in Turin. The report was trite and there was no elaboration, just a mere list of proposed foundations. There were seven places listed, indicating the places where the Salesians were wanted. But a series of questions could be asked. How did they come to know about the Salesians? How did they know Fr. Braga? When did they first make contact? While in Manila, he stayed with the St. Paul Fathers, mostly Italians and old acquaintances in Hong Kong, whose address was Pious Society of St. Paul, 531 F.B. Harrison, Rizal City.

<sup>41</sup> ASC F157 Cina: Corrispondenza (Telegramma). The message was received in Turin on 19 May 1950. Fr. Braga told Fr. Ricaldone that he was going to Turin after having taken the "ultimi accordi". But what were these "latest agreements"?

<sup>42</sup> SAS 25B014 Fr. Pietro Pomati: born in Vercelli, Italy (15 November 1906); first profession in Ho Sai, China (29 January 1925); ordained in Hong Kong (30 May 1931); died in Hong Kong (27 March 1994) at 88 years, 69 years Salesian and 63 years priest.

<sup>43</sup> ASC F157 Cina: Corrispondenza (Pomatti a Ziggjotti, Roma, 27 maggio 1950): "ne guadagnerà il futuro ed i contratti saranno fatti con maggior vantaggio nostro".

China were also called “les religieux a bon marché” – of the three foundations made by Fr. Braga there, two were made “col prato Filippi”. In China, the Salesians were forced to carry the financial burden of acquiring the lands offered. In the mind of Fr. Pomati, this was supposed to be avoided in the Philippines<sup>44</sup>.

After almost three months after his Philippine visit, Fr. Braga reported to the members of the General Council in Turin on 7 June 1950<sup>45</sup>, expressing the great expectation for the Salesians in the only Catholic country in Asia. Both ecclesiastical and civil authorities and the people themselves have manifested their desire that the Salesians come. And as a proof of their sincere desire, they presented to Fr. Braga not only two requests but several of them.

In the province of Tarlac north of Manila, there was an offer of an existing school operated by American military chaplains who belonged to the Archdiocese of New York and who wanted to cede their work particularly to the Salesians. The owners of Vicmico in the town of Victorias in the province of Negros Occidental were ready to construct a technical school according to the design and plans of the Salesian Aberdeen School<sup>46</sup>. In the island of Iloilo, the Bishop of Jaro offered two schools: one in the capital Jaro, and the other near the capital, in a place called Pavia Mandarron. The Bishop of Lipa in the province of Batangas, south of Manila, offered a school in Bauan, and the care of a minor seminary in the seat of the archdiocese. While in the island of Cebu, the Salesians were offered to take care of a center for street children. A group of well-intentioned persons in fact were ready to construct a village for these boys and to entrust it to the Salesians. Finally, there was an unspecified offer in Manila<sup>47</sup>.

Although he had in his list only two offers to look at before he came to Manila, Fr. Braga received really seven offers, in six provinces located in four islands: four offers in the southern islands of the Philippines - Negros, Cebu, Iloilo; and three in the island of Luzon - Tarlac, Batangas and Manila. Six Bishops wanted the Salesians in their jurisdiction – Reyes of Manila, Guerrero of Pampanga, Santos of Batangas, Lladoc of Negros Occidental, Cuenco of Iloilo and Rosales of Cebu. The offers concerned various types of works: for orphans and for abandoned boys in Cebu City, a seminary in Lipa, schools in Tarlac town, Iloilo City, Pavia Mandarron and Victorias.

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<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*: “Quella di Pechino fu tutta opera nostra. Il terreno fu comperato dalla Congregazione; tutti fummo tassati e si pagò quello che si poté pur di veder realizzata la profezia di D. Bosco”.

<sup>45</sup> ASC D875 Verballi (7 giugno 1950): “Isole Filippine. Vien ammesso D. Carlo Braga, ispettore...”.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.* (17 giugno 1950): “Victorias, Isola Negro, Filippine. Si legge la convenzione con la Società Raffineria degli Zuccheri e se ne tratterà a suo tempo”.

<sup>47</sup> ASC F164 Filippine (Braga al Concilio Superiore, Torino [maggio 1950]).

### 3. Braga's Second Visit

#### 3.1. Archbishop Vagnozzi

Manila must have expected immediate results after that first visit of Fr. Braga, possibly revealing its enthusiasm and optimism for the Salesians. But this must be because Fr. Braga had given certain assurances during that first encounter. In fact, Archbishop Vagnozzi had believed that Fr. Braga would have lived up to his promise, that in that same year in time for the opening of the school, the Salesians shall already have been in the Philippines. But seemingly, the warm-hearted Fr. Braga had not kept his promise. For this, the Archbishop had written him on 30 September 1950, lamenting about the delay in the arrival of the Salesians. However, the good Apostolic Delegate was also quick to excuse Fr. Braga. He himself hypothesized that perhaps the delay was caused by the war in Korea<sup>48</sup> and the communist threat in the Philippines<sup>49</sup>, even if perhaps these did not affect directly the Philippines<sup>50</sup>.

Nonetheless, the Archbishop advocated the request for Salesians from Tarlac as definitely urgent. The two American priests, who were actual administrators and owners of the school, were now impatient in giving the school to the Salesians. They were at the brink of offering it to the Christian Brothers of De La Salle. They could not wait further in spite of the assurance of Fr. Braga, since they were already being recalled to the United States<sup>51</sup>. The Archbishop did not see any reason for the delay of the Salesians' coming; he saw things rather simply. The Salesians merely had to assume the direction of the school. The land, buildings and a big "auditorium" were ready. He advised Fr. Braga to act at once before the American Fathers changed their mind. He clearly did not hide his being partisan for the Salesians.

Furthermore, the Archbishop reminded Fr. Braga of the other requests, and probably of Fr. Braga's other promises. In Cebu, the committee for the "Boys Town" was already collecting funds for the boys' center, and had already publicly announced that the Salesians were coming to take care of the city's street children. In Lipa, Bishop Rufino Santos awaited the Salesians for the boys' school. But he declared that if they did not manifest their interest to his offer, then he was giving it to some other religious institute to run the school.

<sup>48</sup> Kenneth Scott LATOURETTE, *A Short History of the Far East*. New York, 1965, pp. 722-731.

<sup>49</sup> Cf Alfredo SAULO B., *Communism in the Philippines. An Introduction*. Quezon City, Ateneo de Manila University Press 1990.

<sup>50</sup> SAHK Philippine (Vagnozzi a Braga, Manila, 30 settembre 1950).

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*



Cebu, Tarlac and Lipa had followed up their requests. Archbishop Vagnozzi logically exhorted Fr. Braga to solicit the decisions of the General Council regarding these proposals and to inform him at once. He was practically acting as the unofficial “spokesman” of those who wanted the Salesians to run their offers. The interested parties recognized how “close” he was to the Salesians<sup>52</sup>.

Fr. Braga wrote Fr. Ricaldone on 16 December 1950, and spoke about the insistent desire of the Apostolic Delegate that the Salesians come urgently. However, he commented that the Archbishop did not have anything concrete at hand<sup>53</sup>. So that whatever he had done so far were mere negotiations on offers. The Archbishop had not probably been really concrete enough so as to merit immediate action by the Salesians. There were no contracts yet of which the Salesians were aware of. Perhaps, Fr. Braga was only keeping in mind the pieces of advice he received from Archbishop Piani. But certainly, Fr. Braga had indeed made certain promises to Archbishop Vagnozzi which he had not complied as yet; thus, the rather decided reaction of the Manila Apostolic Delegate.

In a Pro Memoria written in 1950, Fr. Braga stated a reason why the coming of the Salesians to the Philippines could not yet be concretized. This was with regards the offer from Victorias, with whom the negotiations were on a standstill in as much as the principal negotiator and owner of Victorias Milling Company, Mr. Miguel Ossorio, was still in the United States and had not returned yet<sup>54</sup>. Nonetheless, Fr. Braga was very much interested with this offer, so that he hoped to go back to the Philippines sometime in January of the coming year to meet the owner and “to finalize the agreements”<sup>55</sup>. He never mentioned, however, that of Tarlac to which he had shown a sudden interest after the delay for Victorias.

### 3.2. *Second Visit*

From Turin, on 11 January 1951, the then Prefect General, Fr. Renato Ziggotti (1892-1965)<sup>56</sup>, wrote to Fr. Braga. He asked him to visit the Philippines

<sup>52</sup> SAHK Filippine (Vagnozzi a Braga, Manila, 30 settembre 1950).

<sup>53</sup> SAHK Filippine (Braga a Ricaldone, Hong Kong, 16 dicembre 1950): “Anche S.E., il Delegato Apostolico insiste per la nostra andata, ma di pratico non ci dà nulla in mano”.

<sup>54</sup> “Il ritardo venne causato del viaggio in America del Sig. Enrico Ossorio e del prolungato soggiorno oltre al previsto. Le includo la risposta alle nostre proposte e mi pare che sia accettabile quanto essi offrono”. Cf. SAHK Filippine (Braga, Pro Memoria).

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>56</sup> But why is it that Fr. Ziggotti and not Fr. Ricaldone had written Fr. Braga this time? Possibly, it was because of the actual situation in Turin. That is, the Rector Major was now seriously sick such that the ordinary affairs of the Salesian Society were now taken cared of by the Vicar, who in this case was Fr. Ziggotti.

once more and to do a quick “inspection” of the offers, for him “to force those cooperators and admirers of the Salesians” to really offer something concrete and, if ever, give the Salesians a free hand in what they offered<sup>57</sup>.

Fr. Ziggiotti reminded Fr. Braga that he should concentrate his efforts on “a good proposal” and not on projects which were difficult to realize, and possibly to save the Superiors from embarrassment. Turin never made promises to anyone in the Philippines; Fr. Braga did! Furthermore, he told Braga that there were very few personnel available to send to the Philippines, just in case certain deals pushed through. He cited an example: Spain had many clerics from which recruits could be obtained, but it had few elder confreres to share. Thus, Fr. Braga should not pretend to accept so many offers all at the same time. According to him, Fr. Braga should “make fire with the little wood that we have” in Manila<sup>58</sup>.

The Provincial of China once more left Hong Kong for the Philippines on 19 February 1951 for his “second official visit”. A week earlier, in fact, Fr. Benato had written to the Apostolic Delegate in Manila to inform him of Fr. Braga’s coming<sup>59</sup>. True to his word and acting on the advice of Fr. Ziggiotti, he proceeded immediately to Victorias where the proposal was concrete and where he had been received earlier by the Bishop of Bacolod. But when he arrived in Manila, Fr. Braga asked Archbishop Vagnozzi if the latter could present and show him some other proposals so that he might make the most of his stay in the Philippines<sup>60</sup>. Somehow, he was clearly violating what Fr. Ziggiotti had told him.

Fr. Braga acknowledged a letter of Fr. Benato on 28 February 1951 and updated him on his current visit to the Philippines. He noted to him that there were better “dispositions” in comparison with the previous visit he made. In Victorias, he claimed that the Ossorios were ready to start the construction of the school that they proposed. In fact, he intended to return to Victorias that coming 3 March, and thus would be out of Manila for a couple of weeks. Victorias must be that “una buona proposta” which Fr. Ziggiotti had advised to watch out. And with regards Tarlac, he informed Fr. Benato that he intended to give “to the Bishop”<sup>61</sup> of the Diocese in which Tarlac was situated, pictures of Mary Help of Christians<sup>62</sup>.

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<sup>57</sup> ASC F157 Cina: Corrispondenza (Ziggiotti a Braga, Torino, 11 gennaio 1951).

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>59</sup> SAHK Filippine (Benato a Vagnozzi, Hong Kong, 12 febbraio 1951).

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>61</sup> The Bishop of Tarlac was Cesar Guerrero, known to be a devotee of Don Bosco’s Madonna. He was formerly Auxiliary of Manila before his assignment to Tarlac. It was in Manila that he got to know Archbishop William Piani who was Apostolic Delegate, and through the kind prelate, the devotion to Mary Help of Christians.

<sup>62</sup> SAHK Filippine (Braga a Benato, Manila, 28 febbraio 1951).

By 13 March, Fr. Braga wrote Fr. Benato once more from his temporary residence in Manila with the St. Paul Fathers. This time, though, he was preparing his return to Hong Kong by 19 March. He would have wanted to come back earlier. But the Archbishop wanted him to meet a certain Fr. Brothieur<sup>63</sup> of the Scheut Fathers. The latter had an offer to the Salesians, which Archbishop Vagnozzi wanted Fr. Braga to give a look<sup>64</sup>.

### *3.3. Braga's Response to Archbishop Vagnozzi*

What transpired in the second visit of Fr. Braga to Manila?

Almost a month after Fr. Braga's second visit to Manila, the Apostolic Nuncio of Manila wrote him on 24 April 1951 and informed him once more of the Tarlac offer. He believed that the Salesians should immediately accept the offer. He did not see any reason why they should not. For him, the "issue is mature and virtually concluded". He did not believe the Superiors in Turin needed to have all things decided before they should approve the Tarlac offer. Once, when he stopped in Tarlac on his way to Baguio City, the director of the school had shown him a contract between Bishop Cesar Guerrero and the Salesian Society in case the school was transferred to the Salesians. And he, as Apostolic Delegate, had already expressed his approval of the contract to the Bishop of San Fernando<sup>65</sup>. For this, he just could not understand why the Salesians should not come at once.

Besides, Archbishop Vagnozzi believed that there was little time left for them to conclude the negotiations. If they waited further, they definitely risked to lose the occasion of having the school. The American chaplains were already on the point of giving their school to another religious order, which was also very interested with the offer made to the Salesians. The American priests felt that the Salesians were not really interested because they delayed their coming. And this attitude embarrassed the chaplains and the Archbishop as well. School was about to begin that July 1951, and it was not clear whether the Salesians would take over. It was already April<sup>66</sup>.

Worse, Archbishop Vagnozzi expressed his actual sentiments: he no longer felt interested with the offers to the Salesians and he did not feel advocating

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<sup>63</sup> This was supposed to be on behalf of Bishop Brasseur (CICM), Apostolic Vicar of the Mountain Province. The latter in fact had proposed a school in his jurisdiction for the Salesians to take over.

<sup>64</sup> SAHK Filippine (Braga a Benato, Manila, 13 marzo 1951).

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.* (Vagnozzi a Braga, Manila, 24 aprile 1951).

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*

other proposals to the Salesians. In fact, he had a letter ready to be mailed to the Superiors of Turin expressing his personal and sincere displeasure. He only hoped that Fr. Braga, whom he considered so “generous in dispositions”, would do something to prevent him from sending this letter<sup>67</sup>.

Fr. Braga quickly responded to the “complaining Archbishop”. On 1 May 1951, he congratulated the Archbishop for the elevation of the Apostolic Delegation in Manila into a Nunciature<sup>68</sup>. After, he tried to give reasons for the seeming delay, if only to save the situation for the Superiors and for himself as well. He was the one who dared the assurances and who made the promises, in his sincere belief that Turin would believe him and act at once<sup>69</sup>.

Fr. Braga informed the Archbishop that he had immediately written to Turin as soon as he had received his letter regarding the Tarlac project. He told him that he had assured the Superiors that the conditions for the take over were favorable, that they should not waste time in giving their approval.

“Philippine Islands. In a second part, Fr. Braga speaks of the visit he made in some parts of the Philippines Islands by order of the Superiors. He enumerates the various proposals which were made to him for Salesian foundations. He suggests that a confrere be sent to the place to study the projects and to refer to the Rector Major. The Rector Major believes that it may be the moment of Providence to extend our apostolate to the Philippine Islands, and more now when the situation of our confreres in China is preoccupying”<sup>70</sup>.

Moreover, he had even dared suggest to them the kind of confrere whom they should send: one who spoke English, possibly an American, and capable of administering a school. He even gave as reason for the delay for the arrival of the approval of Turin on the “bad weather that was raging!”<sup>71</sup>.

Nonetheless, Fr. Braga suggested that the new Apostolic Nuncio should send him and Turin a copy of the contract that he spoke about. Meanwhile, the Archbishop had lectured Fr. Braga that contracts matured “in time”, as the project developed and grew; that they were rarely immediately perfect<sup>72</sup>. For this, Fr. Braga had insisted to the Superiors that they could already approve the

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>68</sup> In 1951, the Apostolic Delegation in Manila was elevated into an Apostolic Nunciature. The first Apostolic Nuncio to the Philippines was no less than Archbishop Egidio Vagnozzi.

<sup>69</sup> SAHK Filippine (Braga a Vagnozzi, Hong Kong, 1 maggio 1951).

<sup>70</sup> ASC D875 Verbali (20 aprile 1951): “... Il Rettor Maggiore crede che questo sia il momento della Provvidenza per estendere il nostro apostolato alle Isole Filippine e tanto più quando occorre preoccuparci della sorte dei nostri confratelli della Cina”.

<sup>71</sup> SAHK Filippine (Braga a Vagnozzi, Hong Kong, 1 maggio 1951).

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.* (Vagnozzi a Braga, Manila, 24 aprile 1951).

offers; the contracts could be finalized and concluded later in the Philippines<sup>73</sup>. He had a final comment to the new Apostolic Nuncio. The Rector Major indeed favored the Tarlac offer; but he was prudent on this in as much as economic means were lacking. Perhaps, the Archbishop could write to the Rector Major and assure him financially of this project<sup>74</sup>.

Archbishop Vagnozzi's answer on 17 May 1951 to Fr. Braga was astonishing. Probably enthused with the recent assurances he received from the Provincial of China, he wrote that he expected the Salesians to begin in Cebu too. So that instead of showing disinterest with the Salesians, he even reminded Fr. Braga about the offer of the Archbishop of Cebu<sup>75</sup>, who was also threatening to offer the work to another religious order, if the Salesians did not act at once. Besides, he had indeed written to Turin, asking the Rector Major to decide on Tarlac and to send confreres<sup>76</sup>.

The Archbishop stated that Turin should not insist in first having the contract before the Salesians came. For this would give a work of apostolate a taste of "business". The contract could always be finalized when the Salesians arrived. Besides, he had personally assured the bishops concerned that the Salesians were coming. If they did not, they risked making an "ugly figure"<sup>77</sup>. This was obviously quite different from the position of Turin, which insisted on having clear agreements before they approved. The experience of 1912 was supposed to be a reminder to them. In a moment of emotion, Archbishop Vagnozzi confided to Fr. Braga that Turin was indeed too slow in answering. Although Fr. Braga was doing his best, it was Turin who seemed to be the disinterested one<sup>78</sup>.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.* (Braga a Vagnozzi, Hong Kong, 1 maggio 1951). Cf ASC D875 Verballi (30 maggio 1951): "Tarlac, Isole Filippine. Si esamina dal Vescovo Msgr. Guerrero Cesare di S. Fernando, Isole Fil.... La si trova accettabile. Si autorizza l'Ispettore di firmarla, proporre il direttore, provvedere all'erezione canonica".

<sup>74</sup> SAHK Filippine (Braga a Vagnozzi, Hong Kong, 1 maggio 1951).

<sup>75</sup> ASC D875 Verballi (30 maggio 1951): "Cebu, Isole Filippine. Si concede che l'Isp. mandi qualcuno per iniziare trattative col Vescovo Msgr. Giulio Rosales, che c'invita ad aprire un'opera salesiana. Tanto per Tarlac come per Cebu si provvederà con personale proveniente dalla Cina e obbligato a partire".

<sup>76</sup> SAHK Filippine (Vagnozzi a Braga, Manila, 17 maggio 1951). Judging from the date of this letter to that of Fr. Braga's 1 May, it took about two weeks for a letter to arrive from Hong Kong to Manila and vice-versa. Surprisingly, the Archbishop added a new proposal, which should be given immediate attention by the Superiors of Turin. He referred to the proposal of Cebu. The reason was that a piece of land that belonged to the government had been given to the Archbishop of Cebu. This was being given for a period of 10 years, with a nominal payment of Php1.00 yearly. Cf *ibid.*

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*

#### 4. Second Braga Report

Even before Archbishop Vagnozzi complained to Fr. Braga about the hesitation of the Salesians to accept the offers to them in the Philippines, Fr. Braga had already, in fact, acted on what he had negotiated in his second visit. He had written to the Prefect General, Fr. Ziggotti, on 17 March 1951, informing him that several offers have been concretized, the details of which he would write and send to the Superior later. For this, he told him that there would be the urgent need of personnel, understood obviously that Turin was in accord with the result of this negotiations he had made<sup>79</sup>.

By 29 March 1951, Fr. Braga had sent a report to Turin<sup>80</sup>. The report and the seeming audacity of its contents were something that the Superior never expected. Probably, the “moves” of the veteran Provincial of the China Province were very fast<sup>81</sup>. And the enthusiasm of the report was supposed to provoke in the Superiors the same reaction<sup>82</sup>. What were the contents of his report that was supposed to enthuse the Superiors of Turin and thus stimulate them to act soon on the offers that the Salesians have received from Manila?

##### 4.1. *Why the Salesians Should Come*

Fr. Braga was convinced that the news he was to relate to the Rector Major would give fresh spirit to the rather suffocating atmosphere and discouraging situation of the Salesians in the China Province. The Salesian Society, in anguish for the Chinese persecution, could somehow be relieved of the good news that the Philippines could bring to it<sup>83</sup>.

In principle, Fr. Braga favored the idea that the Salesians should come to the Philippines. In the whole of the Archipelago, no work similar to what could be done by the Salesians, existed. Hence, they ought not to hesitate in

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<sup>79</sup> ASC F158 Cina: Corrispodenza (Braga a Ziggotti, Hong Kong, 17 marzo 1951). Fr. Braga sent this letter through a nun of the Daughters of St. Paul who was leaving for Italy. He did not miss the chance to write a quick note to the Superiors in Turin.

<sup>80</sup> ASC F158 Cina: Corrispondenza (Braga a Ricaldone, Hong Kong, 29 marzo 1951).

<sup>81</sup> Fr. Carlo Braga was already ending the fourth year of his term as Provincial; but it was also his fourth time as Provincial. He became Superior of the Salesian Province of China for the first time in 1930. For this, he was supposed to finish his mandate sometime in 1952. But this would not exactly happen. For he would be later sent to the Philippines as Delegate and later as *Visitatore* (Vice-Provincial and Superior of the Philippine Visitatoria).

<sup>82</sup> ASC F158 Cina: Corrispondenza (Braga a Ricaldone, Hong Kong, 29 marzo 1951).

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*

establishing themselves in the Archipelago. And this would surely be appreciated by the Filipinos, both ecclesiastical and civil. He could not be more sincere and optimistic.

“The Philippines opens its doors to us, and it will be good to channel our energies towards her”<sup>84</sup>.

Furthermore, the China Provincial saw the possibility of recruiting vocations from the Filipinos. In his observation, the Filipinos, treated with the Preventive System, would bear the fruit that the Congregation wanted so much: Salesians. And these vocations would be good ones, for they will be very involved and combative. Besides, it would be easy to entice the Filipinos to join them. They loved to be treated as equals, without distinction of color or nationality. They have been impressed by the fact that the Salesians came from different countries; it proved that they did not come for any nationalistic motive. After the past experience with the Spaniards and that with the United States, the Filipinos could not but be sensitive to this issue. The fact was that there were currently strong tendencies towards the nationalization of all aspects of Filipino society. This was seen in the new policies being adopted regarding the school system. Anything that went against this tendency would certainly be frowned at<sup>85</sup>.

Because of the worsening situation in China, and the future there being not sure, it was necessary that the Salesians prepare an alternative venue where they could release their apostolic energy. Fr. Braga had written:

“It is necessary to immediately have an outlet”<sup>86</sup>.

He had even outlined two possibilities for those confreres who risked expulsion from China, especially those of Chinese nationality. They could either go to Japan; but it would be difficult to negotiate such transfer in the event of war. Or they could go to Borneo, where the Apostolic Inter-Nuncio of Indonesia, Msgr. Giorgio de Jonghe d'Ardoye, had offered a foundation in the Archipelago. There, the presence of the Dutch and the benevolence of the local government towards the Chinese would facilitate the transfer of the Chinese confreres. For

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<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>85</sup> Although the Salesians who came to the Philippines were from different nationalities, especially European, the group that dominated was the Italian. Their number, plus the fact that the origin of the Congregation was Italian, could not but influence the manner by which they did their ministry and dealt with the people. This could also be seen in the early formation that they gave to the local vocations.

<sup>86</sup> ASC F158 Cina: Corrispondenza (Braga a Ricaldone, Hong Kong, 29 marzo 1951).

the other Salesians who were not Chinese, however, who might be expelled from China, the Philippines could just be the new venue of their rejected apostolicity<sup>87</sup>.

Furthermore, Fr. Braga considered his visit to the Philippines as timely and providential. The Bishops of the Philippines<sup>88</sup>, in their meeting of December 1950, had decided to establish in every diocese a vocational or an agricultural school, in a statement, which they issued on 31 January 1950, the feast of St. John Bosco! Now, the Salesians might as well fill up this requirement. And related to this, a precarious situation in the Philippines seemed to favor the coming of the Salesians. About 50,000 graduates of the country did not find work easily in spite of their specialized preparation. There was a conspicuous absence of workers capable of answering the growing industrialization. Moreover, the Chinese controlled and took advantage of the working class<sup>89</sup>. If the Salesians come, then they could provide the needed technical schools and could prepare the specialized work force, who could be on their own, and would not need to be under the economic control of the Chinese.

For Fr. Braga, the Salesian system of education could give a novel contribution and impetus to the actual system of education in the Philippines, which he thought to be out-dated, both in method and content. Besides, there would not be any financial difficulty, most especially if the Salesians worked in schools, with which he sincerely believed that the Salesians could easily maintain themselves. For the profit from the school fees which could be easily obtained from the income in the schools would help finance the schools

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<sup>87</sup> Later on, during the first years of the Provincialate of Fr. Alfredo Cogliandro, the Salesians would again be asked to work in Indonesia. The Salesians would go to Indonesia only later, when the Philippines would be “forced” to take over East Timor upon the withdrawal of the Portuguese Salesians from the contested island.

<sup>88</sup> Cf Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines, *Statement of the Philippine Hierarchy on Vocational Education (31 January 1950)*, in Pedro C. QUITORIO III (ed.), *Pastoral Letters (1945-1995)*. Manila 1996, pp. 65-66: “A serious regard for the needs of the country as well as a sane spirit of patriotism demands that vocational training be given stress in the educational system... There is a need of good Christian educated men and women to take their places in society as workers and trained artisans... There is a greater need of respect for these occupations in the spirit and example of the Carpenter of Nazareth and the Fisherman of Galilee. The dignity of labor and the dignity of the laborer must be given real meaning”. The so-called Conference of Bishops in the Philippines (=CBCP) was constituted in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, the actual bishops, in real numerical increase since the beginning of the 1900s, met twice a year in order to discuss problems related to the Philippine Church.

<sup>89</sup> ASC F158 Cina (Report of Fr. Braga on his visit to China and the Philippines, March-April 1951). The Chinese, according to Fr. Braga, controlled the area of the working class: the saw mill and lumber, the communications; and these were now threatening to monopolize the retail shops and the wholesale stores, practically the business and the trade.



themselves, as well as the other actual and other future activities, of the Salesians<sup>90</sup>.

#### 4.2. Where the Salesians Could Work

Fr. Braga had his hands full when he came to Manila the second time around. After the experience of the first visit, he knew where to go, what questions to ask, with whom to speak, and with whom to negotiate, and how to negotiate<sup>91</sup>.

In his report to Turin, Fr. Braga said that he had visited five places where there were proposals for foundation: Tarlac, Manila, Lipa, Victorias and Cebu. He did not realize, however, that he actually had been in seven places. For in his report, he also mentioned having been in Pototan and Jaro in Iloilo and Baguio City in the Benguet Province<sup>92</sup>.

Fr. Braga visited St. John Bosco Academy in Tarlac<sup>93</sup> and met Bishop Cesar Guerrero together with his diocesan economist. Besides taking over the school in Tarlac, Bishop Guerrero wanted the Salesians for two other things: first, to run another school in Pampanga, province south of Tarlac, and teach catechism to the young, probably in reference to the Salesian Oratory; second, to help in the animation of his new diocese as confessors to the priests and the religious sisters. He hoped, too, that they would give conferences to the priests of his diocese for their spiritual enrichment<sup>94</sup>.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.* Cf also Agenzia Missionaria Salesiana (=AMS) (29 febbraio 1952) 11: "Nelle Isole Filippine non esistono ancora opere come quelle salesiane. Questo spiega il campo vasto che viene ai medesimi offerto. Si ha pure grande fiducia di potere reclutare personale salesiano per lo sviluppo delle opere, fra i filippini...."

<sup>91</sup> ASC D875 Verbali (20 aprile 1951): "Le Isole Filippine. In una seconda parte d. Braga parla della visita da lui fatta ad alcuni punti delle Isole Filippine, per mandato dei Superiori. Enumera le varie proposte che gli vennero fatte per fondazioni salesiane. Suggestisce che venga mandato nel posto un confratello a studiare i progetti e riferire al Rettore Maggiore".

<sup>92</sup> In Manila, Fr. Braga surely met the Archbishop of Manila Gabriel Reyes and the Apostolic Delegate Archbishop Egidio Vagnozzi; while in Cebu, he met Archbishop Rosales and the committee (Pio Valencia, Ismael Alvarez, Francis Lim) in charge of the offer of a Boys Town to the Salesians. In Baguio City in the Mountain Province, he must have met Bishop Brasseur, who was Apostolic Vicar for the Mountain Province. He went to the latter in as much as it was not far from Tarlac. And from this, probably, Fr. Braga had the idea of seeing to it that the Salesians should have a place for vacation sometime in the future. He was foreseeing; besides, he really did not want to be outdone by the other religious!

<sup>93</sup> The province of Tarlac was still a part of the Diocese of San Fernando, Pampanga, whose Bishop was Cesar Guerrero, when the Salesians first came. But soon, it was made a Diocese in 1963, with Bishop Cinense as its first bishop. Even this prelate was very kind and accommodating to the Salesians.

<sup>94</sup> ASC F158 Cina (Report of Fr. Braga on his visit to the Philippines, March-April 1951).

When he went back to Manila, Fr. Braga met this time Archbishop Gabriel Reyes. The latter first offered him a school located in Tayuman in the area of Tondo. However, he later changed his offer and proposed the idea that the Salesians take over the former archdiocesan seminary and a parish in a district of Manila called Mandaluyong. The old seminary was located in a parish dominated by a schismatic religious group called Aglipayans, a local religious sect inspired by the religious revolution of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century<sup>95</sup>. The Salesians could bring back the “old order”, that was, to regain those who have turned into Aglipayans. Regaining those who have strayed from the right faith was something Fr. Braga considered urgent for the Salesians to do in the Philippines if ever they come. Besides, working in the parish would give them a lot of possibility to do evangelization, in fact. While in Manila, he also met a certain Dr. Salvador Araneta (1902-1982) who wanted the Salesians to provide his university, which he recently opened, with teachers of religion<sup>96</sup>.

After Manila, Fr. Braga went to Lipa, in the province of Batangas. He met Bishop Rufino Santos (1953-1973) who offered him a high school and who hoped that it could be transformed into a technical school in the future. He then proceeded to Victorias in the island of Negros Occidental. The administrators of Vicmico showed him a school, which was already slowly rising, similar to that which these administrators saw in Hong Kong. As he saw the work, Fr. Braga realized too the possibility of doing social work among the workers of the sugar refinery<sup>97</sup>. After Negros, Fr. Braga went to Cebu, where a committee of civic-minded citizens proposed that the Salesians begin a work for indigent boys.

Several schools, a parish, confessions and conferences to diocesan priests and religious sisters, teachers of religion in a university, possible social work among workers, a center for indigent boys: here was a variety of possibilities

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<sup>95</sup> The Aglipayans belonged to a religious sect founded during the Philippine struggle against Spanish colonial rule. It had nationalistic tones in its teachings. It had a prodigious growth in the first ten years of its creation; but immediately after, its influence declined. When the Salesians came, the sect was practically stale and without life. Cf Mary Dorita CLIFFORD RVM, *Iglesia Filipina Independiente: The Revolutionary Church*, in Gerald ANDERSON (ed.), *Studies in Philippine Church History*. Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London 1969, pp. 223-255; Pedro S. de ACHUTEGUI SJ – Miguel BERNARD SJ, *Religious Revolution in the Philippines. The Life and Church of Gregorio Aglipay*. 4 vols., Ateneo de Manila, Quezon City 1961.

<sup>96</sup> ASC F158 Cina (Report of Fr. Braga on his visit to the Philippines, March-April 1951). Mr. Salvador Araneta (1902-1982) was an industrialist, educator and public servant, who asked the Salesians to teach in the school (the Gregorio Araneta University) that he founded. Cf *Filipinos in History*, vol. III. National Historical Institute, Manila 1992, pp. 22-23.

<sup>97</sup> ASC F158 Cina (Report of Fr. Braga on his visit to the Philippines, March-April 1951). The Chinese, according to Fr. Braga, controlled the area of the working class: the saw mill and the lumber, the communications; and these were now threatening to monopolize the shops and the stores.

where the Salesians were invited to work in the Philippines. Fr. Braga spoke of a vast area of work, perhaps too extensive in the beginning. But he was convinced that without the presence of the Salesians, the people in the Philippines would not be able to do much.

The Provincial of China regarded the offer of a parish right in Manila as something not to take for granted. He already had in mind of asking for a parish, in fact. For he realized that a parish would be a valid support for the future work. He knew that the Filipino Catholics were very generous, especially when they were given the convenience of receiving the sacraments. He had proof of this generosity of the people of Manila: he claimed to have seen in his previous visit how a big church was constructed within a year. And they were actually enlarging it further! Besides, the schools, according to him, would not only be able to maintain themselves; they would also be a source of help for the poorer works which the Salesians might adopt in the future.

Fr. Braga, who had sent the same report to the Prefect General, Fr. Renato Ziggioiti, for his own observations<sup>98</sup>, was apologetic at the end. At the same time, he was very assuring to the Superior. What he reported might not have been what the Superior was expecting. But he assured him that he had fulfilled his assignment: he had negotiated and discussed the offers. Things would be definite only after some time. For this, one should not be afraid of accepting offers, which might not be still totally concrete<sup>99</sup>. In front of all these offers, however, the question or questions of Fr. Braga must have been – which offer should he start with? How many offers should he begin with?

The veteran Provincial strongly endorsed the proposal of Vicmico and considered this as the priority project. His motives were curt: according to him, it was one most in need of the presence of the Salesians; at the same time, the conditions offered by those proposing that work were good. The owners of Vicmico would take care of the Salesians financially; they would undertake the construction and furnishings of the school buildings in which the Salesians would work. These generous concessions were in line with the desire of the owners of Vicmico, the Ossorios: they wanted a name and a work, which might preserve the population of the place, honest and religious<sup>100</sup>.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.* Fr. Ziggioiti had replaced as Prefect General Fr. Berrutti who recently had died. Even the Rector Major, Fr. Pietro Ricaldone was also at the same time not in the best of health.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*: “Amatissimo Padre, comprendo che le notizie sulle Filippine non sono forse quali si attendeva, ma posso assicurare che della strada se ne è fatta e che per concretare bisogna disporre di molto tempo”.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.* One should note two things though: (1) A recommendation of Archbishop Piani was to start first in Manila in order to establish a base; then the confreres could proceed to the provinces of the Archipelago. Victorias was in the islands, in the Visayas. (2) Moreover, the real work began in Tarlac. In Victorias, the coming of a Salesian was merely to supervise the construction; in Tarlac, the Salesians were immediately immersed and involved in the running of a school.

Fr. Braga reported to Turin, too, of the need of colleges and universities for qualified teachers who could give catholic education to their students. Thus, the request for Salesians who could teach religion in a private university should be considered seriously<sup>101</sup>. Furthermore, he also saw the need of a house, where the Salesians could go freely in order to rest. He foresaw that the confreres would need a place to recuperate their energies on account of the warm and humid climate in the islands. After having seen Baguio and the “rest houses” of the religious there, he dared to suggest to Turin that a rest house ought to be considered in the future for the Salesians, if only to assure the continuance of the Salesians and their work<sup>102</sup>.

Finally, in case that the Salesians decide to come to the Philippines, he proposed that the Salesian presences in the Archipelago ought to be as scattered as possible among the provinces. And this, for a very practical reason: that they might have “open camp” in order to ask for financial help and obtain mass intentions. Indeed, it was a realistic one and at the same time according to the spirit of the times – the masses were indeed sources of income<sup>103</sup>.

#### 4.3. Who Should Go to the Philippines

In his report to the Rector Major, Fr. Braga suggested that confreres should immediately be sent to Victorias and Tarlac, and possibly to Cebu. He insisted on the necessity of sending at least one Salesian to the Philippines at once. For he could not manage to stay long in the Philippines, nor did he have enough time to negotiate and so come up with the agreements that Turin asked with regards the different requests. The Salesian who would come could and should do this in fact<sup>104</sup>.

It was important that a Salesian or Salesians were present in Victorias. This was in order to supervise the already on-going construction and to make sure that this was adequate to the needs of the Congregation. Otherwise, with no one supervising the offers, what could remain for the Salesians would be “inadequate and unfit buildings”<sup>105</sup>. For Victorias, however, the real work was not yet to begin at once.

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<sup>101</sup> Fr. Braga saw how it was convenient to go teach in Araneta University located in Caloocan at the end of Highway 54 (now called Edsa Highway). The Salesians could stay in the house that would be founded in Manila (Mandaluyong), and from there go and teach.

<sup>102</sup> ASC F158 Cina (Report of Fr. Braga on his visit to the Philippines, March-April 1951).

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>104</sup> ASC F158 Cina: Corrispondenza (Braga a Ziggotti, Hong Kong, 12 aprile 1951).

<sup>105</sup> ASC F158 Cina (Report of Fr. Braga on his visit to China and the Philippines, March-April 1951).

Fr. Braga clearly suggested, instead, that they should start first with the school in Tarlac, by sending a priest confrere, preferably an American, and two clerics. They should be in the Philippines possibly by the month of June, during the opening of the new school year. Whoever they might be, they should feel honored that they were coming to help a Province, which had two authentic martyrs and four confreres killed in the field of apostolate. He would add:

“Blood has also its voice and its rights”<sup>106</sup>.

For this, his request should not be taken for granted by the Superiors; it was his Province’s right to be helped in such manner.

As he hesitated in sending to Manila confreres of Chinese descent, for fear that their possible presence would add to the Chinese sponsored communist movement in the country, there was one confrere whom Fr. Braga had in mind to send to the Philippines: Fr. Guido D’Amore<sup>107</sup>, one of his trusted men of the Province<sup>108</sup>. He considered this confrere as “one very sharp in business” and sympathetic, a religious, both serious and observant, and one who had this special gift: “to say things clearly without offending”. According to him, Fr. D’Amore was tenacious in defending the interests of the Congregation<sup>109</sup>. But did this particular confrere live up to the expectations of Fr. Braga for him<sup>110</sup>?

<sup>106</sup> ASC F158 Cina: Corrispondenza (Braga a Ziggotti, Hong Kong, 12 aprile 1951).

<sup>107</sup> SAS 34B530 Fr. Guido D’Amore: born in Avellino, Italy (16 July 1917); first profession at Portici-Bellavista, Naples (31 August 1933); perpetual profession in Shanghai, China (22 August 1940); ordained priest in Shanghai, China (29 January 1943). He later left the Congregation, having received dispensation on 7 February 1965.

<sup>108</sup> ASC F158 Cina (Report of Fr. Braga on his visit to China and the Philippines, March-April 1951). Fr. Braga considered Fr. Guido D’Amore as one “che negli affari è sagace e di buono spirito ... pio, osservante, attaccato alla Congregazione, costante nelle sue imprese”. Cf *ibid.*

<sup>109</sup> ASC F158 Cina: Corrispondenza (Braga a Ziggotti, Hong Kong, 12 aprile 1951). The Hong Kong Provincial Council thought of sending Fr. D’Amore to the Philippines to assist in the construction of the technical school in Victorias, due to the insistence of the Ossorios. For this and for the rest of the personnel, instructions were awaited from Turin. Cf SAHK Verbali (Hong Kong, 27 aprile 1951).

<sup>110</sup> Reactions that I gathered concerning Fr. Guido D’Amore somehow showed that, in spite of his good will, it would not be his destiny to complete the work which was then expected of him by his superiors. In his short stay in the Philippines, he was described as one who thought of “big things”, a sort of megalomaniac. Cf Interview with Fr. Anthony Di Falco, (Mercy Hospital) Oakland, California, 16 May 2002. The way the school in Victorias would attest to this. He came to Turin to buy machines for the shops of Don Bosco Victorias, with cash at hand (\$200,000), to the amazement of the Salesian Brother with whom he negotiated the machines. It was a buying spree, to the impression that he did not really know what he wanted to buy. Cf Interview with Salesian Brother Mario Rosso of Opera Salesiana Rebaudengo (Turin), at the Salesian Retreat House of Muzzano, Biella in May 2001. This was confirmed by Fr. Timoteo Munari in a recent encounter (6 February 2006) in Valdocco, Turin.

Later, on 22 December 1953, Fr. Acquistapace wrote to Fr. Cogliandro asking him to accept Fr. D'Amore into his U.S.A. West Province and to remain there for some time, until he had acquired U.S. citizenship. This was in order to facilitate the operations for the possession and registration of lands donated to the Salesians in the Philippines<sup>111</sup>. By February 1954, the confrere was being readied to take the place of Fr. Di Falco in the U.S.A., whose Provincial, Fr. Cogliandro, insisted that he return to his original Province. Fr. D'Amore would try to take advantage of obtaining the U.S. citizenship while he was there<sup>112</sup>. But after he left for U.S.A., he never returned to the Philippines; Fr. Braga's "predilected" eventually left the Salesian Society sometime in 1965.

#### 4.4. English Speaking Confreres

For Fr. Braga, it was also necessary to send personnel who could speak English, two for each house, one of every pair being a priest. The Salesians should enter the Philippines with people who could give the Salesian Society honor. He had never insisted on personnel of such caliber. But he considered a *conditio sine qua non* to have confreres "who are able to impose themselves and are able to do fully their work as teachers"<sup>113</sup>. English was the medium of instruction in the Archipelago. Other congregations had prestigious schools on account of their capability to speak English. The Salesians should not be inferior to them because its personnel were unable to communicate in English; they should be capable of this language, even if externally. For according to him, the Filipino was one to whom "the form has more value than the substance"<sup>114</sup>.

The English-speaking personnel would have to come from abroad for the moment and not from China where there were very few who spoke the language sufficiently in order to be teachers. And this particular confrere should already be in the Philippines by the middle of June in time for the opening of the school year<sup>115</sup>.

In another letter to the Rector Major written on 18 April 1951, Fr. Braga again expressed this same recommendation, which he considered important

<sup>111</sup> SAHK Correspondence (Acquistapace a Cogliandro, Mandaluyong, 22 dicembre 1953). Sec. 317 of the rule for the acquisition of a U.S. citizenship declared that it was enough for a priest to stay in the U.S.A. for one year as missionary, so that he could acquire the citizenship by naturalization. Cf *ibid.* (Acquistapace a Cogliandro, Hong Kong, 1 marzo 1954).

<sup>112</sup> SAHK Verballi (Hong Kong, 10 febbraio 1954).

<sup>113</sup> ASC F158 Cina: Corrispondenza (Braga a Ziggiotti, Hong Kong, 12 aprile 1951).

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*: "la forma vale più della sostanza".

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*

and crucial in order to begin well the work in the Philippines. It was one sure way if the Salesians were to render honor to the Congregation. He could not deprive China of confreres who might be capable of speaking English. Turin had to take care of this, to insure that the Salesians who came to the Philippines might not be outdone by the other religious. He had never asked any specifically qualified personnel from Turin. But he was now doing it for the first time, if only to begin well the work in the Philippines. He declared to the Superior in Turin:

“We cannot present ourselves inferior [to the other religious] for the impossibility of speaking English”<sup>116</sup>.

However, if there was another thing that he asked from Turin regarding the personnel who should come to the Philippines, it was that they should also be able to speak the languages in use in the country. To speak English was indispensable. To be able to speak Spanish was good as a means of making propaganda for the work and the ministry. There were still people in the Philippines, usually coming from educated and higher class, who continue to speak Spanish. But all should learn the local language, in whatever island they worked, “in order to penetrate the soul of the young and the people”, even if this would make sometimes difficult the transfer of personnel. For this would mean learning the language, after having been assigned in another island or province<sup>117</sup>. Such language problem, however, according to Fr. Braga, did not exist in Japan<sup>118</sup>.

The Salesians might encounter some difficulty when they would come to enter the Philippines as residents. It normally took almost two months in order to obtain a visa to enter the Archipelago. However, citizens of Spain and the United States did not need any visa. Moreover, there was an annual quota, which was not easy to exceed, for the other foreigners who wish to enter the Philippines and reside therein. Thus, the personnel could not be all Italian nationals who were still the more numerous of the Salesians at work in China<sup>119</sup>.

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<sup>116</sup>ASC F158 Cina: Corrispondenza (Braga a Ricaldone, Hong Kong, 18 aprile 1951).

<sup>117</sup> For the difficulty of learning the different languages in the Philippine Archipelago, the missionaries were distributed into areas, with a minimum transfer of personnel from one region to the other. This was a so-called geo-ethnic distribution of the Religious Orders in the early part of Philippine Church History. Cf John Leddy PHELAN, *The Hispanization of the Philippines. Spanish Aims and Filipino Responses (1565-1700)*. Madison 1959, pp. 41-53.

<sup>118</sup> ASC F158 Cina (Report of Fr. Braga on his visit to China and the Philippines, March-April 1951).

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*

Finally, Fr. Braga thought of a criterion, in which Turin definitely concurred, as a guide to which proposal could be accepted. The offer should be financially viable, meaning, that the Salesians should be taken care of financially, at least in the beginning. They needed help and must be helped in the construction of the schools offered, at least for the first three years from the day of their coming. This condition must be repeatedly explained to the contracting partners. Why so? Because the people in the Philippines thought that the schools of the religious were made in order to generate income and help those who were in the missions. Fr. Braga was sure that it would not be so for the Salesians, at least in the beginning. Their works were new; for this, they must be helped. Even if people in the Philippines, who must have known and possibly have seen their huge schools in Hong Kong and Macao, and thus must have thought that the Salesians were rich, did not understand<sup>120</sup>.

### 5. Ziggiotti's Answer to Fr. Braga

In April 1951, there were eight offers. In July of that same year, the first Salesians went to the Philippines, first to Tarlac, then to the other offers approved by Turin. It was clear to both Turin and Hong Kong, that there was so much to begin with and to achieve in the Philippines.

“Works similar to those of the Salesians still did not exist. This explains the vast field offered to them. They are also confident that they will be able to recruit vocations among the Filipinos for the development of the works. They like to be treated as equal, without distinction of color or nationality”<sup>121</sup>.

Fr. Ziggiotti's answer to Fr. Braga's report of 29 March 1951 came after a meeting of the General Council of 30 May 1951. The proposal for Tarlac was approved. The Council was not only of complete agreement with the convention made for this offer; it was also very pleased! Consequently, Fr. Braga could now proceed to do two things: sign the agreement and send his suggestion on who could be the new superior of the house, plus the confreres who could work with the new superior<sup>122</sup>. Thus, Tarlac was the first of the works officially approved by Turin.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.* Corrispondenza (Braga a Ziggiotti, Hong Kong, 12 aprile 1951).

<sup>121</sup> AMS (Febbraio 1952) 11: “... non esistono ancora opere come quelle salesiane. Questo spiega il campo vasto che viene ai medesimi offerto. Si ha pure grande fiducia di poter reclutare personale salesiano per lo sviluppo delle opere, fra i filippini, poiché essi amano di essere tratti alla pari senza distinzione di colore e nazionalità”.

<sup>122</sup> ASC F158 Cina: Corrispondenza (Ziggiotti a Braga, Torino 30 maggio 1951).



However, the Superiors had words of caution for Fr. Braga. He should not pretend to obtain so easily an English-speaking confrere who could be superior for Tarlac. On the contrary, he should be satisfied with anyone, American or English, but whose qualities and qualifications might not be to his expectation. This would depend on the Divine Providence and good will of the Provincial to whom the Rector Major would write and who would respond to such a request<sup>123</sup>. But at least, they were taking his recommendation seriously.

The other possible Salesian work considered by the Superiors was the offer from Cebu. The Superiors informed Fr Braga that he could already think of who among the confreres to send for the future boys' center. Moreover, he was being authorized to negotiate with the formulation of a possible contract or agreement and inform Turin when this would be final. These concessions, however, were made somehow to make the Archbishop happy<sup>124</sup>.

Fr. Braga was obviously pleased with the response from Fr. Zigiotti in the name of the Rector Major. He was now assured of at least two points: that the foundations of Tarlac and Cebu were approved, and that he could now work on whom to send to these future presences. But one thing still remained in suspense: would there be that much needed English-speaking confrere to be superior for Tarlac? Divine Providence and the benevolence of the Provincials of the East and West U.S.A. Provinces would temporarily supply this need. Fr. Anthony Di Falco and Fr. John Rutkowski, two American Salesians would be the first to arrive to start the work in Tarlac. Fr. Braga had previously asked for at least one English-speaking Salesian; instead, he got two!

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<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.* But which Archbishop? The Apostolic Nuncio or the Archbishop of Cebu? Probably, it was to placate Archbishop Vagnozzi and to assure him that they were grateful to what he had been doing for them.



### Chapter Three

## FIRST FOUNDATIONS (1951-1953)

The first Salesian works in the Philippines were schools. Two of these were technical, started by the Salesians themselves; the third was already existing as an academy. The first was offered by an American priest who wanted the Salesians to continue the school which bore the Salesian founder's name, St. John Bosco Academy. The second was donated by a God-fearing gentleman who wanted to live the social teachings of the church. The third was granted by the Archbishop of Manila who left to the Salesians to impose the kind of school and education they were known for.

### 1. Saint John Bosco Academy, Tarlac

The founder himself of the St. John Bosco Academy in Tarlac wrote a brief history of the school that he founded. In this document, found in the Salesian Central Archives in Rome, he gave an outline of how the school began before it was consigned to the Salesians. The brief history, typewritten in two pages, showed how this particular work of the Salesians was "made by America".

#### 1.1. *Origins of St. John Bosco Academy*

The founder of the St. John Bosco Academy in Tarlac was the Archbishop of Manila, Michael O'Doherty<sup>1</sup>. Tarlac province was then still part of the Archdiocese of Manila, which also included the province of Pampanga. As such, therefore, the school which the Salesians would later accept was originally under the jurisdiction of Manila's Archbishop. Later, however, it would be under the Archdiocese of San Fernando, Pampanga, whose first bishop was an auxiliary of the Manila Archdiocese<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> ASC F570 Philippine: Tarlac (A Brief History of St. John Bosco Academy, Tarlac, Tarlac) 1.

<sup>2</sup> The Diocese of Tarlac was created on 16 February 1963 and was erected on 10 May 1963. It comprises the province of Tarlac; it is a suffragan of the Archdiocese of San Fernando. Its first Bishop was Jesus J. Sison (ordained Bishop on 11 May 1963 and retired on 21 January 1988). The Diocese of Manila was established in 1578. It became an Archdiocese in 1595, with its division into the Dioceses of Nueva Segovia, Nueva Caceres and Cebu. The Diocese of San Fernando (Pampanga) was elevated into an Archdiocese on 17 March 1975 with suffragans the Dioceses of Balanga, Iba and Tarlac. Cf *The 2002 Catholic Directory of the Philippines*. Quezon City, Claretian Publications 2002, pp. 218, 253.

On 27 January 1948, Archbishop O'Doherty had written to Fr. James Wilson<sup>3</sup>, approving the construction of a new building in the new site of the school. Moreover, he had also endorsed the fund-raising campaign for this initiative<sup>4</sup>. Later, in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the school, he had permitted Fr. Wilson to keep the Blessed Sacrament in his "college for boys"; he had expressed his satisfaction that Fr. Wilson had managed to obtain an assistant. Furthermore, he hoped that Fr. Wilson would succeed as he negotiated with the Urquico Family for some property<sup>5</sup>. He had in fact advised him to make sure that all documents be drawn according to law, and that the property must be put in the name of the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Manila<sup>6</sup>. The Archbishop, who was Fr. Wilson's ordinary while in the Philippines, definitely was a constant reference with him. Both, in fact, were citizens of the U.S.A.

But St. John Bosco Academy owed much if not all its origins from Fr. Wilson, a former chaplain of the U.S. Army. He is in fact considered as the "Founder and Director (1<sup>st</sup>) of St. John Bosco Academy", being considered as "in sole charge" of the Academy. He had joined the U.S. Army as chaplain in 1945. In August of the same year, he came to the Philippines with the U.S. liberation forces. The next year, he was in Tarlac where he saw the need of a Catholic institution and boys' school there<sup>7</sup>. Moreover, he was hounded by the insistence of the Holy Ghost Sisters of Tarlac that he put up a school for boys. It was to the interest of the Sisters to have such a school, in as much as they did not have any school to place their male elementary graduates; they only enrolled girls in their high school. Mr. Perpetuo Samson, a pioneer of St. John Bosco Academy, wrote that as early as 1945, Fr. Wilson already felt the need of establishing a Catholic school for boys in Tarlac. For this, he sought for a site for his school<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> Fr. James Wilson was born in New York, U.S.A., on 4 March 1916. His parents were James Wilson and Margaret Murphy. He was ordained a priest in 1942 at the age of 26. He belonged to the Archdiocese of New York, whose Ordinary was Francis Cardinal Spellman. He studied at Cathedral College, New York, St. Joseph's Seminary, New York, Catholic University, Washington D.C., and Fordham University, New York, where he earned an M.A. Cf SAFIN Tarlac *The Silver Bosconian* (Souvenir Book – 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of St. John Bosco Academy 4 February 1973) 6.

<sup>4</sup> SAFIN Tarlac Correspondence (O'Doherty to Wilson, Manila, 27 January 1948).

<sup>5</sup> Fr. William Mahoney was also an ex-U.S. chaplain who had stayed for a while in the Philippines after his term of service and who had offered the request for help by Fr. James Wilson in the administration of St. John Bosco Academy in Tarlac sometime in 1948. He was working in one of the parishes in Tarlac when he decided to join Fr. Wilson.

<sup>6</sup> SAFIN Tarlac Correspondence (O'Doherty to Wilson, Manila, 1 July 1948).

<sup>7</sup> SAFIN Tarlac (Ad Lumen. Don Bosco Academy Yearbook [1952]) 2.

<sup>8</sup> "As early as 1945, Rev. Fr. James Wilson already felt a need to establish a Catholic School for boys in Tarlac. He was already scouting for a site for his dream school". Cf SAFIN Tarlac (*The Silver Bosconian*, 4 February 1973) 5.

At the end of his term of service in the Philippines, Fr. Wilson requested Francis Cardinal Spellman<sup>9</sup>, his Ordinary in the New York Archdiocese, to grant him a leave of absence for at least two years, so that he could still stay in the Philippines, specifically in Tarlac, to start a boys' school. In fact, sometime in 1947, the Cardinal positively answered him<sup>10</sup>.

Fr. Wilson rented the Oriente Hotel building along Tañedo St. of Tarlac town on 20 June 1947. Some days later, on 6 July 1947, classes began in his school, with 86 enrollees, of which 45 in 1<sup>st</sup> year, 22 in 2<sup>nd</sup> year, 15 in 3<sup>rd</sup> year, and four in 4<sup>th</sup> year. He sought the assistance of a fellow American chaplain who was also stationed in the Philippines, Fr. William Mahoney, who began to help him in 1948 in the school's administration. Nicknamed the "gentle giant" because of his extraordinary height, he took over from Fr. Wilson the spiritual direction of the school, the religion classes and the sports activities. On 22 July 1951, when the Salesians finally took over the school, he was already the Parish Priest of Ramos, Tarlac<sup>11</sup>.

## 1.2. "Traslado" of St. John Bosco Academy

After the school's first year experience, Fr. Wilson saw the inadequacy of the temporary location of the school which he foresaw would not contain its future enrollment. By January 1948, Archbishop O'Doherty had approved his request for the construction of new buildings in as much as he had found a new place where to transfer the school<sup>12</sup>.

The second home of St. John Bosco Academy in Tarlac was not far from where it started. It was in Barrio Santo Cristo, with an area of 17,784 square meters. A certain Servillano Aquino supposedly sold the land to Fr. Wilson for the amount of Php29,568<sup>13</sup>. Earlier, Benigno Aquino Sr., his father, had expressed his interest in having a school for boys in his province and had promised to sell the land if this would be used for such a school. Fr. Wilson did not have the sufficient money to pay; but he had his benefactors. The Archbishop

<sup>9</sup> Francis Joseph Spellman: born in Massachusetts, U.S.A. (4 May 1889). He was elected Archbishop of New York on 15 April 1939, and was made a Cardinal on 18 February 1946. He was a close friend of Cardinal Pacelli, who later became Pius XII. For some time, he worked in the Vatican Secretariate of State. Cf *American Encyclopedia*. vol. 25, New York, p. 385.

<sup>10</sup> SAFIN Tarlac (Ad Lumen. Don Bosco Academy Yearbook [1952]) 3.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> ASC F570 Philippine: Tarlac (A Brief History of St. John Bosco Academy, Tarlac, Tarlac).

<sup>13</sup> In present day calculation (December 2003, \$1 = Php56.00), it would be equivalent to \$528 (about Php1.66 per square meter). This was in 1948.

generously gave Php18,000, while he shared Php2,000. For the moment, the rest of the amount of Php9,568 was covered by a mortgage to Servillano Aquino himself<sup>14</sup>.

Later, Bishop Cesar Guerrero, however, providentially promised to cover the rest of the amount needed for the purchase of the land. He was then newly named Bishop of the new Bishopric of San Fernando, Pampanga which was detached from the Manila Archdiocese. He was not alien to the Salesians, in as much as he was Auxiliary to the Archbishop of Manila when Archbishop Piani was Apostolic Delegate to the Philippines. His contribution came a year later, making him a partner in the venture of St. John Bosco Academy and sort of an owner of the land where the school would be built<sup>15</sup>.

With the obtainment of the land, Fr. Wilson proceeded with the construction the necessary buildings, four army-type Quonset huts, to house the classrooms for a seven dozen students, a library, the administrative offices, the chapel and the priests' living quarters. By the time the Salesians had taken over the school, there were already five buildings that constituted the Academy, with the addition of a gymnasium. This, whose foundation was laid on 31 January 1949, was constructed in "bayanihan style". When it was completed the next year, it was said to be the biggest and the best in Central Luzon<sup>16</sup>.

In the course of the first three years that St. John Bosco Academy was in Barrio Santo Cristo, the buildings therein had been valued at Php150,000 and had been constructed through the contributions of both people from the United States of America and the Philippines. It was speculated that its future products would be the future Catholic leaders who would work for the good of the Church in Tarlac. And these graduates would be wholly "interested in family life based upon sound moral and economic principles". However, notwithstanding the seeming positive evolution of his school, Fr. Wilson announced that by July 1951, at the beginning of the new school year, he would be giving up the school. Moreover, he also declared that the so-called Salesians of St. John Bosco were taking over the school. And on this impending take-over, the current administrators were greatly optimistic<sup>17</sup>!

Why such turn of events?

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<sup>14</sup> ASC F570 Philippine: Tarlac (A Brief History of St. John Bosco Academy, Tarlac, Tarlac).

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

### 1.3. *How the Salesians Came*

Fr. James Wilson seemed to have found himself in difficulty as he administered St. John Bosco Academy in its new home. After almost a year since the transfer of St. John Bosco Academy to Barrio Sto. Cristo in November 1949, Fr. Wilson wrote Bishop Cesar Guerrero of San Fernando Diocese, providing him a copy of a financial statement which he had sent to a certain Fr. Guanlao<sup>18</sup> as instructed by the Bishop. At the same time, he had also sent him a blueprint “of the land in question”<sup>19</sup>.

The Diocese of San Fernando had been established on 11 December 1948. Tarlac, a province north of San Fernando which was the capital of Pampanga province and seat of the new diocese, now belonged to this new ecclesiastical jurisdiction. Its first Bishop was Cesar Guerrero, former Auxiliary Bishop of Manila, and now the Ordinary of Fr. Wilson and St. John Bosco Academy.

Fr. Guanlao was the actual Parish Priest of Tarlac town when Fr. Wilson wrote him on 19 November 1949, as requested by Bishop Guerrero. He presented him the actual condition and financial situation of his school after almost two years of operation. With the gymnasium, which was then under construction, and the existing buildings and the equipments therein, the estimated value of the school was Php40,000. The land that was bought had been partially paid. But it was precisely this that preoccupied Fr. Wilson. The remaining amount, covered by the mortgage, was now due for payment. And he seemed undecided how to pay it<sup>20</sup>.

Fr. Wilson had several options to meet his obligation. He could procure a bank loan. But this would be a temporary solution which would involve a huge payment of yearly interest; the Academy was not in the position for the moment to do that. He could sell part of the land which he had bought; but that would be detrimental to the school, since it would mean losing part of its precious space. Or, he could give the school to a religious order involved in schools and education. However, this “Religious Teaching Society” should be capable of undertaking the financial obligations and improvements needed in a growing school, similar to the terms observed by the Holy Ghost Sisters<sup>21</sup>. His last option, instead, was a seeming desperate call for a solution to his woe. For this, he had begun to pray for a miracle through the intercession of his school’s patron, St. John Bosco.

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<sup>18</sup> Fr. Guanlao was the actual Parish Priest of Tarlac town when St. John Bosco Academy began in the same town.

<sup>19</sup> SAFIN Tarlac Correspondence (Wilson to Guerrero, Tarlac, 19 November 1949).

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

Meanwhile, Fr. Wilson had asked his new Bishop for help to be able to pay the mortgage of the terrain of the school. So that perhaps he might not need to have recourse to his third option, to which he was strongly inclined as a solution. And it is in this that he wanted Bishop Guerrero's permission. In fact, he had in mind the Salesians of Don Bosco; and the Bishop could perhaps help persuade the Superiors of this religious order to accept his offer of the school and to send Salesians to Tarlac.

Moreover, Fr. Wilson had invoked the Salesian patron's help, and asked for a miracle, if need be.

"To hope for a miracle from Don Bosco is not too far fetched. He has already done marvels here. In any case, we can at least expect him to help us to help ourselves"<sup>22</sup>.

In this particular prayer, St. John Bosco had not failed Fr. Wilson. For the fact was that the Salesians said yes. But how did this happen?

Fr. Wilson did not remain idle in order to solve his predicament. He was determined to give "his school" to the Salesians. His classmate, Fr. Charles McManus<sup>23</sup> based in New York, wrote on 31 January 1950 to Fr. Ernest Giovannini (1904-1993)<sup>24</sup>, Superior of the Salesians of the Province of New York on his behalf<sup>25</sup>.

Fr. McManus explained the situation to Fr. Giovannini. His friend, Fr. James Wilson, had received a leave of absence from Cardinal Spellman in 1947 "for the purpose of founding a Catholic high school for boys in the Philippine Islands". For this he had founded a school and named it "St. John Bosco Academy". This, in fact, was now in its third scholastic year and was preparing to graduate its second class that year. Presently, the school consisted of five buildings on five acres of land. Fr. Wilson was presently assisted by another priest who came from the Diocese of Hartford, and who also had received a leave of absence for the same purpose of administering a school. However, both priests had only leaves of absence; they could not guarantee the continuance of their initiative. Thus, Fr. Wilson had asked him to ask the Salesian

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> Fr. Charles lived in St. Patrick's Cathedral Rectory in 460 Madison Ave., New York 22, N.Y.

<sup>24</sup> SAS 24B040 Fr. Ernesto Giovannini: born in Turin, Italy (21 July 1904), first profession in New Rochelle, U.S.A. (24 August 1924); ordained in San Francisco, U.S.A. (2 February 1931); died in Watsonville, U.S.A. (14 March 1993), at 89 years, 69 years Salesian, 62 years priest. He was Provincial of New Rochelle (1944-1958), General Councillor for Schools (1958-1965), General Councillor for the Italian Region (1965-1971). After, he returned to the U.S.A. and was assigned to the West Province. At the time of Fr. Wilson, he lived in 148 Main Street, New Rochelle, N.Y.

<sup>25</sup> SAFIN Tarlac Correspondence (McManus to Giovannini, New York, 31 January 1950).



Fathers, if they “would be interested in assuming this project which bears their founder’s name”. Thus, this “probing” letter to Fr. Giovannini, dated on the Solemnity of St. John Bosco<sup>26</sup>!

The Salesian Provincial of New Rochelle did not delay his answer to Fr. McManus. It came two days later, on 2 February 1950. Fr. Giovannini showed his genuine interest on the project. For this, he asked if Fr. McManus could send him more information “so that we might present the proposal to our Major Superiors in a definitive form for their decision”<sup>27</sup>. It is interesting to note that the Salesians now were taking the initiative on the proposal of Fr. Wilson.

Meanwhile, Fr. McManus had forwarded Fr. Giovannini’s letter to Fr. Wilson who answered Fr. Giovannini promptly. In a letter dated 14 February 1950, Fr. Wilson described St. John Bosco Academy sincerely and precisely to him, if perhaps to entice the good Salesian to accept his proposal.

The school was only five blocks away from the Parish church of the provincial capital; it was only the second Catholic school existing in the province. It handled only boys in its four years of high school and did not yet have any elementary department. There were 80 students enrolled in the school, taught by three priests and four Filipino laymen of whom some of them were teaching only part time. There was a low enrollment in the school on account of its “high scholastic standing and a general apathy toward Catholic education...due to the uninstructed condition of the people”. The school was situated on five acres of land, consisting of five buildings which contained a chapel, a library, a laboratory, four classrooms and a gymnasium; that these buildings were built with war-surplus materials and were estimated to be equivalent to Php40,000. There were no debts, except a small mortgage on the land but which was being paid off that month by the Diocese to which the school was part. The school was situated in the Diocese of San Fernando, Pampanga, whose Bishop was a certain Cesar Guerrero, who, in fact, gave Fr. Wilson the permission to “feel out” the Salesians<sup>28</sup>.

At the end, Fr. Wilson encouraged Fr. Giovannini to submit the proposition to his Superiors in Turin and to send if possible their reactions and conditions of acceptance to him before the beginning of the next school year, which was due in July 1950. These he would gladly pass on to Bishop Guerrero<sup>29</sup>.

Fr. Wilson’s letter did not find anymore Fr. Giovannini in New York when it arrived there. The latter had left earlier for Turin. But Fr. William Kelley, the

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<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> SAFIN Tarlac Correspondence (Giovannini to McManus, New York, 2 February 1950).

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.* (Wilson to Giovannini, Tarlac, 14 February 1950).

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

provincial secretary, acknowledged on 23 February 1950, instead, Fr. Wilson's letter and informed him that he would forward his informative letter to Fr. Giovannini<sup>30</sup>. That was still another fortuitous detail for Fr. Wilson: now Fr. Giovannini could personally and directly present his proposal to the Salesian General Superior in Turin itself. Don Bosco seemingly was working the miracle!

Although, Fr. Wilson did not know that at the same time, Fr. Braga was practically scheduled to go to the Philippines to take a look on the offers to the Salesians. To remember that, in November 1949, he had already been asked by the Rector Major to visit the islands.

The first visit of Fr. Braga in 1950 definitely coincided with the initiative of Fr. Wilson to entrust his school to a "Religious Teaching Society". And there was in fact, Fr. Braga, Salesian, visiting for the first time Manila. Bishop Cesar Guerrero must have told Archbishop Vagnozzi, who welcomed Fr. Braga in Manila, of this proposal. And the Apostolic Delegate must have had this in mind when he talked with Fr. Braga. The Salesian Superior of China was now right there, anyway, "asking for work". He was available to meet Fr. Wilson and discuss his offer for the Salesians to work<sup>31</sup>.

Fr. Braga must have assured Archbishop Vagnozzi and Fr. Wilson that he would endorse the proposal to the Superiors in Turin. Moreover, he must have promised them that the Salesians were coming that same year. This did not come about, since Fr. Wilson, who meanwhile had become impatient, had thought of offering the school to the Christian Brothers. Archbishop Vagnozzi had in fact insisted that the Salesians come at once. The fact was that Fr. Wilson had even announced to the people of the coming of the Salesians. And he must have spoken sincerely so well of them, that a certain enthusiasm and expectation was created. But the Salesians were not that punctual in their arrival.

#### 1.4. A Contract

The Superiors of Turin have insisted on Fr. Braga that a contract be made between the Salesians and the priests who had invited them to take over their school. This was to insure that the Salesians were not on the losing end, just in case the donors changed their mind. Without a contract, it would be difficult to obtain Turin's blessing and approval. And so it was to be that way<sup>32</sup>.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.* (Kelley to Wilson, New Rochelle, 23 February 1950).

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.* (Braga to Wilson, Hong Kong, 4 February 1951).

<sup>32</sup> ASC F570 Philippine: Tarlac Contract of Lease. The original contract of lease being in English, an Italian translation of it was made for the Superiors of Turin. Cf ASC F570 Philippine: Tarlac Contratto di Cessione.

Fr. Wilson had first thought that the religious order who would take over St. John Bosco Academy would also assume the burden of paying the mortgage. But Bishop Cesar Guerrero had generously accepted to pay the remaining amount of Php9,568 of the debt incurred in the acquisition of the land where the new school stood. Most probably, the Salesians would not have accepted the school had they been asked to pay that amount.

On 4 February 1951, Fr. Braga wrote Fr. Wilson expressing his gratitude for the welcome he received during his visit the previous year. He asked to be excused for not immediately answering him. At the same time, he asked Fr. Wilson if he could draw up the terms of cession of the buildings and the land to the Salesians, since the latter was more acquainted with the laws of the Philippines and probably more practical in coming up with a suitable and convenient arrangement. Upon receiving the contract, he hoped to send it to Turin so that the Superiors could approve it. Moreover, he asked him to mail him more copies of the photographs he had sent him, and also to forward him a topographical map of the location of the school<sup>33</sup>.

Accordingly, Fr. Wilson wrote a contract which he patterned on that which the Sisters of the Holy Ghost had for their Institute in Tarlac<sup>34</sup>. He sent this to Bishop Guerrero on 23 April 1951, together with a copy of the Apostolic Delegate's letter endorsing the contract of lease. Archbishop Vagnozzi assured Bishop Guerrero, that he could tranquilly approve the contract, since he did not find anything against Canon Law on it<sup>35</sup>. After the examination and approbation by his diocesan consultors, Bishop Guerrero sent back the approved contract to Fr. Wilson<sup>36</sup>. Archbishop Vagnozzi, included as arbiter in the case

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<sup>33</sup> SAFIN Tarlac Correspondence (Braga to Wilson, Hong Kong, 4 February 1951).

<sup>34</sup> Cf ASC F570 Philippine Tarlac (Contract of lease). The terms (mutual promises, covenants and stipulations contained in clauses) of the contract contained in the document were ten. The contracting partners consisted of the Bishop of San Fernando Diocese as lessor and the Salesians of Don Bosco, "Catholic Missionary organization, formed and existing for purposes of religious and educational instruction" as lessee. The property (the land with an area of 17,784 sq.m.) was on lease to the Salesians by Bishop for a period of ninety-nine years. Rental was fixed on one Php1 yearly. The contract could again be renewed for another ninety-nine years, or could be finally donated or sold to the lessee. However, the land and the actual buildings existing plus future constructions on the leased property would be exclusively for Catholic education and instruction.

<sup>35</sup> ASC F570 Philippine Tarlac: Corrispondenza (Vagnozzi to Guerrero, Manila, 23 April 1951). Archbishop Vagnozzi, in fact, stated that the "valor locationis" of the property not exceeding Php15,000 (but in the report of Fr. Wilson, the property cost Php29,568 [!]), then the Bishop could approve it in the condition that the Diocesan Consultors and the Council of Administration consented. This was in accordance to Canon Law 1541 #2.

<sup>36</sup> ASC F570 Philippine Tarlac: Corrispondenza (Wilson to Guerrero, Tarlac, 21 April 1951).

of conflict between the contractors, also received a copy of the contract and had read it<sup>37</sup>.

Fr. Wilson sent Fr. Braga the copy of the contract approved and signed by the Bishop on 4 May 1951. Together with it, he also sent him a copy of a brief history of St. John Bosco Academy which he had written, and a copy of the letter of recommendation from the Philippine Apostolic Delegate<sup>38</sup>. At the same time, he also promised Fr. Braga the topographical map of the town of Tarlac, plus two copies of the annuals of the school which contained various pictures of the school<sup>39</sup>.

Moreover, Fr. Wilson informed Fr. Braga that the school year in the Philippines was scheduled to open on 18 June, that was, in less than a month time. He hoped that Fr. Braga would be kind enough to send the personnel he promised him in time for the school opening. The fact was that the people, including the bishop and the clergy, were already informed of their immediate arrival. It would not be good to disappoint them<sup>40</sup>. Besides, he declared that he was ready to go back to the U.S.A. as soon as they arrived. Also, his companion and aide, Fr. Mahoney, had a parish in Ramos, Tarlac now awaiting him<sup>41</sup>.

On 19 May 1951, Fr. Braga acknowledged having received the letter and the projected contract sent him by Fr. Wilson. Moreover, he had endorsed the contract to the Superiors in Turin, hoping to himself that the Superiors would approve it. He was convinced that English-speaking Salesians should begin the work there; he had even asked the Superiors to send someone either from the United States or Ireland to begin the Salesian work in St. John Bosco Academy<sup>42</sup>.

Nonetheless, the China Provincial confessed that it would be quite impossible for someone to come to the Philippines by mid-June, in time for the beginning of the school year, in as much as the school year in the Salesian houses ended in mid-July. However, he promised to do his best to have someone come immediately<sup>43</sup>. Basically, he had accepted the contract and had agreed to come to the Philippines, even before Turin had given its explicit consent. In a sense, he was already committed to this initiative even before Turin.

Meanwhile, Archbishop Spellman of New York had asked Fr. Wilson the reason for the delay of his re-entry to the Archdiocese. After the rather

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid* (Vagnozzi to Guerrero, Manila, 27 April 1951).

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid*. (Wilson to Braga, Tarlac, 4 May 1951).

<sup>39</sup> Most probably, the annual and the brief history of the St John Bosco Academy Tarlac which I encountered in the Salesian Central Archive were the ones which Fr. Wilson had sent to Fr. Braga.

<sup>40</sup> ASC F570 Philippine Tarlac: Corrispondenza (Wilson to Braga, Tarlac 4 May 1951).

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>42</sup> SAFIN Tarlac Correspondence (Braga to Wilson, Hong Kong, 19 May 1951).

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid*.

encouraging letter of Fr. Braga, Fr. Wilson wrote back his Archbishop, expressing his optimism that St. John Bosco Academy would be self-supporting and with a probable increase in enrollment for the coming school year. But what pleased him more was that the negotiations for the transfer of the school to the Salesians were drawing to a conclusion, even if the Superior of the Salesian in charge of the negotiations expressed that there would be some delay. That Fr. Braga, who had been there twice to see the school, and who showed himself more enthusiastic and optimistic that the Salesians would take over the school, was very assuring for him<sup>44</sup>.

Indeed, it was taking almost a year now for Fr. Braga “to win his Superior in Turin over to the idea of coming here”. And yet, Fr. Wilson saw no other possibility for “St. John Bosco Academy” to continue except through the Salesians. This was his best and preferred option. For this, he asked Cardinal Spellman if he could help by exerting “some pressure” on the Superiors in Turin “for the actual acceptance of the school” and “for the sending of at least one English-speaking Father”<sup>45</sup>.

Fr. Braga did not fail in his promise to Fr. Wilson, this time. On 16 July 1951, he wrote to inform him that the Salesian Fr. Francis Di Falco<sup>46</sup> was ready to leave San Francisco for Tarlac soon. He asked him for a little more patience. And please, if Fr. Wilson could just show Fr. Di Falco the same kindness and cooperation that he had always and genuinely shown him whenever they met<sup>47</sup>.

Obviously, Fr. Wilson could not but express his joy for the “good news”. Fr. Di Falco, in fact, had sent him a telegram, requesting him to arrange for a three-year visa in the Philippines. For this, he had contacted the Catholic Welfare Organization to help in this<sup>48</sup>. Moreover, he informed Fr. Braga that his partner, Fr. Mahoney, had already been assigned Pastor of the Parish of Ramos, Tarlac<sup>49</sup>. It was as if to say “I was so sure you were coming ....”

Fr. Di Falco did arrive on 15 September 1951 to start the work of the Salesians at St. John Bosco Academy Tarlac<sup>50</sup>. He was sent to Manila on loan

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<sup>44</sup> *Ibid* (Wilson to Spellman, Tarlac, 26 May 1951).

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>46</sup> The real name is Anthony Di Falco. Cf SAFIN Tarlac Correspondence (Braga, 25 March 1952). SAS 33B217 Anthony Di Falco: born in San Francisco, USA (20 May 1914), died in Oakland, California (23 March 2003) at 89 years, 70 years Salesian, 59 years priest. I personally had the chance to interview him in April 2002 at the Mercy Retirement Center in Oakland where he was confined.

<sup>47</sup> SAFIN Tarlac Correspondence (Braga to Wilson, Hong Kong, 16 July 1951).

<sup>48</sup> The Catholic Welfare Organization was the predecessor of the CBCP, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines.

<sup>49</sup> SAFIN Tarlac Correspondence (Wilson to Braga, Tarlac, 26 July 1951).

<sup>50</sup> SAFIN Tarlac (The Silver Bosconian, 4 February 1973) 3.

by his Provincial of the U.S. West Province<sup>51</sup>. Fr. Wilson finally left for New York on 5 February 1952<sup>52</sup>. Possibly, he left the Philippines, convinced that St. John Bosco had not failed him. He got his miracle after all!

## 2. Don Bosco Technical Institute, Victorias

After St. John Bosco Academy, the next work started by the Salesians in the Philippines was yet another school, Don Bosco Technical Institute Victorias, the first Salesian technical school in the Philippines<sup>53</sup>. That of Tarlac was an academy; the latter this time offered technical education to the young of the place. And it was with this type of school which would typify the Salesians and would make their kind of school different from other schools; through this, in fact, they would be known in the Philippines.

The proposal to open a school in Victorias came before the offer to take over the school in Tarlac. Fr. Braga was responsible for accepting both offers. But he gave precedence to Tarlac, which he saw was nearest for the Salesians to start in the Philippines. Besides, there was already a school with students studying. Instead, the school in Victorias was still under construction, even if perhaps it was on its way to completion.

Tarlac was an initiative of priests who had limited sources, while Victorias was an initiative of lay people who had abundant financial resources. Both had the backing of Archbishop Egidio Vagnozzi, who interceded on behalf of their donors. These, in fact, had opted specifically for the Salesians to come and realize their offers.

### 2.1. A Christian Layman's Initiative

It was Don Miguel Ossorio, President of Victorias Milling Corporation, Incorporated, who took the initiative in the foundation of the Salesian school of Victorias in the province of Negros, Occidental<sup>54</sup>. But why did he so?

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<sup>51</sup> SAHK Minutes of Provincial Meeting (Hong Kong, 16 aprile 1954). Fr. Cogliandro would insist on Fr. Acquistapace for the return of Fr. Di Falco, not knowing that later on, he would be in need of personnel, having been appointed Provincial of the Philippines in 1963.

<sup>52</sup> SAFIN Tarlac (The Silver Bosconian, 4 February 1973) 10. Cf BS (February-March 1972). Fathers Wilson and Mahoney would come back to the Philippines for the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of St. John Bosco Academy in 1973. Fr. Di Falco would also come for this occasion.

<sup>53</sup> AMS (31 marzo 1952) 26.

<sup>54</sup> SAFIN Victorias (A brief history of Don Bosco Victorias).

Don Miguel had sent the General Manager of Vicmico, Don Claudio Luzuriaga<sup>55</sup>, “to visit technical centers in Asia in search of special technicians to help establish a technical school to develop idle boys in the plantation into valuable workers of the future”<sup>56</sup>. Don Claudio, in his visit to Hong Kong, was impressed by the work of the Salesians there, specifically by the Salesian Technical School at Aberdeen. It was this particular type of school that he believed Don Miguel wanted for Victorias. For this, he reported to him and strongly proposed that Victorias have a Don Bosco Technical School as he had seen it in Aberdeen. The latter, in fact, would “make representations with the Salesian Order for the possibility of a similar center in the Philippines with similar technical instruction”. His assurance to whomever he spoke with was that the establishment of such a school would be at Don Miguel’s personal expense<sup>57</sup>.

Mr. Frederic Ossorio, son of Don Miguel, wrote on 5 December 1950 to a certain Mr. H. J. Young of Vicmico stationed in Manila. He asked him to send a pre-paid and open-dated airline ticket, Hong Kong-Manila-Hong Kong, to Fr. Carlo Braga of the Salesians in Hong Kong<sup>58</sup>. The latter, in fact, had written Mr. Frederic on 28 November 1950, and informed him that the Salesians were now “in a position to assume the direction and management of a technical school”<sup>59</sup>. This he suggested to Mr. Frederic that it would be good that he come and visit personally the Salesian technical schools in Hong Kong. The former, however, had declined the invitation, on account of the unstable situation in the area; instead, he invited Fr. Braga to come and visit Victorias<sup>60</sup>.

At the same time, Mr. Frederic expressed in his letter to Fr. Braga two important points. First, that the question of the high school for boys was a mere part of the whole educational problem of the community of Victorias. The program that he conceptualized for Vicmico was “a program of community dimensions”. As such, the desire was to create a “family view” which should guide the life within the community and those responsible for the central. Workers and management ought to form a whole community unto themselves, so that “the real union is not a labor union, but a Christian and community union”. Second, that Vicmico had no problem with the two proposals of Fr.

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<sup>55</sup> Don Claudio Luzuriaga was a Salesian cooperator. He was a sponsor for the episcopal ordination of Msgr. Louis Morrow, secretary of Archbishop Piani. Cf SAFIN Victorias (Questionario per le scuole professionali, 1953-1954).

<sup>56</sup> SAFIN Victorias (A brief history of Don Bosco Victorias).

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>58</sup> SAFIN Victorias Correspondence (Frederic Ossorio to H.J. Young, Victorias, 5 December 1950).

<sup>59</sup> SAHK Correspondence (Braga to Frederic Ossorio, Hong Kong, 28 November 1950).

<sup>60</sup> SAFIN Victorias Correspondence (Frederic O. to Braga, Victorias, 5 December 1950).

Braga regarding the agreement between the Salesians and the company. Although they favored the second proposal and which they considered as the better one, they believed that until the Salesians “are thoroughly at home and can estimate expenses and requirements, it may be best to start out with the first proposal”<sup>61</sup>.

Fr. Braga, in fact, had suggested two ways on how Vicmico and the Salesians would relate. The company could provide the Salesians all the physical assets of the school and keep the Fathers, Brothers, lay teachers, and expenses for the boys on its payroll. Or the company could provide all the physical assets of the school, and give them freely as gift to the Salesian Congregation, helping out with yearly grants-in-aid as may be required”<sup>62</sup>. On both counts, Vicmico would assume all financial burdens for the construction of the proposed school, and would continue to provide financial help for the continuance of the project. The Salesians, on the other hand, would provide the personnel for the smooth administration of the school.

Fr. Braga, accustomed to schools which included interns, had also included a plan of having boarders in the school in his proposal without consulting the Ossorios. However, this would have meant another construction, and thus additional expense which the Ossorios did not foresee. On the other hand, Mr. Frederic had also thought that the Salesians should take over as chaplains of the community church within Vicmico. But that would be in the near future, in as much as there still was a chaplain appointed by the Bishop in the company chapel of Vicmico<sup>63</sup>.

## 2.2. A “Mushrooming” Work

In the course of the negotiations, Vicmico became wary of what the Salesians wanted to do in Victorias. In another letter that he wrote to the Ossorios, Fr. Braga had claimed that the Salesians would work to “make Negros the capital of Catholic Action” of the Philippines. Behind this declaration, he asked for a three-story building which would house 500 boys and 150 boarders, plus an additional building which would serve as theatre, capable of seating a

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.* Mr. Frederic claimed that this was explained to them by a certain Fr. Walter Hogan, a Jesuit.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>63</sup> SAFIN Victorias Correspondence (Frederic O. to Braga, Victorias, 5 December 1950). The chaplaincy of Vicmico was actually under a priest of the Mill Hill Missionary Society, a certain Fr. McCann, appointed by Bishop Lladoc of Bacolod. The patron of the chaplaincy was St. Joseph the Worker.



thousand. For Don Miguel, this was beyond what had been agreed upon between him and Vicmico during Fr. Braga's visit of February 1951. The latter had seen a building being constructed, and which he already considered adequate enough in size; he had only asked for an additional floor in order to house about eight Salesians. Moreover, Don Miguel and Fr. Braga had never discussed about boarders at that time. So that he did not expect the construction of another building. This, he wrote his son, Mr. Frederic, on 30 July 1951<sup>64</sup>.

Don Miguel advised his son that Vicmico should really come up with something written with the Salesians. Vicmico had an agreement with the Maryknoll Sisters; it should also have one with the Salesians<sup>65</sup>. Don Bosco Victorias was not a mere initiative of the Ossorios. It was by Vicmico, as a corporation; hence, it had to have the opinion of its members and stockholders. For this, the initiative of a trade school had to be approved by them, even if Don Miguel, as major stockholder, had the controlling vote to have such initiative approved. Nonetheless, he was determined "to contribute to the expense of a trade school according to what may be needed for our community"<sup>66</sup>. Mr. Frederic expressed the same opinion of his father. Indeed, things had to be put down in writing, regarding the "responsibilities and undertakings" of Vicmico; the understanding with the Salesians had to be clearly in black and white. This was what he wrote on 7 August 1951, in answer to his father's letter<sup>67</sup>.

When the Salesian, Fr. Guido D'Amore<sup>68</sup>, arrived to supervise the construction of the school in Victorias, Mr. Frederic appeared worried and preoccupied. He heard the Salesians' ideas and plans, which were clearly beyond that which were discussed between them and Fr. Braga. And he was rather alarmed. The ideas of the Salesians seemed to be "mushrooming" at the expense of Vicmico. For they had asked an extra building to house boarders which was never discussed initially; they have even increased unilaterally the number of these boarders from 150 to 200. The Salesians, seemingly, were focused on "the boys" and the community life of the school. The impression of Mr. Frederic was that Salesians were lost in a fever of school ambition. Instead, he saw the Church at large to work for, not merely a sector of it. His main reference was to love God and seek His will; and this, he seemed not to have heard from the Salesians<sup>69</sup>.

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<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.* (Miguel O. to Frederic O., Greenwich, Connecticut, 30 July 1951).

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.* (Frederic O. to Miguel O., Victorias, 7 August 1951).

<sup>68</sup> ASC D870 Verbal (26 agosto 1952).

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*

The Salesians recognized this later. Indeed, Victorias was a project of Mr. Frederic Ossorio, who wanted “to practice the papal encyclicals regarding the social question and to do propaganda with the other rich landowners”<sup>70</sup>.

Mr. Frederic was now more determined to ask the Salesians to come up with a statement of intention and moral commitment. He did not insist for a detailed contract visualization which would still be too early, since the Salesians were just beginning. His first understanding with Fr. Braga was “viva voce”. Thus, he sincerely discussed these impressions of his with Fr. D’Amore, who tried to clarify him of the Salesians’ intent. According to the latter, they were experienced with regards the evil and threat of communism. They saw in the Philippines a possibility to strategically inflict damage to this phenomenon. In the struggle against this, the alleviation of the poor was definitely an unending task. That Negros should become “the Capital of Catholic Action” and could be realized in Victorias. The Salesians at work in Vicmico could help alleviate the conditions of the poor. They could provide the necessary youth leadership in a burgeoning industrial proletariat. And finally, they could present a “show window striking the planters and centralistas, which form a larger fraction of the ruling class”<sup>71</sup>.

Nonetheless, Vicmico’s official negotiator favored a business-like approach to the current problem with the Salesians. But he seemingly defended the mushrooming ideas of the Salesians to his father. According to Mr. Frederic, a school for about 500 boys was realistic enough. Current school population from company personnel was about 1,800; to assume that 50% of these were boys, thus 900. The idea of having boarders seemed not bad after all. The personnel of Manapla would also need a school for their children. Besides, in the future, difficulty of subsidizing the school, boarders would be paying students.

According to the young Ossorio, the Salesians probably knew what they were asking; they were “not beginners” but “refugees from big schools in China”. The Salesians had drawn up plans, with the size that they wanted; and that was logical enough. At the end, Mr. Frederic expressed something that sounded prophetic for the Salesians.

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<sup>70</sup> AMS (March 1952) 26: “praticare le encicliche papali sulla questione sociale e lavora di propaganda presso gli altri ricchi possedenti”. Cf ASC F622 Victorias (Brochure for school year 1955-1956): “The ideals of Catholic Social Action were behind the establishment of the Don Bosco Technical Institute. It seeks to help meet the demands in this country for technical schools that could train young boys to be skilled craftsmen, and it strives to give the boys both a foundation in sound character and worthy fundamental values to live by.”

<sup>71</sup> SAFIN Victorias Correspondence (Frederic O. to Miguel O., Victorias, 7 August 1951).

"The school will outlast the Company, I am sure... This is a work not only for the Company but also for God, and it has a life not only in conjunction with the Company but on its own"<sup>72</sup>.

He further explained to his father that the "mushrooming" of the plans of the Salesians was because of the possibility of an increased number of personnel which they could send to work in Victorias, on account of the expulsion of quite a number of Salesians from China. Fr. Braga had assured him that other Salesians would still come.

"Subsequent purges in China seem to have more Fathers available. Once before at the beginning of the war, the German and Italian Fathers had to leave Hong Kong, which was a blessing for Shanghai. Now they must leave Shanghai which may again be the hand of Providence"<sup>73</sup>.

The younger Ossorio also clarified another problem in this first contact with Fr. D'Amore: on the question of financing the plans of the Salesians. He declared that Vicmico would provide a budget to the Salesians for the project of one fiscal year. It would be up to the Salesians "in the light of the budget and the estimates on their buildings and plans, to decide how it was to be spent". Thus, the Salesians planned; they spent according to the budget granted to them. The expanded plans of Fr. D'Amore were to be respected. Vicmico set up what it thought it could afford. But the Salesians would be left alone with their plans, flexible and inclusive, of their ultimate aims<sup>74</sup>. With this, it seemingly was quite possible now to come up with a written contract with Fr. Braga and the Salesians.

### 2.3. A First Agreement

Mr. Frederic discussed with his father how to receive the Salesians. He tried to be precise and just in fulfilling its obligations to the Salesians whom they have asked to come and "help" them build the community of Victorias. He concerned himself with the accommodations of seven possible Salesians who might come, preparing for them a temporary budget to cover their first needs<sup>75</sup>. Furthermore, he thought of a building plan, in which five structures

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<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.* (Frederic O. to Miguel O., Victorias, 27 August 1951). Mr. Frederic made his calculations for the first Salesians: for seven Salesians as pocket money, Php700; a cook, Php70; a boy, Php50; food, Php700; laundry, Php150. The total arrived at Php1,675 monthly.

would ring a five acre field. The soccer field would be at the center. The order of priority of construction was organized too: first the workshops, then the classrooms, dormitory, gymnasium-theater, and finally the chapel. He hoped that the construction would be finished in time for the start of the school year of 1952. The estimated amount needed for the construction of a building was Php 255,000<sup>76</sup>.

With this in mind, Mr. Frederic wrote Fr. Braga on 26 September 1951. Vicmico was now ready to enter into an agreement with the Salesians. He expressed to him what Vicmico would like the Salesian Society to agree to undertake for Vicmico, and what Vicmico proposed to undertake for the Salesian Society.

Vicmico requested the Salesian Society to operate a vocational trade school inside its premises, so as to teach the trades of mechanics including metal work, machine shop and foundry, electrical and carpentry, as well as the minor trades of shoe-making and tailoring. Its students would be primarily the sons of the employees of Vicmico; although, there could also be the possibility of other students enrolled in the institution. The school's size would be according to the buildings provided for. It should commence as soon as practicable. The teaching staff would be members of the Salesian Society, except as may be specifically agreed upon with Vicmico<sup>77</sup>.

Furthermore, it proposed to provide each Salesian who would work in the school a monthly salary of Php100 each. It would provide lodging, board and domestic helpers for their up-keeping. But above all, Vicmico would construct the buildings needed for the vocational trade school. The company asked one thing if possible: if the Salesians could please try to be ready to administer the institute by May or early June of 1952<sup>78</sup>.

Meanwhile, Mr. Frederic was also studying the possibility of segregating the school assets as an independent entity, and possibly giving them to the Salesians. Although it had been reported to him that such transfer of ownership of assets of such size would encounter "punitive 'gift' taxes", he hoped, however,

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<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.* By July 1952, the shops and the boarding house were ready. And by the end of the same year, the school complex was finished. Cf AMS (March 1952) 26.

<sup>77</sup> SAFIN Victorias Correspondence (Frederic O. to Braga, Greenwich, Connecticut, 26 September 1951). Fr. Braga supposedly had written him on 6 September 1951; but we do not have this letter. Nonetheless, there is a draft of a "Convenzione fra la Victorias Central Sugar Raffinery e la Congregazione Salesiana di San Giovanni Bosco", expressing what the Salesians expected from Vicmico. Cf ASC F622 Victorias (Convenzione). Sometime in October 1957, Vicmico wrote a draft of a "Management Agreement" between Vicmico and the Salesians of Don Bosco, further putting precision to the contract between the two entities after several years of relation. Cf *ibid.* (Management Agreement).

<sup>78</sup> SAFIN Victorias Correspondence (Frederic O. to Braga, Greenwich, Connecticut, 26 September 1951).

to obtain “tax credit” and thus avoid paying taxes. For this, he had written a certain Mr. Carlos B. Hilado of their Manila Office to enlighten him on this possibility<sup>79</sup>. He was only being broad-minded and far-sighted in his dealings even with the Salesians.

#### 2.4. A Salesian Trade School

The Salesian presence in Victorias began in March 1952 with the arrival of the Salesians Fr. Guido D’Amore and Fr. Giovanni Monchiero, sent by their Provincial, Fr. Braga<sup>80</sup>. The school that they started, “the first technical school”<sup>81</sup>, officially started in the school year July 1952-1953<sup>82</sup>.

The first novelty of Don Bosco Victorias was its technico-academic program. It gave its high school students lessons of theory and hours in shop practice. The technical school was in mechanics and machine shop, electronics, welding, electrical and automotive. Its academic courses were the same which an ordinary high school offered. Earlier though, the technical program of the school included shoemaking, tailoring-cutting and woodworking. But these were later discarded for the more technical trade offerings in response to the Philippines’ call for industrialization. The curriculum of the school was made up of three courses: an intermediate course, the preparatory course and a technical secondary course. This school was designed so that the education obtained therein had to be paid. Consequently, school tuition and others were a must from the students.

However, even before the school officially began, the Salesian work in Victorias already “functioned” with an Oratory with the Salesians, as they awaited the opening of the school year. As Fr. Guido D’Amore, favored emissary of Fr. Braga, supervised the construction of the school, he and Fr. Giovanni Monchiero, who arrived in the middle of January 1952 introduced the Oratory, organizing the “Don Bosco Boys Club” which involved the young of the area in “clean sports and amusements”<sup>83</sup>. This created a good impression on the

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.* (Frederick O. to Carlos B. Hilado, Victorias, 27 May 1952). Mr. Frederic’s question to Mr. Hilado was: “Is there anything in the laws of the Philippines which will permit the launching of a non-profit, public benefit, stockholder-less, educational trust without punishment in taxes, and with encouragement to the donor?” Cf *ibid.* Nonetheless, this possible move of Vicmico did not materialize at that moment.

<sup>80</sup> SAFIN Victorias (A brief history of Don Bosco Victorias).

<sup>81</sup> SAFIN Victorias Correspondence (Questionario per le scuole professionali, 1953-1954).

<sup>82</sup> ASC F622 Philippine Bacolod-Victorias (Don Bosco Technical Institute, Victorias. Prospectus, School Year 1954-1955).

<sup>83</sup> SAFIN Victorias Correspondence (Frederic O. to Miguel O., Victorias, 27 August 1951).

people and the administrators of Vicmico; it was a good propaganda for the Salesians. They managed to transform the place where they were programmed to educate from “a distrustful environment to an enchanted one”<sup>84</sup>. For the feast of St. John Bosco that they organized in January 1952, two bishops and three vicar generals from other dioceses even came to see what the Salesians have started in Victorias<sup>85</sup>.

Fr. D'Amore was the trusted man of Fr. Braga; he was, in fact, the first rector of Don Bosco Victorias. In the first years of the Philippine Delegation, he was the appointed delegate of the provincial economer, even if the relationship between him and the provincial economer of China would not always be that smooth. The former probably tended to act independently. Later, Fr. Braga would send Fr. D'Amore to the U.S.A. in order that he might get the U.S. citizenship. This was in order to facilitate the negotiations and transactions of the Salesians in the Archipelago, where contracts with persons who were from the U.S.A. were respected and easily concluded. The Salesians, relatively unknown and from a country to which the Philippines did not have specific and many ties, needed someone to officially represent them in their eventual transactions which they foresaw would be many in the Philippines.

The coming of the Salesians in Victorias was under the auspices of the Bishop of Bacolod, Bishop Lladoc. But it was Bishop Emmanuel Yap of Bacolod, Bishop Lladoc's successor, who gave permission on 25 June 1952 to the Salesians to erect a house in Victorias<sup>86</sup>. Fr. Renato Ziggotti, who had recently replaced Fr. Pietro Ricaldone as Rector Major, asked the Holy See permission in order to canonically erect the house of Don Bosco Victorias<sup>87</sup>. It is interesting to note, however, the motive expressed by the superior for the house of Victorias: it was mainly for a trade school preferentially, for interns and externs, of the poor of the region<sup>88</sup>. On 28 August 1952, the house was canonically erected. Like that of Tarlac, Don Bosco Victorias was now officially

<sup>84</sup> ASC F622 Filippine Bacolod-Victorias: Correspondence (Monchiero to Ziggotti, Victorias, 7 March 1952).

<sup>85</sup> AMS (March 1952) 26.

<sup>86</sup> ASC F622 Filippine Bacolod-Victorias. Consent of the Bishop of Bacolod for the erection of Don Bosco Victorias (Bacolod, 25 June 1952). Interestingly, the note added at the bottom of this document: “Per la ‘St. John Bosco Vocational School’ di Victorias - Negros Occ.”: The Salesian school in Victorias was intended to be a “Vocational School”. This was confirmed by the provincial secretary based in Hong Kong, Fr. Clemente Benato. Cf *ibid.* (Conforme. Fr. Clemente Benato [no date]).

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.* (Ziggotti, Torino 21 July 1952).

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*: “La predetta Casa ha lo scopo principale di aprire un Oratorio Festivo e scuole professionali per alunni interni ed esterni, principalmente poveri, della regione”.

a Salesian work “in Oratorium et Scholas pro adolescentibus artificiiis erudiendis”<sup>89</sup>.

### *2.5. Doing the Salesian Part*

Fr. D’Amore, after some months of adaptation to their new workplace, wrote Fr. Ziggotti on 7 March 1952. Indeed, the Don Bosco Victorias project was “grandiose”, which involved practically \$1.5 million. Things were going so fast, for their partners and financiers of the venture were clearly expecting them to start the school by July. The Ossorios were faithful to their promises. And were the Salesians quick to keep their part? They have promised them to have the personnel, not only before the start, but logically also to prepare the school year; but they have not yet come. Indeed, it was still March, four months to go before the scheduled opening. But there were only 23 days left before the deadline of submitting the request to open a school to the government’s Bureau of Education. But Fr. D’Amore did not yet have the names of those who were supposed to administer the school. For this, he did not even have the documents to submit to the Bureau. For if they failed to meet the deadline for the submission of the names of those Salesians who were suppose to administer the school, they risked to lose a year of school<sup>90</sup>. The agreement with Vicmico was that the school should start that year, 1952. This, they have promised to the people who knew how to keep their own promise.

Fr. D’Amore was afraid to cut an “ugly figure”. The Salesians would seem not to know how to keep their promises. They would look so stupid. The buildings they wanted were there; but where were the personnel? This, in spite of his joy of seeing the shops already finished, and the school building ready within three months’ time. In fact, people have started to approach Fr. D’Amore, expressing their desire to send their children to the new school. And notwithstanding the contentment and hope for the new school, he had a certain “sense of dismay”, which might probably had been the same sentiment that Fr. Wilson experienced when he waited listlessly for the promised Salesians for Tarlac.

If the Salesians could not come at once, Fr. D’Amore wanted at least their names, wishing to have such information before 20 March 1952, so as to be able to submit them to the government bureau. He also needed his diploma in

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<sup>89</sup> ASC F622 Philippine Bacolod-Victorias (Decretum canonicae erectionis Domus, Turin, 27 augusti 1952).

<sup>90</sup> ASC F622 Philippine Bacolod-Victorias: Corrispondenza (D’Amore a Ziggotti, Victorias, 7 marzo 1952).

Pedagogy from the Ateneo of Turin and that of Fr. Monchiero from the Salesian Institute of Foglizzo. These documents were to explain their qualifications to administer a school in front of the authorities; but it was probably a reminder to the Superior that those who would come should be qualified to teach. He had previously sent a telegram to Fr. Ferrari, who was in Italy rather than in the Philippines where he had been named delegate, to send him the names of the confreres destined to the Philippines, as well as the diplomas he asked. Fr. D'Amore had asked him to send the list of personnel even by air mail, so as to have them as soon as possible. But the latter had not responded yet<sup>91</sup>. For this, he was begging the Rector Major to mediate for him with Fr. Ferrari. That was how desperate he was.

Moreover, Fr. D'Amore warned that those who would come were expected to work at once. For this, it would be good that they were already proficient in English. There was no time to learn it when they arrived. He remarked that "one did not need to go to Oxford" to learn English<sup>92</sup>. This was in reference to Fr. Ferrari, who, instead of going as soon as possible to the Philippines, had gone to London to learn English, hoping to speak it as fluently as he spoke his mother tongue.

On 27 March, Fr. Ferrari had written Fr. D'Amore, informing him that the personnel for the Philippines would hopefully leave by June. In his answer to Fr. Ferrari, the latter responded declaring that he had not yet received the diplomas that he had demanded nor the titles of confreres who were suppose to teach. For this, he suggested that Fr. Ferrari send him what he could; the rest he would try to improvise. The majority teachers were supposed to be the Salesians, as it was the tradition. He declared that he did not intend to get externs to teach in the school. His opinion on the lay teachers: it was costly and "with no moral result"<sup>93</sup>. He was slow to see an aspect of the reality of education in the Philippines. Experience would tell the Salesians that the lay teachers would be necessary if they wanted to go on with their schools; the situation in the Philippines was different from Italy.

Indeed, Fr. D'Amore, happy that the personnel had already started the process of applying for visa to enter the Philippines, told Fr. Ferrari that the confreres who could leave for the Philippines should come at once, even by

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>93</sup> ASC F482 Filippine Mandaluyong: Corrispondenza (D'Amore a Ferrari, Victorias, 10 aprile 1952): "Per i titoli, se non si può fare niente, cercate di mandarci ciò che potete e vedremo se ciriconoscono". One asked whether Fr. Ferrari really had diplomas to send. Nay, one could ask whether the Salesians who came were really qualified and had indeed titles to back up their qualification.



air. The rest would have to travel by boat via Genoa. Fr. Ferrari should inform him of the travel expenses and whether it was more convenient to pay in Italy or in Manila. The Apostolic Nuncio, Archbishop Vagnozzi, had kindly advanced \$1,000 for the trip of the confreres<sup>94</sup>.

Fr. D'Amore had asked Fr. Ferrari when the latter was arriving in the Philippines. He needed him as superior, to discuss and solve some of the more recent problems. He warned him to avoid "a second Shanghai"<sup>95</sup>. Finally, he had other news for the Provincial Delegate. The good news was that one of the personnel, the coadjutor Giovanni De Reggi (1914-1992)<sup>96</sup>, was already in Manila; hopefully, he would be in Victorias the next week. And the bad news was that the confrere did not know English. He would have to find a way so that the confrere could learn English to be able to teach by July<sup>97</sup>!

## 2.6. First Impressions

Fr. Giovanni Monchiero (1915-1976), a soft-spoken confrere who went to Don Bosco Victorias earlier than Fr. D'Amore, had written to Fr. Ziggotti almost at the same time as Fr. D'Amore. He expressed to the Superior his first impressions of the work that he and Fr. D'Amore had just started in Victorias<sup>98</sup>.

The Philippines was quite different from China; in fact, it was its reverse. In the Archipelago, the people were all Christians, "as enthusiastic as the Europeans". But these Christians were of "mild character". For this, the Chinese took advantage of them, gained on them on business matters. The Filipinos were generous; nay, they were very generous. The examples were clear: the

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.* Archbishop Vagnozzi had sent the \$1,000 to the China Province account in the U.S.A. It was more than enough for the travel expenses; for this, Fr. Ferrari should ask the excess from Hong Kong. Cf *ibid.*

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*: "Venendo, cerchi di farsi determinare chiaramente dai Superiori le sue specifiche qualità, autorità e poteri da non capitare un secondo Shanghai, che sarebbe una Babele già profilatesi e che è meglio sotto tutti i punti, di eliminare".

<sup>96</sup> Br. Giovanni De Reggi died in Tolmezzo (11 August 1992) at 78 years, 56 years Salesian. He left for the Chinese missions on 13 November 1936, and then transferred to the Philippines in April 1952. He repatriated to Italy sometime in the 1980s.

<sup>97</sup> ASC F482 Filippine Mandaluyong: Corrispondenza (D'Amore a Ferrari, Victorias, 10 aprile 1952). The school started alright. By March and April of 1953, equipments for the mechanics, electro-mechanics, carpentry and shoe-making shops bought by Fr. D'Amore for about \$200,000 arrived from Italy. Cf AMS (marzo 1954) 24.

<sup>98</sup> Fr. Giovanni Monchiero died in Canlubang, Calamba, Laguna, Philippines (17 May 1976) at 61 years, 45 years Salesian and 36 years priest. He left for the Chinese missions on 24 April 1947, and then transferred to the Philippines in January 1952.

Apostolic Nuncio was ready to foot the bill for the trip of the first confreres; the owners of the Vicmico were disposed to pay when they came<sup>99</sup>.

But the clergy was scarce in the Philippines; consequently, the people were not really practicing and were ignorant of their religion. On the contrary, the Protestants were working "spectacularly" to win the Catholics. Hence, there was the equivalent need to work hard in order to prevent this fall-out from the Catholic faith. The country was practically "entirely civilized", due to the Spaniards and the Americans. Everybody spoke English with their particular accent. There were cities and towns with all the comfort of the European cities, such as already remarked by those Salesians who earlier came to the Archipelago. But in the hinterlands, there were the barrios, people lived in nipa huts. The Negrenses, who were the inhabitants of the island where Don Bosco Victorias was located, were Malayans in complexion, with the skin a little brown. In Negros Island, sugar cane was grown and was the main product<sup>100</sup>.

The owners of the sugar refinery wanted to put into reality the papal encyclicals on the social question. Vicmico was very much organized "a la Americana", that was, a big park, English meadows, gracious cemented villas which served as offices for the managers and the Salesians as well. The technical personnel of the company, which was international, lived in two-story houses, with their servants, garden, refrigerators, telephone, etc., modernly well-equipped. Food, travels, laundry were reimbursed by the company. The monthly pay ranged from Php100 to Php250. After six years of work, the company paid the expenses of a six-month vacation which could be in any part of the world. The houses of the workers were in cement. They had free water and light. The life provisions were at a reduced price in determined shops. There were 400 kilometers of railways, and 25 locomotives for transportation. Everywhere in the island, there was peace and well-being<sup>101</sup>. Above all, the Salesians were esteemed and were assisted by the personnel of the sugar mill, especially by the Spaniards. And the esteem was such not only by the lay but also by the Bishop of the Diocese. The latter, through the urgings of the people of the sugar mill, was ready to give the Parish of 5,000 souls within the "Mill" to the Salesians, who for the moment had refused since they did not possess as yet

<sup>99</sup> ASC F622 Filippine Bacolod-Victorias: Corrispondenza (Monchiero a Ziggotti, Victorias, 7 marzo 1952).

<sup>100</sup> ASC F622 Filippine Bacolod-Victorias: Correspondence (Monchiero a Ziggotti, Victorias, 7 marzo 1952). Fr. Monchiero aptly described the houses of the people of the barrios as "baracche di legno elevate di due metri dal terreno per il fresco, e all'ombra delle palme di cocco". Cf *ibid.*

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.* Cf also AMS (March 1952) 26.

the local language. For this, they had persuaded the owners to retain the actual Parish Priest, a certain Mill-Hill missionary<sup>102</sup>.

Fr. Monchiero told Fr. Ziggotti that the company was ready to give the elementary school near the Salesians to the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians. Other Congregations of Sisters had expressed their desire to take this work. He suggested that Turin should somehow “push” the Superiors of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians to do something fast about this, or else they risked losing this chance<sup>103</sup>. He confessed one last thing to the Superior: the work was tough. He and Fr. D’Amore were overworked, both with the Oratory and the construction. The process of getting the permission from the government to open the new school was frustrating, and the preparation for the coming school pressure laden. There was even the Parish Priest, who was sick, whom they had to substitute often. Besides, they felt alone and far from their confreres.

“I assure you that in certain days we feel terribly the gravity of our situation”<sup>104</sup>.

Nonetheless, the first confreres moved on to start their task of putting up the technical school. Little perhaps did they think that Don Bosco Technical Institute Victorias would be a very much visited school, by government officials and by those who were concerned with the type of education that the Salesians were spearheading in the Philippines. A government delegate from the U.S. capital came to verify the articles written on this Salesian school in the U.S. Even the President of the Philippines, Ramon Magsaysay, planned a personal visit to the school. The Director for the Bureau of Private Schools had shown great interest to the Salesian way of education. He even now wanted that the Salesians take charge of preparing teachers and instructors for the trade and vocational schools of the country. And the school in Victorias was his assuring example<sup>105</sup>.

### 3. Don Bosco Technical Institute, Mandaluyong

The development of the Salesian work in the Philippines was interpreted as fast. It seemed that almost yearly, the Salesians were starting a foundation.

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<sup>102</sup> ASC F622 Philippine Bacolod-Victorias: Correspondence (Monchiero a Ziggotti, Victorias, 7 marzo 1952).

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>105</sup> AMS (March 1954) 24-25: “I direttori del dicastero ministeriale delle scuole professionali danno ampia facoltà ai salesiani di preparare i programmi e gli orari di insegnamento ... [The Director of the Bureau of Private Schools] vorrebbe che i salesiani immediatamente si mettessero a preparare gli insegnanti di scuole di arti e mestieri della Repubblica”.

In the two years that followed after they started in Tarlac and Victorias, they took up three others: Mandaluyong, Cebu and Makati. Cebu was one of those foundations already pre-approved by Turin. Instead, Mandaluyong and Makati, were immediate offers that the Salesians could simply not refuse, even if Turin might have hesitated in accepting these offers.

### 3.1. *Mandaluyong – “Casa Madre”*

The Salesians were barely two years old in the Philippines when they assumed this third work. They had one clear reason why they immediately accepted the moment it was offered to them: it was located in the capital of the country. They obviously wanted a place to establish themselves in Manila, to serve as a meeting point for the works they already administered and would administer in the future. Their confrere, Archbishop Piani, had suggested to Fr. Braga that the Salesians should start first in the Philippine capital. In reality, Mandaluyong came only after those which were started in the periphery.

Already, Archbishop Gabriel Reyes wanted the Salesians in Manila. But he could not decide as yet which place to give them as venue of their ministry, until the old seminary of Manila came into light. It would be his successor, Archbishop Rufino J. Santos, who would finally deal the Salesians with their foundation in Manila. The latter had in fact invited them earlier to start a work in his former diocese in Lipa. They had not so far heeded his invitation. This time, though, they would not refuse him.

Fr. Luigi Ferrari wrote Fr. Ziggotti on 30 November 1953, informing him that the Salesian work of Mandaluyong was already functioning as a “Don Bosco Boys’ Center”, that was, an Oratory. At the same time, however, a sort of an Aspirantate had also been included within the opera, for the Salesians felt the need that early to gather vocations at once in order to render the work in the Philippines “fruitful”<sup>106</sup>.

Archbishop Santos consented to the canonical erection of the Salesian house of Mandaluyong<sup>107</sup> as requested by Fr. Luigi Ferrari, Delegate of Fr. Acquistapace. The latter had succeeded Fr. Braga as Provincial of the China Province, which now included not only China and the Philippines but also Vietnam. So the Rector Major, Fr. Renato Ziggotti, declared the canonical

<sup>106</sup> ASC F482 Filippine Mandaluyong Corrispondenza (Ferrari a Ziggotti, Manila, 30 novembre 1953).

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.* (Consent. Archbishop Rufino J. Santos, Manila, 20 July 1953).

erection of the Salesian house of Mandaluyong<sup>108</sup> on 15 September 1953<sup>109</sup>, thus making it the third house of the Philippine delegation, after Tarlac and Victorias, and the first to be established in the capital of the Islands. Archbishop Piani had previously suggested to Fr. Braga that the Salesians start in the capital<sup>110</sup>. It was never too late to start in the capital. Perhaps, it was more propitious to have one now, since the Salesian presence in the Philippines was surprisingly growing fast.

Fr. Ferrari, as Delegate of the Provincial, entered into contract with the Archdiocese of Manila and its Archbishop. The agreement, established on 11 February 1954, was a “contract of sub-lease”, with the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Manila as sub-lessor, and the Salesians of Don Bosco as sub-lessee. For ninety-nine years, the Salesians could use the property given to their disposition, in order that they could put up a vocational school and an Oratory. The Archbishop was to contribute to the activities of the festive Oratory and to subsidize the Salesians, giving the sum of Php150 monthly for each Salesian assigned. This would be considered as alms which obliged the Salesians to celebrate a certain number of masses for the Archbishop. Both contracting parties would agree on the number of Salesians who would be assigned to the house. The Salesians, however, would take full responsibility of the construction and the operation of the vocational school, making them autonomous in its direction and administration. Finally, the contract consented in the inclusion of boarders within the compound of the school<sup>111</sup>.

<sup>108</sup> In his request for the canonical erection of Don Bosco Mandaluyong, Fr. Fedrigotti stated the two-fold scope of its foundation: (1) to open “scuole professionali per Alunni interni ed esterni”; (2) to open “un Oratorio per l’assistenza religiosa e morale della gioventù del luogo”. Cf ASC F482 Filippine Mandaluyong (Richiesta. Fedrigotti, Torino, 11 agosto 1953).

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.* (Decree of canonical erection. Ziggotti, Torino, 15 settembre 1953). The Secretary General sent Fr. Acquistapace two copies of the original decree of canonical erection of the house, of which one was kept in provincial archives, the other in the archives of the newly erected house. Cf ASC F482 Filippine Mandaluyong: Corrispondenza (Puddu a Acquistapace, Torino, 15 settembre 1953).

<sup>110</sup> In the rescript issued by the Holy See to the request of Fr. Fedrigotti, issued on 26 August 1953, there is a curious note added to the document: “dummodo nihil obstet ex parte S.C. de Propaganda Fide”. However, this note is cancelled out with an open and a close parentheses. Beside it, a dated (13 September 1953) handwritten note is added. It stated that there was no need of adding the “dummodo nihil obstet...” in as much as Manila was not under the Propaganda Fide. Cf ASC F482 Filippine Mandaluyong (Rescript n. 3794/53. Rome, 26 August 1953). And how much was the rescript of the Holy See for the canonical erection of Don Bosco Mandaluyong? £1245, broken down in the following: £1000 (Taxa Lib.), £45 (Expensae Lib.), £100 (Agentia Lib.), £100 (Exsecutio Lib.) Cf *ibid.*

<sup>111</sup> Cf ASC F482 Filippine Mandaluyong. Contract of sub-lease (Manila, 12 November 1953). The Archbishop had the address at 33 Aviles Street, San Miguel, Manila, while Fr. Ferrari had the address at # 100 General Kalentong St., Mandaluyong, Rizal.

Fr. Acquistapace came to Don Bosco Mandaluyong on 30 December 1953 and conducted his first official canonical visitation of the newest of the Salesian presence. He stayed there till 6 January 1954, when at the end of his visitation, he wrote the solitary observations that the visitation entailed. The house of Mandaluyong was indeed complex. It consisted of an Oratory where boys came during the week since the center was in a very popular area. It had a trade school which was swiftly increasing in fame and thus in enrollment. But then, it also had a group of boarders and a budding Aspirantate from where vocations were to be chosen.

Nonetheless, a most important remark that Fr. Acquistapace wrote in the books of observations of the house of Mandaluyong was regarding the special mission of this Salesian presence.

"I believe that the special mission of this House is to put us in contact with the environment, the customs and the moral needs of the Filipino youth, and to make us experience the preciousness of the various kinds of Salesian apostolate"<sup>112</sup>.

Thus, Don Bosco Mandaluyong was a sort of a first front in the ministry of the youth of the country, which ought to provide the Salesian a multifaceted experience. Mandaluyong was to expose the newcomer Salesian to the reality of the Filipino and teach him to invent and create his apostolate towards the young. In a way, Don Bosco Mandaluyong should make the Salesians Filipino.

Fr. Acquistapace, however, challenged the confreres of this particular work to exert effort to increase the number of the boarders and to take care of the aspirants. He was already thinking in fact of these categories for the work for vocations. He had even exhorted the rector to give some Latin classes to a small group of students considered as "the more regarded in moral and intellectual qualities", who could become future aspirants<sup>113</sup>. For him, to have vocations was crucial for the Salesian work. For these, the Salesians should specially take care of the interns and the aspirants<sup>114</sup>.

At the end, the Provincial declared that this "Don Bosco Technical Institute" should become, "at least in the order of importance and 'special mission'", the

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<sup>112</sup> SAFIN Mandaluyong: Quaderno delle Osservazioni (Acquistapace, 1 gennaio 1954) 3. In the first visitation of Fr. Acquistapace, 30 December 1953 to 6 January 1954, we read this note regarding the Salesian house of Mandaluyong: "In my point of view, the special mission of this House is to put us in contact with the ambient, with the customs and moral needs of the Filipino young, and to make us make precious experience of the various kinds of the Salesian apostolate". Cf. *ibid.*

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.* (Acquistapace, novembre 1956) 21, 23.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.* (Acquistapace, 1 gennaio 1954) 5: "... fare ogni sforzo per aumentare il numero degli interni e per separare e curare nel miglior modo possibile gli aspiranti!"

“*Casa Madre* of the Salesian Works” in the Philippines<sup>115</sup>. Don Bosco Mandaluyong was not only important; it was also privileged in the eyes of the Superior.

The school, in fact, in its first year of official operation (1953-1954), had 94 students (of these, 14 were interns and 80 externs) in its vocational course as well as in its secondary course: 31 mechanics, 45 electro-mechanics, 10 carpentry and eight tailoring. There were 10 Salesians at work in the school: five priests, two clerics and three coadjutors<sup>116</sup>. The Oratory was frequented by 450 boys. The budding Aspirantate had seven recruits, of which four were in the 1<sup>st</sup> year and three in their 5<sup>th</sup> year<sup>117</sup>.

The next year, the enrollment would more than double with 261 boys (of which 21 interns and 240 externs): 110 mechanics, 105 electro-mechanics, 30 carpentry and 16 tailoring. The Salesians have also increased to 10; four priests, three clerics and three coadjutors<sup>118</sup>. The number of aspirants had also doubled so soon: two in the first year, eight in the second year and four in the fourth year. The number of boys frequenting the Oratory was almost the same at the average of 550.

But what was surprising was the activity with regards the sodalities and associations typical of the Salesian environment: 143 members, of which 25 (Blessed Sacrament Sodality), 18 (Immaculate Conception Sodality), 30 (St. Joseph Sodality), 20 (Knights of the Blessed Sacrament) and 50 (Catholic Action)<sup>119</sup>. In its third year of operation (1955-1956), the elementary would be included with an enrollment of 116. The high school enrollment would have 286 and the vocational with 63. Meanwhile, the Aspirantate would be phased out and transferred to Victorias. However, there would be an adult vocation<sup>120</sup>.

This trend of increase in number and activities in Don Bosco Mandaluyong would be constant that would further mark the importance and exceptionality

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<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>116</sup> The confreres of Don Bosco Mandaluyong were the priests Pierangelo Quaranta, Patrick Ryan, Giovanni Righetti, Emilio Baggio and Pericle Bianchini; the coadjutors Valentino Floris, Marcos Barnaba and Mario Viel; and the clerics Agustin Lopez and Luis Iriarte. The superior of the house was Fr. Luigi Ferrari, who at the same time was superior of the delegation. Cf *Elenco Generale* (1954), p. 413.

<sup>117</sup> ASC F482 Philippine Mandaluyong: Statistiche (Anno Scolastico 1953/1954).

<sup>118</sup> The confreres of Don Bosco Mandaluyong for the school year 1954-1955 were the priests Vincenzo Ricaldone, Ferdinando Rossotto, Emilio Baggio, Giovanni Righetti and Ercole Solaroli; the coadjutors Valentino Floris, Michele Garombo, Marcos Barnaba, Nicolino Tambascia and Mario Viel; the clerics Patrick Corcoran, Luis Iriarte and Agustin Lopez. Cf *Elenco Generale* (1955), p. 413.

<sup>119</sup> ASC F482 Philippine Mandaluyong: Statistiche (Anno Scolastico 1954/1955).

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.* (Anno Scolastico 1955/1956).

of this particular Salesian presence. Fr. Acquistapace's vision of it was indeed slowly being realized.

### 3.2. Mandaluyong According to the "Quaderno"

The copy of the notebook on which the Superior wrote his observations after his extraordinary visitation which he had to do canonically every year is still conserved<sup>121</sup>. Unfortunately, it is about the only important archival document which the house had conserved through the years<sup>122</sup>. One asked the sense of history of those who were first in this Salesian house in Manila.

The "Quaderno delle Osservazioni"<sup>123</sup> was a precious document which reveals the first years of the Salesian house of Don Bosco Mandaluyong, from its foundation until the Salesian Province of the Philippines was established<sup>124</sup>. We find in it a total of 11 visitations conducted by four different Superiors: the Provincials Fr. Mario Acquistapace and Fr. Alfredo Giuseppe Cogliandro, the Visitatore Fr. Carlo Braga, and the Prefect General Fr. Albino Fedrigotti. The observations expressed in the *Quaderno* reveal the lights and shadows that surrounded Don Bosco Mandaluyong, those which merited correction and those which merited laudation.

#### 3.2.1. The Oratory

The Boys' Center of Don Bosco Mandaluyong was a model one. Located in a very populous and low-income area of the municipality of Mandaluyong, it was very much frequented. In its first years, it averaged 500 boys every

<sup>121</sup> *Costituzioni della Società di San Francesco di Sales*, Torino, Direzione Generale Opere Don Bosco 1966, art. 121; *Regolamenti della Società Salesiana*, Torino, Direzione Generale Opere Don Bosco 1966, art. 346.

<sup>122</sup> *Regolamenti della Società Salesiana*, art. 351.

<sup>123</sup> "Quaderno delle Osservazioni" is translated as "Book of Observations". The Provincial Superior used to write his remarks regarding the religious community he was officially conducting a visitation. There is very little of archival materials kept in the local archives of Don Bosco Mandaluyong. The more precious and more important one without doubt is this notebook.

<sup>124</sup> SAFIN Mandaluyong: *Quaderno delle osservazioni*. In its front cover, there was picture of Saint Charles Borromeo. This book contained the observations made during the visits of the following Superiors - Fr. Mario Acquistapace: 30 December 1953 - 6 January 1954, 18-24 February 1955, 15-20 October 1955, November 1956, 28 November - 4 December 1957; Fr. Albino Fedrigotti: February 1959; Fr. Carlo Braga - 1960, 26 February - 5 March 1961; 15 February to 8 March 1962; 28 July - 5 August 1962; Fr. Alfredo Cogliandro: November 1963.



Sunday; and it still tended to grow<sup>125</sup>. In 1960, Fr. Braga would observe that it was frequented by 600 to 1,000 boys and was well organized<sup>126</sup>. In the beginning, however, it did not have its own locale. The school's 7:00 a.m. Sunday mass, intended for the oratorians, were also frequented by outsiders who should be going to the nearby San Felipe Parish, but who were now practically occupying the places destined for the oratorians. Fr. Acquistapace, in fact, wanted the Salesians to make them understand that the Sunday celebration in the school was really for the boys<sup>127</sup>. But the ordinary people who lived around the school preferred to frequent the Sunday mass organized by the Salesians.

However, in 1956, Fr. Acquistapace noted that the school had its own chapel but which was far from the dignity that Don Bosco would have wanted for the house of God<sup>128</sup>. The school had sought to apply his observation of the previous year, even with this deficiency. Three years later, Fr. Fedrigotti would once more observe the inadequacy of the chapel, for it was not attractive and comfortable. But the general participation of the students in the celebrations was not lacking<sup>129</sup>. Nonetheless, Fr. Braga, in 1960, would insist on the construction of a new chapel so as to give greater fervor in the practices of piety of the boys<sup>130</sup>.

The aspirants, boarders and boys of the Oratory mixed together, especially on Sundays. So that the aspirants readily and easily joined in the activities of the Oratory, even if perhaps some of these activities were not "proper" to them. Fr. Acquistapace advised the Salesians that the aspirants did not really need to watch the movies every Sunday shown to the oratorians. On the contrary, they should be given other activities on weekends<sup>131</sup>. He also observed that the boarders were not dressed according to the religious and Salesian character of the house. He wanted the boys to avoid wearing the so-called "low waist" pants<sup>132</sup>. Nonetheless, Don Bosco Mandaluyong remained an example for him to cite in his visitation of the other houses.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.* Quaderno (Acquistapace, 18-24 febbraio 1955) 7, 9.

<sup>126</sup> ASC F163 Philippine: Corrispondenza (Braga a Ziggiotti, Tarlac, 9 febbraio 1960).

<sup>127</sup> SAFIN Mandaluyong: Quaderno (Acquistapace, 15-20 ottobre 1955) 11.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.* (Acquistapace, novembre 1956) 19.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.* (Fedrigotti, febbraio 1959) 25. There is no record of observations regarding a provincial visitation of Mandaluyong in 1958. Instead, we have the observations of Fr. Albino Fedrigotti, as Prefect General, who made an extraordinary visit of the Philippines in the name of the Rector Major in February 1959.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.* (Fedrigotti, febbraio 1959); *ibid.* (Braga, 1960) 27-28.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.* (Acquistapace, 18-24 febbraio 1955) 7, 9.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.* (Acquistapace, novembre 1956) 21, 23.

### 3.2.2. The School

The house of Don Bosco Mandaluyong was indeed complex and in need of equilibrium and care for all the sectors that constituted it. It was the school, however, that was developing quickly and was getting renowned. It did not merely remain vocational; it now had both the elementary and the high school. Characterized as technical, an innovation in Manila itself, it was inevitable, therefore, that it attracted attention. But it still needed to be organized as a school of Don Bosco.

The school and Oratory were excelling in sports, a characteristic of the Don Bosco education system. They were winning competitions, especially in football. Each Salesian had his football team, to coach and to manage<sup>133</sup>. This was one game that he particularly loved to play and teach others to play. And the Salesian seemingly knew how to do this very well. After only two years of operation, the game had been picked up by the boys who were becoming champions. For this too, he was in the midst of the boys, who obviously flocked around him<sup>134</sup>.

However, the Provincial noted that attention ought to be given to the religious formation of the boys too; and it was important to impose this already from the beginning. In his visitation from 15 to 20 October 1955, he insisted on the care for the sacred functions and songs of the school. The commemoration of the monthly 24<sup>th</sup> and exercise of a happy death, which could be made to coincide with the first Friday of the month, should also be “traditionalized”<sup>135</sup>. For the same spiritual accompaniment of the boys, the Salesians gave particular impulse to the Salesian sodalities. In the school’s first year (1953-1954), there was only the Catholic Action (which was very much in vigour in Italy then) with 56 members (16 from the vocational school, and 40 from the Oratory) as a religious group. The next year, however, they introduced the typical sodalities which already garnered over a hundred boys<sup>136</sup>.

It was really in the school that the Salesians excelled. So early in its foundation, it had already both the elementary and the high school. However, it was in the elementary sector of the school that the situation for the Salesians became problematic.

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<sup>133</sup> Two Salesians who “invented” the games for the boys of Mandaluyong were Fr. Maurilio Candusso and Br. Giovanni De Reggi. Any frequenter of the Oratory would inevitably see these Salesians with a soccer ball at hand to make boys play the game.

<sup>134</sup> SAFIN Mandaluyong: Quaderno (Acquistapace, 15-20 ottobre 1955) 11ff.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>136</sup> ASC F482 Mandaluyong: Statistiche (Anno Scolastico 1954/1955).

During his visitation in 1959, Fr. Fedrigotti had given certain provisions for the elementary department, something that Fr. Braga had to remind the Salesians in his visitation in 1960. This department of the school was populated by lay teachers, most of them women. Fr. Fedrigotti wanted the sector to be separated from the high school. He considered as sufficient one Salesian, as principal, to be responsible. Although, he could be assisted by a lady teacher, a sort of an assistant principal; however, this assistant must be "capable and serious". Although he openly did not favor the elementary because of the lady teachers, Fr. Fedrigotti tolerated it for the reason that it was better that the young were educated by lay people who were supervised by religious<sup>137</sup>.

Earlier, in 1956, Fr. Acquistapace had observed that in the future, it would be good to separate the elementary<sup>138</sup>. Fr. Cogliandro shared Fr. Fedrigotti's observation, as well as that of Fr. Acquistapace. He even moved that no Salesian be directly involved in the elementary school. And what is the reason for this? It was because there was a big group of lady teachers in this sector. For him, it was enough to assign an elder headmistress to be in charge of the elementary which could be limited to the 4<sup>th</sup> grade. The higher grades, the 5<sup>th</sup> and the 6<sup>th</sup>, could be integrated to the high school. A Salesian could be assigned to take charge of them<sup>139</sup>. Nonetheless, Fr. Cogliandro was convinced that the elementary "does much good and is serious in its work", for it prepared the future students for the high school, and provided the Christian education to children who would have none of it if they were not in the Salesian school<sup>140</sup>.

### 3.2.3. The Salesian Community

But if there was someone that the Superiors wanted to help in their visitations, it was the Salesian community<sup>141</sup>. The confreres of Don Bosco Mandaluyong were also reminded of certain things for a greater fidelity to the Salesian rules.

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<sup>137</sup> SAFIN Mandaluyong: Quaderno (Fedrigotti, 1959) 27-28. Fr. Fedrigotti did not feel at ease with the ladies in a Salesian school. But he preferred that the young be educated by teachers who were governed by principles of religion in their work of education. For this, he allowed the elementary sector in Mandaluyong, "salvare tanta gioventù dall'insegnamento laico". Cf *ibid.*

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.* (Acquistapace, november 1956) 21, 23.

<sup>139</sup> ASC F163 Philippine: Corrispondenza (Cogliandro a Fedrigotto, Makati, 12 febbraio 1964).

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>141</sup> *Regolamenti della Società Salesiana*, art. 347.

Fr. Acquistapace reminded the confreres that for the monthly exercise of a happy death, effort should be made to have an extraordinary confessor, even a non-Salesian. According to him, this should not be difficult to find in a city like Manila. Furthermore, each confrere should be provided with a meditation book and a copy of the book used for spiritual reading. They did not know well yet the language of the country. Besides, the books in hand should help them understand what they pray<sup>142</sup>. For the confreres who were involved in the ministry of the confession, the monthly “moral case” ought to be done, if only to keep them faithful to Don Bosco’s system<sup>143</sup>. Moreover, they ought to encourage frequent communion in the daily school mass celebrated<sup>144</sup>.

The Superior gave them a further practical advice. The confreres should write their extraordinary schedules on the blackboard provided in the refectory. Keeping the community informed was one way of maintaining the family spirit and giving the house “the atmosphere of a little paradise”<sup>145</sup>. Moreover, they ought to try to understand when there was not enough and when there was not everything at table. Indeed, the search for what was “proper” for the foreign was a temptation, but which was not easy to have, “on account of the elevated prices of certain food”<sup>146</sup>.

Nonetheless, in spite of certain problems he witnessed among the confreres of the “first hours” in Mandaluyong, Fr. Acquistapace admired the witness of this particular Salesian community:

“... the spirit of faith of all the confreres in which none searches one’s interest but the good outcome of the work of the house; the spirit of joy ... seen above all in the refectory, which the major superiors wish so much; the spirit of sacrifice and of work which sometimes was excessive”<sup>147</sup>.

Moreover, the confreres were exemplary in assisting the boys, and he was happy to see them in the playground, especially during the 10:30 a.m. recess, when all the students were out for their break<sup>148</sup>. They, too, were diligent in

<sup>142</sup> SAFIN Mandaluyong: Quaderno (Acquistapace, 15-20 October 1955) 11ff.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.* (Fr. Acquistapace, novembre 1956) 21. Fr. Acquistapace suggested that confessors should read the “Camilleri”.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.* 22. Fr. Acquistapace noted a particular argument, a sort of challenge, which could help the Salesians obtain more fruits in their work: “Come ottenere più frequenti comunioni fra i nostri giovani che vengono alla Messa quotidiana senza dover confessarsi *totius quoties* si accostano alla Mensa Eucaristica”. Cf *ibid.*

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.* 21, 23.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.* (Acquistapace, 15-20 ottobre 1955) 11.

<sup>147</sup> *Ibid.* (Acquistapace, novembre 1956) 21.

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.* (Acquistapace, 15-20 ottobre 1955) 11.

their assistance among the boarders, even if perhaps there were things to be improved in this regard<sup>149</sup>.

Now, that was not just a formal complement by the Provincial who dreamed of this particular house as *Casa Madre* of the Salesians in the Philippines. The spirit which he wanted planted was indeed little by little being rooted, so that a tradition was being established. Seemingly, he was seeing his vision being realized.

Fr. Acquistapace reiterated in 1957 his previous observations, as he witnessed the great sacrifice being put up by the confreres in his visitation of Mandaluyong in 1957, from 28 October to 4 December. They did not have the places needed and did not have sufficient finances. They were in the midst of the young during recreation, especially when the greatest number of the young was in the recreation ground. The family spirit of the house was admirable in the refectory as well as outside. He congratulated the confreres for the increased number of young people who went to daily mass, their way of praying and their enthusiasm to serve the mass, plus the organization of the Catholic Action and the sodalities<sup>150</sup>. Even the activity of scouting, which was common in the schools in the Philippines, was slowly growing. It began in 1954 with 16 members<sup>151</sup>; the next year, it had 52<sup>152</sup>. However, in its third year, its number had gone down to 32<sup>153</sup>. But this was because the sodalities had somehow attracted more numbers. Furthermore, there had been much impulse given to the teaching and learning of catechism which was marked with the catechetical contest held<sup>154</sup>. His previous suggestion for the Salesians to use the "filmine" to make the religion classes be more attractive must certainly have been kept in mind<sup>155</sup>.

In his extraordinary visit of the school on 11 February 1959, the Prefect General, Fr. Albino Fedrigotti confirmed such remark of the Provincial. He synthesized what he saw in Mandaluyong in these words: much work, the love for Don Bosco, and the spirit of observance of the rules were indeed noticeable<sup>156</sup>.

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<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.* Fr. Acquistapace was precise in his suggestions on the example of the Salesian assistant in the dormitory of the boarders: his cell should not take too much space and should be well kept, its curtain always open during the day so that the boarders could be inspired to order in their own places. Cf *ibid.*

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.* (Acquistapace, novembre 1956) 21, 23.

<sup>151</sup> ASC F482 Mandaluyong: Statistiche (Anno scolastico 1953/1954).

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.* (Anno scolastico 1954/1955).

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.* (Anno scolastico 1955/1956).

<sup>154</sup> SAFIN Mandaluyong: Quaderno (Acquistapace, novembre 1956) 21,23.

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.* (Acquistapace, 15-20 ottobre 1955) 11.

<sup>156</sup> *Ibid.* (Fedrigotti, febbraio 1959) 25: "il molto lavoro, l'amore a Don Bosco e lo spirito di osservanza".

Furthermore, there was a word of warning from Fr. Fedrigotti when he ended his visitation of the Salesians' "most prestigious school" in the Philippines. The school seemingly was becoming more for the elite. Indeed, there was much good done in the betterment and the purification of the ambient, specially in the moral and scholastic sense, what with so many students who came to the school. However, Fr. Fedrigotti gave this realistic advice: the Salesians should keep that particular option for the poor in consonance with the charisma of the Founder:

"Do not forget that Don Bosco preferred among the young the most in need. Do not allow yourselves to be induced to prefer the wealthier students or the "figli di papa"<sup>157</sup>.

Earlier, there was the felt need that it was time to think of organizing the Salesian Cooperators and the Salesian Past Pupils<sup>158</sup>, of which Mandaluyong should set an example for the other schools. The existence of these, in fact, would be acknowledged in November 1956 by Fr. Acquistapace, who would praise the confreres for their effort to establish these<sup>159</sup>. The inauguration of the carpentry shop was scheduled for the coming feast of St. John Bosco; the exhibit of what the school was producing in the shops ought to be continued<sup>160</sup>. The introduction of the "School Diary" was indeed novel; it was proving very useful not only for the students but also for the parents and the teachers as well<sup>161</sup>.

Fr. Braga predicted that by June 1960, the enrollment in the school would have reached about 2,000, with half elementary and half for the technical school. Besides, the machineries of the shops of Mandaluyong were almost like those of Don Bosco Victorias. The current construction was to provide the Salesians decent quarters, which was also desired by the Cardinal<sup>162</sup>. In spite of the growing fame of the school, however, the Salesians should continue to make effort in organizing the didactic and professional aspects of the school. Assistance, more "acute and constant" on account of the great number of

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.* (Acquistapace, 15-20 ottobre 1955) 11.

<sup>159</sup> *Ibid.* (Acquistapace, novembre 1956) 21, 23.

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.* (Acquistapace, 15-20 ottobre 1955) 11.

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.* (Acquistapace, novembre 1956) 21. Fr. Acquistapace added that if article 193 of the Regulations was observed, then the aim of the school diary would indeed be complete. Cf *Regolamenti della Società Salesiana*, art. 193: "Il Capo deve curare i perfezionamenti e l'aggiornamento professionale dei confratelli che lo coadiuvano nel laboratorio, e promuovere la collaborazione costante e l'affiatamento con essi, e sentirsi responsabile con i Superiori della formazione religiosa dei giovani confratelli addetti al suo laboratorio".

<sup>162</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Braga a Ziggotti, Tarlac, 9 febbraio 1960).

students<sup>163</sup>, should be more precise<sup>164</sup>. At this point, though, he had to admit to the Rector Major that the number of personnel was clearly insufficient. For a growing school, the three priests, four shop heads, two clerics and two coadjutors who served as factotum were simply not enough<sup>165</sup>.

There was much being done for Don Bosco Mandaluyong as it was still beginning. It was not a perfect house. And it would remain so.

### 3.3. Don Bosco Mandaluyong before the Salesians Came

Don Bosco Mandaluyong, where the Salesian work commenced was already historical before the Salesians started their own history there. It was a seminary, and much earlier an orphanage. In both situations, it was intended to house the young. In the first phase, it catered to those who were abandoned and victims of situations; in the second phase, it formed those who were thought to be future ministers for the Church. One never thought that it would be given to religious whose charisma was, in fact, to take care of the young, specially the marginalized and the poor.

The edifice that existed in the site of Don Bosco Mandaluyong was originally intended to house the young, specially the indigent and the abandoned and the homeless, who had become orphans on account of disasters which had struck the City of Manila<sup>166</sup>. In 1882, a certain lawyer by the name of Don Baldomero Azanas, a member of Association of Our Lady of Consolation which was an organization based in St. Augustin Church and with the approval of his Augustinian mentors, presented a project on 29 July 1882 of an *Asilo* for the orphans which resulted from the cholera epidemic of that year. No less than the Governor General of the Philippines and the elite society of Manila supported him, so that through a *Junta de Damas* (established on 27 August 1882) the *Asilo de Nuestra Señora de la Consolacion* under the patronage of St. Thomas of Villanova, which would house the young orphans, was officially founded on 1 October 1882.

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<sup>163</sup> SAFIN Mandaluyong: Quaderno (Fedrigotti, febbraio 1959) 25.

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid.* (Braga, 1960) 27-28.

<sup>165</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Braga a Ziggiotti, Tarlac, 9 febbraio 1960). In 1960, the following were the personnel in Mandaluyong: the priests Pierangelo Quaranta, Mario Cuomo and Maurilio Candusso; the coadjutors Andrea Bragion, Romildo Gamba, Giovanni De Reggi, Rafael Mrzel, Pawel Prokopowicz and Mario Viel; the clerics Alfredo Manalili and Augusto Miranda.

<sup>166</sup> On 16 July 1880, an earthquake struck Manila; in 1882, a cholera epidemic caused much death and suffering to the population.

Initially, the *Asilo*, administered by lay people, was located in a rented house somewhere in the locality of Iris, along the spacious boulevard from Sampaloc to Tondo. But the increase number of orphans created problems in terms of finances and personnel. So the *Junta* wrote the Augustinian Provincial, Fray Salvador Font, on 22 December 1882, in the hope that a religious corporation would direct the *Asilo*. The Augustinian Provincial welcomed the request; he in turn, asked a group of Augustinian nuns from Spain, the *Hermanas de los Pobres* to come and assume the administration of the *Asilo*<sup>167</sup>.

The *Asilo* was transferred the next year to a new location, in a 50,000 sq. meters lot between Real and San Marcelino Streets in the area of San Fernando de Dilao in Manila. The corner stone of the new building was blessed on 8 March 1883, in the presence of the Governor General Primo de Rivera, the Archbishop of Manila Pedro Payo OP, and other dignitaries. However, the new building, made up of light materials, soon became inadequate to accommodate the growing number of orphans. Moreover, because of the increase in the number of orphans, and the moral problem posed by the cohabitation of boys and girls in the same house, the Augustinians decided to transfer the girls to the house that the Augustinians had in Mandaluyong. Here, the female orphans were put under the care of the Augustinian Sisters who have come recently from Spain through the Augustinian Fathers.

Meanwhile, some of the older boys were transferred to the Augustinian Monastery of Guadalupe where they were taught drawing, painting, engraving and sculpture by a certain Don Melchor San Pedro. The Augustinians already planned a school of arts and trades for these orphans. For this, they built the *Asilo* for boys and a school of arts and trades as well in Tambobong (today Malabon)<sup>168</sup>.

In the advent of the Philippine Revolution, it was believed to be the place where the upcoming revolution against Spain was denounced. One of the orphan girls, through the suggestion of one of the nuns, told what she knew to one of the Augustinian friar who came to the convent. The Augustinian in turn reported the plan to the Spanish authorities who moved at once to arrest the supposed leaders of insurrection against Spain. Andres Bonifacio, revolutionary leader of the movement for Independence of the Philippines from Spain, the Katipunan, anticipated the revolution and proclaimed the Independence of the Filipinos in Balintawak in August 1896.<sup>169</sup>

<sup>167</sup> For their acceptance, they put one condition: that the *Junta* submits an inventory of the funds collected so far and the furniture of the provisional building where the orphans were sheltered, as well as a copy of the by-laws and the resolutions taken by the *Junta*.

<sup>168</sup> Cf Hernandez F. POLICARPIO OSA, *The Augustinians in the Philippines*. Makati City, 1998, pp. 11-17.

<sup>169</sup> Cf E. ORDOÑEZ (ed.), *The Philippine Revolution and Beyond*. 2 vols., Manila 1998.



After the War of Independence against Spain, during the American occupation of the Philippines, the *Seminario de San Carlos de Manila* was inaugurated on 15 June 1913. At the same time, there was a school known as "Santa Mesa College" in the same place, where the government had thought of putting up a primary school, intermediate, high school and college<sup>170</sup>.

Originally put under the patronage of St. Charles Borromeo, the seminary, located in the barrio of San Felipe Neri, was commonly known as *Seminario de Mandaluyong*. It was under the care of the *PP. Paules* who gave it all their time and interest; the Archbishop of Manila, Jeremias Jacob Harty, helped the center financially.

However, in 1919, the new Archbishop of Manila, Michael O'Doherty, wanted to concentrate on the seminary for the future priests of the Archdiocese. Thus, the College was transferred the next year to the central house of the *PP. Paules* (Vincentians) at San Marcelino Street. Thus came about Saint Vincent College (from 1920 to 1927) (future Adamson University by the C.M.), leaving the place in Mandaluyong as only Seminario, which the *PP. Paules* continued to administer<sup>171</sup>. The Seminary, known as San Carlos Seminary, however, was later transferred to its actual site in Guadalupe, in Makati.

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<sup>170</sup> *Misiones Catolicas en el Extremo Oriente*. Manila, 1937, p. 186.

<sup>171</sup> Cf *ibid.*, pp. 186-189.



## Chapter Four

# TWO FOUNDATIONS (1954)

## 1. Don Bosco's Cebu

Turin had already approved in 1951 the offer of Cebu together with those of Lipa, Tarlac and Victorias. It was one of the first offers, in fact, that Fr. Braga had the chance to see for himself during his visits to the Philippines. However, it was only in 1954 that Cebu was officially adopted by the Salesians. Perhaps, one would ask why the delay in the start of the work, and what made the Salesians accept the offer.

### 1.1. Cebu Boys Town

Don Bosco Cebu started as a work to house and care for street children<sup>1</sup>. This was rather novel, in as much as the three previous works began by the Salesians were schools. It was the closest to the purpose that Don Bosco had invoked for the Salesians: to care for the poor and the abandoned young. This particular initiative could not but attract the attention of others. Bishop Cuenco of Iloilo, seeing the work on 6 April 1954, not even a month after it commenced, expressed his desire to have a similar work in his Archdiocese. The fact was that this was practically the type of work that the Archbishop of Manila had first offered to the Salesians when they came in 1911<sup>2</sup>.

The Salesians had opened up schools with the usually "attached" Oratory as an intention of canonically erecting a new presence. That of Don Bosco Cebu would later also be destined to end up as a school. Indeed, the Salesians in Cebu started a school, as planned, so that the boys adopted by the Salesians did not need to go outside of the Salesian center for their schooling. The trade school that they established began to enrol other boys, both interns and externs, who shared the premises with "the boys"; the technical schooling it provided was so good that it was sufficient enough to land its graduates of high school to work in a country which was getting industrialized.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. AMS (31 agosto 1954) 75.

<sup>2</sup> The offer of Archbishop Jeremiah Harty, Ordinary of Manila, and of Archbishop Ambrose Agius, Apostolic Delegate to the Philippines was that the Salesians take over a reformatory for difficult boys in a place called Lolombo. Cf G. BICOMONG SDB, *The Arrival of Don Bosco in the Philippines...*, pp. 21-29.

The Salesian work in Cebu became more complex with the addition of a parish. Seemingly, the Salesians assigned there were soon drawn to work in the parish and thus leaving the difficult boys of “the Town” to themselves, or at least to the care of a coadjutor who found himself at a loss on how to handle such boys. The language remained a barrier to communicate and educate. Sometimes, the hard way had to be employed if only to instil discipline.

In the course of time, the “normal” boys of the school prevailed over the street-boys. Then, little by little, “the boys” were no longer at home at their town. And thus the work became a school for the Filipinos just like the others. One should not forget, however, that the original intent of the work, when it was canonically erected was for the boys loitering and idling in the streets of Cebu, and for orphans as well.

### 1.2. *Announcing Boys Town*

The newspapers of Cebu were not lacking in announcing Boys Town to the Cebuanos as well as to the whole of the Philippines<sup>3</sup>. The publicity indeed was helping “to make noise” about what the Salesians were doing for the young of the island, if only to arouse sympathy and help for what they were doing, as they were only starting.

On 21 May 1954, a certain Ven D. Najarro wrote Fr. Attilio Boscarior<sup>4</sup> asking for one of his latest pictures for an article he was writing about the Boys Town Center<sup>5</sup>. Ms. Concepcion Briones<sup>6</sup> also wrote Fr. Boscarior on 2 February 1954 asking him to send pictures, one of the present constructions for the boys in Tisa and another with the present building with the boys. She wanted to send these pictures to Manila for a possible newspaper write-up<sup>7</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> Among Cebu City’s newspapers, which published articles on the newly established Cebu Boys Town were: *The Republic Today*, *The Southern Star*, *The Column Today* and *The Daily News*. But there were also newspapers with nationwide circulation, which published articles on the Salesian work: e.g. *The Manila Bulletin* and *The Philippine Free Press*.

<sup>4</sup> SAS 38B312 Fr. Attilio Guerrino Boscarior: born in Udine, Italy (23 December 1915); first profession in Chieri, Turin. (8 September 1938); ordained in Shanghai, China (1 July 1948); died in Udine, Italy (30 December 1976) at 61 years, 38 years Salesian and 28 years priest. He worked in the Casa Generalizia in Rome.

<sup>5</sup> SAFIN Cebu: Correspondence (Navarro to Boscarior, Cebu City, 21 May 1954).

<sup>6</sup> Ms. Concepcion Briones was one of the first benefactors of Boys Town. A civic-minded and active member of the CWL which initiated the work for Cebu’s street children and which asked the Salesians to take over this apostolate. To promote the initiative, she had written an article - “Cebu Builds New Home for the Homeless”.

<sup>7</sup> SAFIN Cebu: Correspondence (Briones to Boscarior, Cebu City, 2 February 1955).

A write up entitled "A Credit to Boys Town" showed how the situation at the Salesian center aroused compassion and desire to help the boys of the Salesian institution<sup>8</sup>. Someone who read this write-up wrote the Salesian Missions Procure of New York, U.S.A. and sent a \$40 contribution "to help the youngster above and similar youngsters in need". He wrote his reaction to the article, which he received<sup>9</sup>.

The Salesians of the Philippines must have asked the help of their Salesian confreres and their U.S. Missions Procure Office in order to raise funds for the current Boys Town apostolate. The superior of Don Bosco Cebu must have sent a write-up, based on a true-to-life experience at Boys Town, in order to bolster this fund-raising initiative. And the Salesian mission procurator had used this write-up in order to arouse interest in this Salesian apostolate and thus obtain donations<sup>10</sup>. But what was the content of this write-up entitled "A Credit to BoysTown"?

*Cebu, Philippines* – Although a nine-year-old youngster stayed only a few days at the Boys Center conducted by Salesian Missioners here, he proved to be a credit to the community in that short time.

The lad had been invited to the center by Father Boscarior, rector. He received a supply of clothes when he entered, and quickly made friends with the other boys. Then one morning a woman appeared who said she was his mother, and wanted to take him home for a time.

A few days later, the lad returned to the center. He gave Father Boscarior back all the clothes he had received, and said that he was leaving for good. When the priest asked why, the nine-year-old youngster explained: 'Because my mother is teaching me to steal things from the Boys Center. I don't want to do that, Father. I would like to stay here. But since my mother expects me to steal from you, the best thing for me to do is go away'<sup>11</sup>.

A story like this could not but provoke good propaganda for the budding Salesian work at the Boys Town. But it definitely revealed how noble the work was in favor of the abandoned boy.

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<sup>8</sup> SAFIN Cebu (Document "A Credit to Boys Town" [undated]). This was taken from the article "My mother wants me to steal, boys town inmate confesses" which came up with one of Cebu's dailies, sometime in 10 May 1954. Cf SAFIN Cebu: House Chronicle (10 May 1954).

<sup>9</sup> SAFIN Cebu (Document "A Credit to Boys Town" [undated]).

<sup>10</sup> The current U.S. Salesian mission procurer was Fr. Joseph Louis, residing at 148 Main Street, New Rochelle, N.Y. However, at that time, the office was called "Salesian Missions News Service". Possibly, this was the predecessor of the Salesian Missions Procure Office of the Salesian East Province of the U.S.A.

<sup>11</sup> SAFIN Cebu (Document "A Credit to Boys Town" [undated]).

## 2. Beginnings

Fr. Braga had already finished his term as Provincial of the China Province and had been superior in Victorias since 15 September 1953, when he came to Cebu that Saturday of 6 March 1954<sup>12</sup>. Two days after, he left early morning for Bacolod, leaving the rest of the Salesians who were temporarily residing in the house of the Redemptorists, first generous benefactors of the Salesians. From there, they supervised the work being conducted near the Cathedral for the temporary home of Boys Town<sup>13</sup>.

Meanwhile, Fr. Boscariol, first director of Boys Town who dared the streets of Cebu if only to gather and welcome its vagabond young, together with cleric Agustin Lopez, newly arrived from Spain with cleric Luis Iriarte<sup>14</sup> to immerse himself in the missions, met with civil authorities and persons who showed interest in their work, and visited places of works of charity in the City. The local newspapers began to write about them and their intent. Fr. Boscariol could not but consider this as useful propaganda for the work they were about to start.<sup>15</sup>

The construction of the temporary boys' center near the Cathedral had accelerated. By 13 March, everything seemed to be completed, so that "the new and temporary site for Boys Town was ready"<sup>16</sup>. The Salesians decided to say goodbye to the Redemptorists, to whom they attempted to give a modest offering. But their Redemptorist hosts refused to accept anything and considered themselves honoured to have shared their house to the newly arrived religious<sup>17</sup>.

On 15 March, Fr. Boscariol, and cleric Lopez, together with Fr. Luigi Ferrari, went to "Cebu Boys Town" located at the Cathedral to begin their work. It was the 6<sup>th</sup> day of the novena to St. Joseph. They began to put in order the place and the things that they had brought that Saturday; and there, they received the first four boys who came from the *Asilo de la Medalla*

<sup>12</sup> SAFIN Cebu: House Chronicle (6 March 1954).

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.* (8 March 1954).

<sup>14</sup> SAS 48B549 Fr. Agustin Albino Lopez Modroño: born in Madrid, Spain (11 September 1931); first profession in Mohernando, Spain (16 August 1948); ordained in Mandaluyong, Philippines (22 March 1958). He left the Society some time in 1980. He was vice provincial of the Philippine Province (1973-1976). SAS 48B170 Fr. Luis Iriarte Elorz: born in Navarra, Spain (18 August 1929); first profession in Mohernando, Spain (16 August 1948); ordained in Mandaluyong, Manila (22 March 1958). He is presently assigned in Don Bosco Youth Center, Tondo, Manila, Philippines.

<sup>15</sup> SAFIN Cebu: House Chronicle (9 March 1954).

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.* (13 March 1954).

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.* (14 March 1954).

*Milagros* of the same City<sup>18</sup>. Two days later, the coadjutor Lorenzo Nardin<sup>19</sup> arrived to complete the Salesian community. With the four boys already with the community, the Salesians decided to organize a first activity, a singing class, to prepare the center's coming official inauguration<sup>20</sup>.

A week after, on 25 March, feast of the Annunciation, the Archbishop of Cebu, Julio Rosales, came to bless the new Salesian work in the presence of the City Mayor and the President and the members of the Corporation<sup>21</sup>. After the simple inauguration, a short program followed<sup>22</sup>. Somehow, the worked started simply; it would continue on with the same simplicity.

## 2.1. Cebu's Boys Town

### 2.1.1. The First Town

The first Salesian house of Cebu was a Php12,000 building, whose roofing and sidings were perched on the posts of the Cathedral of Cebu and which was built within the compound of the Cathedral, along Legazpi Street. It was constructed with the proceeds from a carnival of 1947 and from the generous donations of charitable citizens. The place was good enough for the Salesians and their boys: there was a place to stay, a public basketball court nearby for the sports, a church for the mass just beside. However, it was obviously

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<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.* (15 March 1954). "Muy de mañana dimos comienzo a nuestra vida en la nueva moral temporal. Eramos: P. Ferrari, P. Boscariol y clérigo A. Lopez". "Así que hoy, en plena novena a San José, Patrón especial de nuestra Congregación, damos comienzo a la obra que por tanto tiempo han suspirado los buenos Cebuanos." The *Asilo de la Milagrosa* was founded in 1934 by concerned alumnae of Colegio de la Inmaculada Concepción. In 1936, the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul took over the management of the Institution. It is currently located at Gorordo Avenue, Lahug, Cebu City. Cf AMS (10 diciembre 1954) 100-101.

<sup>19</sup> SAS 40B130 Coad. Lorenzo Nardin: born in Padua, Italy (6 March 1922); first profession in Este, Padua (16 August 1940). He is presently assigned in Don Bosco Tabor in Calamba City, Laguna.

<sup>20</sup> SAFIN Cebu: House Chronicle (17 March 1954). The Salesian work at the Boys Town started on 15 March 1954. It started with three Salesians (two priests and one coadjutor) for 25 boys of which 15 were orphans. All the boys were interns. The work was described as an "ospizio e orfanotrofio". In the house, there was a cook and a laundry woman. Cf SAFIN Cebu: Dati statistici annuali di ciascuna casa 1954/1955.

<sup>21</sup> SAFIN Cebu: House Chronicle (25 March 1954). Cf also AMS (agosto 1954) 75.

<sup>22</sup> SAFIN Cebu: Program, Priests' Day Celebration, Archdiocese of Cebu (25 March 1954). In the morning of the same day, there was the ordination of seven new priests. The blessing was four in the afternoon. The program that followed consisted of three numbers: "1. Boga boga. 2. Murcia. 3. Unas palabras de un chico en español". The celebration was organized by a certain Doña Concepcion Sidebottom "verdadera mama de nuestros muchachitos". Cf *ibid.*

temporary. It could accommodate only 30 boys, who ate on army trays and spent their time cleaning the yards, scrubbing the floors, washing dishes. It had an extra dining table reserved for “visitors” – boys who did not reside at the Center but who came only at meal time<sup>23</sup>.

This new Salesian presence was first referred to as Cebu Boys Center, Inc.<sup>24</sup> Behind this title, it showed that it was the initiative and was managed by the Cebuanos, with a board of trustees<sup>25</sup> consisting of some of the prominent citizens of Cebu and aimed at its existence and subsistence. The newspapers would refer to it as “The Town”. They were the first to witness and report the reality of the children on the streets of Cebu: “homeless waifs that fought, cursed, stole and starved along the city’s waterfront and thoroughfares”. The articles published by the newspapers conscientized the ordinary and more prominent citizens of Cebu City, so that they were provoked to mull over a project where these boys could be taken in. This, the Salesian Fathers picked up as passed on to them by Cebu’s concerned citizens<sup>26</sup>. But it would be simply known as “Boys Town”.

### 2.1.2. The Cebuanos’ Boys Town

Don Bosco Cebu was the initiative of Don Ramon Aboitiz and his wife, Doña Maria, to whom Cebu’s Archbishop and good hearted and civic-minded people gave unrelenting support<sup>27</sup>. They were the ones who negotiated with Fr. Braga for the coming of the Salesians, and were the most important and most prominent benefactors of this Salesian work. Don Ramon, in his sincerest sense of God, would, in fact, always hold this work dear to his heart. After which, the authorities of City of Cebu adopted the project<sup>28</sup>.

<sup>23</sup> SAFIN Cebu: *The Republic Daily* (23 February 1955). Thus, there were “in-mates” and “ex-mates” in the beginning of the Salesian Boys Center in Cebu City.

<sup>24</sup> SAFIN Cebu: *The Daily News* (28 January 1955).

<sup>25</sup> The first president of the Board of Trustees of Cebu Boys Center was a certain Don Gil Garcia, who was also head of the prestigious Cebu Lions’ Club.

<sup>26</sup> SAFIN Cebu: *Southern Star* (3 May 1955).

<sup>27</sup> One church group, which was a proponent of the Boys Town project, was the Catholic Women’s League of Cebu City. Some of the members of this parish organization were the first benefactors of the boys who frequented and who lived at the Town.

<sup>28</sup> SAFIN Cebu: Drive for membership of Cebu Boys Center, Inc. (25 June 1954). In his talk to the Board of Trustees of Cebu Boys Center, Inc., the Salesian Provincial, Fr. Mario Acquistapace, publicly acknowledged Don Ramon’s and Doña Maria’s role for the Boys Center. Don Ramon Aboitiz was born on 16 November 1887, to Paulino Aboitiz and Emilia Yrastorza in Ormoc City. He died on 4 May 1974.



But Boys Town was supposed to be of and by the Cebuanos. It lived very much from the goodness of its benefactors and the good will of the simple and ordinary Cebuanos, whether rich or simple, the prominent or the not-so-prominent. At least, it was a center for children of the street, the homeless and the orphans. It was sustained in its initial stage by the generosity of those who pioneered the project and inspired the people to be generous too. For the Cebuanos, on behalf of Boys Town, the people of Cebu City were expected to be asked and to be depended upon.

The official opening of Boys Town coincided with the visit of one known proponent of the work for street children. The day after the inauguration, there were visitors to the center: about 20 "Damas Catolicas" (CWL) and some members of the Board of Trustees of Cebu Boys Center, Inc., and Fr. Wegner, successor of the celebrated Fr. Flanagan of the original Boys Town in the U.S.A.<sup>29</sup> Fr. Wegner expressed his satisfaction with the work that Fr. Boscarioni was about to start. He expressed some of his views on what should be the Boys Town, which really coincided with some of the Salesian ideals, and gave some suggestions on how the Salesians could obtain financial help for this new initiative<sup>30</sup>.

Asked by Fr. Ferrari on how to obtain the funds for the day-to-day maintenance of Boys Town "for the long pull ahead", Fr. Wegner had a clear answer: Boys Town in America was supported not from the dollars that came from the wealthy and philanthropic persons or organizations, but mostly from the small contributions of people – people of all faiths, colors and economic conditions, millions of American individuals interested in human welfare. Help should come, not from the 400 rich and wealthy of Cebu, but from the thousands of the average people of Cebu. With their "20 centavos, 50 centavos, a peso, two pesos" and because of their kind hearts, Boys Town would survive<sup>31</sup>.

As if to prove his point, Fr. Wegner made propaganda for Boys Town and the Salesians during his visit to Cebu. He asked the people of Cebu to contribute their "bit" ... "that our city's share of underprivileged boys could be given the chance to grow up into useful and better citizens of Cebu". He spoke to the

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<sup>29</sup> Msgr. Edward Joseph Flanagan was born in Roscommon, Ireland (13 July 1886) and died in Berlin, Germany (15 May 1948). He founded Boys Town in Nebraska (1917), to be home of homeless boys. This was supposed to be supported wholly through voluntary contributions. His initiative captured the mind of the American people, so it was made into a movie in 1938, starring Spencer Tracy. Cf *American Encyclopedia*, vol. 11, New York 1967, p. 33; *ibid.* vol. 4, p. 377. To note: Boys Town in the USA and the Welfareville at Mandaluyong, Manila were two precedents of Cebu Boys Town.

<sup>30</sup> SAFIN Cebu: House Chronicle ([6] March 1954).

<sup>31</sup> SAFIN Cebu: Newspaper [unnamed] (18 March 1954).

officers and members of the Rotary, the Lions, the Jaycees, the YMCA, the Catholic Women's League and the Knights of Columbus, as well as to the masses of Cebu. At the end, Fr. Ferrari could not but declare: "The coming of Fr. Wegner to Cebu at this time is Providential"<sup>32</sup>.

But it was during the celebration of the National Family Week in December 1954 that the Salesians gave their concept of what they have accepted from the people of Cebu. Fr. Boscariol dared to explain the Boys Town as a "certain unique family". This community of children which has gradually increased to the present 25, "the maximum capacity of the family's temporary house" that time was made up of different characters, temperaments and traits. The boys were not parentless: the Salesians were their fathers; the Blessed Virgin provided them with the motherly love. The system that they used to educate these boys was called "Preventive System", where reason was used, and when reasoning was not enough, religion was used to influence them. This was what they wished: that the children lived precisely in an atmosphere of family. The future transfer to that "four-hectare lot in Punta Princesa" was in order to have a more appropriate place for such a "family"<sup>33</sup>.

In thanking those who listened to his discourse, Fr. Boscariol could not but name those who were making this possible and whom he considered as family members. At the end of his speech, Fr. Boscariol made an affirmation, which revealed on how Don Bosco Cebu and the boys should be a family:

"The Salesian Fathers are making an appeal for more cooperation for the improvement and growing up of his family, who belongs, not to the Fathers, but to you all – Cebuanos, because this too is your very own family"<sup>34</sup>.

## 2.2. *In Need of God's Providence*

After almost four months of operation, Boys Town clamoured for the constant and sure funds to continue its work. Good will was no longer sufficient.

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<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> SAFIN Cebu: Discourse of Fr. Guerrino (Attilio) Boscariol (Cebu City, December 1954).

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 2. Fr. Boscariol described the Preventive System as "where reasoning is used and when reasoning is not enough, we use religion to influence him". He nominated in his discourse as responsible for the existence of Cebu Boys Center the Board of Trustees of the Center with Don Gil Garcia and Mr. Eddie Aboitiz (acting chairman, son of Don Ramon Aboitiz ["philanthropic father" of E. Aboitiz] who was responsible for the new site of the Center and the Php100,000 future building); Cebu City's Mayor Jose Rodriguez; and members of Catholic Women's League (Mrs. Sidebottom, Mrs. Luisa Pido, Mrs. Angelis Martinez, Mrs. Eulalia Renner, Mrs. Esperanza Osmeña, Mrs. Mena F. Escaño, etc.). He called this family as Cebu Boys Center.

Besides, the initiative had to develop; without the funds, it could not continue nor grow. It, in fact, was running out of funds<sup>35</sup>!

Cebu Boys Center Inc. was a project of Cebu City. Its Board of Trustees, which met on 25 June 1954, came to a decision whether their project was to continue on<sup>36</sup>. Fr. Acquistapace, present in this meeting, declared that it was on the insistence of Doña Maria Aboitiz and other civic-minded citizens and the assurance of adequate support that he had temporarily approved the project. However, he informed the Board "that before their Mother House could give final approval to undertaking this project, they would have to be assured of adequate support insofar as the availability of their own land to them, permanent buildings, and funds for remittance". In the mind of the Provincial, the status of this project was the following: the place set for the permanent site of Boys Town offered by the provincial and city governments were unsuitable; the funds for the maintenance of the boys were about to be exhausted<sup>37</sup>. There had been initiatives to push through with the project; but these were inadequate. Otherwise, they would be forced to give up the undertaking considered still temporary.

The Board had decided to launch the long delayed drive for membership to secure funds for the maintenance of Boys Town<sup>38</sup>. As a consequence, the Undersecretary for Commerce and Industry, a certain Mr. Perfecto Lagio, spoke to Cebu Rotary Club in a luncheon meeting in favor of Boys Town on 22 July 1954. In this meeting, the fund-raising on behalf of Boys Town started. Cebu Rotary Club President, Mr. Salvador Sala, handed a cheque Php1,000 to Cebu Boys Center Inc. Vice-President, Mr. Eduardo Aboitiz, who in turn gave Mr. Sala certificate No. 1 of life membership in the foundation.

The same Board of Trustees created a ladies' committee<sup>39</sup> on 22 October 1954 to help raise funds. The members of this committee went to the City Hall to

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<sup>35</sup> SAFIN Cebu: Drive for membership of Cebu Boys Center, Inc. (25 June 1954). The same document of 25 June presented a financial statement of the Cebu Boys Center Inc., which listed the current contributions, expenses and net worth of the institution: total receipt to date (Php14,906.23) and total expenditure to date (Php13,487.78). The balance at hand was Php1,418.45, while the accounts payable was Php1,277.99. The resulting present net worth was Php140.46.

<sup>36</sup> SAFIN Cebu: House Chronicle (25 June 1954).

<sup>37</sup> SAFIN Cebu: Drive for membership of Cebu Boys Center, Inc. (25 June 1954).

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.* In this initiative, the types of membership corresponded to a certain amount of money in favor of the Project: life member (Php1,000/once only); business member (Php120/annual fee); ordinary member (Php24/annual fee). The members of the fund drive were Carlos Quizon, Francis Lim, Ismael Alvarez, Salvador Sala, Ramon Duterte, Jesus Moraza and Eduardo J. Aboitiz (general chairman of the drive).

<sup>39</sup> This committee was made up of certain Mesdames Angie Miranda, Paquita Gonzales, Carmen Paredes and Concepcion Sidebottom. Cebu's Chief of Police (Faustino Capati) promised the ladies a monthly 50-centavo contribution from each of his men.

ask support from the City Mayor and the City's Department Chiefs. In turn, the City Mayor, Mayor Jose V. Rodriguez, launched his "operation one-centavo" on 10 November 1954. He appealed to managers of large establishments to install boxes in their offices so that workers could do their share in uplifting the Boys Town. This initiative resulted to Php102 from the City Hall and which was given on 2 December 1954 to the treasurer of the board<sup>40</sup>. The same Mayor, about two weeks later, appealed to the public "to visit and see the show in any movie house on November 29 1954", for the "moral rehabilitation of the poor waifs at the Boys Center". For each ticket bought, the Boys Town got five centavos. So that the total collection obtained from the cinemas was Php400<sup>41</sup>.

Cebu Jaycees, led by Jose Yaotin and its Christmas Package Committee, opened its drive for Boys Town on 11 November 1954<sup>42</sup>. The Cebu Chamber of Commerce, as well as the Cebu Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Chinese Trade Association distributed rubber shoes, played Santa Claus to the boys on 17 December 1954<sup>43</sup>. Earlier, on the occasion of the consecration of the altar, newly renovated with Italian marble, of the Cathedral, the 260 sponsors, who gave Php25 each for the occasion, took breakfast at the Boys Town, which served as propaganda<sup>44</sup>. The local government sought to provide funds too. Employees of two local government departments, the Fire Department and the City Mayor's Office, came up with a total donation of Php289<sup>45</sup>.

At a certain point, there was so much help that came in, that Fr. Boscarior became discriminative. Thus, he suggested that the benefactors do not send rich food and thus risk pampering the boys. Instead, they better send school materials: notebooks, pencils, ink and blackboards<sup>46</sup>. At the end, he felt relieved of an enormous burden, which had been placed upon him by his Superiors who seemingly had left him all alone:

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<sup>40</sup> SAFIN Cebu: House Chronicle (10 November 1954). Other initiatives followed. Two well-known business firms turned over a total of Php123.60: Cebu Standard Vacuum Co. (Php39.65) and BPI employees (Php83.95). Moreover, the Chartered Bank of India and Australia (Php8.40), City Engineer's Office (Php25.21), Office of the Superintendent of Schools, the teachers of the Tejero Elementary School (Php38) shared their contributions to the drive.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.* (2 December 1954). Of the twenty-one movie houses, which cooperated with the Mayor and his initiative, the following gave the more pronounced contribution: Gem Theatre Php55.40; Cebu Theatre Php35.40; Marbel Theatre Php31.75; Belmar Theatre Php29.35; Venus Theatre Php29.30.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.* (11 November 1954).

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.* (17 December 1954).

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.* (21 September 1954).

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.* (2 June 1954). Fire Chief Arcadio Capili gave Php100; Mrs. Concepcion Briones of the City Mayor's Office gave, instead, Php189.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.* (8 June 1954).

“Thanks to the goodness of our benefactors, one can pull ahead”<sup>47</sup>.

The eyes of Cebu City remained to be focused on Boys Town. And they looked upon it benevolently and generously, at least in its beginnings.

### 2.3. *The Boys of “The Town”*

#### 2.3.1. “Inmates”

“The Inmates”<sup>48</sup> - this was how the boys of the Salesian work of Cebu was sometimes called; one of the many names of those who came and were first welcomed by the Salesians in their temporary center near Cebu’s Cathedral. In the general program commemorating the silver jubilee of priesthood of Archbishop Julio Rosales, it was written:

“The Daughters of Isabela will serve breakfast to the *inmates of the Cebu Boys Center* in the Cathedral compound”<sup>49</sup>.

Boys Town started on 15 March 1954 with four from the *Asilo de Medalla Milagrosa*. Then other boys came easily, from all situations and from all problems. These boys came and went away. Some of these boys remained, because they have found a home at the Center; but others left, unaccustomed to live in a fixed place.

On 3 April 1954, four boys were received, coming from the leprosarium, obviously free of the dreaded sickness: Bartolome, Raymundo, Bonifacio, and Apolinario. Another from the leprosarium, with the name of David came five days later. On 9 April 1954, another “limpiabotas” (=shoeshine boy) with the name of Reynaldo was received.

A boy named Teofilo Gonzales, who was caught stealing Php30 in order to take care of his father, was taken in. His case was dropped by Mrs. Dolores Abellar from whom he had stolen the amount<sup>50</sup>. Moreover, people who learned of what had happened, began to help. A benevolent man from Bacolod gave

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.* (4 February 1955).

<sup>48</sup> SAFIN Cebu: *The Republic* (26 January 1955). A certain Mr. Esteban Montecillo wrote Fr. Boscarriol, requesting him to furnish him the “number of inmates” of Boys Town. Cf SAFIN Cebu: *Correspondence* (Montecillo to Boscarriol, Cebu City, [...]).

<sup>49</sup> SAFIN-Cebu: *General Programme, Silver Jubilee Celebration of the Most Rev. Julio R. Rosales* (2 June 1954).

<sup>50</sup> SAFIN Cebu: *House Chronicle* (30 November 1954). The boy’s lone defense was to say: “My father was dying. My mother left us some six months ago. And there is no one to take care of Tatay”. Cf *ibid.*

Php15. A fund drive for Teofilo drew Php114.70, with Php55.70 coming from the employees of the Visayan Electric Company. This “Angel with a Dirty Face”, as Teofilo was described, even received help from his victim<sup>51</sup>, Mrs. Dolores Abellar.

A boy named Francisco Baño, who came from the provincial prison, was received in Boys Town, but then escaped and took away all the things he received<sup>52</sup>. Another, named Vicente, had already escaped three times since he arrived in April 1954. Still another, called Nonoy, accepted to come to Boys Town ... because his mother wanted him to steal. For this, he decided to go away, but not without informing Fr. Boscariorl why he was leaving<sup>53</sup>.

A group of boys came from the waterfront perch; they were members of the so-called *Bando Osmeña*. Some pilfered copra. Some carried the basket of the rich at Carbon market, with a daily haul of twenty-five centavos<sup>54</sup>. They thought they might change their lives coming to Boys Town.

A certain Mr. Natalio Gonzales, resident of Talibon, Bohol, wrote Fr. Boscariorl on 14 February 1955, asking on “how a boy may qualify and reside in the Boys Town”. He wanted his 13 year old boy to be “confined, reformed, educated” there, if he could afford the requirement<sup>55</sup>. To this, Fr. Boscariorl responded, defining the nature of the Salesian work of Cebu: it was

“... a charitable institution for homeless, destitute or wayward boys. These qualifications and the limitation of our facilities are the determining factors whether we can accept a boy or not”<sup>56</sup>.

It was the same answer he gave when a certain Mr. Jose Y. Matung of Calamba, Misamis Occidental, wrote for information on 23 March 1955<sup>57</sup>. Was this a school? If so, how much was the “exact payment for the tuition...miscellaneous expenses and the board”<sup>58</sup>.

### 2.3.2. Difficulties

One of the first preoccupations of Fr. Boscariorl for the “inmates” of Boys Town was their education. For the moment, he decided to send the bigger boys to

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.* (24 December 1954).

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.* (4 May 1954).

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.* (16 May 1954).

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>55</sup> SAFIN Cebu: Correspondence (Gonzales to Boscariorl, Talibon, Bohol, 14 February 1955).

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.* (Boscariorl to Gonzales, Cebu City, 23 March 1955).

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.* (Boscariorl to Matung, Cebu City, 23 March 1955).

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.* (Matung to Boscariorl, Calamba, Mis. Occ., 16 March 1955).

Abellana Vocational High School; while the younger ones went to a school managed by a group called YLAC (=Young Ladies Association of Charity)<sup>59</sup>. They studied the basic elements of religion, music, history, geography and arithmetic<sup>60</sup>. They were obviously special students in front of their other classmates. Fr. Boscarior was not sure whether the boys would be accepted for that school year 1954-1955; he had to wait for the decision of the education authorities<sup>61</sup>. Besides, the Salesians did not have the resources to fund their education. But the Acting Mayor of Cebu City, Florentino D. Tecson, assured Fr. Boscarior that the city government would help him secure free vocational education for some of the boys<sup>62</sup>. Nonetheless, even if he managed to send the boys to school on 14 June 1954, his hope was that Boys Town would have its own school in the near future<sup>63</sup>.

Fr. Boscarior tried to keep the boys in the way of Don Bosco. He brought them for regular outings. They would swim in Talisay or Marigondon or Mactan, and hike to Guadalupe or Toledo or London Heights or Oton. They would see movies borrowed by a certain Fr. Thibalht: *Robin Hood*, *Arrow Head*, *Tarzan*, *Peter Pan*. In the last day of 1954, the boys even went to see a movie entitled *Flying Squadron* at the City's Liberty Cinema for half the price. Fr. Boscarior remarked: "All are contented ... It is very clean". Instead, he refused to allow the boys to see the other film offered by Vision Cinema *White Christmas*, even if this was offered to them gratis. But they would later occasionally show movies provided by St. Paul Films, for whom a certain Fr. Clement Canavero SSP made propaganda of the films available<sup>64</sup>. For their confessions, he brought the boys to the Church of the Santo Niño<sup>65</sup>.

But it was not an easy task to take care of this type of boys. Fr. Boscarior, authentic pioneer of the work in Cebu, remarked:

"What life with these young people, accustomed to jump into the waters near the boats, to steal copra, to swim undressed as God created them, and then dirty as one would say. Now, however, they are on the same level as the others...as they had been won over by the cheerfulness, confidence and esteem of the sons of Don Bosco"<sup>66</sup>.

<sup>59</sup> In a letter of Adelaida B. Palomar (secretary of YLAC) on 17 September 1954, she thanked Fr. Boscarior for "tendering moral and material help to our school children". Cf SAFIN Cebu: Correspondence (Palomar to Boscarior, Cebu City, 17 September 1954).

<sup>60</sup> SAFIN Cebu: *The Republic Daily* (23 February 1955).

<sup>61</sup> SAFIN Cebu: *House Chronicle* (27 June 1954). The decision was in the hands of Dr. Pedro Guiang, new assistant director of public schools, and Mr. Federico Piedad, new school superintendent of Cebu.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.* (29 June 1954).

<sup>63</sup> SAFIN Cebu: *The Republican Daily* (23 February 1955).

<sup>64</sup> SAFIN Cebu: Correspondence (Canavero SSP – propaganda letter for St. Paul Films).

<sup>65</sup> SAFIN Cebu: *House Chronicle* (23 May 1955).

<sup>66</sup> AMS (Dicembre 1954) 100-101.

He further remarked, revealing the sentiments of a Salesian genuinely immersed in a reality of Filipino boys:

“But our days are not only with these 26 interns. Almost everyday, I go to the port and pass the time with about 200 shoeshine boys, from whom all escape away because they are dirty and disgusting. I am happy to be with them, in spite of the fact that I return home with my vestment always dirty”<sup>67</sup>.

The boys of the Town have hardly started their school, and 12 of the boys stopped frequenting the classes. The Salesians saw that there was little advantage and more moral danger for the boys when they went to school. And so, they decided to keep them at home<sup>68</sup>. Some of them constantly escaped, and Fr. Boscariol constantly searched these escapees to convince them to return<sup>69</sup>. Three boys escaped, while the other two asked to go away<sup>70</sup>. He once reported the escape of two boys, Francisco and Ariston; for the former, it was the fifth time. But there were always others to accept to replace those who left.

On 14 July 1955, two boys escaped from Boys Town, among which the “fiery and small Romulo”<sup>71</sup>. The next day, two other boys escaped “and these are the ones with empty heads”<sup>72</sup>. Earlier, Fr. Boscariol had left for his retreat at the Redemptorists<sup>73</sup>. The day after he returned, some boys who wanted to leave decided to stay, “after he reasoned out with them”<sup>74</sup>.

The work, indeed, was not easy. But Fr. Boscariol was convinced that it was valid, because it was very Salesian. He reflected:

“One wonders why so many defections? One notes that in these young people, there is no openness, nor sincerity. They are seemingly dumb. It makes one reflect. There seems to be no days of abundant graces. It is a moment of trial. In the feast of St. Louis of Gonzaga, a simple feast, internal and spiritual; nothing external, even at lunch”<sup>75</sup>.

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<sup>67</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>68</sup> SAFIN Cebu: House Chronicle (7 February 1955). “... si è venuto alla determinazione di tenerli a casa. Avranno così scuola qui da noi”.

<sup>69</sup> SAFIN Cebu: House Chronicle (27 January 1955): “Scappa Romeo Leviste ... nostalgia del Pier”. Cf *ibid.* (15 January 1955). “D. Boscariol pesca Romulo Parella al Pier – ci è scappato 2 o 3 giorni fa; la porta a casa, ma dopo merenda scappa di nuovo”.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.* (28 April 1955): “Pazienza. La nostalgia del Pier è fatale e irresistibile per molti”.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.* (14 July 1955).

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.* (15 July 1955).

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.* (10 July 1955).

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.* (17 July 1955).

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.* (21 June 1955).



### 3. Boys Town's New Home

The center near the Cathedral was obviously a temporary one. For this, the Salesians asked the Cebuanos for a permanent place for their boys. And this was promptly given and done.

#### 3.1. *The "New Town"*

On 20 May 1954, the Cebu Provincial government was ready to lease a 12 hectare site to the Salesians, about two and half kilometers from the Capitol. The water problem that existed in the site could easily be resolved with the help of a well-drilling organization. Earlier, the Salesians had proposed a ten-hectare lot adjoining the Lahug runaway on which a boy's town patterned after America's famous camp of that name in Nebraska could be put up<sup>76</sup>. But because it was near a residential area and because the airport was still operational, they were refused<sup>77</sup>.

Another site at the Buhisan forest reserve was suggested. Fr. Braga and Fr. Boscariol, together with Acting Mayor Florentino D. Tecson and Don Eddie Aboitiz who represented his father, surveyed the place on 19 June<sup>78</sup>. On 10 August, Don Ramon Aboitiz had called for Fr. Braga and Fr. Boscariol in order to see a house along Magallanes Street within the City, which he wanted to give to the Salesians. But it was difficult to transfer the ownership of the house, since the Salesians were foreigners and were neither U.S. nor Filipino citizen<sup>79</sup>.

But it would only be the next month, that a permanent site of Don Bosco Cebu became a reality. On 11 September 1954, Don Ramon bought another two lots (circa 25,000 square meters) for Boys Town near the property, which he had earlier acquired<sup>80</sup>. A few days later, Br. Nardin went to look at the terrain with people from the municipality<sup>81</sup>. On 23 September, a day before the commemoration of Mary Help of Christians, Don Ramon summoned the Salesians to his office, and consigned to them an authentic copy of the new site for Boys Town<sup>82</sup>. The next month, he brought them a cheque of Php2,000 as

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.* (26 April 1954).

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.* (20 May 1954).

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.* (19 June 1954).

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.* (10 August 1954).

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.* (11 September 1954).

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.* (17 September 1954).

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.* (23 September 1954).

payment for the acquired property<sup>83</sup>. And in a news article that came out on 22 October, the people of Cebu was informed that he had donated Php100,000 for the construction of the buildings<sup>84</sup>. The good Don Ramon had been consistent in his generosity towards the Salesians whom he sincerely meant well.

Fr. Braga and Fr. Boscarol acted immediately, as they went a month later to Mr. Eddie Aboitiz, to present their proposal regarding the project and construction. So that by 22 November 1954, they had ultimated with Don Ramon and his son “the designs of the new Boys Center, at least for the temporary part”<sup>85</sup>. It was a wonderful and timely gift to them by the Aboitiz, just before the month of Christmas.

The construction of the new house was going so well, that the Salesians thought of transferring already in February 1955<sup>86</sup>. The first building that was being constructed could fit in about 50 boys. But once all the constructions were terminated, it would be able to host 200 boys<sup>87</sup>.

The problem of water, which was encountered in the site, was solved by Mr. Eddie. He had asked for the construction of a well through the help of the Liberty Wells’ Association and the office of the Director of Public Works<sup>88</sup>. Meanwhile the City Mayor, to whom the Board of Directors of Cebu Boys Center, Inc. appealed, had requested the Osmeña Waterworks System if they could meanwhile provide free water. He had recently asked the same thing for the house of the Good Shepherd at Banawa<sup>89</sup>. At the end, Boys Town had its own water source, facilitating its transfer to its permanent site<sup>90</sup>.

After almost a year of residence in its temporary home at Legazpi Street<sup>91</sup>, the Salesians and the boys transferred to their new residence on 5 March 1955, first Saturday of the month, which was also the month of St. Joseph whose protection they sought<sup>92</sup>. It must have been an easy and light *trasloco* (=transfer),

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.* (5 October 1954).

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.* (22 October 1954).

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.* (22 November 1954).

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.* (2 February 1955).

<sup>87</sup> SAFIN Cebu: The Republic Daily (23 February 1955). One boy, if adopted, cost a Php25 monthly donation.

<sup>88</sup> SAFIN Cebu: Correspondence (Orosa to E. Aboitiz, 24 August 1954).

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.* (Rodríguez to the Cebu Municipal Board, Cebu City, 13 November 1954).

<sup>90</sup> SAFIN Cebu: The Republic Daily (19 February 1955).

<sup>91</sup> On 3 November 1954, a certain Mr. Pardiñas offered to buy the old Boys Town to the amount of Php8,000 after he had discussed with his Chinese partners. The bargain, however, was that it could not be sold for less than Php10,000. A few days later, the Board of Trustees in charge of the center confirmed that the temporary construction had indeed been sold to the said person for Php9,000. Cf SAFIN Cebu: House Chronicle (3 November 1954); *ibid.* (12 November 1954).

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.* (5 March 1955).

since there was not much to move. A few days after, Fr. Boscariol received a telegram from Fr. Ferrari, informing him about the contract of land lease stipulated between him and Don Ramon and Doña Maria<sup>93</sup>. The Salesian work was slowly becoming permanent.

The new and better home was located at Punta Princesa near the Antuwanga hills, four and half kilometers from Cebu City<sup>94</sup>. It was along the road to the Buhisan water reservoir ... "a lush, fertile valley bounded by the Buhisan River on the western section ... on a valley ... a rich, level land hedged by tall, fruit-bearing coconut trees, four and half hectares in area..."<sup>95</sup>. The property, calculated to be worth Php26,000, was supposed to have 200 boys who would follow a curriculum of home-keeping and handicraft work, farming<sup>96</sup> and other productive vocational subjects<sup>97</sup>. After the opening of the Boys Town in its new home, the following projects were scheduled: tilapia raising, poultry-raising, piggery, farming, tailoring, shoemaking and carpentry<sup>98</sup>.

By 15 March 1955, Boys Town was one year old. And the number of the boys continued to increase. By 19 April, there were already 38. By July, they were already 44, almost filling up the only current building standing up. And they were little by little being organized<sup>99</sup>. The new Center was also opened for Sunday masses to the population around. And when the new school year began, some of the boys went to Tisa Elementary School<sup>100</sup>. Classes were supposed to

<sup>93</sup> ASC F425 Philippine Cebu (Contract of Land Lease, 5 March 1955).

Cf SAHK Philippine (Conforme. Clemente Benato 30 ottobre 1956). SAFIN Cebu: House Chronicle (9 March 1955). "Telegramma da parte di Don Ferrari, sollecitanti notizie a riguardo del contratto stipulato in questi giorni tra i Salesiani e Don Ramon Aboitiz, a riguardo della nuova casa".

<sup>94</sup> SAFIN Cebu: Philippine Free Press (19 February 1955). In the archives of Don Bosco Technical High School Cebu, there is a map, which traces the area where the Salesian presences is actually located. Cf SAFIN Cebu: Road Map (partial) Cebu City (Routes to Don Bosco Technical High School Cebu Boys Town).

<sup>95</sup> SAFIN Cebu: The Republic Daily (23 February 1955). There were lots of bananas growing in the new property where the building was being constructed. The banana fruits, still green, were brought to the temporary Boys Town. Cf SAFIN Cebu: House Chronicle (3 February 1955).

<sup>96</sup> Mr. Antonio Durano, provincial agriculturist had send fruit tree seedlings on 17 June 1955 to Boys Town upon the request of Mr. E. Aboitiz who dutifully thanked him: 20 avocado, 20 nangka, 12 pili nut, 12 santol. Cf SAFIN Cebu: Correspondence (Durano to Aboitiz, Cebu, 17 June 1955); *ibid.*, (Aboitiz to Bureau of Agricultural Extension, Cebu, 20 June 1955).

<sup>97</sup> SAFIN Cebu: House Chronicle (2 April 1955).

<sup>98</sup> SAFIN Cebu: The Republic Daily (23 February 1955).

<sup>99</sup> SAFIN Cebu: House Chronicle (19 April 1955): "Al mattino hanno ogni giorno un pò di lavoro e un pò di scuola. Al dopo pranzo dopo la ricreazione: riposo fino alle 3. Dalle 3 alle 4 scuola. Poi merenda e ricreazione fino alle 6".

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.* (13 June 1955).

be from 7:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. and then from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. However, the Salesians thought that those of the 1<sup>st</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> elementary grades should study at home so that they could also do some work<sup>101</sup>. Indeed, one making a visit of the Town would notice the “metamorphosis” in the boys<sup>102</sup>.

Besides, the Salesians would make them participate in the feasts of the Jesuits and Redemptorists, who were also their first benefactors, in an effort to recognize their help as the Salesians were newcomers in Cebu. Definitely, these religious had been very hospitable and generous in giving help to the Salesians<sup>103</sup>.

### 3.2. Fr. Ziggotti at Boys Town

No less than the Rector Major of the Salesians came to visit Boys Town<sup>104</sup>. The Salesians, 44 in number, were only five years old in the Philippines; but they already had five important works to minister<sup>105</sup>.

Fr. Renato Ziggotti was the first Rector Major (1952-1965) to visit the Philippines<sup>106</sup> in the early part of April. He came to the Philippines from Tokyo on 5 April 1955<sup>107</sup>, and stayed up to 13 April, after which he flew to Sydney, Australia to continue his visit of the region. He practically stayed in the Philippines for nine days, visiting all the Salesian houses existing at that time: Manila-Mandaluyong (5 April), Cebu City (6 April), Bacolod (7-8 April), Manila-Mandaluyong (9 April), Tarlac (10-11 April) and Manila-Mandaluyong (12-13 April). In this particular visit to the Philippines, the Rector Major met and discussed with a series of important personalities in Philippine Church and society, as he was hosted by the Archbishops of the more prominent dioceses

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.* (15 June 1955).

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.* (2 April 1955): “...once wayward, astray waifs who from ruggedness and insecurity are now very courteous, playful and possessing healthy appetites. The boys, when not in the field or occupied in handicraft work, attend classes where they are fast mastering the rudiments of primary education”.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.* (31 July St. Ignatius / 2 August St. Alfonso 1955).

<sup>104</sup> Fr. Ziggotti left Italy on 24 November 1954 for a tour of Salesian houses in the Near and the Far East, Australia, Canada and the United States. Cf SAFIN Cebu: The Southern Star (16 March 1955). In his visit to Manila, the Superior General was accompanied by his secretary, Fr. Giovanni Furlanetto. He arrived in Manila from Tokyo, in 5 April, via Northwest Airlines. Cf SAFIN Cebu: The Manila Bulletin (7 April 1955).

<sup>105</sup> Cf. AMS (Aprile-Maggio 1955) 29.

<sup>106</sup> ASC B116 Chronicle of the visit of the Rector Major to the Philippines (April 1955).

<sup>107</sup> Fr. Acquistapace had asked the Provincial of Japan, Fr. Tassinari, if Fr. Ziggotti could come and visit the Philippines first before Japan, so that the visit to the Chinese-Filipino Province would have been a continuous one. The revised schedule would have been Philippines-Hong Kong (6-23 March) and Japan (24 March-12 April).

of Manila and Cebu, and as he conferred with the leading industrialists of the Philippines such as the Ossorios and McMickings.

The Rector Major's visit of the Philippines was in the news, before and after he came. This was mostly read and seen in Cebu, especially with the more important dailies of the City, the Southern Star<sup>108</sup> and The Daily News<sup>109</sup>, which generously announced the coming visit of the Superior General of the Salesians of Don Bosco to Cebu. They spoke of what the Cebu City government, beginning with the Mayor of Cebu City, was doing of his coming visit, and also spoke of the itinerary of the visit, even if it might have been a brief one. In fact, it was practically a one-day visit. He came early 5 April and left early the next day for Victorias, Negros Occidental, for a visit of the Salesian School there.

The newspapers (practically copying the news and the mistakes of each other!) made interesting references to Fr. Ziggiotti's visit. They wrote that his visit was in order to "inspect" the members of the Salesians in Cebu<sup>110</sup>. They called the Salesian Society as Salesian Order, reminiscent of the other religious orders more popular at the time. They misspelled his name. But most of all, they spoke of Boys Town, something which they considered as new in Cebu and whose origins were referred to be from U.S.A. They described the work the Salesians were doing, especially for the street children.

All the newspapers had news of his visit on the front page. The news definitely served as a propaganda for the Salesians, to obtain more help, material and moral, for the work they were doing. But they also revealed how the Salesians had won the sympathy of the Cebuanos for what they were doing on behalf of the street children. What they announced somehow served as a measure of how much impact the Salesians had already obtained in the local society.

On Holy Wednesday, 6 April 1955, together with Fr. Acquistapace<sup>111</sup>, Fr. Johannes Rauh<sup>112</sup> and Fr. Michele Suppo, he arrived in Cebu from Manila and

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<sup>108</sup> SAFIN Cebu: The Southern Star (1 April 1955).

<sup>109</sup> SAFIN Cebu: The Daily News (3 April 1955).

<sup>110</sup> The Provincial Superior of a Salesian Province, was, in fact, called "Ispettore" (=Inspector), as was usually used in Italy. This was similar to the concept used in Italy in reference to a civil superior with a certain jurisdiction, which included personnel.

<sup>111</sup> Cf AMS (Aprile-Maggio 1955) 29. Fr. Mario Acquistapace, Provincial of the Chinese-Philippine-Vietnamese Province, described the reception given to the Rector Major at Boys Town in these words: "La popolazione del rione si riversò nella nostra casa e assieme ai nobili signori e signore bevemmo tutti 'Coca-cola' e 'Seven-up' a gloria di Don Bosco e del suo Successore".

<sup>112</sup> SAS 36B291 Fr. Johannes Rauh: born in Haselmuhle, Germany (4 January 1918); first profession in Hong Kong (8 December 1936); ordained in Macao, China (25 March 1946); died in Bonn, Germany (29 November 1995) at 77 years, 59 years Salesian and 49 years priest. He returned to Germany and joined the Salesian Cologne Province. He was mission procurator and was in charge of Radio Veritas Asia, which was financed mainly by the Cologne Archdiocese.

was welcomed by a certain Mr. Tecson, together with the prominent residents of Cebu who were ardent supporters of the Boys Town movement at the Lahug Airport. As he greeted those who welcomed him in Italian, Fr. Boscarior translated for him in English. Upon his arrival, the group immediately proceeded to bless the new site of Boys Town in Punta Princesa<sup>113</sup>.

The Committee for Boys Town hosted lunch for him at the Casino Español of Cebu. In the afternoon, he visited the Archbishop; later in the evening, he received the *rendiconti* of the confreres. But it was also in this visit that he blessed the new building of Boys Town<sup>114</sup>. He left the next day for Victorias, thanking the people for the kind welcome afforded him. Later, he would once more write to the Salesians in Cebu from Manila, to thank and encourage them for the work they were doing<sup>115</sup>. Indeed, he saw for himself how difficult the work in Boys Town was for the Salesians.

Fr. Boscarior took the chance to introduce the Salesian work and its Rector Major to the prominent citizens of Cebu. He had invited Cebu's Provincial Governor, Sergio Osmeña Jr., who begged off, in as much as he would be out with his family for the Holy Week<sup>116</sup>. For the same occasion, he invited Mr. and Mrs. Santiago Syjuco Jr., who also could not come in as much as they were actually in Davao<sup>117</sup>.

### 3.3. *Boys Town on the Move*

On 25 May 1955, Fr. Acquistapace arrived in Cebu from Bacolod, accompanied by the Bishop of Bacolod, Msgr. Yap, who also wanted to see for himself what the Salesians' Boys Town was<sup>118</sup>. By 28 September 1955, the chapter of the house of Don Bosco Cebu met to discuss certain important things<sup>119</sup>. Boys Town was now to go into full swing.

Fr. John Cilfford<sup>120</sup>, while still rector of Hong Kong West Point, first visited Boys Town on 24 January 1955. He came from Victorias where he preached

<sup>113</sup> SAFIN Cebu: Visit of Fr. Ziggotti (April 1955).

<sup>114</sup> SAFIN Cebu: House Chronicle (6 April 1955).

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.* (14 April 1955).

<sup>116</sup> SAFIN Cebu: Correspondence (Osmeña Jr. to Boscarior, Cebu City, 4 April 1955).

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.* (Crespo to Boscarior, Cebu City, 2 April 1955).

<sup>118</sup> SAFIN Cebu: House Chronicle (25 May 1955).

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.* (28 September 1955). The community now consisted of Fr. Attilio Boscarior, Fr. Pericle Bianchini and Br. Carlo Nardin.

<sup>120</sup> ASC D870 Verbal (9 agosto 1955). SAS 31B082 Fr. Jan Pieter Clifford: born in Haarlem, Holland (8 August 1911); first profession in Groot-Bijgaarden, Holland (26 August 1931); ordained in Hong Kong (15 August 1940); died in Cebu, Philippines (6 April 2000) at 89 years, 69 years Salesian and 60 years priest.

the retreat to the students<sup>121</sup>. On 9 August 1955, he wrote from Hong Kong, informing the Salesians of Cebu that he was the new superior to replace Fr. Boscarior<sup>122</sup>. The letter of Fr. Acquistapace announcing the nomination of Fr. Clifford arrived a week after<sup>123</sup>. A musical band, invited and organized by a certain Mrs. Josefina Gullas, welcomed him. Others also came to welcome the new superior<sup>124</sup>, who officially arrived in at Pier 1 on 29 August 1955<sup>125</sup>.

Fr. Clifford did not waste time as soon as he arrived. After learning how to use the scooter, he went to the town of Talisay to learn Visaya, taught by another Dutch priest<sup>126</sup>. With his arrival at Cebu Boys Town, he busied himself obtaining increased material and financial aid. Consequently, he contacted the Salesian Missions Office in New Rochelle to ask for help. He asked mass intentions from the mission procurator, Fr. Joseph Louis<sup>127</sup>, and from Fr. Edward Cappelletti who would succeed Fr. Louis<sup>128</sup>. With this, Fr. Clifford would be able to keep a balance at the Salesian Missions Office in New Rochelle which could be used to pay his requests for materials from the U.S.A.<sup>129</sup>. Once, he asked the Missions Procure a donation of 400 baby chicks for the poultry farm of Boys Town<sup>130</sup>. In gratitude, he sent a Christmas package of San Miguel beer from the Philippines<sup>131</sup>.

<sup>121</sup> SAFIN Cebu: House Chronicle (24 January 1955).

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.* (9 August 1955): "Tutti si sono contenti, specialmente D. Boscarior, il quale non aspettava altro che questo giorno".

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.* (16 August 1955).

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.* (25 August 1955).

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.* (29 August 1955).

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.* (27 September 1955).

<sup>127</sup> SAFIN Cebu: Correspondence (Louis to Clifford, New Rochelle, January 1958): "...assigned by this office 100 masses inc. 1 novena of masses = \$100, less 3% deduction = \$3; total received by Boys Town was \$97".

<sup>128</sup> SAFIN Cebu: Correspondence (Cappelletti to Clifford, New Rochelle, 15 March 1960). Fr. Clifford received the following masses to celebrate: 1 Gregorian (\$30), 50 low masses A.I.D. (\$50), two high masses (\$10), for a total of \$90. But there was a 3% tax deduction of \$2.70. The total received by Fr. Clifford was \$87.30.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.* (Cappelletti to Clifford, New Rochelle, 10 June 1960). As of 10 June 1960, Fr. Clifford had a deposit of \$420.07 at the Salesian Missions Office in New Rochelle. Masses were celebrated in Cebu, with the stipends remaining in New Rochelle to pay eventual orders from Cebu. Cf *ibid.* (Cappelletti to Clifford, New Rochelle, 5 April 1961): "Please offer 30 low masses, in order to offset the charges for the Sacra-Kit which was mailed to you directly from the Leslie A. Calhoun Company, and which bill we have already paid".

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.* (Louis to T. Stapleton, New Rochelle, 2 August 1957). Fr. Louis wrote to Washington Breeders Hatchery, Inc., to ship the said order (400 baby chicks), declaring that "the chicks are not to be used for commercial purposes ... not for sale ... strictly a donation ... to be used by our priests at the Cebu Boys Town".

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.* (Cappelletti to Clifford, New Rochelle, 15 November 1960).

Sometimes, Fr. Clifford would make “his money” travel to Hong Kong, so that he could also pay whatever he might have asked to be procured in the island. For this, his “financial partner” was Fr. Pietro Pomati, the provincial economer of the China Province<sup>132</sup>. In Turin, instead, he had a certain Fr. Munari<sup>133</sup> who would procure his orders<sup>134</sup>. He also asked help from the Provincial of Japan, Fr. Alfonso Crevacore (1916-1995)<sup>135</sup>, for the construction of an additional building to accommodate a hundred boys at the Town<sup>136</sup>; the latter, unfortunately, could not send help<sup>137</sup>.

Fr. Braga, in the period of the *Visitatoria*, informed Fr. Ziggotti that the technical school in Cebu had already been initiated. The boys did not need to go elsewhere anymore for school. And to care for this work, there were five priests and a coadjutor<sup>138</sup>. But, at this point, Fr. Braga had some observations for the Superior.

In the Salesian community, two of the five priests were more like coadjutors with no ministry at all and who were concerned only with the material. One was driver and marketer, and who took care of the poultry. The other, who was in charge of the kitchen, was rather sickly and was in need of a change of air and life. The problem was really the “priest driver”. He never learned the local language or English, even if he had been provided with a teacher. He just was not good with the languages, nor could he work with the boarders. But he was obedient, hard-working, and did everything for the material needs of the house. The coadjutor, who was indeed a good confrere, had the culture of a grade five boy. Even his capability of being a tailor was as good as one who was in the

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.* (Pomati to Clifford, Hong Kong, 27 October 1960). “I received a cheque from Fr. Cappelletti ... we are no more creditor and debtor ... and everything is settled.” On 27 August 1960, he had a debit of HK \$65.21 divided by US \$5.68, so that he owed Fr. Pomati US \$11.48. Cf *ibid.* (Pomati to Clifford, Hong Kong, 27 August 1960).

<sup>133</sup> SAS 47B234 Fr. Angelo Munari: born in Vicenza, Italy (20 November 1916); first profession in Pinerolo, Italy (16 August 1947); ordained in Bollengo, Turin (1 July 1956); died in Turin, Italy (18 August 2002) at 85 years, 55 years Salesian and 46 years priest.

<sup>134</sup> SAFIN Cebu: Correspondence (Munari to Clifford, Torino, 14 luglio 1961): “Sono riuscito a procurarle: un torno Inger nuovo, un trapano radiale nuovo, una limatrice 650 usata, tre altri torni usati ... Ora il nostro spedizioniere, Zambruno e Castagnole, provvederà alla spedizione ... Appena possibile, le sarò preciso con la spesa totale”.

<sup>135</sup> SAS 37B272 Fr. Alfonso Crevacore: born in Novara, Italy (1 March 1916); first profession in Tokyo, Japan (8 December 1937); ordained in Tokyo, Japan (22 December 1945); died in Tokyo, Japan (28 December 1995) at 79 years, 58 years Salesian, 50 years priest. He was provincial economer of the Japan Province from 1962-1968.

<sup>136</sup> SAFIN Cebu: Correspondence (Clifford to Crevacore, Cebu, 16 ottobre 1958).

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.* (Crevacore to Clifford, Tokyo, 13 novembre 1958).

<sup>138</sup> The Cebu community consisted of Fathers Jan Clifford, Lino Repetto, Patrick Ryan, Jose Bosch and Br. Lorenzo Nardin. Cf *Elenco Generale* (1960), p. 456.



first year. But again, he was at least assisting and trying to be always with the young<sup>139</sup>.

#### 4. Significant Boys Town

##### 4.1. *Impact of Boys Town in Cebu*

Cebu Boys Town continued to be the concern of the Cebuanos. And this was something that the Cebuanos wanted others to emulate, even at the national level.

Mayor Jose V. Rodriguez, in fact, had suggested to Congressman Ismael L. Veloso of the lone district of Davao to include in his proposed bill for the establishment of boys towns all over the country, a provision which would enable the boys of these centers to get subsidies from the government. The Congressman had, in fact, congratulated the Salesians, the Aboitiz and the Mayor for their effort on behalf of Boys Town. And in his enthusiasm, he had proposed to introduce a bill in Congress for the establishment of state-operated boys towns in the more important cities or towns of the nation, for street children and for young people who went astray and found no hope of improving their lot<sup>140</sup>.

Cebu's City Council thought that it should help financially Boys Town, which they admitted was doing good to the City. It planned to approve a resolution granting an annual Php720 aid item. But before doing so, they checked whether they were within the limits of the law. The City Fiscal Jose L. Abad, giving his legal opinion, declared that Cebu City was authorized to shoulder two-thirds of the Php1,000 yearly aid to the Manila Welfareville. Why could it not channel this aid instead to Boys Town, since it was the counterpart of the Manila Welfareville<sup>141</sup>?

The Mayor, furthermore, initiated the campaign, "One Centavo-A-Day". Three strong boxes, where coins could be dropped, were placed at the lobby of the municipal hall, in the Office of the Clerk of the Municipal Court, and in the central headquarters of the City Police Department<sup>142</sup>. This initiative was also headlined as "Daily reminder: save a centavo for one soul"<sup>143</sup>.

<sup>139</sup> ASC F163 *Filippine: Corrispondenza* (Braga a Ziggiotti, Tarlac, 9 febbraio 1960).

<sup>140</sup> SAFIN Cebu: *House Chronicle* (23 June 1955).

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.* (10 January 1955).

<sup>142</sup> SAFIN Cebu: *The Republic Daily* (12 January 1955).

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*

Boys Town and the Salesians as well, were a novelty in a city like Cebu. At such an early stage of its history, this peculiar Salesian work was already calling the attention of people. This was good on one hand, for the propaganda it was creating on behalf of the Salesians, and for whatever contribution their work for the wayward boys of the City could give to better the conditions of the young in the Philippines. The Salesian Boys Center became a source of learning for the Cebuanos, who wanted their students to learn from the Salesians and their style.

A certain Sr. Rosario Gullas-Cruz, Dean of one of the colleges of Cebu City, wrote Fr. Boscarriol, requesting if her class of guidance and counselling could see a practical implementation of the principles in guidance and counselling in Boys Town<sup>144</sup>. The Clinical Psychology Class of the University of San Carlos also came. The visit gave them an idea of the nature of the Salesian work<sup>145</sup>. A certain Mr. Simeon Barajas, Principal of a school, requested Fr. Boscarriol if a class in Philippine Social Life and Progress could visit his “educational establishment”<sup>146</sup>. Other groups of varied levels, wanted to do the same: simply visit Boys Town, with their young students. And they wished to come as soon as possible, even on a Sunday: Teresa A. Gabrillo, Cub Scouts Mistress, with her boy scouts and cub scouts<sup>147</sup>; Mr. Romulo Bacol, President of the Pre-Law Organization of University of San Carlos<sup>148</sup>; Miss Concepcion F. Rodil and the Faculty Club of the University of San Carlos<sup>149</sup>; Miss Vicenta Cuico and her class from Cebu Vocational Normal School<sup>150</sup>.

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<sup>144</sup> SAFIN Cebu: Correspondence (Gullas-Cruz to Boscarriol, Cebu City, 24 May 1954). The “official address” of the Salesian institution was the following: Boys Town Center – Cebu Cathedral – City of Cebu. It is interesting to note that the name of the Salesian institution was varied. In this case, it was “Boys Town Center”.

<sup>145</sup> SAFIN Cebu: Suggested Schedule of Visit of Clinical Psychology Class of the University of San Carlos, Cebu City (21 May 1954). The visit, supposedly to last about 30 minutes, consisted of the following. (I) Requested lecture by the Institution Chief on: 1. Brief History of the Institution. 2. Aims of the Institution. 3. Financing the Institution. 4. Clients: (a) Types, (b) Entrance requirements (Any limitations on sex? Age? Personal status? Economic status? Religious beliefs? Etc.), (c) Geographical considerations? 5. Reference to Typical Psychological Cases, if any: (a) Psychosis, (b) Psychoneurosis, (c) Feeble-mindedness, (d) Delinquency, (e) Physical defects, (f) Etc. 6. Problems confronted by the Institution. 7. Success, if any, of the Institution. (II) Observational Tour in or around the Institution, with the kind permission of the Chief of the Institution visited.

<sup>146</sup> SAFIN Cebu: Correspondence (Bajarias to Boscarriol, Cebu City, [...]).

<sup>147</sup> *Ibid.* (Gabrillo to Boscarriol, Cebu City, [...]).

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.* (Bacol to Boscarriol, Cebu City, 7 August 1955).

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.* (Rodil to Boscarriol, Cebu City, 27 July 1955).

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.* (Cuevas to Boscarriol, Cebu City, [...]).

#### 4.2. Boys Town – “Controversial”

But Boys Town, too, became an issue for Cebu City, which was now so sensitive to the good that the Salesian center was doing. For this, the concerned Cebuanos, who were logically partisans of the Salesians, readily came up to defend them and their center.

A certain lady lawyer wrote a rather maligning article against the care of the poor indigent boys and girls of Cebu. Urging the government to establish a correctional for youth, she, however, criticized unfairly and downgraded ingeniously what institutions like the *Asilo de la Milagrosa* and Boys Town were doing for the poor young. The author seemingly mentioned that in a private center which cared for the indigent boys “one of the institution’s biggies demonstrated ... anger ... by bashing the child’s face with the ball”<sup>151</sup>.

The Chief Clerk of the Mayor’s Office and a first benefactor of the Boys Center, Ms. Concepcion Briones, called the attention of Mayor Jose Rodriguez regarding this news article<sup>152</sup>, which she declared dwelt “on the admission and treatment of wards” and which might “not be good publicity to the cause of the Boys Town Movement”. The Mayor, also an enthusiastic supporter of the Boys Center project, had just distributed brass boxes in various universities and business houses in Cebu City “in the hope of bolstering our Boys Center funds with coins dropped into them by civic-spirited citizens”. Ms. Briones expressed her doubts whether the Mayor’s initiative of “brass boxes” would receive many generous contributions<sup>153</sup>.

No less than Mr. Eduardo Aboitiz answered the lady lawyer’s article and defended what private institutions were doing for orphans and wayward youths<sup>154</sup>. His response to the “calumny” explained further what this Boys Center was doing on behalf of Cebu City<sup>155</sup>.

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<sup>151</sup> SAFIN Cebu: The Republic Daily (23 February 1955). The author of the malicious news column, urging the establishment of a government correctional institution for youth, nonetheless down played “private institutions and their role in ameliorating the lot of orphans and wayward youths”. She expressed “some assertions in connection with Cebu Boys Town, which are not only incorrect but uncharitable”. She casted doubts on the way Boys Town was operated, using wrong facts which she interpreted so as to discourage “the spirit of helpfulness to the cause of solving the problem of youth delinquency” in Cebu City. Cf *ibid*.

<sup>152</sup> The article came out in the newspapers, The Republic Daily (21 February 1955) and The Column Today (19 February 1955).

<sup>153</sup> SAFIN Cebu: Correspondence (Briones to Rodriguez, Cebu City, 21 February 1955).

<sup>154</sup> SAFIN Cebu: The Southern Star (25 February 1955). Cf also SAFIN Cebu: The Daily News (25 February 1955).

<sup>155</sup> SAFIN Cebu: Document in defense of Cebu Boys Town (undated and author unspecified). However, there are other documents, which refer to this incident of bad publicity on account of a newspaper article.

Mr. Aboitiz explained what the Cebu Boys Town and the likes were doing together with a few civic and charitable minded persons and organizations. They themselves were sometimes at the limit of their financial and housing facilities, but continued to help the poor children and youth with hardly some help from the government. The government had not established similar institutions, even if it had sometimes helped such institutions in Cebu. Instead, Cebu Boys Town had been giving precisely that needed “youth care and correction”, giving “that love and attention” the emarginated young needed, and forming their “moral character” properly<sup>156</sup>.

The son of Don Ramon, as Vice-President of Cebu Boys Center, Inc., again wrote on 21 July 1954 to once more clarify a newspaper article, which appeared in some Cebu dailies. He regarded the statement of Cebu’s Police Chief on the project of a welfareville institution in Cebu as misleading. The latter had said that the Boys Center had turned down a great number of minors sent to the Center for lack of funds<sup>157</sup>.

Mr. Aboitiz’s defense of the Salesians and their work revealed the real situation of the center entrusted to them. The Salesians never refused admission of boys turned in to them by the Police Chief. The fact was that, 20 boys were sent to Boys Town by the Police Chief and by the provincial jail; and they had all been accepted. Some of them, however, have escaped; only six have remained. It was true that those facilities were very limited and, that there were little funds for expansion. For this, only 25 to 30 could be accommodated. Boys Town accepted only boys under 16, who had no parents or immediate relations within the City. It preferred boys from the pier area or slums, and those who were delinquent. Besides, Mr. Aboitiz and Cebu Boys Center, Inc. were in the midst of a campaign if only to generate funds to maintain Boys Town<sup>158</sup>.

When Fr. Boscarior had called his attention concerning cases of theft that had plagued the boys’ dormitory as well as the rooms of the Fathers, Mr. Aboitiz asked Cebu City’s Police to help return the stolen goods already recovered, and to recover the stolen items not yet found. Moreover, he asked that a certain amount of security be provided within the perimeter of Boys Town, if also to show the public and the authorities’ support for what the Salesians were doing<sup>159</sup>.

<sup>156</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>157</sup> SAFIN Cebu: Clarification (E. Aboitiz, Cebu City, 21 July 1954).

<sup>158</sup> SAFIN Cebu: House Chronicle (21 July 1954).

<sup>159</sup> SAFIN Cebu: Correspondence (E. Aboitiz to Capati, Cebu, 24 June 1954). The items stolen from the boys’ dormitory were: three mosquito nets, four bed sheets, three bed spreads, one mat, several pillow cases and several towels. One thief had been apprehended and identified by Fr. Boscarior.

#### 4.3. Eddie Aboitiz and Boys Town

Earlier, Mr. Eduardo Aboitiz had written Congressman Ismael L. Veloso of Davao on 21 March 1955, asking for financial assistance on behalf of Boys Town. The politician's "political answer" to his request provoked him to express his mind on what should be done for Boys Town<sup>160</sup>. Mr. Aboitiz's response to the Congressman was clearly a-political. But it also showed what was happening to Boys Town in its beginnings.

The politician's proposed bill had no point, when boys' centers like that of the Salesians, were already existing. These institutions were often privately organized; and these were more effective than those organized by the government. They operated mostly through the guidance of religious orders and civic groups who did not incur expenses in terms of salaries. These, in most cases, have "received no aid whatsoever from the National, Provincial, or City governments". In Cebu, not even the local Social Welfare Administration had lent support to the Boys Town. Luckily, the Board of Trustees of Boys Town included the City Mayor and a member of the Municipal Council, who have given moral support and were actually financing the artesian well being constructed at the Boys Town site. Even government employees have shared their individual contributions to somehow sustain the Boys Town. Mr. Aboitiz went straight to the point, stating that what he needed for Boys Town was "a direct subsidy from the Government" if only to purchase food and clothing for the boys. This, the Congressman did not mention<sup>161</sup>.

Mr. Aboitiz, as Vice-President of Cebu Boys Center, Inc., also wrote the Commissioner of Public Welfare of Manila on 9 July 1954. He presented her an itemized list of Boys Town's expenses based on the capacity of 25 boys who were actually in the location of the project<sup>162</sup>, and provided a copy of the press release and financial statement earlier issued, as proof that their funds

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<sup>160</sup> The seemingly good-willed Congressman had filed Bill no. 3409, declaring "the imperative necessity of establishing a boys' town in every capital of the country to provide for the varied opportunities of our less fortunate youths such as education, recreation, physical, vocational, religious and moral developments which have been denied them for years". Cf SAFIN Cebu: Correspondence (Veloso to E. Aboitiz, Cebu City, 30 March 1955).

<sup>161</sup> One of Mr. Aboitiz's frank remarks to Cong. Veloso was: "Every peso given as aid to these institutions would go directly towards the support and expansion of this work". For him, the Congressman's proposed bill should have mentioned "that aid be given Boys Town ... by subsidizing and paying a certain amount ... per boy". Only with this could the Congressman be successful in his supposed aim of alleviating and improving the lot of 'underprivileged' and wayward boys". Cf SAFIN Cebu: Correspondence (E. Aboitiz to Veloso, Cebu City, April 1955).

<sup>162</sup> SAFIN Cebu: Itemized list of expenses of Cebu Boys Town (Boscariol, Cebu, 9 July 1954). Total monthly expense for Cebu Boys Town was Php549.84.

were practically exhausted. He lamented the indifference of the public with regards their initiative to raise funds for the project. For this, he asked the Commissioner if she could provide an allocation from the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes for this project on behalf of “street children” of Cebu to continue<sup>163</sup>.

At the end, though, Boys Town remained to be the private sector’s commitment.

#### 4.4. *Boys Town and the Cebuano’s Generosity*

The fact was that the first Boys Town lived and survived on the donations of its Cebuano benefactors and sympathizers, who gave their donations, and who helped the Salesians to obtain donations.

Once more, it was Mr. E. Aboitiz who was among the first to move in order to help. He wrote the president of Cebu Bakeries Association, on 11 June 1954, after he had appealed to the Chinese Chamber of Commerce, and requested from the association 75 pieces of bread daily, the minimum for 26 boys who were actually at the Boys Town. The past week, the Shamrock Bakery had, in fact, delivered bread to help the boys. He suggested, however, that the bakeries take turns in providing the needed bread<sup>164</sup>. Cebu Lion’s Club President, Nazario R. Villamor wrote Mr. E. Aboitiz on 26 August 1955 regarding a decision of their Board of Directors to adopt one boy of Cebu Boys Town at the rate of Php25 monthly<sup>165</sup>. The Provincial Governor of Cebu, Sergio Osmeña Jr. donated Php150, his allowance for the month of March 1954<sup>166</sup>. The employees of Cebu City Hall even sent “plates, spoons and forks”<sup>167</sup>.

There were varied benefactors with varied donations for Boys Town in the beginning of the Salesian work. A certain Mrs. Palacio gave bananas and candies and a Mrs. Sidebottom, who donated a sack of “corn rice”<sup>168</sup>; a Mrs. Singson

<sup>163</sup> SAFIN Cebu: Correspondence (Aboitiz to Madrigal, Cebu, 9 July 1954).

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid.* (Aboitiz to Tan, Cebu, 11 June 1954).

<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.* (Villamor to Aboitiz, Cebu, 26 August 1955).

<sup>166</sup> *Ibid.* (Osmeña to Boscariol, Cebu City, [ ] March 1954). Fr. Boscariol dutifully acknowledged the receipt of the donation, a PNB check no. 189171G, and thanked the Governor for his much needed donation. This, in fact, had become more urgent, with the impending transfer of the Boys Town to its new site, which would entail an additional number of boys, thus additional financial help. Cf *ibid.* (Boscariol to Osmeña, Cebu City, [ ] March 1954).

<sup>167</sup> *Ibid.* (Trinidad to Boscariol, Cebu City, [ ] May 1954). The donation was even personally canvassed by Mrs. Antonina V. Trinidad, chief of the Records Division and Deputy of the City Hall. The concrete donation according to the inventory of Fr. Boscariol was: “five spoons, five forks, two soup plates with flowers, one dessert plate, three ordinary plates”. All these, Fr. Boscariol acknowledged receipt on 31 May 1954.

<sup>168</sup> SAFIN Cebu: House Chronicle (4 January 1955).

gave a sack of sugar<sup>169</sup>; a Mrs. Esperanza Velez donated Php10<sup>170</sup>. Another lady gave vegetables, meat and potatoes<sup>171</sup>; Mrs. Gullas sent a conspicuous amount of gifts, among which were chicken and sugar<sup>172</sup>.

Mr. Vidal Aboitiz, brother of Don Ramon, gave an offering for Gregorian masses, and Mrs. Borrromeo, Php20 for masses.<sup>173</sup> The manager of Pepsi-Cola donated cases of bottles of Pepsi and Royal Tru-Orange, through a certain Mr. Jose Corrales, considered as one of the more important benefactors of Boys Center<sup>174</sup>. A Mr. Gil Garcia invited the boys for lunch together with the people of VECO<sup>175</sup>. The "Asociación de Damas Catolicas de Cebu", through its head, Mena F. Escaño, asked that Cebu Mutual Loan & Building Assn. "retirar las acciones correspondiente a Siete Acciones por valor en total Php1,400" in favor of Boys Town<sup>176</sup>.

The Red Cross brought gifts offered by students of different Cebu City schools. A group of benefactors-alumnae of St. Theresa College donated Php200. The naval officers of the U.S.S. Pullox, which anchored last December in Cebu, donated a cheque for Php101<sup>177</sup>. Two tailors came "to adjust and accomodate used clothes for use of the boys"<sup>178</sup>. U.S. Navy surplus served the need for school uniforms<sup>179</sup>. The cinema "Rene" gave a free cartoon movie of Walt Disney<sup>180</sup>. The Social Welfare Association in Cebu, "special benefactor" of Boys Town, donated a sack of rice "with great formality...as always"<sup>181</sup>, and came to distribute "bread and sausages...with pomp and ostentation"<sup>182</sup>.

The Archbishop of Cebu doubled the supply of powder of milk from 10 to 20 boxes<sup>183</sup>. He donated the altar used for the Marian International Congress

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.* (14 January 1955).

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.* (18 January 1955).

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.* (4 February 1955).

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.* (12 March 1955).

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid.* (14 March 1955).

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.* (7 March 1955).

<sup>175</sup> *Ibid.* (Aboitiz Invitation to Lunch to Boys Town, Cebu City, 1 September 1955).

<sup>176</sup> SAFIN Cebu: Document authorizing the withdrawal of "siete acciones por valor en total Php1,400". This initiative was concluded during a meeting held in the house of Mena Escaño. The motion for this initiative was made by Sra. Romualda de Sasedor (Directora de la Asociación) and was seconded by Sra. Felicidad M. Villamor (Gran Suprema Tesorera). The initiative was concluded in Cebu on "Enero 10 de 1955". Cf *ibid.*

<sup>177</sup> SAFIN Cebu: The Republic Daily (1 March 1955).

<sup>178</sup> *Ibid.* (19 January 1955).

<sup>179</sup> SAFIN Cebu: House Chronicle (21 July 1955).

<sup>180</sup> *Ibid.* (2 January 1955).

<sup>181</sup> *Ibid.* (1 August 1955).

<sup>182</sup> *Ibid.* (18 August 1955).

<sup>183</sup> *Ibid.* (27 May 1955).

held in November 1954 in Manila to Boys Town<sup>184</sup>. He told Fr. Boscariol to bring the boys to the Walker Rubber Shoes store to choose the shoes that fit them exactly<sup>185</sup>.

Fr. Boscariol, after receiving donation of powdered milk and fish liver oil from the UNICEF Child Feeding Program<sup>186</sup>, insisted for more milk<sup>187</sup>. He asked help from the Religious of the Good Shepherd, the Sisters of St. Theresa School<sup>188</sup>, the Daughters of Charity of the *Asilo dela Medalla Milagrosa*<sup>189</sup>, the Redemptorists, the Jesuits<sup>190</sup>.

Indeed, donations came from all types of people and of all kinds. But the problem to this was that they did not always come regularly and sufficiently. Nonetheless, in spite of the marked lack of material resources, Boys Town moved ahead, with the Salesians donating themselves as best as they could. They could not but be the first material resources to make this particular Salesian work function.

## 5. Don Bosco Boys' Center, Makati

"After having entered the Philippine Islands only three years ago, they have inaugurated in this Year of the Blessed Mother their fourth center of apostolate. The work is born in the district of Makati in Manila. The work is a festive Oratory that would benefit the young of the area; but later, a technical school would be developed"<sup>191</sup>.

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.* (13 January 1955).

<sup>185</sup> SAFIN Cebu: Correspondence (Surban to Boscariol, Cebu City, 23 May 1955).

<sup>186</sup> SAFIN Cebu: Donation from UNICEF Child Feeding program (5 January 1955).

<sup>187</sup> SAFIN Cebu: Correspondence (Boscariol to Caluag, Cebu City, [May 1955]).

<sup>188</sup> *Ibid.* (Bertholemy to Boscariol, Cebu City, 16 February 1955). Mother M. Bertholemy sent a check of Php200 for Fr. Boscariol's "nice institution". She asked prayers for the Theresians, that they might have a "happy vacation" after a successful year of study. Then followed the signatures of Carmen Barredo, Sandra Rodriguez, Mercedes Aseniero, Rosario Alo, Linda Senining, Nenita Benedicto, Herminia Florido, Liliana Estavilla, Josefina Velez and Annabelle Osmeña, who sent their regards to Fr. Boscariol.

<sup>189</sup> SAFIN Cebu: House Chronicle (10 April 1954). Madres de la Caridad brought "unos instrumentos de musica y unos guantes de boxeo". Cf *ibid.*

<sup>190</sup> *Ibid.* (9 January 1955). Those of Berchmans College offered a movie, "A Christmas Carol", in the feast of the Epiphany; a certain Jesuit, Fr. Tibbot, was a benefactor too. Fr. Boscariol was quick to show his gratitude to the Jesuits. He had lent the bus to them, who thanked him for such act of kindness. One can see in their thank you letter the names of Leonardo Silor, Rodolfo Ma. Villarica, Andres Bolinas, Oscar Estalilla, J. Encomienda, Pio De Castro, Francisco Perez and H. Paul de Maire. Cf SAFIN Cebu: Correspondence (Jesuits to Boscariol, Cebu City [...]).

<sup>191</sup> BS 78 (ottobre 1954) 372. Cf. AMS (luglio 1954) 70.



This was how the second Salesian work in the capital of the Philippines was announced in the Italian Salesian Bulletin of October 1954. After only three years, the Salesians had just opened a fourth *opera*, starting as a typical Salesian Oratory, in this case a so-called boys' club, only to develop later into a technical school, *anzi*, into a *grande* technical school. It was fruit of an offer by an industrialist family whose development plan coincided with the Salesians' project of a vocational school for the indigent youth of the area. This Salesian work was the second to be "established" by the Archbishop of Manila. It seemed that it was inspired by the success of Don Bosco Technical Institute in Victorias.

### 5.1. *Don Bosco Makati: A Noble Vision*

On 27 June 1952, Fr. Braga, who was ending his term as Provincial of the China Province, together with Fr. D'Amore, met Mr. John R. McMicking. The purpose of the meeting was regarding the foundation of an industrial school in the area of Makati<sup>192</sup>.

The Salesians, according to the Ayalas, had proposed to first establish "a boys' club"; after which, they would put up an industrial school. They planned to set this up in the area, which the Ayalas were developing. They preferred "to work in a highly populated area, close to industrial plants". This was in order to achieve their double aim: "to raise the moral outlook of a 'difficult' section of the community" and "to provide a nearby source of employment" for their students after the completion of their studies<sup>193</sup>.

On the other hand, the Ayalas were willing to help the Salesians' project "of providing boys of the underprivileged classes with the industrial skill". Fr. Braga's proposal to the Ayalas, in fact, agreed with their own project. They had plans to develop the Makati district, specially the community of Culi-Culi and the industrial area near the place. At the essence of it, they planned to build a "balanced community" to be made up of low and middle-income people and the wealthy. To achieve this, they wanted to develop an industrial area to provide work as well as income to the inhabitants of the place<sup>194</sup>.

<sup>192</sup> SAFIN Makati: Correspondence (McMicking to Braga, Manila, 29 July 1952).

<sup>193</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>194</sup> Barrio Culi-Culi was a densely populated and ever-expanding sitio of the district of Makati, with an estimated population of 10,000, where "vice is the major industry and most of the young people have grown up to think of bars, houses of prostitution and the disposal of stolen goods as natural and proper means of livelihood". It had a labor potential, which could well respond to the need of the future factories of the industrial area. Cf SAFIN Makati: Correspondence (McMicking to Braga, Manila, 29 July 1952).

The Salesians' plan for an industrial school "would have an ideal scope for operations" in the area. It meant that the students of their school would get the chance of livelihood, and thus combat and overcome the growing social problem of the times. For Mr. McMicking, the proposal of the Salesians would indeed involve the "entire community" of the area: (1) the humble classes and their students who would be prepared by them as future laborers; (2) the industrialists with technical equipment and advice; (3) and philanthropic groups who would provide financial aid for their school in favor of the emarginated young<sup>195</sup>.

For this, the Ayalas had a concrete offer to the Salesians. They would donate to them six hectares of land worth almost a million pesos, strategically located in the center of the industrial district, so that they could put up a socio-religious project, "a boys' club and a vocational school". They planned a system of turning over their land donation section by section, depending on the ability of the Salesians to expand. This was their concrete proposal; this was only what they intended to offer. The Salesians would have to look for other sources to finance their project<sup>196</sup>.

Nonetheless, the Ayalas were realistic and generous. They knew that the Salesians had just arrived; for this, they had very limited financial resources as yet to construct. Consequently, after having mapped out an area of 1,500 square meters on which the Salesians could put up the boys' club, their residence, and a small chapel, they would willingly give them an amount to begin construction of the boys' club<sup>197</sup>.

## 5.2. *Work without Permission*

Fr. Braga could not conclude the negotiations with the Ayalas. Later, in October 1953, Fr. Ferrari had informed Hong Kong that a "company in Makati" offered a territory for a future work. He further stated that he had the intention of starting a festive Oratory, which probably meant that he had already accepted the offer. He added, moreover, that the Archbishop had already destined a parish for the Salesians. But even this, he must have assured the prelate that the Salesians would also accept<sup>198</sup>.

It would be Fr. Mario Acquistapace, the Provincial, who would deal with it. With the consent of his council, on 24 December 1953, he wrote the Rector

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<sup>195</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>196</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>197</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>198</sup> SAHK Minutes of the Provincial Meeting (Hong Kong, 27 ottobre 1953).

Major regarding the offer of six hectares of land located at the heart of a district, which was prospected as prime by those who were developing it. The terrain would be given to the Salesians piece by piece as their work developed. The work, however, should be finished within ten years. The only condition asked by the donors was the Salesians construct an industrial school for the sons of the people of a “district”, which was more or less “la bocca di Manila”. The first donation of terrain was to be accompanied by a donation of Php15,000 destined for the construction of the festive Oratory<sup>199</sup>.

Fr. Acquistapace imagined this new initiative as the germ for a grandiose work. He even hoped that the Rector Major would one day lay down the foundation stone of the work. He declared that they were preparing the plan, which they would be soon sending for Turin’s approval<sup>200</sup>. Their courage to put up a work in Makati was based on the strength of a six-hectare donation where they could construct<sup>201</sup>. The difficulty regarding the passage of the property to the Salesians was superable<sup>202</sup>.

Early the next year, on 26 January 1954, Fr. Luigi Ferrari, delegate of Fr. Acquistapace to the Philippines, asked permission from Mr. Alfonso Zobel de Ayala “to occupy and fence the parcel of land located at the corner of Pasay-McKinley Road and the proposed Pasong Tamo Extension”, as well as the adjoining portion between the parcel of 5,211 square meters and the National Power Corporation’s right-of-way<sup>203</sup>.

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<sup>199</sup> ASC F157 Cina: Corrispondenza (Acquistapace a Ziggiotti, Hong Kong, 24 dicembre 1953). Cf also ASC F158 Cina (Relazione Annuale, 1953). The land donation had an actual value of more than a million pesos (Php280 per square meter = \$1). That was not little at that time, for a land given free at the heart of a district that was prospected to be prime by those who were developing it.

<sup>200</sup> ASC F157 Cina: Corrispondenza (Acquistapace a Ziggiotti, Hong Kong, 24 dicembre 1953).

<sup>201</sup> ASC F477 Manila-Makati: Osservazioni (Torino, 26 ottobre 1955). There is a handwritten note at the bottom of the page of this document, which purports to this fact of a donation on behalf of the Salesians. It also further stated that help would not be lacking for the future construction.

<sup>202</sup> ASC F157 Cina: Corrispondenza (Acquistapace a Ziggiotti, Hong Kong, 24 dicembre 1953). However, there was a little problem as he negotiated the passage of the property to the Salesians. The property would have to be registered to the North American Province with a representative confere of a U.S. citizenship ... “visto essere un Nordamericano equiparato ai Filippini che noi non abbiamo ancora”. Cf *ibid*. I did not find any document indicating how this passage of the property was effected. It must have been Fr. Anthony Di Falco who stood as the American counterpart for the negotiations.

<sup>203</sup> SAFIN Makati: Correspondence (Ferrari a Alfonso Zobel de Ayala, Manila, 24 January 1954). Fr. Ferrari declared: “...which we will subsequently purchase from you in accordance with present negotiations with us”. To note that Fr. Ferrari signed his name with the sub-title “In behalf of the American Province of Salesians of Don Bosco”. Cf SAFIN Makati: Correspondence (Ferrari to Alfonso Zobel de Ayala, Manila, 26 January 1954).

The establishment of Don Bosco Makati was practically in full swing. Besides, there had been a commitment on the part of the Salesians to assume a nearby parish of their newly acquired donation<sup>204</sup>.

### 5.3. Turin in Front of a *Fait' Accompli*

However, Fr. Acquistapace did not tell Fr. Ziggiotti one thing: that he had literally accepted the offer, and had in fact started the construction of the first *casetta*, destined for the Oratory and for the temporary residence for the Salesians.

It was the Prefect General, Fr. Albino Fedrigotti, who answered Fr. Acquistapace on 14 January 1954 on this issue of an offer practically concluded and a construction actually going on, without Turin's explicit permission. The query he put out regarding "this Makati" was logical and precise enough to Fr. Acquistapace. Have constructions already started? Have the Superiors approved of this new work<sup>205</sup>?

Moreover, the Prefect General pointed out a certain contradiction on the part of the China Provincial. The latter spoke and complained to Turin on the lack of personnel. And yet now, he had just told them, that he has started a new house and was about to send them the plans<sup>206</sup>.

Fr. Fedrigotti expressed unrelentingly the supposed mind of the Superiors to the humbled Provincial Superior. The general consent given by the Superiors for the beginnings of the works in the Philippines was quite different from the explicit permission, which was given when there were guarantees of personnel and maintenance. Did Makati have these "guarantees"? Besides, the opening of Makati never had any explicit authorization! At this point, he became rather sarcastic. The Nuncio and the Authorities, applauding and hailing and praising and encouraging – these did not sustain the works; these were not enough. Logically, these people were happy that somebody was doing something else for them. And they were surely happy that the Salesians wanted to join in. But he, Fr. Acquistapace, Superior, should not be that simple in front of them.

"When they push you to do something, ask them first what help they intend to give"<sup>207</sup>.

Alright, Fr. Fedrigotti agreed with the motives that Fr. Acquistapace had said regarding the offer of a parish to the Salesians, as encouraged by the

<sup>204</sup> ASC F477 Manila-Makati: Osservazioni (Torino, 26 ottobre 1955).

<sup>205</sup> ASC F157 Cina: Corrispondenza (Fedrigotti a Acquistapace, Torino, 14 gennaio 1954).

<sup>206</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>207</sup> *Ibid.*: "Quando ti spingono a fare, chiedi loro che aiuto intendono dare(!)".

Apostolic Nuncio. But the crucial question stood. Did Fr. Acquistapace have personnel? It was not a question whether there was another house nearby to run the parish. To erect a parish was practically to establish another house. And so there followed some more strong words to the Provincial, who was known to be so good and so docile.

“If you do not have the personnel, then wait before you accept the offer”<sup>208</sup>.

Fr. Fedrigotti, as Prefect General, thus concluded. Makati – it is still “on the air”. Please, do not do anything.

Fr. Acquistapace tried to explain the *facenda* of Makati to the Rector Major, not to the Prefect General. Makati was to be treated as a future settlement after that of Don Bosco Mandaluyong, where there were so many works together. It was an occasion not to be disregarded; it would not demand so many personnel for the moment, since it would only be starting with a festive Oratory. Moreover, there was no conflict with regards the offer of a parish. In his opinion, the Superiors had agreed to the possibility of adopting one when the occasion came; and it did. In fact, both of them desired to have a parish, and in Manila at that<sup>209</sup>.

At the end, Fr. Acquistapace and the Salesians in Manila would have their way.

#### 5.4. A House “Erected” by the Archbishop of Manila

Don Bosco Makati was born from controversy. It continued to be so, even as it normalized in its growth. It seemed that the Salesians put in charge to manage the Manila-base of the Salesian Society did not know how to, at least technically.

Even before Fr. Fedrigotti, in lieu of the Rector Major, had decreed the canonical erection of the Salesian house of Manila-Makati on 7 July 1956, “in Oratorium et Schola pro adolescentibus artificiiis erudiendis”<sup>210</sup>, and before the Archbishop of Manila had given the permission for its canonical erection on 12 May 1956, the Archbishop had already decreed on 15 September 1955 its juridical erection<sup>211</sup>.

<sup>208</sup> *Ibid.*: “Se non hai il personale, aspetta ad accettare”.

<sup>209</sup> *Ibid.* (Acquistapace a Ziggiotti, Hong Kong, 2 febbraio 1954).

<sup>210</sup> ASC F477 Manila-Makati (Decree of canonical erection, Fedrigotti, Torino, 7 luglio 1956).

<sup>211</sup> ASC F477 Manila-Makati (Decree of canonical erection, Rufino J. Santos, Manila, 15 September 1955).

Fr. Ferrari, Fr. Acquistapace's representative in Manila, had earlier informed Hong Kong that he had already signed the contract for the Parish of Makati<sup>212</sup>. But he had also presented a request to the Archbishop to erect a Salesian house. The Archbishop had dutifully acted on it, and in fact established the house. The motivations which moved the Archbishop to canonically erect the house were the following: (1) that the new work was useful for the Archdiocese; (2) that there was sufficient endowment to realize the purpose of the house now or in the future; (3) that he agreed with the "charter of foundation" sent him by the Provincial Delegate<sup>213</sup>.

In his decree of erection, the Archbishop established Don Bosco Technical Institute as an "ecclesiastical moral person" based on Canon Law, cc. 99-103, "with rights to possess and administer the properties in conformity with the Code, Diocesan Statutes and customs". At the same time, he had another paragraph in his decree which sounded controversial:

"We reserve to our self and our successors the right of visiting this institution, to make the necessary changes in its charter and to supervise it in spiritual matters as well as to supervise the finances of this institution"<sup>214</sup>.

The Provincial Delegate submitted this document to the provincial secretary in Hong Kong, who in turn confirmed it.

Obviously, Turin refused to endorse the decree of erection by the Manila Archbishop to Rome<sup>215</sup>. And it gave its motivations: (1) that there was no need of an establishment of a house "by the Ordinary"; (2) that the Salesian Congregation had its own canonical existence as a congregation "juris pontificii", and for this was "exempt"; (3) that the Archbishop simply needed to give a simple "consensus in scriptis" according to Canon 497, paragraph 1.<sup>216</sup>

In his decree, the Archbishop claimed the Salesian work of Don Bosco Makati as the Archdiocese's. One asked what made the Archbishop "commit" this mistake. Was he deliberate in writing this decree, thus ignoring the "exempt" status of the Salesians? Or was he just ignorant of Salesians' being a

<sup>212</sup> SAHK Minutes of the Provincial Council (Hong Kong, 8 settembre 1955).

<sup>213</sup> ASC F477 Manila-Makati (Decree of canonical erection, Rufino J. Santos, Manila 15 September 1955). Unfortunately, no "charter of foundation" can be found in any of the archives consulted.

<sup>214</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>215</sup> *Ibid.* (Osservazioni, Torino, 26 ottobre 1955).

<sup>216</sup> CJC 497 § 1. "Ad erigendam domum religiosam exemptam, sive formatam sive non formatam, aut monasterium monialium, aut in locis Sacrae Congregationi de Prop. Fide subiectis quamlibet religiosam domum, requiritur beneplacitum Sedis Apostolicae et Ordinarii loci consensus in scriptis datus; secus, satis est Ordinarii venia".

congregation “*juris pontificii*”? But perhaps, one could question the understanding of the Provincial Delegate in matters regarding foundations.

The Salesian secretary general, Fr. Salvatore Puddu, wrote to the provincial secretary of Hong Kong, Fr. Benato, to explain why the Superiors could not accept the decree of erection by the Archbishop of Manila. He insisted on the juridical status of the Salesian Society<sup>217</sup>. Moreover, he added that in the visitation of schools, those, which had interns, were declared exempted<sup>218</sup>. But, was Makati a school with interns? Or perhaps Turin wanted Makati to be one, so as to assure its exemption?

After a word of criticism of the Archbishop<sup>219</sup>, Fr. Puddu suggested to Fr. Benato a word of caution though, using “few sufficient words” in making the Archbishop understand the particular relation of the Congregation with bishops, and so as not to embarrass him<sup>220</sup>. Somehow, the little crisis was overcome.

Later, the Salesians “re-applied” to the Archbishop for permission for the canonical erection of Don Bosco Makati. This time, however, it was Pierangelo Quaranta<sup>221</sup>, as “Delegado Provincial de los Padres Salesianos”, who submitted the request to the Archbishop<sup>222</sup>. It was a known fact that the confrere and the Archbishop were in very good relation. Meanwhile, Fr. Ferrari, the former

<sup>217</sup> Here, Fr. Puddu quoted certain norms of Canon Law related to the argument: Canon 497.1; but also Canons 615, 618, 344.2, 512.2.

<sup>218</sup> ASC F477 Manila-Makati: Corrispondenza (Puddu a Benato, Torino, 3 novembre 1955). Cf CJC 1382: “Ordinarii locorum sive ipsi per se sive per alios possunt quoque scholas quaslibet, oratoria, recreatoria, patronatus, etc., in iis quae religiosam et moralem institutionem spectant, visitare; a qua visitatione quorumlibet religiosorum scholae exemptae non sunt, nisi agatur de scholis internis pro professis religionis exemptae”.

<sup>219</sup> At the bottom of the page, there was a handwritten note of “protest” or better judgement against this “interference” of the Archbishop by Fr. Puddu, the Secretary General: “Curioso come certe autorità tentino di estendere i loro poteri quanto possono a danno altrui e in nome di Dio”. Cf ASC F477 Manila-Makati: Corrispondenza (Puddu a Benato, Torino, 3 novembre 1955). Fr. Puddu would again comment on this issue to Fr. Benato, indicating to him that the Congregation could not accept the terms of the Manila Archbishop: “che la Congregazione non accetta la clausola apposta dal Vescovo Msgr. Santos, Manila, Makati, di poter controllare in material spirituale e finanziaria nella più larga.” Cf. ASC F548 San Fernando Filippine (Don Bosco Makati).

<sup>220</sup> *Ibid.* This same letter of Fr. Puddu was sent by Fr. Benato to Fr. Ferrari in Manila.

<sup>221</sup> SAS 33B213 Fr. Pierangelo Quaranta: born in Torino, Italy (9 November 1916); first profession in Pinerolo, Turin (17 September 1933); ordained in Bagnolo Piemonte, Cuneo (29 June 1943); died in Manila (12 April 1992) at 76 years, 59 years Salesian and 49 years priest. SAHK Corrispondenza (Quaranta a Bellido, Hong Kong, 19 maggio 1952). He was also esteemed as “abile nelle opere oratoriali ... e che vada poi a suo tempo con D. Ferrari”. Cf *ibid.*

<sup>222</sup> ASC F477 Manila-Makati: Permission of the Archbishop of Manila (Manila, 12 May 1956).

Provincial Delegate, had gone back to join his former Province in Italy, the Romana. His was another story of “fuga” from the Philippines<sup>223</sup>.

Fr. Fedrigotti, in lieu of the Rector Major and after having received the rescript from the Holy See<sup>224</sup>, decreed on 7 July 1956 the canonical erection of the house of Don Bosco Makati “in Oratorium et Schola pro adolescentibus artificibus erudiendis”<sup>225</sup>, as in fact expressed in the letter of request submitted to the Archbishop<sup>226</sup> and in the request previously submitted the year before<sup>227</sup>. The Secretary General transmitted two copies of the decree of canonical erection to the Provincial in Hong Kong, Fr. Acquistapace, one for the provincial archive, and the other for the house of Makati<sup>228</sup>. This new presence was to be located in San Pedro Makati, Rizal, adjacent to the new “circumscription” of San Lorenzo Village<sup>229</sup>. For the moment, Don Bosco Makati was safely of the Salesians.

## 6. The Parish of Don Bosco Makati

### 6.1. A Sought for Parish

The offer of a place for a future school by the industrialists Ayala and McMicking was partnered to the offer of a parish to the Salesians. Both the Apostolic Nuncio and Manila Archbishop were already wont to give the Salesians a parish, since they came to the Philippines.

Earlier, Fr. Braga in fact had seen how some of the religious orders in the Philippines had parishes as part of their ministry. He also observed how generous

<sup>223</sup> It is said that Fr. Ferrari stealthily left the Philippines. His official reason was that he was going to Vietnam to preach the retreat of the confreres there. Before he left Manila in the latter part of 1955 from the house of Mandaluyong where he was superior, he advised the confreres not to change anything during his absence, under the pretense that he would come back. The confreres of the house, nevertheless, knew somehow that he was on his way out of the Philippines. This is what we have extracted in an interview with Fr. Ercole (Miguel) Solaroli.

<sup>224</sup> ASC F477 Manila-Makati (Rescript n. 14766/56 (Rome, 20 June 1956). It cost: £1.000 (Taxa Lib.), £40 (Expensae Lib.), £100 (Agentia Lib.), £100 (Executio Lib.). Cf *ibid*.

<sup>225</sup> *Ibid.*: Decree of Erection (Fedrigotti, Torino, 7 luglio 1956). Fr. Fedrigotti sent the official request to the Holy See on 5 June 1956 so that Turin could canonically erect the house of Makati. Cf *ibid*. (Fedrigotti, Torino, 5 giugno 1956).

<sup>226</sup> ASC F477 Manila-Makati (Permission of the Archbishop of Manila, 12 May 1956). The declared purpose of the new religious house was for an “Oratorio Festivo y Escuela de Artes y Oficios”, that was, a “Festive Oratory and a Trade School”.

<sup>227</sup> *Ibid*. (Osservazioni, Torino, 26 ottobre 1955).

<sup>228</sup> *Ibid*. Corrispondenza (Puddu a Acquistapace, Torino, 7 luglio 1956).

<sup>229</sup> *Ibid*. (Permission of Archbishop of Manila, Manila, 12 May 1956).



the Filipinos were in giving to the needs of their local churches. Above all, he knew how useful a parish could be for the money it would generate. Fr. Acquistapace shared the same prospective. The income would indeed be able to augment their meager resources to finance Tarlac, Mandaluyong and Cebu. A Salesian parish in Manila was "a sure source of income and material help"<sup>230</sup>.

When a parish was offered to him, Fr. Acquistapace had tried to refuse or to delay it indefinitely. He had just accepted Mandaluyong; he was about to accept Makati. However, the Apostolic Nuncio insisted on the offer. Fr. Acquistapace knew that without capital from outside, it would be difficult to sustain their current works. Besides, it would appear rather queer and strange for the Salesians to refuse what other religious would ask on their knees. Nay, it would be like saying that they did not want what they were doing.

But which Parish was offered? The Archbishop of Manila wanted to give the Salesians the Parish of San Felipe Neri, located near the house of Don Bosco Mandaluyong. This Parish, in its proximity to the Don Bosco house, could have been easily administered by the Salesian community nearby. And this was, in fact, what Fr. Ferrari was expecting. But somehow, the Parish Priest of the said Parish was not of the idea of giving up his place. The Parish was well-established, even if it had its problems. The presence of the Aglipayans was very much felt in the area.

On account of this situation, the Archbishop had instead offered to the Salesians another parish, which was not even three years old, in a place notorious as a red light district. Perhaps, the Parish Priest was only too eager to get out of it and give it to some other. And now it was being offered as an alternative to the Salesians, who were just so near and about to start in Makati. The Oratory and vocational school, and the Parish: these seemed to be just in the right place and at the right time. The vision of the Salesians was a typical festive Oratory, a parish which could generate income, and a school with students who would pay tuition fees to complement the parish income. What were needed now were three or four confreres to start the work. The provincial council of Hong Kong, which had deliberated on this, had agreed on the necessity and utility of this work. Moreover, Archbishop Vagnozzi had already written to Rome to process the passage of the said Parish to the Salesians. The contract could be presented soon to Fr. Acquistapace, who would then be able to send it to the Superiors in Turin<sup>231</sup>.

When Fr. Acquistapace wrote the Prefect General on 18 May 1955, he expressed the idea of putting Fr. Godfrey Roozen in charge of the proposed

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<sup>230</sup> ASC F157 Cina: Corrispondenza (Acquistapace a Ziggotti, Hong Kong, 24 dicembre 1953).

<sup>231</sup> *Ibid.*

“Parish of Makati”. This, which was from the school of Don Bosco Makati, “as the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians was from the Cottolengo”, was in a small land with a “shed” as church. However, in this church, there had been for a long time a statue of Mary Help of Christians who was well venerated<sup>232</sup>. By September 1955, Fr. Ferrari had written to Fr. Acquistapace that the Archbishop had already given the “Parish of Makati” to the Salesians, who did not refuse it. He had told Fr. Acquistapace “che non poteva non accettare”. The latter retained that it was important for the development of the work in Manila, had thought that this initiative could possibly be lost. For the presence of a Salesian work near the Parish has started to inconvenience the actual Parish Priest who was trying to obstaculate it<sup>233</sup>. And so now, the Parish was of the Salesians too.

## 6.2. San Ildefonso Parish

The Parish of San Ildefonso was drawn out from two actual cities, that of Makati and Pasay, from two Parishes, those of Saints Peter and Paul (1620) and Santa Clara de Montefalco (1864)<sup>234</sup>. It was founded on 11 August 1951 by Archbishop Gabriel Reyes, who was Ordinary of Manila from 1949-1953. Its first Parish Priest was a certain Fr. Emilio Mercado<sup>235</sup>.

On 10 February 1951, the Vicar General of the Archdiocese had written the Parish Priest of Santa Clara in Pasay City, P. Dr. Simeon Gutierrez, who was also vicar forane of the area, informing him of the planned erection of a new Parish from his actual Parish. For this, he had asked the Parish Priest to provide within 20 days certain information to the Curia relevant to the said

<sup>232</sup> *Ibid.* (Acquistapace a Fedrigotti, Hong Kong, 18 maggio 1955).

<sup>233</sup> *Ibid.* (Acquistapace a Fedrigotti, Hong Kong, 7 settembre 1955): “Abbiamo un terreno molto propizio. Il contratto è quello dato dai Superiori con qualche addattamento nella forma fatta dalle Congregazioni Romane. D. Ferrari disse che non poteva non accettare”.

<sup>234</sup> It is said that sometime in 1781, the Jesuits came to the place and established a chapel where they brought statues of San Ildefonso, San Ignacio and San Pascual Baylon. In 1870, a chapel of nipa and sawali was constructed by Ayala y Cia. During the American regime, the place where the chapel was located became morally notorious (and is still notorious) for its bars and nightclubs, which made it known for its poverty and crime relatedness. The presence of the American bases nearby encouraged such establishments and the prostitution that it entailed. Cf *SIP Hapi @ 50* (article on a brief history of the Parish of San Ildefonso) [unpublished manuscript] 1.

<sup>235</sup> Fr. Emilio Mercado was Parish Priest from 1951-1954. He was succeeded by Fr. Francisco Domingo (1954-1955) and Fr. Pedro Santos (1955). It was then that the Salesians took over the parish. Cf *SIP Hapi @ 50*, 1.

plan<sup>236</sup>. A few months later, on 11 August 1951, Archbishop Gabriel Reyes canonically erected San Ildefonso Parish<sup>237</sup>.

The negotiations for the transfer of the Parish to the Salesians were made by Archbishop Rufino J. Santos, who succeeded Archbishop Reyes, with Fr. Ferrari. So that by 14 September 1955, the two parties have come up with an agreement which delineated the limits of the Parish and the relationship between the Archdiocese and the Salesians<sup>238</sup>.

Turin received a copy of the contract between the Ordinary of Manila and Fr. Ferrari on 21 November 1956. It revealed that the Parish had already been accepted, without even the final approval of Turin. The Parish had been entrusted to the Salesians “ad nutum Sancta Sedis”; thus, it was not a Parish ran by religious and is administered as all the other parishes of the archdiocese “quoad bona et administrationem”<sup>239</sup>.

Already on 26 April 1955, Turin had written to Fr. Acquistapace, acknowledging the receipt of the proposed contract between the Archbishop of Manila and Fr. Ferrari<sup>240</sup>. Turin, however, denied that it be a conferment “ad

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<sup>236</sup> SAFIN San Ildefonso (Vicario General to Fr. Simeon Gutierrez, Manila 10 Februar 1951).

<sup>237</sup> *Ibid.*, (Ereccion de la parroquia de San Ildefonso, en Culi-Culi, Makati, Rizal - Gabriel M. Reyes, Arzobispo de Manila, 11 Agosto 1951). On 8 November of the same year, the newly assigned Parish Priest, Fr. Emilio Mercado, wrote the Archbishop to ask the Parish Priests of Makati and Santa Clara “por si corresponder alguna porción de los bienes a esta nueva parroquia, a tenor del canon 1500 del derecho vigente”. Cf *ibid.*, (Emilio Mercado to Archbishop Gabriel Reyes, Culi-Culi, Makati 8 November 1951).

<sup>238</sup> SAFIN Makati (Conventio Ad concedendam Paroeciam Sancti Ildephonsi Salesianis Patribus Sancti Joannis Bosco Archiepiscopus Rufinus J. Santos D.D. - R. D. Aloysius Ferrari SDB, Manila 1955).

<sup>239</sup> ASC F477 Makati-San Ildefonso (Verbali del Capitolo Superiore, 21 Novembre 1956).

<sup>240</sup> Turin received a copy of the suggested contract in Italian and English. This contract contained five points, which gave duties of the contracting parties (the Archdiocese of Manila and the Salesians of St. John Bosco). Cf *ibid.* (Contratto di conferimento della parrocchia di S. Ildefonso alla Società Salesiana). We put here the English version of the proposed contract. “(1) That the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Manila confers on the Salesians of Don Bosco, the Parish of Saint Ildefonso, Makati Rizal, for a period of 99 years. (2) The buildings of the Parish, i.e. church, convento, recreation center, etc. to be erected by the Archdiocese with suffrages and help of our faithful. (3) That the Salesians of Don Bosco oblige themselves to exercise the parochial ministry within the confines of said Parish as determined by the “Decree of Erection” in accordance with the Sacred Canons and the Diocesan decrees. (4) That the Salesians of Saint John Bosco shall engage, within the limits of the said Parish in the work of Festive Oratory and other parochial organizations on behalf of the youth and population of the said Parish. (5) That should either of the two parties to this contract desire to break the same contract before the expiry as per paragraph I, for just reasons, notice of such rescission must be given two years previously”.

nutum sancta sedis” so that it might be in line with the Constitutions<sup>241</sup>. It, however, agreed that the contract regarding the Parish and the Parish works be similar to the parishes that the Salesians have in the United States. Moreover, it should be noted that the Salesians were already at work in the area for the more than three years now, where they were “proprietors” of six hectares of land, where they were developing “a work which was properly Salesian”. The Salesians should be told in the administration of goods, to administer separately the goods of the Parish and that of the Opera Salesiana. Finally, Turin noted that according to the list of houses, the house of Makati was still not canonically erected<sup>242</sup>.

Fr. Zaggiotti, seeing the proposed contract noted in the document which accompanied it, approved and accepted the Parish:

“Seen: it seems that it is a convention desired by the Apostolic Nuncio and approved by him, very useful and honorable for us”<sup>243</sup>.

To accept the Parish was considered to the advantage of the Salesians, “not only financially”, but also for the work which the Salesians wanted to do for the young of the quarter, which they considered as “among those who were morally in need of the city”<sup>244</sup>. Thus, he decreed that the “Parish of Culi-Culi” in Makati be accepted on 17 January 1957<sup>245</sup>. Strange, for the acquisition of a Parish, Turin seemed not have put up much resistance and difficulty. And even with the contract between Fr. Ferrari and the Archbishop, certain recommendations of Turin seemed to have been disregarded.

Fr. Acquistapace appointed Fr. Giovanni Righetti to be the first Parish Priest in September 1955. However, the latter would not last long; for in a little more than a year, he would leave for Italy, unable to adapt to the climate that the Archipelago had. This time, to take his place, it was Fr. Giuseppe Rizzato<sup>246</sup> and with whom San Ildefonso Parish would cover and make a long history.

<sup>241</sup> *Costituzioni della Società di San Francesco di Sales...*, art. 10: “In via ordinaria non si accettino parrocchie. Se tuttavia per giuste ragioni si credesse di accettarne qualcuna, si esiga che venga conferita non a singoli soci, ma alla Società, e con licenza della Sede Apostolica”.

<sup>242</sup> ASC F477 Manila-San Ildefonso (Verbali del Capitolo Superiore, 25 aprile 1955).

<sup>243</sup> *Ibid.* (Zaggiotti, 11 dicembre 1956).

<sup>244</sup> *Ibid.* (Conferimento della parrocchia di S. Ildefonso alla Società Salesiana).

<sup>245</sup> *Ibid.* (Zaggiotti, 14 gennaio 1957). He had earlier asked the Holy See the permission to accept “una Parrocchia a Culi-Culi, Makati” which the Archbishop wanted to entrust to the Salesian Society “ad normam iuris et ad nutum Sanctae Sedis”. Cf *ibid.*, (Zaggiotti, 11 dicembre 1956).

<sup>246</sup> SAS 30B109 Fr. Giovanni Rizzato: born in Vicenza, Italy (15 August 1911); first profession in Chieri, Turin (13 September 1930), ordained in Turin, Italy (2 July 1939); died in Makati City, Philippines (20 September 1991) at 80 years, 61 years Salesian and 52 years priest. Cf SAHK *Corrispondenza* (Braga a Benato, Roma, 10 dicembre 1952). Fr. Giovanni Rizzato would be Parish Priest of San Ildefonso until his death in 1991.

### 6.3. Conclusion

Two years after having commenced with Don Bosco Makati, Fr. Acquistapace wrote Fr. Fedrigotti on 14 May 1957. He informed the Prefect General that the festive Oratory was already functioning and expressing his hope that he and the Rector Major would come to see the work as they had promised<sup>247</sup>.

Three years later, Fr. Braga would also write Fr. Ziggotti, saying that San Ildefonso Parish was caring for 20,000 souls and that the school had now 530 students enrolled. Moreover, he asked for another confrere who was good in English, to occupy himself with the 1,000 Catholics residing in the nearby San Lorenzo Village and who spoke English and Spanish fluently. The inhabitants of this zone of the Parish were possible sources of generous donations; unfortunately, none of the Salesians currently assigned in the school could take care of them<sup>248</sup>.

Another three years later, Fr. Cogliandro wrote Fr. Fedrigotti this time, suggesting that an elementary school, similar to the set-up in Mandaluyong - that was, the elementary separated from the high school and with its own entrance - be added to the construction plans of the school. With this addition to Don Bosco Makati, the financial gain would be doubled, useful for paying the debts of the Province<sup>249</sup>.

Meanwhile, there was one thing so clear when Archbishop Santos approved the establishment of Don Bosco Makati: he showed concern for the young poor of his Archdiocese. He had already once encouraged the Salesians to do something about them, when he approved Don Bosco Mandaluyong with its Oratory and trade school. He had just approved the Makati's boys' center and future vocational school, because of what it would do for the youth of the area. And he did not want to miss this opportunity to insist on another request that he knew the Salesians were good at. On 12 May 1956, he expressed his desire that they, one day, should put up a festive Oratory in a place called Tondo, where there were "many boys who could profit from a Salesian institution for them"<sup>250</sup>.

The good Archbishop had to wait for some time, though, not for long. He, in fact, would have the privilege once more of welcoming the Salesians there. Meanwhile, the Salesians were given time, and were having time, to grow and to mature.

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<sup>247</sup> ASC F157 Cina: Corrispondenza (Acquistapace a Fedrigotti, Hong Kong, 14 maggio 1957).

<sup>248</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Braga a Ziggotti, Tarlac, 9 febbraio 1960) 2.

<sup>249</sup> *Ibid.* (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 12 febbraio 1964).

<sup>250</sup> ASC F477 Manila-Makati (Permission of Archbishop of Manila, Manila, 12 May 1956): "...tantos niños que podrìan aprovecharse de una Institución Salesiana para ellos".

Two years after the publication of *Confessions*, in 1711, he published a second volume, *The Christian's Duty*. This work was a practical guide to the Christian life, and it was written in the same style as *Confessions*. It was a very popular work, and it was one of the best-selling books of the day. In the preface to *The Christian's Duty*, he wrote: "I have written this book, not only to instruct the ignorant, but also to refresh the minds of those who are already enlightened." This book was a practical guide to the Christian life, and it was written in the same style as *Confessions*. It was a very popular work, and it was one of the best-selling books of the day.

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1. *Confessions*, ed. by J. H. Sisson (New York: World, 1913), p. 1.

2. *Confessions*, ed. by J. H. Sisson (New York: World, 1913), p. 1.

3. *Confessions*, ed. by J. H. Sisson (New York: World, 1913), p. 1.

4. *Confessions*, ed. by J. H. Sisson (New York: World, 1913), p. 1.

## Chapter Five

### THE SALESIANS

Among the files regarding the Philippine Salesian Province found in the Salesian Central Archives, there is a document, which contains the list of the so-called “Fondatori” of the Salesian Visitatoria<sup>1</sup>. The names of Salesians listed were considered belonging to the China Province. The names enumerated reveal those who constituted the Philippine Visitatoria. They also show who were already at work in the Philippines during the period of the Delegation. They informed us too of those who remained in order to form part of the Province.

Nonetheless, there is the need of a careful reading of these names, in as much as not all who are enumerated came to form part of the Visitatoria; nor did all of them remain in the Visitatoria. Besides, it might have been indicated that they belonged to the China Province. In reality, however, some came from other Provinces if only to be “missionary” to the Philippines. Moreover, a better look at the list will also reveal to us who persevered in their Salesian vocation and in their mandate to work in the Philippines.

The Salesians listed as “Fondatori” have laid the foundation of the Salesian work in the Archipelago. To know them is most useful to understand the why of the actual Salesian *opus*. Some of them must have surely influenced the younger generation of Salesians whom they have enticed to join them; they have created a certain mentality, which could still be persisting even at the present.

#### 1. “Fondatori”

In the list of confreres who constituted the Visitatoria, we found the names of 78 Salesians. Of these, there were 35 priests, 16 perpetually professed coadjutors, two temporary professed coadjutors and a coadjutor-novice, three perpetually professed clerics and two temporarily professed clerics, and eight cleric-novices and a coadjutor-novice, forming a combination of various ages

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<sup>1</sup> ASC F164 Confratelli dell’Ispettorato della Cina che passano alla Visitatoria delle Filippine (coi loro documenti). Cf also the appendix at the end of the book, which contains the names of the confreres of the Visitatoria as well as that of the Province in its first year. N.B. “Fondatori” = Founders.

and of different nationalities. At the bottom of the document, there was a reference of still four other Salesians who were supposed to be destined for the Philippines but who had not yet come: three were named, the fourth anonymous. The total was 82 “founding Salesians” of the Philippine Visitatoria when it was established in 1958; most of these, however, were already mostly members of the Delegation.

### 1.1. *Priests Fondatori*

The confreres in the list of “Fondatori” consisted of priests and coadjutors, clerics and novices, either temporarily or perpetually professed. Of the priests, there were Emilio Baggio who had also taught Theology and Scriptures at the Salesian Theologate in Hong Kong<sup>2</sup> and who was second rector of Tarlac<sup>3</sup>, Pablo Bahillo who had expressed his desire to Fr. Acquistapace that he wanted to go to the Philippines<sup>4</sup>, Antonio Battistello who had been transferred to work with the aspirants in the Philippines because he did not sufficiently know Chinese, while on the contrary he knew English. He had arrived in Hong Kong on 26 December 1954 after his ordination, and was initially destined to work with the aspirants in Kowloon<sup>5</sup>.

There was Pericle Bianchini, on whose behalf Fr. Acquistapace had written to the Superior of the Salesian Verona Province, who had asked to go to the missions and whom Fr. Fedrigotti in fact intended to send. Attilio Boscaroli went to Cebu and Johannes Buchta to Tarlac in June 1954, in time for the opening of the new school year. Jose Bosch came directly from Spain. Maurilio Candusso was expected to leave for Manila in October 1954<sup>6</sup>. Jan Clifford

<sup>2</sup> SAS 31B196 Fr. Emilio Baggio: born in Milan, Italy (25 January 1914); first profession in Chieri, Turin (13 October 1931); ordained in Shanghai, China (29 September 1940); died in Arese, Milan, Italy (5 September 2002) at 88 years, 71 years Salesian and 62 years a priest. He worked in the Philippines from 1955 to 1964. He went back to Italy in 1964 and worked there until 1985. He once more returned to the Philippines in 1985, and finally went back to Italy in 1992 where he died ten years later. Cf SAHK Cina Provincia dal 1906 (list of confreres of the Province).

<sup>3</sup> ASC D870 Verballi (5 maggio 1955).

<sup>4</sup> SAHK Corrispondenza (Acquistapace a Suppo, Saigon, 29 giugno 1955). Fr. Bahillo left the Philippines and transferred to Korea in 1962; he left the Society sometime in 1976 and joined the Diocese of An dong, Korea, where he died in 1984. Cf ASC F165 Korea Corrispondenza (Bahillo a Fedrigotti, Seoul, 10 dicembre 1966).

<sup>5</sup> Cf Antonio BATTISTELLO, *Un Ventennio in Estremo Oriente. Appunti di viaggi e di vita missionaria*. (unpublished manuscript). Verona [1993], p. 1.

<sup>6</sup> SAHK Corrispondenza (Benato a Acquistapace, Hong Kong 13 settembre 1955).



later arrived to be rector of Cebu Boys Town, replacing Boscariol. Mario Cuomo, who went to China as a novice in 1936 and who concretely experienced communist persecution, came to Manila as a young priest. He was in a communist prison in Shanghai for 15 months, an experience which he kept in writing.<sup>7</sup> Guido D'Amore had applied to go to Victorias and was in fact sent and appointed as its first rector.<sup>8</sup> Adolfo Faroni, who had studied Theology in England as a member and at the expense of the China Province, was destined for the Philippines.<sup>9</sup> He was supposed to come to the Philippines together with a Spanish cleric, Alonso Jaime, who was also studying Theology in Spain. The latter never came. Fr. Faroni was ordained in Sherfield English, England (7 July 1957); he went to the Philippines on 14 November 1957. There were Saverio Fels and Albino Fernandez;<sup>10</sup> the latter was supposed to go directly to the Philippines after his brief vacation in Spain, together with three clerics from Spain. He never went; instead two clerics came to the Philippines to add up to the limited personnel.<sup>11</sup> Instead, Fels came and was put in charge of the finances of the delegation.

There were Pietro Garbero, Anthony Gircour, Giuseppe Guarino. Mathias Kreutzer, who was delegate of the Provincial for the area of Peking before the Salesians finally exited from China, came to the Philippines as rector of Victorias<sup>12</sup>. Giovanni Monchiero had been asked to go and help D'Amore in Victorias; he was in Italy then for vacation. Instead, it had not been easy to assign Pierangelo Quaranta to the Philippines. He was professor in the studentate of Hong Kong; it was not easy to find someone to substitute him. The clerics Luis Iriarte and Agustin Lopez came from Spain after their Novitiate.

Johannes Rauh, had gone back to Germany for some rest, but also in order to ask help for the new Salesian presence in the Philippines through the German Missions Procure. Lino Repetto went to Cebu, and became a pioneer of the new

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<sup>7</sup> Cf AMS (30 aprile 1953) 46-50.

<sup>8</sup> SAHK Minutes of the Provincial Meeting (Hong Kong, 6 giugno 1951). Fr. Guido D'Amore left the Society from the United States sometime in 1965. Cf ASC D870 Verballi (26 agosto 1952).

<sup>9</sup> SAHK Corrispondenza (Acquistapace, Hong Kong, 15 ottobre 1953).

<sup>10</sup> Fr. Albino Fernandez Diaz is presently assigned in the Residencia Salesiana of Allariz, Orense, Spain. He never went to the Philippines, even if he was listed among the "Fondatori". He returned to Spain instead from China. In a telephone interview in April 2003, he referred to another Albino Fernandes, of Portuguese origin, who might have been the one destined to go to the Philippines. However, no confrere of such a name exists. Cf SAHK Corrispondenza (Benato a Puddu, Hong Kong, 2 ottobre 1951).

<sup>11</sup> SAHK Minutes of the Provincial Council (Hong Kong, 28 settembre 1951). Cf SAHK Corrispondenza (Braga a Benato, Roma, 10 dicembre 1952).

<sup>12</sup> ASC D870 Verballi (26 luglio 1956).

Boys Town in Punta Princesa<sup>13</sup>. Iginò and Vincenzo Ricaldone were brothers who found themselves working in the same place. The former previously worked in North India; the latter was novice master in China. Giovanni Righetti, together with the coadjutor Romildo Gamba, were at first refused a visa by the Philippine Consulate in Hong Kong for lack of documents. Giovanni Rizzato was first destined by Fr. Braga to go to Taipei; but he was redirected to the Philippines. And finally, there were Godfrey Roozen who was already the rector of Don Bosco Aberdeen in Hong Kong, the young professor of Philosophy Ferdinando Rossotto, the Irish Patrick Ryan and the German Georg Schwarz whom Fr. Braga so fondly called “il mio pirata”, and Ercole Solaroli, who was newly ordained after finishing his Theology in India. By 17 October 1952, Ryan, together with Vincenzo Ricaldone and Quaranta, were already scheduled to proceed to the Philippines<sup>14</sup>.

There was Luigi Ferrari who had been appointed by the Superiors to be the Delegate in the Philippines<sup>15</sup> (1953-1955), and then Provincial (1969-1975). Sometime in 1955, he returned to Rome, Italy and was rector of the Salesian house of Gerini. He had a licentiate in Theology from the Pontifical Gregorian University. Fr. Ziggotti knew Ferrari well, since both came from the same Veneto region of North Italy. He had been in the Philippines twice earlier: in 1952 as Provincial Delegate, and in 1966, as rector of Don Bosco Seminary College, Canlubang. When he finished his term as Provincial, he went back to his original Province, the Italian Romana. He had been sent by the Provincial to Italy to negotiate directly with Turin regarding the issue of personnel, on account of the scarcity of confreres and the urgency to open several presences instead of only one in the Philippines<sup>16</sup>. He had been delayed in coming back since he had gone to London by his own initiative to perfect his English<sup>17</sup>. So he was asked by Hong Kong to return immediately, in order to organize the two actual works in the Philippines already existing and to initiate those which had already been accepted and approved<sup>18</sup>. On 24 October 1952, he finally left

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<sup>13</sup> Fr. Lino Repetto returned to Italy and joined the Ligure-Toscana Province. Fr. Braga had second thoughts of sending to the Philippines the confrere whom he considered as a good and capable worker. He had asked Fr. Bellido to check whether the confrere smoked. “Se si tace o si chiude un occhio sarà presto uso generale, specie coi molti olandesi che abbiamo tra noi. Sono davvero ammirevole: nessuno di essi ha mai preso una sigaretta in bocca; eppure vi erano abituati sino dalla puerizia”. Cf SAHK Corrispondenza (Braga a Bellido, Hong Kong, 19 maggio 1952).

<sup>14</sup> Cf SAHK Corrispondenza (Benato a Kreutzer, Hong Kong, 17 ottobre 1952).

<sup>15</sup> SAHK Minutes of the Provincial Meeting (Hong Kong, 6 giugno 1951).

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.* (Hong Kong, 12 dicembre 1951).

<sup>17</sup> SAHK Corrispondenza (Braga a Bellido, Hong Kong, 19 maggio 1952). While eight of those whom Fr. Braga had recommended to go to the Philippines had prepared their documents to be able to depart as soon as possible, “Lui [Fr. Ferrari] però è andato a perfezionarsi nella lingua dei biondi”. Cf SAHK Corrispondenza (Benato a Kreutzer, Hong Kong, 17 maggio 1952).

<sup>18</sup> SAHK Minutes of the Provincial Meeting (Hong Kong, 3 marzo 1952).

Hong Kong for Manila together with Lino Repetto and the Coadjutor Carlo Nardin<sup>19</sup> and became the first rector of Mandaluyong<sup>20</sup>.

And there was also Carlo Braga, whose name never appeared as among those whom Ferrari wanted to come and work in the new Delegation. Since 7 October 1952, he had finished being Provincial, in as much as the Rector Major had already appointed Fr. Acquistapace to succeed him<sup>21</sup>. For this, he had gone back to Italy, to his native place where he spent Christmas<sup>22</sup>. Fr. Acquistapace had originally destined him to work in Taiwan. Somehow, this did not work out. He was eventually sent to the Philippines, as rector of Don Bosco Victorias<sup>23</sup>, if only to help provide a solid Salesian base on the budding work there<sup>24</sup>. Fr. Acquistapace, who was then in Turin, had to remind him though to proceed immediately to his assignment, telling him that this too was the desire of the Superiors of Turin<sup>25</sup>. D'Amore was already agitated in as much as the confreres supposedly destined to the Philippines, including Fr. Braga, destined to Victorias, had not arrived yet<sup>26</sup>.

## 1.2. Coadjutors Fondatori

Of the coadjutors listed among the "Fondatori", we have the names of Andrea Bragion who had previously worked in Vietnam after China; Giovanni De Reggi who went to Victorias with the cleric Geoghegan, one of the first

<sup>19</sup> SAHK Corrispondenza (Benato a Rassiga, Hong Kong, 11 dicembre 1952).

<sup>20</sup> ASC D870 Verbali (2 settembre 1953).

<sup>21</sup> SAHK Corrispondenza (Benato a Kreutzer, Hong Kong, 17 ottobre 1952).

<sup>22</sup> Vasco TASSINARI, *Don Braga. L'uomo che ebbe tre patrie*. Bologna, Gesp 1990, p. 635. Fr. Acquistapace had told the confreres to make Fr. Braga feel as comfortable as possible, after the latter's "return" from Hong Kong, from 12 to 23 April. Cf SAHK Corrispondenza (Acquistapace, Hong Kong, 24 marzo 1953).

<sup>23</sup> ASC D870 Verbali (4 settembre 1953).

<sup>24</sup> Fr. Acquistapace had written to the Rector Major regarding the non-desirability of Fr. Braga by the confreres assigned in Formosa as well as by the Inter-Nuncio himself, who revealed his opinion to Fr. E. Waidinger. For this, he suggested that Fr. Braga be assigned to the Philippines where there was the need of one who could give the true Salesian spirit to the new presence: "Si presentano grandi e vantaggiosi opere salesiane, ma se non hanno lo spirito salesiano a base, costruiremo contro Don Bosco". Cf SAHK Corrispondenza (Acquistapace a Ziggotti, Hong Kong, 11 aprile 1953).

<sup>25</sup> SAHK Corrispondenza (Acquistapace a Benato, Torino, 21 luglio 1953). Fr. Acquistapace had to write twice to the provincial secretary, Fr. Benato, to inform Fr. Braga "che vada al più presto alle Filippine".

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.* (Acquistapace a Benato, Torino, 15 luglio 1953): "Mi dispiace che i confratelli per le Filippine non siano ancora sul posto. D. D'amore ha ragione attende con ansia il Sig. D. Braga che anch'io credevo già a Victorias".

coadjutors to come to the Philippines<sup>27</sup>; the brothers Edvigi and Valentino Floris, Romildo Gamba, Michele Garombo, Barnaba Marcos, Rafael Mrzel, Lorenzo Nardin, Tommaso Orsolin, Pawel Prokopowicz, Nicolino Tambascia and Mario Rossi who came as perpetually professed<sup>28</sup>; the Chinese Joseph Tchio, Mario Testa, Mario Viel and Luciano Gorla who was assigned in Mandaluyong as practical trainee. They came and did their practical training in the Philippines. Some of them did their perpetual profession in the Archipelago<sup>29</sup>.

These coadjutors were in charge mainly of the shops of the schools, which through their expertise became technical and innovative during their time. In the process, though, some of these coadjutors who were still young for they recently made their vows, would leave the Society. Only Bragion, Mrzel, Rossi and Tambascia remained and finished their years in the Philippines. Lorenzo Nardin was the last of this group<sup>30</sup>.

Although the name of the coadjutor Salvatore Massi did not appear in the list, he ought to be included in as much as he had been in the Philippines since 1953, being assigned in Don Bosco Victorias. However, he would go back to Italy to re-join the Roman Province<sup>31</sup>. Moreover, there were two other coadjutors who worked in the Philippines, but who returned to their original Provinces before the Philippines was constituted to be a Visitatoria. Francesco Stoppa Sady went back to Hong Kong, while Carlo Nardin, who left Hong Kong with

<sup>27</sup> SAHK Minutes of the Provincial Meeting (Hong Kong, 3 marzo 1952). Fr. Braga had charged Br. De Reggi to bring a set of the Memorie Biografiche for the houses of Tarlac and Victorias. Cf SAHK Corrispondenza (Braga a Benato, Macao, 4 aprile 1952); (Benato a Kreutzer, Hong Kong, 17 settembre 1952). N.B. The Salesians who were not priests were formerly called coadjutors; now they are called Salesian Brothers.

<sup>28</sup> Br. Mario Rossi arrived in Manila on 13 January 1954 and went to Victorias where he was assigned. Cf SAHK Corrispondenza (Acquistapace, Mandaluyong, 13 gennaio 1954).

<sup>29</sup> The coadjutors Tchio, Viel and Gorla made their practical training and their perpetual profession in Don Bosco Mandaluyong. Cf SAHK Minutes of the Provincial Meeting (Hong Kong, gennaio 1952); *ibid.* Corrispondenza (Braga a Benato, Tarlac, 28 gennaio 1952).

<sup>30</sup> The following coadjutors left: the Brothers Edvigi and Valentino Floris, Garombo, Testa, Viel, Gorla and the Chinese Tchio. Instead, the Salesians De Reggi, Gamba, Marcos, Orsolin and Prokopowicz would repatriate and die in their original Provinces.

<sup>31</sup> Br. Salvatore Massi was a member of the Salesian communities of Torino-Crocetta (1934-1935) and Torino-Oratorio S. Francesco di Sales (1935-1936) before he left for the China missions in 1936. According to his anagraphic record, he belonged to the Don Bosco Victorias (1953-1962), Don Bosco Mandaluyong (1962-1965) and Don Bosco Canlubang (1965-1967). Afterwards, he returned to Italy and joined the Roman Province. I met him personally at the San Callisto Catacombs where he was assigned sometime in the 1980s.

Fr. Repetto for Manila on 24 October 1952, returned later to Italy to join the Adriatica Province<sup>32</sup>.

Many of these Salesian coadjutors were mainly responsible for the technical schools the Salesians became known for. Unfortunately, there has been little material preserved, on how these Salesians constructed this particular impressa of the technical schools of which the Salesians became known.

### 1.3. Clerics Fondatori

From the beginning of the foundation of the Salesian presence in the Philippines, there had never been enough clerics to boost up the Salesian work. And this was a clear lament of Fr. Braga. He would have started early and assiduously the recruitment of future Salesians, if he had the clerics. He considered them as the link to the young Filipinos who could be enticed to be Salesians, entering the Salesian minor seminary or Aspirantate. With these possible vocations, then the continuance of the work started would have been assured somehow.

There were three clerics, already perpetually professed, who were listed among the "Fondatori" of the Philippine Visitatoria. Patrick Corcoran did his practical training in Tarlac (1953), while Sileno Nello Pivetta did his tirocinium in Cebu (1953) and his perpetual vows in Victorias on 15 May 1957<sup>33</sup>. Another Irish cleric, William Geoghegan, did practical training in Don Bosco Victorias in 1953, after which he went to England for his Theology; he also left the Salesian Society.

There were other clerics, temporarily professed, Filipinos and non-Filipinos, in the "Fondatori" list. The non-Filipino clerics were Feliks Glowicki, Jaime Claret, Felicísimo Juan, and Silverio Justo. Glowicki, a Pole, experienced the difficult beginnings of Tarlac as a practical trainee, studied Theology in England and returned to the Philippines. The rest were Spaniards, who later left the Congregation.

The Filipino clerics were Rodolfo Agana, Remo Bati and Leo Drona. All three were sent abroad to Italy for their Theology. There were also Cornelio Esplico, Juan Gatmaitan, Alfredo Manalili, Augusto Miranda, Hilario Muyco, Jose Luis Navarro and Ronaldo Peroy. Almost all of these, who belonged to the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> groups of novices, did not continue on in the Salesian Society. Bati did

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<sup>32</sup> In his mortuary letter, it is indicated that Br. Carlo Nardin worked in Cebu in 1954. He probably was the coadjutor first assigned to work among the street children of Cebu Boys Town. Cf SAHK Corrispondenza (Benato a Rassiga, Hong Kong, 11 dicembre 1952). However, Br. Lorenzo Nardin also worked in Boys Town, which was his first assignment when he came to the Philippines.

<sup>33</sup> SAHK IN 27 (September 1961) 10.

his practical training in Tarlac; Drona, instead, was six years in Hong Kong, three as a student of Philosophy and three as assistant<sup>34</sup>. But like their foreign counterparts, these clerics did not count much then. A good number of these clerics were still in Hong Kong doing their Philosophy, for the moment “useless” and unable to contribute to the actual work of building up the Delegation.

However, nine novices were also listed among the “Fondatori” of the Philippine Visitatoria. They were all Filipinos: Pedro Alabe, Norberto Chavez, Bernardo Fontanilla, Delfin Leonardo, Marcelino Prudente, Antonio Serrano, Leandro Tapay, Mariano Tarrosa and Jesus Tayag. Fontanilla, Tarrosa and Tayag, who belonged to this 3<sup>rd</sup> Novitiate batch, have remained Salesians; while Alabe, Chavez and Serrano did not finish the Novitiate.

Moreover, other four Salesians listed were categorized as confreres directed to the Visitatoria: Alberto Duran, Raul Hernandez, Angel Izquierdo and an unidentified cleric, who probably was Francisco Castillo Mendez<sup>35</sup>. Izquierdo came to the Philippines, but soon repatriated to re-join the Madrid Province where he held responsibility in its animation. He also worked as a missionary in South Africa; but because of his ill-health, he had to go back to Spain once more. Duran, Hernandez and Castillo were Mexicans. Duran and Hernandez were diverted to Campo Grande, Brazil. Nonetheless, Duran went back to Mexico where he was novice master (1980-1987) and vice provincial (1990-1999); instead, Hernandez left sometime in 1966. Castillo made his perpetual profession in San Fernando, Pampanga in 1963, but later left the Congregation. To remember that before the Salesians finally established themselves in the Philippines, there had been a previous “Salesian Mexican community” in Manila, which consisted of Archbishop Guglielmo Piani and his secretary Msgr. Louis La Ravoire Morrow, both of which formerly belonged to the Salesian Mexican Province.

#### 1.4. *Looking at the Founders*

The majority of the priests (29 of them) listed as “Fondatori” indeed came from the China Province<sup>36</sup>: Only 11 of the coadjutors were originally of the

<sup>34</sup> SAHK IN 57 (May 1964) 10; *ibid.*, 59 (July-August 1964) 13.

<sup>35</sup> Fr. Alberto Duran Cabrales is presently rector of Instituto Santo Domingo Savio in Mexico City. Instead, Fr. Francisco Castillo Mendez, a Mexican, came to the Philippines and did practical training in Don Bosco Tarlac and made his perpetual profession in San Fernando, Pampanga (11 July 1964). He re-entered his original Province of Guadalajara, Mexico in 1965. He was incardinated into the Diocese of Brownsville, USA in 1982.

<sup>36</sup> The following belonged to the China Province: Baggio, Bahillo, Battistello, Bianchini, Boscarior, Braga, Buchta, Candusso, Clifford, Cuomo, D’Amore, Fels, A. Fernandez, Ferrari, Garbero, Gircour, Kreutzer, Monchiero, Quaranta, Rauh, Repetto, V. Ricaldone, Righetti, Rizzato, Roozen, Rossotto, Ryan, Schwarz and Solaroli.

China Province; Corcoran was the lone cleric who belonged to the China Province<sup>37</sup>.

Instead, those who did not come directly from the China Province were the Salesians Guarino, Iriarte, Lopez, Faroni and Igino Ricaldone. Guarino, of Italian origin, was a newly ordained priest from the French Province of Lyons, when he went to work in the Philippines. Iriarte and Lopez came as clerics; they studied Theology at San Jose Seminary at Ateneo in Quezon City and were ordained in Manila, in Don Bosco Mandaluyong on 22 March 1958<sup>38</sup>. Igino Ricaldone was already of the India North East Province, whose provincial center was at Calcutta, before he came to the Philippines. He was ordained in Shillong, India.

Six of the priests listed as “Fondatori” of the Visitatoria left the Society. Others repatriated and died as Salesians<sup>39</sup>. Meanwhile, the Salesians Faroni, Gircour, Iriarte, Schwarz and Solaroli have remained and are still around. However, in 1968, the Salesian Antonio Battistello went back to his original Province in Verona and continues to be a Salesian. Of the Salesian coadjutors, seven eventually left the Society; another seven repatriated sometime in the 1960s<sup>40</sup>. The coadjutor Lorenzo Nardin is the lone survival among the coadjutor-founders.

The majority of these “Fondatori” were Italians, of which 22 were priests, three were coadjutors and two were clerics. Nonetheless, there were also of other nationalities, which created an air of internationality in the ranks of these Salesians: ten Spaniards, four Germans, three Dutch, two Irish, two Poles, a Slovenian, a Chinese, plus three Mexicans<sup>41</sup>. The remaining 19 were Filipinos,

<sup>37</sup> The coadjutors originally of the China Province were Bragion, De Reggi, the brothers Floris, Gamba, Marcos, Mrzel, Orsolin, Prokopowicz, Rossi and Tchio.

<sup>38</sup> Iriarte and Lopez both studied with the Jesuits and were ordained in the Philippines. Fr. Iriarte declared that one reason why they were sent to the School of Theology of the Jesuits, instead to that of the Dominicans, was that they could study gratis with the Jesuits. He said that the Jesuits in China had some “debts” to pay the Salesians. For the cancellation of these debts, he and the other cleric Lopez were given free schooling in Theology by the Jesuits.

<sup>39</sup> Bahillo, Bianchini, Cuomo, D’Amore, Lopez and Rossotto left the Society. Instead, Baggio, Boscarol, Buchta, Candusso, Fels, Ferrari, Kreutzer, Rauh, the brothers Igino and Vincenzo Ricaldone and Righetti went back to Europe and died as Salesians there.

<sup>40</sup> Edvigi and Valentino Floris, Garombo, Gorla, Testa, Tchio and Viel, who were young coadjutors then, left the Society. On the other hand, De Reggi, Gamba, Marcos, Massi, Carlo Nardin, Orsolin and Prokopowicz went back to their original Provinces.

<sup>41</sup> The *Italians* were Baggio, Battistello, Bianchini, Boscarol, Braga, Candusso, Cuomo, D’Amore, Faroni, Fels, Ferrari, Garbero, Guarino, Monchiero, Quaranta, Repetto, I. Ricaldone, V. Ricaldone, Righetti, Rizzato, Rossotto, Solaroli, Bragion, De Reggi, E. Floris, V. Floris, Gamba, Garombo, Gorla, Nardin, Orsolin, Rossi, Tambasica, Testa, Viel, Pezzotta and Pivetta. The *Spaniards* were Bahillo, Bosch, Fernandez, Iriarte, Lopez, Marcos, Claret, Juan, Justo and Izquierdo. The *Germans* were Buchta, Kreutzer, Rauh and Schwarz. The *Dutch* were Clifford, Gircour and Roozen. The *Irish* were Ryan and Corcoran. The *Poles* were Prokopowicz and Glowicki. The *Slovenian* was Mrzel, the *Chinese* Tchio, and the *Mexicans* Duran, Hernandez and Castillo.

ten in their first three years of temporary profession and nine novices. The Europeans obviously dominated the group, specially the Italian, on account of the origins of the Salesian Society. Much of the mentality and the early language used were expected to be Italian, at least in the beginning.

The first Salesians were mostly “made in China” and were formed young, as indicated in their ordinations, religious professions, and thus in their formation too. Nonetheless, those others who were ordained or who made their perpetual profession elsewhere joined the China Province at a young age too. The locals, who were just beginning, were definitely young. The loss of all the novices of the 1<sup>st</sup> batch, and the perseverance in the subsequent groups was perhaps indicative of the immaturity of Salesian vocations and the difficulties with regards the Salesian formation of the young vocations in the beginning.

However, age could also have mattered for a concrete handling of the Salesian beginnings in the Philippines. When the Philippine Visitatoria was established, the average age of the confreres of the Visitatoria was about 40<sup>42</sup>. Of these Salesians, ten were in their 50s, and 18 in their 40s, 12 in their 30s and an equal number in their 20s. One must remember that the Filipino confreres were either in their first year of profession or in their Novitiate. Almost half of the confreres were 40 and above; those who were deciding and administering the communities were in very adult stage.

The eldest was Fr. Carlo Braga<sup>43</sup> at age 69. He was Superior for about 31 years. He was Provincial of China (1930-1953), Provincial Delegate to the Philippines (1956-1958) and Visitatore (1958 to 1963), 23 years Superior of

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<sup>42</sup> Here are the years of birth, the names of confreres and their ages: 1889 (Braga: 69 yrs); 1897 (V. Ricaldone: 61 yrs); 1901 (Garbero: 57 yrs); 1903 (I. Ricaldone: 55 yrs); 1905 (Kreutzer, Bragion: 53 yrs); 1906 (Buchta, Repetto, Marcos, Testa: 52 yrs); 1907 (Orsolin: 51 yrs); 1908 (Ferrari: 50 yrs); 1909 (Candusso: 49 yrs); 1910 (Prokopowicz: 48 yrs); 1911 (Clifford, Rizzato: 47 yrs); 1912 (Roozen, Gamba, Mrzel: 46 yrs); 1913 (Rossi: 45 yrs); 1914 (De Reggi: 44 yrs); 1915 (Boscariol, Fernandez, Monchiero, Righetti: 43 yrs); 1916 (Quaranta, Tambascia: 42 yrs); 1917 (D'Amore: 41 yrs); 1918 (Rauh, Ryan: 40 yrs); 1919 (Cuomo, Fels: 39 yrs); 1920 (Rossetto: 38 yrs); 1921 (Bosch: 37 yrs); 1922 (Bianchini: 36 yrs); 1923 (Guarino: 37 yrs); 1925 (E. Floris: 35 yrs); 1926 (Bahillo, Garombo: 32 yrs); 1927 (Tchio: 31 yrs); 1928 (Viel, Corcoran: 30 yrs); 1929 (V. Floris, Gorla: 29 yrs); 1930 (Pivetta, Fontanilla: 28 yrs); 1934 (Navarro: 24 yrs); 1936 (Peroy, Izquierdo: 22 yrs); 1937 (Tapay: 21 yrs); 1938 (Esplico, Manalili, Miranda, Castillo: 20 yrs); 1939 (Claret, Gatmaitan, Muyco: 19 yrs); 1940 (Bati, Juan, Justo: 18 yrs); 1941 (Agana, Drona, Leonardo, Prudente, Tayag, Hernández: 17 yrs); 1942 (Tarrosa: 16 yrs).

<sup>43</sup> Fr. Carlo Braga was ordained in Turin (11 April 1914) and left four years later for the China Missions (24 August 1919). He was Superior for almost a third of his life. In deference to his rich experience as missionary, he was asked to preach twice (1952, 1961) for the missionary expeditions from the Turin Basilica. Possibly, he participated seven times in the general chapters of the Salesian Society. He was still delegate to CG 19 held in 1965.



China, eight years of the Philippines. Obviously, his experience as leader and missionary and Salesian was one thing that the other confreres did not have. Fr. Vincenzo Ricaldone was entrusted with the task of being novice master at age 59. His age and mentality were just enough to distance him from the younger confreres, so that when the Visitatoria commenced, he was 61 and the youngest of the novices was 16. The relation between the two must have been more than that of a father to a son, but of a grandfather to a grandson. In a way, Fr. Fedrigotti, writing in his memoirs on his impression of the Salesians in the Philippines, declared that this Salesian Province was “where our work was born already adult”<sup>44</sup>.

## 2. Salesians of the Province

The Provincial Directory for the school year 1964-1965 is another document which contains the list of the Salesians who constituted the Philippine Province in its beginnings. Included in this list were certain important details regarding the confrere: his name, birthday, date of first profession and missionary mandate, his actual status and residence. But specially, it is a source of an updated list of the Salesians of the recently established Philippine Province. Listed in this directory were 38 priests, 29 coadjutors (20 perpetually and nine temporarily professed) and 40 clerics (11 perpetually and 36 temporarily professed), for a total of 114.

### 2.1. More Salesians

The list of the personnel of the new Province included confreres who were already in the list of the “Fondatori” of the Visitatoria: a total of 58 veteran Salesians listed in the Provincial Directory<sup>45</sup>. Of the clerics, there were several now studying Theology in Salesian Centers in Europe; others were now in

<sup>44</sup> ASC B620 Fedrigotti: Ricordi personali (Colle Don Bosco, marzo 1975) 42. Cf also Nestor IMPELIDO, *The Salesians in the Philippines: “Dove la nostra opera è nata...adulta”*, in «Ricerche Storiche Salesiane» 23 (2004) 429-455.

<sup>45</sup> The total of the veteran Salesians listed in the Provincial Directory was: priests (29) + coadjutors (18) + clerics (11) = 58, among which Baggio, Battistello, Bosch, Braga, Buchta, Candusso, Clifford, Faroni, Fels, Garbero, Gircour, Glowicki, Guarino, Iriarte, Lopez, Monchiero, Quaranta, Repetto, V. Ricaldone, Rizzato, Roozen, Ryan, Schwarz, Solaroli and Izquierdo; Bragion, De Reggi, Gamba, Garombo, Massi, Mrzel, Nardin, Orsolin, Prokopowicz, Rossi, Tambascia, and Fontanilla; Bati, Drona, Tarrosa and Tayag.

their tirocinium in the various houses of the Province. Meanwhile, 25 of the so-called “Fondatori” were no longer listed in this new provincial list<sup>46</sup>.

Nonetheless, several Salesians arrived in order to augment the very limited personnel of the new Salesian Province. There were nine new priests, 11 new coadjutors, and an outstanding increased number of 36 clerics, for a total of 56 new members of the Philippine Province.

Among the Italians were Giovanni Benna from the Sub-Alpina Province, the new Provincial Alfredo Cogliandro who had just finished his 12-year term as Provincial of the U.S.A. West Province<sup>47</sup>, Ruggero Pioreschi from the Madrid Province, Pierluigi Ricciarelli, a China Province veteran Dante Sacchi; the Spaniards Jose Luis Bernacer, Jose Luis Carreño who had been Provincial of the South India Province<sup>48</sup>, Eduardo Revilla who was fresh from his Theology in England, and the Irish Michael Stephen Murray who came along with Carreño<sup>49</sup>. Cogliandro and Carreño were in their 50s, Murray in his mid 60s; while Sacchi was in his mid 40s. Ricciarelli was in his mid 30s. At least, half of them were still young: Benna, Pioreschi, Bernacer and Revilla were newly ordained and were in their late 20s.

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<sup>46</sup> They either repatriated (Boscariol, Fernandez, Ferrari, Kreutzer, Rauh, I. Ricaldone, Righetti, Marcos), or repatriated and eventually left the Congregation (Cuomo, Rossotto, Testa), or transferred to some other Province and eventually left (Bahillo, L. Tapay), or simply left the Congregation (E. Floris, Justo, Juan, Gatmaitan, Miranda, Peroy), or left during their Novitiate year (Alabe, Chavez, Serrano), or really never came to the Philippines (Duran, Hernandez). Agana, Bati and Drona were in their Theological studies in Italy, while Castillo and Claret were already in their second year of Theology in Salamanca. Navarro, Leonardo, Prudente, Tarrosa, Tayag, Esplico and Fontanilla were in their period of practical training.

<sup>47</sup> SAS 33B235 Fr. Alfredo Cogliandro: born in Genoa (16 May 1911); first profession in Shillong, India (11 December 1933); ordained in Deoli, India (30 January 1943); died in Canlubang, Calamba, Laguna (11 September 1992) at 81 years, 59 years Salesian and 49 years priest. He was missionary in North East, India (1932-1950), where he was master of novices at Kotagiri (1948-1950). He was Provincial of San Francisco, U.S.A., West Province (1950-1962). He was first Provincial of the Philippines (1963-1969). After, he was master of novices in the Philippines (1973-1982).

<sup>48</sup> SAS 22B015 Fr. Jose Luis Carreño Echandia: born in Bilbao, Spain (23 October 1905); first profession in Madrid, Spain (25 July 1922); ordained in Girona, Spain (21 May 1932); died in Pamplona, Spain (29 May 1986) at 81 years, 64 years Salesian and 54 years priest. He was master of novices in Tirupattur, India (1933-1943), Provincial of South India Province (1945-1951).

<sup>49</sup> SAS 22B156 Fr. Michael Stephen Murray: born in Abbeyside, Ireland (26 November 1899); first profession in Oxford, England (16 September 1922); ordained in Cape Town, South Africa (16 December 1928); died in Port Law, Ireland (14 January 1981) at 82 years, 59 years Salesian, and 53 years priest. He was in the U.S.A. in 1975 in irregular situation; however, he re-entered the community in 1979 in Pamplona, in a house founded by Fr. Carreño. The latter, always so generous and understanding towards the confreres, tried to help the former, especially in his moment of difficulty.

Of the coadjutors, there were four Italians: De Cecchi Tiziano, Luigi Parolin, Giuseppe Rettore and Sylvan Zermini. The first three made their perpetual profession in Don Bosco Victorias in Negros Occidental after doing practical training in the Philippines. The last, instead, was a transferee from the Thai Province. There were seven Filipinos lay brothers at this point of time, who were obviously all temporarily professed: Lambert Tena was of the 4<sup>th</sup> Novitiate batch (1959-1960); Pablo Barrientos, Noé Cumla, Herman Ong and Joaquin Palacio were of the 5<sup>th</sup> Novitiate batch (1961-1962)<sup>50</sup>. They made their first profession in the Novitiate of Muntinglupa. Paul Chang and Jose Ferrer were of the 6<sup>th</sup> batch (1962-1963). They did their first profession in Don Bosco San Fernando, Pampanga in 1963, in a moment of transition of the Novitiate from Victorias to Canlubang<sup>51</sup>.

## *2.2. Finally Clerics*

Also, the number of Filipino clerics greatly increased. The cleric Vincent Angeles, Edgardo Espiritu, Marciano Evangelista and Anthony Hopida, were of the 4<sup>th</sup> batch of novices (1959-1960). Demetrio Carmona, Antonio Cura Rolando Fernandez, Felix Intal, Victor Panizales, and Romeo Subaldo were of the 5<sup>th</sup> batch (1961-1962). All these made their first profession in the Novitiate, which was still in Muntinglupa, near the city of Manila. After their profession, they proceeded to Hong Kong for their study of Philosophy; the 1<sup>st</sup> batch of novices was the last to go to Hong Kong. Genaro Gegantoni, Celestino Lingad Jr. and Felipe Torres were of the 6<sup>th</sup> group (1962-1963). They made their first profession in Don Bosco San Fernando, Pampanga, where the Novitiate was temporarily relocated from Muntinglupa; the new permanent site of the Novitiate was already being prepared in Canlubang. Leopoldo Anocha, Fidel Araneta, Francisco Dinglasan, Abelardo Oca, Aguedo Palomo and Angel Solis were of the 7<sup>th</sup> batch of novices (1963-1964).

But there was also a sizeable increase of the non-Filipino clerics, about 17 of them. When the Philippine Province was constituted, Juan Andreu, Valeriano

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<sup>50</sup> Cf the personal notes of Fr. Rolando Fernandez (currently missionary in Dili, East Timor) for a more detailed history of the Novitiate batch (1961-1962). SAFIN Salesians: Rolando Fernandez (Memoirs).

<sup>51</sup> Tena was of the 4<sup>th</sup> Novitiate group (1959-1960). Instead, Barrientos, Cumla, Palacio and Ong, who could not obtain travel documents in as much as he was not yet a naturalized Filipino, were of the 5<sup>th</sup> batch (1960-1961). Chang and Ferrer were of the 6<sup>th</sup> batch (1962-1963); they would be later sent to the U.S.A. for studies. Cf SAFIN Salesians: Roland Fernandez (Memoirs).

Barbero, Jesus Gómez, and Jose Reinoso were studying Theology but as members of the Philippine Salesian Province in different studentates of Theology in Europe<sup>52</sup>. Andreu and Gomez belonged to the Philippines since November 1959, Barbero since February 1961. They did their practical training in the Archipelago previous to their study of Theology, which they did in their country of origin. The new Province, then, did not yet have its own center of study of Theology. Instead, Juan Martinez was finishing his Theology, when he became member of the Province.

The clerics Lorenzo Pelizzato and Angelo Rota proceeded to Hong Kong after their first profession to study Philosophy, sometime in December 1961; it was the turn of the clerics Giuliano Venturini and Felice Furlan by November of the next year. After their studies, they proceeded for their practical training in the Philippines. The American Lawrence Mickartz joined the Province in October 1963 after his first profession in the Salesian Novitiate in Newton, New Jersey of both U.S. Provinces. He had arrived in Hong Kong sometime in November 1963 from the Salesian U.S.A. West Province<sup>53</sup>.

Pietro Franco Uras and Giuseppe Zucchelli came in March 1964 as novices; they finished their Novitiate in the Philippines and made their first profession in Canlubang, with Fr. Carreño as novice master. Ovidio Zaccheddu came in September 1964 after his first profession. He, Uras and Zucchelli joined the rest of the clerics for their Philosophy in the newly established studentate of Philosophy in Canlubang.

But there were also those who were listed in the Directory of the new Province but who were not to be found in the Philippines. The Spanish Antonio Campo was supposed to have been part of the Philippines in August 1963; he left the Congregation, without coming to the Province, sometime in May the next year. The German Josef Limmer was listed as member of the Philippine Province in April 1964, but he left the Congregation sometime in August of the same year. Benjamin Morando<sup>54</sup> and Eliseo Gallina were listed to have been in the Philippines in September 1964 after their first profession. They, however, never went to the Philippines. Campo, Limmer and Gallina left the Congregation

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<sup>52</sup> Martinez finished Theology in Castellamare, Italy, and was ordained in 1964. Reinoso studied in Lyons, France, and was ordained in 1965. Andreu and Gomez studied Theology in Barcelona, Spain, while Barbero studied in Bollengo, Italy. These last three were ordained in the year 1967.

<sup>53</sup> SAHK IN 51 (November 1963) 5.

<sup>54</sup> SAS 64B183 Fr. Benjamin Morando: born in Padua, Italy (4 July 1943); first profession in Albare di Costermano, Verona, Italy (16 August 1964); ordained in Milan, Italy (28 June 1974). He is a missionary in the Salesian Province of Manuas, Brazil since 1967 to the present. He was Provincial (1985-1991). He is actually provincial economist.

sometime in their period of temporary profession. Instead, Morando joined as missionary, the Salesian Province of Manaus in Brazil, where he became Provincial<sup>55</sup>.

### 3. The Lack of Personnel

#### 3.1. A Constant Lack

The problem of personnel has been a constant issue in the development of the Salesian work in the Philippines. The need of Salesians was conditioned by the number of presences that the Salesians have put themselves in the Philippines. Moreover, the number of Salesians was also conditioned by the kind of work the Salesians have begun. The quantity of Salesians for a school would definitely be different from that for a parish. But Salesian Rules had its requirements for the number of Salesians for each house<sup>56</sup>. Perhaps, Turin tried to be lenient in the beginning, that was, in allowing some irregularity with the numbers. But they did not shelve the “ideal” number of confreres that each Salesian house ought to have.

Obviously, the Salesian work in the Philippines was in the beginning phase. It did need to have everything complete in terms of personnel. It also meant that it would have to try to work with the number of personnel it had. The Salesians in the Philippines “have extended themselves too much”, it was said. Too many houses were opened. Why? The Superior was “grabbing” enthusiastically every offer that was dangled to him, so that he did not count the cost. He presumed that the Superiors in Turin would always agree somehow with his decisions. The fact was that the Salesian work in the Philippines developed so quickly that the actual number of confreres could no longer carry on the work, nor were they at the level of doing such work anymore.

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<sup>55</sup> In a personal encounter with Fr. Morando, who was attending a meeting for new provincial economers at the Salesian Casa Generalizia in Rome, on 31 January 2005, he claimed that he was enticed to go to the Philippines by a Salesian whom he met in the Novitiate of Alabare and who spoke so enthusiastically of the Philippines. This Salesian must have been Fr. Antonio Battistello, who was vacationing in Verona, Italy, his original Province. Nonetheless, Fr. Morando was sent by his Superiors instead to Brazil, where he has been from the start of his missionary vocation.

<sup>56</sup> *Costituzioni della Società di San Francesco di Sales...*, art. 108: “Nelle nuove Case che si dovranno aprire, il numero dei soci non sia minore di sei, tranne che gravi ragioni, a giudizio del Consiglio Superiore, esigano altrimenti”; art. 111: “Si costituisca in ciascuna Casa un Consiglio proporzionato al numero dei soci che vi abitano. Esso verrà eletto o modificato dall’Ispettore con suo Consiglio, udito il parere del Direttore della Casa”.

For the moment, it did not expect yet the local vocations to fill up any vacuum with regards the numbers. The sole recourse of the Superior was to ask from the Superiors in Turin to send confreres from abroad. To note, however, that the Salesian work in the Philippines was not a missionary venture in the strict sense of the word.

There was an obvious increase number of Salesians in the new Province<sup>57</sup>, this after only almost 12 years of Salesian presence in the Philippines. The arrival of young foreign Salesians from abroad was definitely part of a strategy: giving fresh and young blood to the Salesian personnel; of integrating early the foreign Salesians who have asked to work in the still new Salesian presence in the Philippines; of presenting to the locals examples of home-grown Salesians which perhaps could reinforce their grasp of who Don Bosco was and what Salesian life and work meant.

Fr. Acquistapace and Fr. Braga have forecasted since the beginning, the possibility of obtaining vocations in the Philippines; and these have now been coming in consistently. The hope of Fr. Cogliandro was that in a few years, the first Filipino Salesians would be ordained. But he would be quick to realize that there were not really so many additional confreres for the new Province, for even before setting foot in the Philippines, he was already asking Turin for confreres. For in spite of the seeming increased number of personnel and the decrease in the average age of the confreres on account the advent of young foreign and local vocations, the Salesians were still not enough to carry on the work they begun.

Besides, the loss of personnel of the new Province was still significant. Of the new foreign injection of Salesians, 13 would leave the Congregation, three would repatriate, one would transfer to another mission, and one would sadly die while still a cleric. There were a total of 18 out of the total new 28<sup>58</sup>. Even the new locals did not fare well, 11 of the 19 clerics and five of the seven coadjutors would eventually leave<sup>59</sup>. Nonetheless, the hope remained on the locals always, to carry on the work of which had been planted.

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<sup>57</sup> In the new Province, there were 56 new confreres, of which 36 clerics. Of these clerics, 26 were locals. The Filipinos consisted of 19 clerics and seven coadjutors.

<sup>58</sup> Of the new foreign injection of Salesians, the following eventually left the Salesian Society: Bernacer, Pioreschi, De Cecchi, G. Rettore, Zermini, Campo, Gallina, Gomez, Martinez, Limmer, Mickartz, Pellizzato and Rota. Those who repatriated were Carreño, Murray and Zucchelli. The cleric Venturini went back to Italy and there died on 17 September 1970.

<sup>59</sup> The eleven Filipino clerics who eventually left the Salesian Society were: Angeles, Anoché, Araneta, Cura, Dinglasan, Intal, Oca, Panizales, Solis, Subaldo and Torres. Instead, the five coadjutors who left the Salesian Society were Barrientos, Palacio, Chang, Cumla and Ong.

### 3.2. *Acquistapace in Search for Personnel*

Fr. Acquistapace, as Provincial and in charge of the Philippine Delegation, felt the problem of personnel for the new presences in the Philippines. But obviously, he had always thought that the establishment of the Salesians in the Philippines was the preoccupation not only of the China Province, but also of Turin who truly was the ultimate responsible for the development and growth of the new Salesian presence in Asia.

Fr. Acquistapace had to take care of the China Province which had to reinforce the presences in Hong Kong and Macao, as well as in Taiwan. A good number of foreign confreres had repatriated after the Communist persecution; the formation of the young confreres and the vocational growth of the Province had been interrupted<sup>60</sup>.

Besides, Turin had also asked the China Province to work in Vietnam now<sup>61</sup>. Not for less that this China Province was now called Sino-Filipino-Vietnamese Province. For this, although he was free to dispose of his confreres as he wished, Fr. Acquistapace always had to take into account the vastness of his Province and the number and possibility of confreres that he could dispose and dispense<sup>62</sup>.

The only thing to do for Fr. Acquistapace was to ask Turin to send confreres and to take the initiative himself to ask for confreres from those who had a certain "abundance" of vocations. For this, he had to depend on the generosity of the respective Provincials that he approached. Besides, the Salesian Society was still riding the high crest of its missionary endeavour. It, too, was supposedly at the peak of its numbers. So many wanted and did become Salesians; there was a surplus in some of the more prominent Provinces of the Congregation. But seemingly, the Philippines was not a priority for Turin.

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<sup>60</sup> ASC 816 Missioni-Statistiche (Missionari ritornati in Patria dal 1950 al 1958). The list reveals those Salesians who could have still come to work in the Philippines but who did not. These were the Salesians Buggea, Guarona, Urbaitis, Della Rosa, Chitò, Narciso. It also reveals those who were registered as "temporaneamente assenti" and who eventually decided not to return to the missions. It is interesting to note that for the year 1954-1955, there had only been one missionary (a coadjutor) who was officially sent by Turin to the Philippines. And yet for that same period, it had sent 25 priests, 82 clerics and 11 coadjutors to the Americas. Cf ASC 816 Missioni-Statistiche (Distribuzione di personale per le missioni, Torino, 12 novembre 1954).

<sup>61</sup> Cf John Nguyen van TY SDB, *The Beginning of the Salesian Work in Vietnam. The Patriarchal Story and the Exodus*, in Nestor IMPELIDO (ed), *The Beginnings of the Salesian Presences in East Asia*. vol. I, Don Bosco Press, Makati City, 2006, pp 165-177.

<sup>62</sup> SAHK Correspondence (Acquistapace, Hong Kong, 6 December 1952). He wrote one of the rectors of the Province, thanking the Lord for the development and for what He was preparing "...qui, nelle Filippine, nel Viet Nam, a Formosa, ecc."

Fr. Acquistapace had asked the Provincial of Madrid to send young coadjutors to the Philippines. He had acted upon the suggestion of Fr. Bellido who had told him to pass by Madrid and ask for missionaries when he went to Turin<sup>63</sup>. He had also written to the Provincial of the French Province of Lyons, motivating his request with the generosity of the French confreres who worked or who were actually working in the China Province<sup>64</sup>. He wrote the same request to the Provincial of the Italian Central Province<sup>65</sup>.

### 3.3. The "Ferrari Notes"

By November 1951, three Salesians were actually at work in two schools. In Tarlac, Fr. Anthony Di Falco and Fr. John Rutkowski were in their second year in this "high school for externs", with almost 200 students. In Victorias, Fr. Guido D'Amore was supervising the construction of the different shops which would be turned over to the Salesians once finished; besides, he had started an Oratory frequented by about 250 boys<sup>66</sup>. While returning from Indonesia, Fr. Roozen passed by the Philippines in order to visit Fr. Di Falco and Fr. D'Amore. He noticed that both confreres were visibly exhausted on account of the work; they have also asked him for help<sup>67</sup>.

Fr. Luigi Ferrari was one of those who had been asked to go away from China, on account of the difficult situation there. Together with two other Salesians, he had retired in a house of the Augustinians in Shanghai-Nantao, in a place opposite to the location of the Salesian house where he was superior,

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.* (Acquistapace to the Provincial of the Celtica Spanish Province, Hong Kong, 26 febbraio 1953). Fr. Acquistapace went to Turin after 17 years of never having gone back to Italy! The Provincial of the Celtica Spanish Province had promised Fr. Acquistapace that he would send clerics for the Philippines, as well as to China. Three clerics, in fact, were currently studying Theology in Shillong, India. Cf *ibid.*

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.* (Acquistapace to the Provincial of France-Lyons, Hong Kong, 26 febbraio 1952). Among the more prominent French Salesians who worked in the China Province were Fr. Louis Olive, companion of Bishop Versiglia for the foundation of Macao, Fr. Cuisset and Fr. Dupont.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.* (Acquistapace to the Provincial of Italia Centrale, Hong Kong, 26 febbraio 1952). The Salesians sent annually by Turin went to the real mission territories of the Congregation in America and Asia. The Philippines, not being a missionary territory, was not an urgent destination of Salesian personnel for Turin. Cf ASC A816 Missioni Statistiche (Partenze dei missionari anno per anno fin dall'inizio fino a 1957). There were obviously more clerics sent than coadjutors. From just the Italian Centrale Province, from 1950 to 1957, 230 clerics and 66 coadjutors left as missionaries. Cf *ibid.* (Partenze missionari 1948-1957 e principali provenienze).

<sup>66</sup> ASC F482 Filippine Mandaluyong: 1° programma massimo.

<sup>67</sup> SAHK Minutes of Provincial Council Meet (Hong Kong, 12 dicembre 1951).



before finally leaving the Mainland for Hong Kong Island<sup>68</sup>. He was named Provincial Delegate to the Philippines sometime in June 1951<sup>69</sup>. One of his tasks was to coordinate with the Provincial for personnel for the new Delegation. By December of that year, the Provincial had decided to send him to Italy to personally negotiate the question of personnel for the Philippines with the Superiors of Turin<sup>70</sup>. Unfortunately, it seemed that he did not transact this urgent issue while he was there, but instead followed his own agenda.

### 3.3.1. Works in Need of Personnel

Nonetheless, Fr. Ferrari did try later to negotiate the problem of personnel with the Rector Major, as he gave the latter his recommendations on the new Salesian Delegation in the Philippines. His purpose was to give to the Rector Major a clear idea on the “question of the Philippines”, so that he might be able to move according to the desires of the Superiors. He probably wrote these “notes” sometime in November 1953, on the day in which he and the Manila Archbishop signed the contract with regards the house of Mandaluyong<sup>71</sup>.

In his “notes”, Fr. Ferrari gave a series of proposals regarding the actual foundations in the Philippines; he also included the new offers which he believed the Superiors should reflect on whether to accept or to refuse. However, the main purpose of the “notes” was to ask for personnel. His request was formulated into three programs<sup>72</sup>, the main elements being the foundations and the personnel actually existing, and the proposed personnel for the works that the Salesians would take over in the near future.

According to Fr. Ferrari, the actual works were in need for Salesians, if they were to be administered well. For the moment, Tarlac and Victorias demanded five priests (two for Tarlac and three for Victorias), five clerics-practical trainees (two for Tarlac and three for Victorias) and five coadjutors (all for Victorias). It was a total of 15 confreres, which in the mind of the Superiors in Turin was already a number so difficult to find<sup>73</sup>.

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<sup>68</sup> SAHK Corrispondenza (Braga a Bellido, Hong Kong, 30 luglio 1951).

<sup>69</sup> SAHK Minutes of provincial council meeting (Hong Kong, 6 giugno 1951).

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.* (Hong Kong, 12 dicembre 1951).

<sup>71</sup> ASC F482 Filippine Mandaluyong: Contratto.

<sup>72</sup> For our study, we have opted for the first proposal of Fr. Ferrari, the so-called the document found in the Salesian Central Archives in Rome “1° programma massimo”. Cf ASC F482 Filippine Mandaluyong: 1° programma massimo.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*

But what perhaps had frightened Turin with the request of Fr. Ferrari were the possible works which he proposed to be opened "in case of danger for Hong Kong". He also believed that the Philippines could serve as "a providential refuge for the confreres" in case that the Salesians in Hong Kong would also be evicted. He wanted to open three new presences which practically and logically doubled the number of his request for personnel. This was indeed audacious but perhaps also outrageous on his part. For he included in his program the confreres needed for the possible opening in Cebu (five priests, two clerics and two coadjutors), in Lipa (three priests and two clerics), and in Manila-Mandaluyong (three priests, a cleric and a coadjutor). In summary, Fr. Ferrari wanted another 17, aside from the 15 for Tarlac and Victorias which he already asked from the Superiors, for a total of 32 confreres<sup>74</sup>.

### 3.3.2. Possible Personnel

In his notes to Turin, Fr. Ferrari had listed the Salesians whom he believed could come to the Philippines. The names of Salesians he listed all belonged to the Province of China<sup>75</sup>. He divided them into two groups, according to where they were actually coming from: from Italy, where some had gone back after the expulsion from China, and from Hong Kong, where they were assigned. At the same time, he also suggested the coming of other confreres as "new personnel" which was still to be determined. It was understood, however, that those who were in the first list would come. If they did not come, he expected that the Superiors should substitute them with some others.

Who were these possible confreres who could be "Filipino Salesians"?

Of those who belonged to the China Province but were for the moment in Europe, there were ten priests: Fathers Emilio Baggio, Giovanni Bertoldi, Attilio Boscariol, Luigi Maria Chitò, Alfonso Demmi, Albino Fernandez, Gaetano Nicosia, Lino Repetto, Giovanni Rizzato, Petras Urbaitis; and five Brothers: Coadjutors Carlo Nardin, Tommaso Orsolin, Eligio Toni, Karl Schmidt. Of those who were in Hong Kong, there were four priests: John Butterfield, Achille Cotta, Andrej Majcen, Pierangelo Quaranta, and two clerics: Clerics Patrick Corcoran and William Geoghegan. All these were for the houses already initiated<sup>76</sup>. Butterfield, Corcoran and Geoghegan were definitely English-

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.* Fr. Luigi Ferrari was named Provincial Councillor of China on 2 September 1953 up to 4 September 1956. He was also the Delegate of Fr. Acquistapace in the Philippines (1951-1955); at the same time, he was rector of the house of Don Bosco Mandaluyong.

<sup>76</sup> ASC F482 Philippine Mandaluyong: 2<sup>o</sup> programma minimo.

speaking, so important and so necessary for the work in a country where English was a first language.

In the same list, Fr. Ferrari wanted additional personnel at the Superiors' discretion: two priests, seven clerics as practical trainees, five coadjutors to head the mechanics, electronics, carpentry, tailoring, shoe-making. And if it was still possible, maximizing the generosity of the Superior, he asked two more coadjutors for the tailoring and the shoe-making<sup>77</sup>.

Hence, the Provincial Delegate was asking for a total of 13 priests, eight coadjutors and two clerics, which he named and could go well for him for the meanwhile. But that the Superiors should send him 14 more, as soon as possible; these, at the Superiors' own choice. All in all, he would be happy to have more than 30 new confreres to run the Delegation in its first years, if his request was fully heeded by Turin. He intended to distribute some of those who would come in the following manner: Br. Schmidt for Tarlac, Fr. Baggio as Parish Priest for Victorias, Frs. Repetto and Boscariol for Cebu, Fr. Quaranta as rector for Mandaluyong and Br. Carlo Nardin as "factotum" in Mandaluyong. If there was one whom he insisted that should be in the Philippines, it was Fr. Butterfield, since the latter spoke English and was needed "for public relations". The confrere never came to the Philippines, however; he had gone back to Ireland where he passed away.

Of the Salesians named, those who actually came were the priests Baggio, Boscariol, Repetto, Rizzato, Orsolin and Quaranta; the coadjutors Carlo Nardin and Schmidt; and the clerics Corcoran and Geoghegan. Of these, only Fr. Quaranta and Fr. Rizzato would remain and die in the Philippines. The coadjutor Schmidt died in the Philippines but no longer a Salesian. Of those who did not come, two are still alive. The other two, however, eventually left the Congregation<sup>78</sup>.

For a first attempt to get personnel, it was not that bad for Fr. Ferrari: ten of those he named actually came to work in the Philippines. But such a small number which was actually sent by Turin could not but result into that constant preoccupation of the succeeding Superiors who came after Fr. Ferrari. These,

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<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*: 1° programma massimo.

<sup>78</sup> Of those who were listed to come to the Philippines but who did not come, two are still alive: Albino Fernandez (Province of Leon) and Gaetano Nicosia (Province of China). Fr. Denim remained in Italy and died in Catania. Fr. Macjen repatriated to Slovenia. Fr. Urbaitis transferred to San Paolo Province of Brazil. Frs. Cotta and Corcoran remained with the China Province. The Coadjutor Eligio Toni and Fr. Luigi Maria Chitò eventually left the Congregation. Some of the personnel requested for Manila were repatriated from India and China, mostly Italians, who, however, were still open to go to some other new country to work. Cf. ASC A816 Missioni Statistiche (Missionari ritornati in patria dal 1950 al 1958).

in fact, did not cease to lament Turin regarding the continuing lack of personnel of their jurisdiction.

#### 4. Overworked Personnel

When Fr. Braga wrote the Rector Major on 21 July 1959 with regards the Philippine Visitatoria, he was so enthused by the seeming energetic growth of the on-going work of his Salesians<sup>79</sup>.

##### 4.1. *Much Work, Few Workers*

The Salesian school of Makati, where there were seven Salesians (six priests and one coadjutor) at work<sup>80</sup>, had 600 students, of which 400 were craftsmen. It also had a Parish of about 15,000 souls, plus two chaplaincies to follow-up. Don Bosco Mandaluyong had nine Salesians (three priests and six coadjutors)<sup>81</sup>; there were 800 craftsmen and 700 students in the elementary school. Second hand machineries have arrived recently, making the school not far from that of Victorias<sup>82</sup>. This, instead, had 900 students, of which 500 were craftsmen, who had four shops for their work<sup>83</sup>. Besides, the Salesians of Don Bosco Victorias also had a “church open to the public” with 6,000 souls to take care of. Don Bosco Tarlac had three Salesians (two priests and a Filipino cleric); there were about 300 students. Its enrollment had increased a little, and so its prestige

<sup>79</sup> Fr. Braga was named Visitatore on 9 August 1958. He would be so until 1963. Earlier, he was Delegate of the Provincial (1955-1958), when Fr. Ferrari returned back “unexpectedly” to Italy.

<sup>80</sup> Cf *Elenco Generale* (1959), pp. 440-441. The confreres then assigned in Don Bosco Makati were the priests Carlo Braga, Saverio Fels, Giovanni Rizzato, Ercole Solaroli, Attilio Boscariol, Giovanni Buchta and the coadjutor Joseph Tchio.

<sup>81</sup> Cf *ibid.*, p. 440. The Salesians then assigned in Don Bosco Mandaluyong were the priests Pierangelo Quaranta, Mario Cuomo and Maurilio Candusso, the coadjutors Andrea Bragion, Giovanni De Reggi, Romildo Gamba, Luciano Gorla, Rafael Mrzel, Pawel Prokopowicz and Mario Viel, and the cleric Augusto Miranda.

<sup>82</sup> In Mandaluyong, the new buildings for the elementary were now finished. Daily mass was celebrated in the portico of these new edifices. An on-going construction was destined for the carpentry which would be utilized as chapel still to be constructed. Cf ASC F163 Philippine: Corrispondenza (Braga a Fedrigotti, Makati, 2 settembre 1959).

<sup>83</sup> Cf *Elenco Generale* (1959), pp. 439-440. The confreres working in Don Bosco Victorias were the priests Igino Ricaldone, Pablo Bacillo, Adolfo Faroni, Pietro Garbero, Giovanni Monchiero and Johan Rauh; the coadjutors Edvigi Floris, Michele Garombo, Salvatore Massi, Tommaso Orsolin, Mario Rossi and Mario Testa, the clerics Juan Gatmaitan, Alfredo Manalili, Jose Navarro and Ronaldo Peroy.

too<sup>84</sup>. In Cebu Boys Town, instead, an elementary school consisting of the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades had just begun. The Salesian work now included a boarding house with 70 interns, plus a Parish with about 20,000 souls. A new building, to be dedicated to Doña Maria Aboitiz, was being finished. There were six Salesians (five priests and a coadjutor) at work<sup>85</sup>. Finally, there were two Salesians running a budding school in San Fernando<sup>86</sup>. In summary, there were 3,870 students, excluding the 2,000 boys who frequented the daily Oratories. For this, Fr. Braga could sincerely exclaim “Viva il lavoro!”<sup>87</sup> Nothing could satisfy his enthusiasm as this real work that his Salesians were doing.

But the Visitatore also indicated to Fr. Ziggotti that in Makati, there was only one shop head, a Chinese confrere. That in Tarlac, the lone cleric was soon to leave the country to start his Theology. That of the five priests who were in Cebu, two were sick, and thus could not do much work. That three of these Salesian houses did not have a resident confessor; as a consequence, there were very few communions among the students. That Don Bosco Mandaluyong did not have a principal and a catechist yet; for this, the work for vocations could not improve as yet<sup>88</sup>. In other words, he was simply telling the Superior General that he did not have Salesians to carry on such prodigious work.

For this, it was quite a different tone when he wrote to the Vicar General. He could not but be dramatically sincere. The year 1959 was for him the year of the “Holy Job”. The fact was that there were several confreres at sick bay. Fr. Buchta was run over by a jeepney on 11 April 1959, an accident which left certain marks that had affected his mental health<sup>89</sup>. Fr. Fels broke a leg in June;

<sup>84</sup> Cf *ibid.*, p. 441. The Salesians assigned in Don Bosco Tarlac were the priests Emilio Baggio, Georg Schwarz, and the cleric Felix Glowicki. At this time, Fr. Roozen was a member of the Tarlac community; however, he was tasked specifically to follow up the new foundation in San Fernando, Pampanga which was still in the process of construction.

<sup>85</sup> Cf *ibid.*, p. 440. In Don Bosco Cebu, the Salesians at work were the priests Jan Clifford, Lino Repetto, Jose Bosch, Giuseppe Guarino and Patrick Ryan, and the coadjutor Lorenzo Nardin.

<sup>86</sup> Fr. Godfrey Roozen and Fr. Agustin Lopez were the Salesians actually assigned and who were following the new foundation in San Fernando, Pampanga. There were also the Salesians who were at work at the Novitiate of Muntinglupa: the priests Vincenzo Ricaldone and Luis Iriarte and the coadjutor Nicolino Tambascia. Cf *Elenco Generale* (1959), p. 441.

<sup>87</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Braga a Ziggotti, Makati, 21 luglio 1959). Cf also *ibid.* (Braga a Fedrigotti, Makati, 2 settembre 1959).

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.* (Braga a Ziggotti, Makati, 21 luglio 1959). In Makati, the lone Salesian shop head was the coadjutor Tchio. The cleric about to go for Theology was Glowicki, and the two sick confreres were Repetto and Ryan.

<sup>89</sup> SAHK Corrispondenza (Benato a Spinek, Hong Kong, 21 maggio 1959): “Purtroppo circa tre mesi fa fu vittima di uno scontro automobilistico, che per poco non gli tolse la vita. Restò ferito gravemente alla testa ed ebbe tre costole rotte. È già ritornato dall’ospedale, ma sembra che il colpo gli abbia lasciato delle conseguenze”.

and after three months, he still had to use the crutches. Fr. Roozen was recently brought to Lourdes Hospital “for painful arthritis on one leg”. Fr. Rauh had arrived in Manila, but had been in bed for ten days; and although he had gotten up and began to do some work, he was still under medical care<sup>90</sup>.

A month later, Fr. Braga, described to Fr. Fedrigotti the Salesians in the Philippines. This he did, after more than a year since he was appointed Superior of the Philippines. According to him, these confreres did not grumble because of too much work; but they were at the point of exhaustion, so that to move them would be disastrous. They worked with great zeal and love, indeed. They were human too, “not angels”; they were at the point of collapse. And they did not see things getting easier for them.

“One thing that afflicts them is to know that their conditions will, in no way, be lightened by the arrival of new personnel”<sup>91</sup>.

But there was a limit to their patience. He presented the hard facts in front of the Superior: in Don Bosco Mandaluyong, now with an enrollment of about 1,600 students, there were only 11 confreres at work. In Don Bosco Makati, two of its personnel were really sick and were unable to meet the demand of the work in full force, since the number of the confreres remained insufficient. In such a situation, Fr. Braga reflected: too much work by too few Salesians was counterproductive. It created tension, and resulted into loss of serenity. In front of some students already so hard to handle and still so stressful, there was not a moment to calm one’s nerves. And so it happened at times, that some confreres lost their peace and patience in front of the boys<sup>92</sup>.

#### 4.2. *Asking Help from China*

The Superior of the Philippines logically turned to the Philippines’ mother Province in order to obtain personnel. For this, he asked the China Province’s Provincial, Fr. Bernard Tohill, whom he had invited to pass by Manila as the latter was on his way to Vietnam. But the confrere did not visit Manila. Fr.

<sup>90</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Braga a Fedrigotti, Makati, 2 settembre 1959).

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.* (Braga a Fedrigotti, Makati, 29 ottobre 1959).

<sup>92</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Braga a Fedrigotti, Makati, 29 ottobre 1959): “Non posso magnarmi dell’osservanza e dello spirito, ma il troppo lavoro guasta parecchie cose e ci toglie, alle volte, la serenità necessaria al nostro quotidiano dovere. In tutta la giornata non si ha un momento per respirare, per sollevarsi, per ritemparsi, per calmare i nervi assai tesi, per la particolare natura di certi allievi piovuti da chissà quale asteroide ... con tanto di atomismo ed irrequietezza da non lasciar respiro”.

Braga knew that the Provincial of China was also busy trying to build up the Salesian work force in Vietnam. For this, he was probably not inclined to send personnel. Fr. Fedrigotti, according to Fr. Braga, should intervene in order to influence Fr. Tohill, so that the latter could be persuaded to help the Philippines. In his mind, the Provincial of China should also “put his hand on his bag”<sup>93</sup>.

Fr. Braga insisted that China should help the Philippines at this point of time. His reasons for demanding became very personal: (1) for what he endured and suffered when he was still in China; (2) for the prosperity that China was now enjoying, fruit of sweat and blood and tribulation of others, including those who were now actually struggling in the Philippines; (3) for the economic prosperity it now enjoyed but which was founded in extreme poverty of several years ago; (4) for the fact that with the overabundance of personnel, there sometimes followed a fall in the spirit of sacrifice of the confreres and consequently the “somnolence of not so many”<sup>94</sup>.

The Visitatore was very practical in his pleading for personnel. He would welcome even Chinese confreres who could obtain Portuguese or English passports. Moreover, he was ready to welcome those confreres, whether European or American, already at work in China who wanted “to change place and to adapt to a new climate and a different environment”<sup>95</sup>, a rather coarse but real and sincere motivation offered by one who was indeed at the extreme of his mendicancy for personnel.

#### 4.3. *Requesting for More*

Furthermore, the Visitatore suggested to Fr. Fedrigotti another source from where Salesians could be obtained for the Philippines: India. The foreign confreres who could not re-enter India, could come to the Philippines. And why did Fr. Braga think of these confreres? They already knew English; because they could still feel themselves missionaries here, since they were accustomed with the work in the rural areas. Besides, the climate in the Philippines could bring about a betterment of their health conditions.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.* (Braga a Fedrigotti, Makati, 29 ottobre 1959). When Fr. Braga finished his term as Provincial, he wrote Fr. Tohill who was rector of the Salesian School of Aberdeen. His letter revealed how he felt that certain confreres were “ingrati” towards him, now that he was no longer Superior. His earnest suggestion to Fr. Tohill: think of your predecessors; to them, have a sense of gratitude. It appeared, however, that some confrere had already forgotten this. Cf SAHK Corrispondenza (Braga a Tohill, Victorias, 19 agosto 1953).

<sup>94</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Braga a Fedrigotti, Makati, 29 ottobre 1959).

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*

Fr. Braga would express the same availability to accept confreres from India to Fr. Archimede Pianazzi on 20 November 1962. These confreres, if ever they were expelled, were very much welcome in the Philippines. They would be of big help, especially for the works which have been suspended on account of the lack of personnel<sup>96</sup>. In India, the missionary work was undergoing trial which would cause the transfer and the exit of Salesians to other countries where they could continue their ministry. The Indian government had now issued restrictions regarding mission centers and the entry of foreign missionaries especially in areas which it considered protected. Moreover, it had started a vilification campaign, if only to undermine the work which the missionaries were doing<sup>97</sup>.

The increased assault of the Protestants should make the issue on sending personnel to the Philippines as an urgent one. The hierarchy in the Philippines, in fact, had sent a memorandum on this issue. Even Turin had received a copy of this memorandum; Fr. Braga knew that the Rector Major had been reflecting on this. But seemingly the Superiors remained deaf to this situation. The Visitatore, revealing himself exasperated, explained to Fr. Fedrigotti that he was not teaching the Superiors in Turin on how to distribute the missionaries. But he confessed that he felt his duty to tell them to do so. In his mind, they should have better listened to his pleading before it was too late<sup>98</sup>.

Fr. Bellido, in charge of the missions, tried to help. He had admitted to Fr. Tohill in November 1958 that there was indeed scarcity of personnel in the Philippines; but he also told him that the confreres would not be receiving help for some years<sup>99</sup>. On 15 July 1960, he wrote to Fr. Tohill, informing him that he had some Salesians ready to go to the Philippines: an Italian cleric for practical training, a Mexican coadjutor expert in carpentry, two clerics who were studying in England. He asked Fr. Tohill if he could perhaps loan a priest to Manila<sup>100</sup>.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.* (Braga a Pianazzi, Makati, 20 novembre 1962) 2. For a history of the Salesians of the Salesian Province of Kolkata in India, cf Nicolas LO GROÏ, *History of the Kolkata Province of St. John Bosco*. Kolkata, S.D.B. 2003.

<sup>97</sup> Cf N. LO GROÏ, *History of the Kolkata...*, pp. 303-306.

<sup>98</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Braga a Fedrigotti, Makati, 9 agosto 1960) 1: "L'epoca nella quale siamo tutta presa del come distribuire i missionari non è la più propizia alle mie osservazioni, tuttavia mi sono sentito in obbligo di farle".

<sup>99</sup> SAHK Corrispondenza (Bellido a Tohill, Torino, 13 novembre 1958). Fr. Bellido remarked to Fr. Tohill that the confrere Fr. Kerlaan, had shown little interest in going to the Philippines "dove c'è tanta scarsità di personale e dove non potranno ricevere aiuto per alcuni anni". Cf *ibid.*

<sup>100</sup> SAHK Corrispondenza (Bellido a Tohill, Torino, 15 luglio 1960). "Fra alcuni anni, cominceranno ad avere giovani sacerdoti, con la lingua conosciuta. Impossibile fare di più. Se tu potessi inviare intanto, alcun bravo sacerdote.... Naturalmente che più tardi tornerebbero a Hong Kong...."



He reiterated the request to Fr. Tohill a few weeks later. He asked him, in exchange for the two coadjutors that he would be receiving, to loan several priests to reinforce the confreres in the Philippines where “those poor confreres, who are also yours, are agonizing”<sup>101</sup>. Such a remark from a Superior who could have been more delicate did not definitely encourage Fr. Braga. Turin, really, did not listen too much to his genuine appeal. The new Provincial, Fr. Cogliandro, would prove this.

## 5. Personnel in the Beginning of the Province

Fr. Braga neither listened to the reminders of Turin to go slow with the foundations on account of the difficulty of finding personnel. On the contrary, he proceeded with his plans, and continued to accept offers and open houses. The school of San Fernando was on the move; Canlubang was already understood. He was in the mood of accepting the offer of Pius XII Center from the Manila Archbishop. But this time, it was his successor who would further bear the burden of the lack of Salesians to manage the new Province which had accepted more works that it could carry on.

### 5.1. A Same Preoccupation

Fr. Alfredo Cogliandro, as new Provincial, wrote to the Prefect General from the provincial house in Makati on 31 October 1963, a couple of weeks since his arrival in Manila. He was quick to see the reality regarding the difficulty of personnel in the Philippines. There was indeed the problem which could not be taken for granted. He claimed that the scarcity was worse than that of his former Province. There were too few Salesians, so the ones who were really running the Salesian works were the lay.

“The ones who really put forward our works here are the lay teachers!”<sup>102</sup>

And in his observation, these lay were mostly women collaborators, who were teachers and employees.

He was very frank to Fr. Fedrigotti when he wrote him again on 10 November 1963. Though he pondered on the possibility of changing certain

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<sup>101</sup> SAHK Corrispondenza (Bellido a Tohill, Torino, 5 agosto 1960).

<sup>102</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 31 ottobre 1963).

confreres of the Province by 1964, he just considered doing it as useless. The motive was very simple:

“There is none to distribute”<sup>103</sup>.

Such was the very trite but precise remark of Fr. Cogliandro. He could not be that sincere.

Thus, his plan to change the rectors of the house was impractical. But being new, he tried to justify the Superiors for such a situation. They might not have been aware of the situation. Nonetheless, the Prefect General should have known better, since he was in the Philippines five years earlier for his extraordinary visitation!

There were 29 priests who could be distributed in the houses of the Province, including that of Pius XII Catholic Center, which Fr. Braga had practically accepted from the Manila Archbishop in order that the Salesians might administer it. However, Fr. Cogliandro wanted to be realistic, as he continued to write to Fr. Fedrigotti the situation of the Salesians in the Philippines. A third of the priests who were available, were really “half-men, whom could not be relied upon for lack of health, neurasthenia, nervous breakdown, ignorant of the language, difficult characters”<sup>104</sup>, a description which he would repeat in his correspondence with Turin. Definitely, this was a very strong accusation against the personnel he inherited in the Philippines, but a stronger accusation against Turin who had probably been remiss in its duties.

For the Provincial, there was absolutely a need of reinforcements. Otherwise, he risked losing the remaining who were still healthy, but who had to overwork and exhaust themselves. He knew that the Superiors in Turin were accustomed to hear these lamentations. But he was convinced that he was not complaining to the Superiors in Turin. For him, it was to tempt Divine Providence to continue on without the adequate resources<sup>105</sup>.

Fr. Cogliandro presented his reflection of the actual personnel.

“...these poor confreres, who came from other Provinces as refugees, some collected from here and there, have done marvels. But now, they need to feel that the whole Congregation is behind them to sustain them, not by words but with facts, here in a country where we who have newly arrived see a great future, and where the souls come to look for us and ask for the sacraments”<sup>106</sup>.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.* (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 10 novembre 1963).

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*: “...solo mezzi uomini su cui non si può fare affidamento per mancanza di salute, nevrastenia, esaurimenti, ignoranza della lingua, caratteri difficilissimi”.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.* Was it not that way too when the Salesians started the Delegation, a situation which continued on during the Visitatoria and which was actually continuing in the Province?

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*

Indeed, when he was still not superior of the Philippines, Fr. Cogliandro would hear these complaints and thought that these were exaggerations. Now he himself had to express the same complaints, and he was not exaggerating!

The Salesians were working for vocations in the Philippines. When he came, there were, in fact, novices, aspirants, students of Philosophy and even practical trainees. However, the fruits of the vocational campaign that was on-going would still bear fruit within ten years, if these vocations persevered. For the moment, it was imperative that the Salesians in the Islands should now receive help from the outside.<sup>107</sup>

The fact was that the confreres in the Philippines were discouraged for the seeming indifference of the Superiors towards the Philippines. For them, Turin was not concerned about them. It was more projected to send personnel to other countries in Asia and America. Although there was really no reason for them to think so, and yet, they did feel that way! If only the Superiors could show that they understood their situation. If only they would send help, even just a little, visible and tangible<sup>108</sup>. Fr. Cogliandro wanted Fr. Fedrigotti to share this lament of his to the other Superiors, especially to Fr. Giovannini and Fr. Bellido, who were supposed to be his friends and understand his situation<sup>109</sup>.

As of 19 December 1963, no help had arrived and Fr. Cogliandro remained in urgent need of personnel. He had the facts in hand: for seven houses, only 29 priests. And even not all of them were wholesome and effective. A third of them were really handicapped, and for various reasons: nervous breakdown, old age, irritable, ignorant of the native language, difficult character<sup>110</sup>. This was a clear outline of the possible defects of some of the confreres who were assigned in the new Province. Add these to the depleted number, and the situation seemed dramatic.

Of the houses, two had about 3,000 students; one school had more than 168 employees "as teachers, shop heads, and employees in the administration". Fr. Cogliandro was sincere and frank, without calms of conscience, in identifying the reason that caused the misunderstanding and the troubles of the past: by the scarcity of personnel, by too much work, by the fatigue, by the impossibility to carry on all that their responsibility entailed<sup>111</sup>.

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<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.* (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 10 novembre 1963): "Si tratta di fare quello che Don Bosco si sarebbe affrettato a fare in modo straordinario per un paese cattolico, dove le anime vanno alla deriva per mancanza di sacerdoti".

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.* (Cogliandro a Ziggotti, Makati, 19 dicembre 1963): "...di cui una decina sono inabili al lavoro o per esaurimento, o per età, o per nervosismo, o per ignoranza della lingua, o per carattere".

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*

Instead of an encouragement, however, Fr. Cogliandro got a reprimand as an answer from Turin. But he humbly accepted what the Superior told him: that he should not pretend to have everything at once. But to prove that he was not asking too much nor for everything now, that what was really needed, he described the confreres as they were really:

“...confreres who were eager but worn out; hard workers but tired; generous, but short-tempered and tense; good but discouraged; zealous but sick!”<sup>112</sup>.

It was up to the Superiors to believe him or not. If he asked the Founder directly for the help the Philippines needed, he was sure of one thing: “Don Bosco lo farebbe”<sup>113</sup>.

There were in fact many “absences” in the Province. The catalogue on the Philippines was not realistic. Some of those listed in it were actually in Italy “for exhaustion”; there were those who were in the Philippines, “but in conditions of health which render them unable to work”<sup>114</sup>. Even the confreres who were exemplary now complained: that the Superiors in Turin never were interested with the Salesians in the Philippines and their lot. But they continued to await some sign of paternal interest from Turin<sup>115</sup>. The confreres could not but “accuse” Turin of having been indifferent to their situation and to the Philippines. The Rector Major, erecting the Bolivian Province in the same year as that of the Philippines, had mentioned this on the “Acts of the General Council”; but there was not even a word when the Philippines was made a Province<sup>116</sup>.

By August 1964, the lack of personnel had reached its critical stage. The Provincial informed the Rector Major that upon his return to Manila, he found that the only priest in the house of Tarlac was sick with meningitis, paralysed

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.* (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 21 dicembre 1963).

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.* This time, Fr. Cogliandro was complaining; and he was sarcastic at that. Perhaps, he wanted to ask Turin: “Why did you have to put me in such a situation?”

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.* (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 17 giugno 1964).

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.* (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 21 dicembre 1963): “che i Superiori di Torino non siano mai stati molto interessati della causa salesiana nelle Filippine”.

<sup>116</sup> When the Philippines was constituted a Province in 1963, no mention of it could be found in any of the “Atti” of 1963. Cf *Atti del Capitolo Superiore* 44 (March-April 1963) 230 / 44. (May-June) 231 / 44 (July-August) 232 / 44 (September-October) 233 / 44 (November-December) 234. The Salesian Province of Bolivia was created in the same year as the Philippines. This was announced by Fr. Ziggotti in the *Atti*. Cf *Atti del Capitolo Superiore* 44 (January-February) 229, 10. When the Philippines was erected as a Visitatoria (Vice-Province), this too was announced by the Rector Major in the *Atti*. Cf *Atti del Capitolo Superiore* 39 (November-December 1958) 204, 16: “5. Visitatoria delle Isole Filippine, staccata dall’Ispettorato Cinese. Visitatore Don Carlo Braga, sede a Manila, intitolata a San Giovanni Bosco”.

and hospitalised. He got the confrere in charge of Rizal Institute in Canlubang to substitute him; but then, the confrere still remained alone<sup>117</sup>.

Fr. Cogliandro followed up his letters asking for personnel with another letter, on 14 October 1964. This time, he was very precise with the personnel that he needed most. Moreover, he demonstrated the actual positioning of the confreres and their movements. His being precise and detailed was for his "tranquillity of conscience", for his duty to present the gravity of the situation, of the lack of personnel in the Philippines. If anything happened, he at least could no longer be held responsible before God. It was enough for the Superior to take the second volume of the *Elenco Generale* and see the indications on the Philippine Province who among the confreres really were and were not in the Philippines; and even if they were in the Islands, whether they could really do work<sup>118</sup>.

In Don Bosco Victorias, where there were 450 students, the superior of the house was sick, and thus was practically absent; the school catechist had to be temporarily transferred to Rizal Institute in Canlubang, an agro-technical school with 500 students. The Parish Priest of Vicmico was sick with tuberculosis; he was slowly recovering, but because of this, he could not do much work. The College in Canlubang had only two confreres-in-charge; it did not have any house council as yet. Don Bosco Cebu, with its 500 students, did not have a catechist, since the confrere had been transferred to the nearby Parish as assistant; the confessor of the school had left for Italy for vacation, with practically no intention of coming back. In Don Bosco Makati, with its 2,500 students, the prefect who had recently arrived had left for the U.S.A., in order to make propaganda; the Provincial, however, considered him really out of place and unfit to stay in the Philippines. The catechist of the school was very sick, with frequent convulsions; he was at the point of a nervous breakdown. Don Bosco Mandaluyong, with its 3,000 students, did not have a prefect anymore, since the confrere had been made into confessor<sup>119</sup>. The school catechist had become sick because he overworked. The other confessor had a nervous breakdown, and had gone back to Germany for a needed rest. The general assistant and lone cleric in practical training was also sick because of physical consumption. In Don Bosco San Fernando, with 518 students, there

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<sup>117</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Cogliandro a Ziggotti, Makati, 26 agosto 1964).

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.* (Cogliandro a Ziggotti, Makati, 14 ottobre 1964).

<sup>119</sup> The rector of Mandaluyong was Fr. Schwarz who, in an interview with the author, admitted that he was rather hard with Fr. Candusso, a gentle and soft-spoken confrere who was then prefect. To avoid the uneasy situation, Fr. Candusso was assigned to perhaps more fitting role as confessor. Unfortunately, Fr. Cogliandro could still not find someone to take his place, for a big school like Mandaluyong.

was no prefect, since this had been temporarily transferred to Tarlac. It was a school that was always in need of a principal for its externs. The school confessor would have no substitute when he leaves for the general chapter to which he was a delegate<sup>120</sup>. Don Bosco Tarlac, with 422 students, did not have any rector who left for Italy and was on in indefinite leave<sup>121</sup>. It was a school that never had a permanent prefect or a catechist. The principal, still very sick but forced to work, walked with a stick and was still recovering<sup>122</sup>.

When one looked at the Directory of the Salesian Society for the year 1964, one indeed would see names of confreres where they were not really present. There were 35 priests, but only 18 were in actual work. The rest were either in their homeland or sick in the hospital or in the infirmary. Fr. Cogliandro claimed that he was not exaggerating. The councillor for the missions ought to know this. And if Fr. Pianazzi would pass by the Philippines from India, then he would realize there was no exaggeration here. Nonetheless, he expressed his gratefulness for the clerics which Turin had recently sent to his Province<sup>123</sup>. Though they may not be involved with the direct work yet, their presence was nonetheless an encouragement to the confreres<sup>124</sup>.

## 5.2. *Wanting to Change Guards*

After what he had observed in his first months since his arrival, and after his visits to the houses, Fr. Cogliandro decided to push through changing the rectors of the houses, in spite of the lack of personnel and the limited number of confreres to choose from.

On 18 February 1964, Fr. Cogliandro wrote Fr. Fedrigotti and gave his suggestions on who could now be superiors of some of the houses. For in his mind, many of the actual rectors had been superiors for too long a time. He planned to put the newly arrived Fr. Pierluigi Ricciarelli in place of Fr. Clifford in Cebu Boys Town; Fr. Lopez in place of Fr. Roozen in San Fernando where there was the Juniorate too; Fr. Roozen, instead, as rector of Don Bosco Makati and provincial economer at the same time<sup>125</sup>.

<sup>120</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Cogliandro a Ziggiotti, Makati, 14 ottobre 1964).

<sup>121</sup> Fr. Saverio Fels went back to Rome, Italy sometime in 1964, to take care of his mother who was all alone. Fr. Fels was an only child. He would later come back to the Philippines in the latter part of the 1980s, but would go back to Rome finally and there die in 1990.

<sup>122</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Cogliandro a Ziggiotti, Makati, 14 ottobre 1964).

<sup>123</sup> These clerics were possibly the Salesians Pietro Uras, Ovidio Zaccheddu, Giuseppe Zucchelli, Giovanni Arienti, Manuel Fraile and Pierluigi Zuffetti. They were all temporarily professed.

<sup>124</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Cogliandro a Ziggiotti, Makati, 14 ottobre 1964).

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.* (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 18 febbraio 1964).

However, he still had to find someone for Don Bosco Mandaluyong. Fr. Quaranta, actual rector of the school, was supposed to go to Pius XII Catholic Center to meet the request of the Archbishop of Manila. Unless of course, the Cardinal-Archbishop changed his mind in asking for Fr. Quaranta; perhaps the Superiors in Turin might like to help him in making the Archbishop withdraw his request for the confrere. However, Fr. Clifford, giving way to Fr. Ricciarelli as superior of Cebu, would be without any rectorship, which “creates a great void”<sup>126</sup>.

The next month, the Provincial wrote Fr. Fedrigotti once more. After beginning with his homage to the Superiors of Turin on the part of the “few Salesians of the Philippines”, he presented his roster of rectors of the Province for the school year 1964-1965. Naturally, he wanted to choose the confreres who would and should represent him in the communities.

This was the line-up of Fr. Cogliandro’s team as he entered the second year of provincialship. Fr. Carreño, a confrere well respected and founder of the college of Canlubang, would be rector and master of novices. Fr. Ricciarelli, who had been exemplary and had visibly favored the poor, would be superior in Cebu<sup>127</sup>. Fr. Quaranta, who could “navigate” his ways, would be sent to Pius XII Catholic Center which remained to be in the experimental stage. He would also be in charge of the Salesian cooperators and benefactors of the works of the Salesians. Fr. Roozen would be superior for the house of Makati which had problems in construction, and provincial economer, as already approved by Turin. Fr. Clifford, whose attention regarding his duties as rector had been called by the Provincial, was being made superior of Mandaluyong where there was the problem of the lack of coadjutors. He was scheduled to go to Europe for two months that summer to visit his family; his mother had died recently. Fr. Lopez, whom the Provincial considered as “buono, aperto, lavoratore”, would be superior of the school and the Aspirantate in San Fernando where he was already the principal. Fr. George Schwarz would be rector of Tarlac for another three years; presently, he was constructing the school with the help of the German government. Fr. Baggio’s term in Victorias was not yet finished, and for this he was staying on<sup>128</sup>. At the end, Fr. Cogliandro could not but “recycle” those whom he perhaps would have wanted to change as superior of the houses<sup>129</sup>.

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<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>127</sup> Fr. Cogliandro described Fr. Ricciarelli as one “di buono spirito, ama la povertà”, “novellino”, who has been ten years a priest and three years in the Philippines. He was currently school principal in Mandaluyong before being transferred to Cebu.

<sup>128</sup> ASC F163 Philippine: Corrispondenza (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 12 marzo 1964).

<sup>129</sup> ASC D877 Verbalì (16 aprile 1964).

It was practically the same for the first provincial council. He wanted to give fresh blood to it, by putting new members; he had very few choices, and for this he had to repeat the former members: Fr. Carreno (1<sup>st</sup> triennium); Fr. Quaranta (3<sup>rd</sup> triennium); Fr. Roozen (3<sup>rd</sup> triennium)<sup>130</sup>. Being assigned in Victorias, Fr. Baggio had asked to be replaced. He would find it difficult to attend the meetings; besides, he was already fragile in health<sup>131</sup>.

Nonetheless, the Provincial's woes for the lack of personnel continued. And because of this, even the house councils had reduced number of members. His constant refrain to the confreres was: "we do not have the men". He was clear with his calculations, if only to hammer his point. For every 157 students, there was only one Salesian. And this did not include the boys who attended the youth centers<sup>132</sup>.

Fr. Cogliandro described these so "few" confreres:

"The confreres are of good spirit and of sacrifice: all great workers notwithstanding the weakened health of some. Every week, someone must for sometime rest because of ill-health and exhaustion. And to say that the climate here is not that terrible, as I thought it would be. It is more difficult and unbearable in India. The work is excessive. But it is the sign which shows that the Lord blesses us"<sup>133</sup>.

Confreres have been very edifying. Some of them have never been at home for the past 18 years, which was undeniably so exemplary for the Provincial and for the younger confreres. He had allowed some of them to go and visit their families. He had received certain comments from Turin on this regard. Indeed, these trips cost the Province. Nonetheless, he reasoned out that it was not the fault of the confreres if the Philippines was so far<sup>134</sup>!

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<sup>130</sup> If one looked at the list, one could see that the provincial council was dominated by the "Chinese". The "Indian" was Fr. Carreño. It was clear mismatch, three against one. At the end, Fr. Cogliandro, who worked in India, seemingly tended to favor the "Chinese".

<sup>131</sup> ASC F163 Philippine: Corrispondenza (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 12 marzo 1964). To note that the members of the council, except for Fr. Carreño, were also "former" or ex-councillors. These council members were all located in or near Manila, for the practical purpose of facilitating their attendance to the provincial council meetings. Cf also ASC D877 Verbali (16 aprile 1964).

<sup>132</sup> It is interesting to note the importance given to the oratorians as young people to whom the Salesian had to take seriously the work of assistance. Cf ASC F163 Philippine: Corrispondenza (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 12 marzo 1964).

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.* (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 17 giugno 1964).



### 5.3. Searching for Confreres

And so the Provincial himself had to look for personnel. He had to search not in China but elsewhere. But he also had to look for volunteers to the Philippines.

#### 5.3.1. Entertaining Volunteers

When he heard the news that the confreres at work in Burma were about to be expelled, Fr. Cogliandro offered the confreres to come to the Philippines. In April 1965, the Burmese government had begun to nationalize and confiscate schools owned and run by religious. It also had published the list of foreign priests and religious which it wanted to send away from the country. And this move threatened the closure of the Salesian work<sup>135</sup>.

Fr. Cogliandro proposed this “modus” for the “Burmese confreres”, who were mostly foreigners threatened with expulsion, to come to the Philippines. They could go as tourists to Hong Kong where Manila would help them obtain their visas; in a month or two, they could be in the Philippines. If the Superiors would permit him, he himself could go to Burma to help these confreres obtain the needed travel documents to the Philippines, since with his American passport, it would be easy for him to enter the country at those critical times<sup>136</sup>.

However, such initiative was not acceptable to Fr. Oreste Paviotti, Provincial of the Indian North Province to which Burma belonged; he obviously wanted that the confreres remain in his Province<sup>137</sup>. Even Fr. Luigi Massimino, Provincial of China, would have wanted to detain two or three of these “Burmese confreres” for the use of the China Province, since his Province, too, was short of personnel. He considered it just, that some of these confreres should come to China, since the new Indian Province of Gauhati had kept certain confreres who were supposed to be destined for China<sup>138</sup>. Nonetheless, Fr. Cogliandro’s

<sup>135</sup> Cf N. LO GROÏ, *History of the Kolkata...*, pp. 394-401.

<sup>136</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 17 giugno 1964).

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.* Fr. Oreste Paviotti was Provincial of India North Province with the provincial office in Calcutta. He and Fr. Cogliandro were former confreres of the same Indian Province.

<sup>138</sup> ASC F157 Cina: Corrispondenza (Massimino a Ricceri, Hong Kong, 5 luglio 1965): “... i confratelli provenienti dalla Birmania e destinati alle Filippine ... tutti i Direttori insistono se non fosse possibile trattenerne 2-3, anche solo per un anno, perché il personale è sempre scarso ... e d'altronde l'Ispettor di Gauhati detiene da molti anni uno dei nostri, attivissimo (D. Tullii)”. The Salesian Province of Gauhati was formerly part of the North Indian Province which had its center in Calcutta.

initiative to get confreres from Burma did get some results; confreres from this troubled nation came to reinforce the Salesians in his Province<sup>139</sup>.

Fr. Cogliandro also entertained “volunteers” to join the Philippine Province. In some cases, these were fresh recruits who wanted to start their Salesian ministry in the missions. Others probably wanted a change of place of work. Others wanted to go back to the “missions”, after having been away from another “mission”.

During a retreat of the confreres, Fr. Cogliandro wrote to Fr. Fedrigotti from San Fernando on 10 July 1964, about these Salesians who volunteered to come and work in the Philippines. There were three from Thailand. A certain Fr. Giovanni Ulliana offered to come<sup>140</sup>. Fr. Cogliandro thought that he could be confessor in Don Bosco Bosco Mandaluyong. Fr. Quaranta, who was also confessor of the school aside from being in charge of the Catholic Center, could no longer be confessor, in as much as the Cardinal did not want him to move for at least a year. However, Fr. Cogliandro doubted whether Fr. Ulliana would be effective, for the impression he had of the confrere whom he met in the U.S.A. the year before<sup>141</sup>. Fr. Francisco Rubio, also from Thailand, had written him asking the possibility of coming to work in the Philippines. Another confrere of Yugoslavian origin, who already expressed to Fr. Pianazzi his desire to come, but who was actually residing in Hannover, Germany, offered to come to teach Philosophy<sup>142</sup>.

Surprisingly, even Fr. Massimino was ready to answer Fr. Cogliandro’s appeal for personnel, but for another reason. He told Fr. Fedrigotti that by sending a certain confrere to Manila to help Fr. Rizzato who had also written and asked him for help, he would be able to rehabilitate this confrere. This confrere, in fact, had asked to change Province if only to start anew<sup>143</sup>. However,

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<sup>139</sup> Some of the confreres who came from Burma and joined the Philippine Province were Frs. Guglielmo Balocco, Leo Barattoni, Alton Fernandez and Br. Joseph Kramar. They left the country sometime in June-July 1966. Cf N. LO GROU, *History of the Kolkata...*, p. 396.

<sup>140</sup> SAS 29B439 Fr. Giovanni Ulliana: born in Treviso, Italy (12 November 1911), first profession in Bang Nok Khuek, Thailand (19 December 1929); ordained in Bang Nok Khuek, Thailand (18 March 1939); died in Bangkok, Thailand (18 June 1984) at 73 years, 55 years Salesian and 45 years priest. Fr. Ulliana was then assigned at St. Dominic School, at Phetburi Road, Bangkok. At the same time, he was confessor at Don Bosco Technical School in the same city. Cf *Elenco Generale* (1964), p. 213.

<sup>141</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, San Fernando, 10 luglio 1964). Fr. Cogliandro described Fr. Ulliana whom he met as “esaurito e nervoso”.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>143</sup> ASC F157 Cina: Corrispondenza (Massimino a Fedrigotti, Hong Kong, 31 marzo 1964). Fr. Massimino told Fr. Fedrigotti that this confrere was a “malcontento del suo stato, e vorrebbe lasciare la Congregazione, o ritornare nell’Ispettorìa Napoletana” where he worked as a student of Theology during vacations. In Manila, he could do ministry, especially if he were sent to work and help Fr. Rizzato. He preferred this solution for the confrere “perché lui desidera un luogo nuovo, dove possa ricominciare da capo, in posizione diversa da quella che ha preso qui e dalla quale gli pare di non potersi redimere”.

Fr. Massimino had second thoughts of sending the confrere to Manila, not because it was unfair to send someone who was problematic. He simply told Fr. Fedrigotti that he also needed confreres, especially those who could teach English; the said confrere was in fact efficient in English<sup>144</sup>.

Fr. Pietro Pomati, actual provincial economer of Hong Kong, offered to go Manila to the joy of his Provincial with whom it was known he had differences. But when he found out that Fr. Roozen was coming back to the Philippines as provincial economer, he backed out<sup>145</sup>. Later, in 1967, Fr. Massimino was ready to send another confrere, the coadjutor Natale Bauducco<sup>146</sup>, to go to Manila and help in the printing press<sup>147</sup>. Even this, however, never materialized.

### 5.3.2. Two Lists

There were others who were interested to come, and of whom Fr. Cogliandro was very much interested that they should come. He himself had made propaganda about the Philippines. He certainly knew Provincials who might help him. He had been a Provincial for 12 years in the U.S.A. before he became Provincial in the Philippines; he had participated in at least two general chapters. Besides, confreres who felt the "missionary vocation" must have heard of the "new experience" in the Philippines. Salesians working in the Philippines must have spoken well of their experience when they were abroad, and must have also made campaigns for personnel.

The fact was that Fr. Cogliandro had a list of these names who wanted to go to the Philippines. And he had sent this list to Turin. If only the Superiors would help him persuade the Provincials of these "volunteers" to let go of them! If only the Superiors would help by giving the obedience to these confreres themselves! Because then, their respective Provincials would no longer prevent their going to the Philippines. He was urgently in need of five or six priests in order to complete the house councils of the more important houses. If the Rector Major would tell the respective Provincials of these Salesians, then these Provincials would accommodate the requests of these Salesians and thus allow them to leave for the Philippines<sup>148</sup>. Fr. Cogliandro was not their superior, but the Rector Major was and who could order them.

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<sup>144</sup> ASC F157 Cina: Corrispondenza (Massimino a Fedrigotti, Hong Kong, 24 novembre 1965).

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.* (Massimino a Fedrigotti, Hong Kong, 24 novembre 1965).

<sup>146</sup> Br. Natale Bauducco was assigned in "Tang King Po" School in Kowloon, where there was a Catechetical Center and a printing press. Cf *Elenco Generale* (1964), p. 473.

<sup>147</sup> ASC F157 Cina: Corrispondenza (Massimino a Fedrigotti, Hong Kong, 3 settembre 1967).

<sup>148</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Cogliandro a Ziggotti, Makati, undated).

The Philippine Provincial had written to the Rector Major as early as 26 August 1963, giving a series of names of Salesians who might reinforce the personnel in his new Province. He was then in Hong Kong, awaiting his visa in order to go to Manila. He had recently been in Italy and had met Salesians who were willing to join the new Philippine Province.

### 5.3.2.1. A First List

Fr. Cogliandro's first list included students of Theology "ready to come to the Philippines, if the Superiors approve": Alberto Bresciani (2<sup>nd</sup> yr. Theology) and Giovanni Della Valle (1<sup>st</sup> yr. Theology) of the Sub-Alpina Province; Adolfo Martinez (3<sup>rd</sup> yr. Theology) and Jesus Manso (2<sup>nd</sup> yr. Philosophy) of Zamora Province; Jose Mallo (3<sup>rd</sup> yr. Theology) of Bilbao Province; Anthony D' Angelo (2<sup>nd</sup> yr. Theology) of New Rochelle Province. They were ready to come after ordination; the cleric Jesus Manso was even ready to come immediately. According to Fr. Cogliandro, their respective Provincials would not put any difficulty in their going to the Philippines<sup>149</sup>.

Of these Salesians who volunteered to go the Philippines, Bresciani is actually a missionary in Manaus, Brazil. D' Angelo is part of the Salesian Parish team in Birmingham, Alabama. On the other hand, Martinez and Mallo left early the priesthood, while Manso left as a deacon. Della Valle left the Society without receiving any of the sacred orders.

The Philippine Provincial had also tried to look for priests, as suggested by the Rector Major himself. He now had a list of those ready to come, "if the Superiors permit". He had spoken to them personally; they could be confessors in the houses where there were none: Fr. Vincenzo Scuderi (Sicula Province)<sup>150</sup>; Fr. Luigi Ferrari (Romana-Sarda Province)<sup>151</sup>; Fr. Giovanni Righetti (Veneta Ovest Province); Fr. Luigi Cazzola (Adriatica Province); Fr. Oreste Broggi

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.* (Cogliandro a Ziggotti, Makati, 26 agosto 1963).

<sup>150</sup> SAS 18B088 Fr. Vincenzo Scuderi: born in Catania, Italy (30 May 1902); first profession in San Gregorio, Catania (20 September 1918); ordained in San Gregorio, Catania (29 June 1926); died in Catania, Italy (22 November 1982) at 80 years; 64 years Salesian and 56 years priest. He was Provincial of the North Indian Province from 1934 to 1947.

<sup>151</sup> Fr. Cogliandro, writing to Fr. Ricceri (Makati, 3 August 1965), informed him that he was in Canlubang as acting rector in as much as Fr. Ferrari (whom everybody thought was already in place) still had not arrived. Fr. Cogliandro would be happy if the Superiors would send him to the Philippines. Cf ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Braga a Ricceri, Makati, 3 agosto 1965). Fr. Ferrari "disappeared" from the Philippines sometime in 1955. He had gone to Vietnam, supposedly to preach a retreat there; but he did not return to the Philippines. After his second time in the Philippines, he would again go back to Italy.

(Lombardo-Emiliana Province)<sup>152</sup>. They were all ready to come. What they awaited was the “beneplacito” of the Superiors; they preferred that the Superiors should tell them to go to the Philippines. Fr. Cogliandro thought that they could arrive for the coming school year. For this, it would be better if they started the process of obtaining visas so as to come even beforehand<sup>153</sup>.

Scuderi was a missionary in North India where he was Provincial when it was constituted a Province. He later repatriated and died in Catania. Broggi and Cazzola were missionaries in China, but repatriated to Italy where they died. All three expressed their desire to go back to the missions. Ferrari and Righetti had been in the Philippines, but have decided to return to Italy; now they wanted a second chance to work in the Archipelago.

### 5.3.2.2. A Second List

Fr. Cogliandro held another list of Salesians who wished to come to the Philippines, a list longer than his previous one. It was undated, but it was “updated”, with more names in it. It was written after he wrote the list of 23 August 1963. These were the confreres listed, with the Salesian Provinces they belonged to and their respective Provincials, and some details on the confreres which Fr. Cogliandro probably thought useful to inform Turin. Fr. Severino Gallo (Centrale Province) knew English<sup>154</sup>. Fr. Giuseppe Savina (Sub-Alpina) was newly ordained at Bollengo. Fr. Aldo Spizzo, his province-mate, was formerly in Bolivia but had gone back to Italy in Chieri; he knew English and Spanish. Fr. Luigi Ferrari (Romana-Sarda), whose name appeared once more, was currently assigned at the Salesian house of Gerini. He wanted to return; in fact, he was needed for the Novitiate and the studentate of Philosophy. From the Spanish Province of Zamora, there were Fr. Eleutério Lobato and Fr. Adolfo Martinez, both newly ordained and who were in Salamanca, and the cleric Jesus Manso who now was a practical trainee; from Madrid Province, Fr. Enrique Mazzola who was in Alcalá working with orphans, Fr. Francisco Gonzales who was principal in Arévalo, and the newly ordained Fr. Guillermo

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.* (Cogliandro a Ziggotti, Makati 26 agosto 1963). Fr. Righetti left the Philippines sometime in 1955 for “esaurimento”. Fr. Cazzola was ready to come to be confessor and teacher of religion. Cf *ibid.*

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>154</sup> SAS 43B105 Fr. Severino Gallo: born in Cuneo, Italy (3 June 1926); first profession in Chieri, Turin (16 August 1943); ordained in Bollengo (1 July 1953). He actually belongs to the Italian Circostrizione Piemonte. He is the brother of Sr. Giuseppina Gallo, a Daughter of Mary Help of Christians who worked and died in the Philippines.

Perez who was in Salamanca; from Bilbao Province, two newly ordained priests, Fr. Isacio Pascual who was working in Santander and Fr. Jose Mallo. Finally, Fr. Raymond Steichen (San Francisco Province), a newly ordained priest who was still at the Crocetta in Turin, asked to come<sup>155</sup>. At the end of the list, there was the promise of the Provincial of Barcelona, to send at least two confreres, at the request of the Superiors<sup>156</sup>.

Gallo lives presently in Valdocco, in Turin, working as confessor in the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians. Savina came as a newly ordained priest. Spizzo never left Italy again and is in the Andrea Beltrami House of Turin. Pascual worked sometime in Benin (1985-1988), but repatriated. Lobato is Parish Vicar in Vigo, Spain. Gonzalez never left his Madrid Province. Mazzola, Perez and Steichen left the Society and the priesthood in the 1970s. Those promised by the Barcelona Provincial did not come.

In summary, Fr. Cogliandro's undated list contained the names of 12 priests and of at least two others without names, plus a cleric: four Italians, 12 from the Spanish Provinces of Zamora, Madrid, Bilbao and Barcelona, and one from the United States: a total of 15 of them, if ever<sup>157</sup>. A good number of these were young priests, newly ordained, awaiting their assignment after their Theological studies, or in the first year of priesthood, or were actually already involved in the ministry, but who perhaps were still in search for their place in the mission. If only they were permitted by their respective Provincials and their applications accepted by the Superiors of Turin!

Fr. Cogliandro must have felt really bad, though, in spite of the seemingly quite a number of confreres who wanted to come and reinforce the personnel in the Philippines. For only two came to add up to the number of Salesians in the Philippines: the young priest Giuseppe Savina, and the "returnee" Luigi Ferrari. Definitely, this was not very encouraging for a Province he continued to lament to Turin as undermanned. But somehow, he would try to manage, resigned to the fact that he would have to work out things with the confreres that he had. Besides, he must have felt that it was almost useless to appeal further to Turin. He would have to consolidate the works and the numbers as best as he could, so that his successors would no longer find that imbalance in houses and personnel that he inherited.

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<sup>155</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Cogliandro a Ziggotti, Makati, undated).

<sup>156</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>157</sup> The Italians were Gallo, Savina, Spizzo and Ferrari. The rest were Lobato, Martinez, Manso, Mazzola, Gonzalez, Perez, Pascual, Mallo, two from Barcelona, and Steichen.

## Chapter Six

# VOCATIONS

As early as 1954, Fr. Acquistapace had declared that there were already a number of aspirants who were being prepared to enter the Novitiate, which for the moment, did not exist yet. One motive for the coming of the Salesians in the Philippines was the possibility of obtaining vocations easily for the Salesian Society. This, however, indicated the concern of the Salesians to start recruiting members for the Salesian Society, if only to make permanent the work they have started. In their minds, the logical and most effective means to prepare and form the future Salesians was the establishment of the Aspirantate.

### 1. The Aspirantate

Aspirantate or Juniorate – this was the traditional place where vocations to the Salesian life was nurtured and chosen before they proceed to the Novitiate. The Salesians usually took the boys while they were young, immediately after high school. They were often recruited from the Salesian environs, the best way to assure that those future vocations grew in the habit and custom of the Salesian way. In connection with this, they sought to have interns within their school setting. The fact was most of the vocations came from the schools that they managed. In the mind of their Founder, the schools were already Aspirantates<sup>1</sup>.

#### 1.1. Aspirantates

Before it found a stable home in Victorias, the Aspirantate in the Philippines was first improvised in Don Bosco Mandaluyong sometime in 1954, when the work in the place was not even a year old. The first aspirants, about 15 of them coming from the environs where the Salesians worked (schools, oratories), lived in the school, together with a group of interns. Fr. Luigi Ferrari, first

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<sup>1</sup> *Regolamenti della Società Salesiana...*, art. 250: “Ogni Casa Salesiana deve essere ambiente adatto allo sviluppo di vocazioni e ciascun Salesiano esserne apostolo. Le Ispettorie però avranno Case speciali per aspiranti salesiani al Sacerdozio ed aspiranti coadiutori”.

Delegate of Fr. Mario Acquistapace to the Philippines and superior of Mandaluyong, already thought of putting the Aspirantate in Mandaluyong: he was first helped by Fr. Ferdinando Rossotto<sup>2</sup> in caring for the first aspirants. It was in this place where the Salesians tried to choose some of the students and inject in them some seeds of vocation to be Salesians, either priests or coadjutors, one day.

Soon after, in April 1955, Fr. Acquistapace decided to transfer the Aspirantate from Mandaluyong to Victorias, upon the suggestion of Fr. Ziggotti who had just come from a visit of the Philippines. The Rector Major had insisted that a convenient place be found for the aspirants. He even suggested that they be, in fact, transferred to Victorias. He had met and conversed with the owner, Don Ossorio, who was willing to share part of the quarters built for the boarders, gratis, at the disposition of the “future Salesians”<sup>3</sup>.

It was Thursday, 21 April 1955, when the aspirants left for Negros. They arrived two days later at the school of Victorias where they found a “big bedroom”, a chapel and a refectory at the ground floor. But probably, the best that they found when they arrived was the superior of school, Fr. Braga. The Aspirantate remained there from 1955 to 1962, practically for seven years. The reason for the transfer from Mandaluyong was supposedly the danger of the mixture of the ordinary boys with the aspirants to the Salesian life<sup>4</sup>.

However, Victorias was already showing that it was not the ideal place for the Aspirantate. Problems have cropped up during its permanence there. Fr. Antonio Battistello, actual-in-charge of the aspirants<sup>5</sup>, wrote to Fr. Albino Fedrigotti on 10 December 1959 on the situation of the aspirants<sup>6</sup>. The aspirants were in constant contact with the externs of the school of Victorias, as it was in Mandaluyong. These externs, with whom the aspirants shared the same classrooms, have sometimes been of “bad example” to them. In July 1959, in

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<sup>2</sup> SAS 36B766 Fr. Ferdinando Rossotto: born in Turin, Italy (21 June 1920); first profession in Pinerolo, Turin (8 September 1936); ordained in Rome, Italy (16 March 1945). He studied at the Pontifical Gregorian University and had a licentiate in Philosophy. He left the Society sometime in 1959.

<sup>3</sup> SAFIN Corrispondenza (Battistello a Bati, Verona [2004]).

<sup>4</sup> Cf Antonio BATTISTELLO, *Un Ventennio in Estremo Oriente. Appunti di viaggi e di vita missionaria*, pp. 83-85.

<sup>5</sup> SAS 44B078 Fr. Antonio Battistello: born in Vicenza, Italy (24 June 1926), first profession in Borgo San Martino, Italy (16 August 1944); ordained in Shillong, India (25 July 1954). He repatriated to Italy and belonged to the Salesian Province of Veneto Ovest, now called Nord-Est, where he was provincial secretary. He is presently assigned in Don Bosco Verona. SAHK Minutes of Provincial Meeting (Hong Kong, 8 gennaio 1955).

<sup>6</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Battistello a Fedrigotti, Victorias, 10 dicembre 1959).



fact, the Prefect General, who had been in the Philippines for a visitation, had recommended to Fr. Braga, the Visitatore, that the aspirants should have their own place and their own personnel, so as to avoid mixing with the externs<sup>7</sup>.

Moreover, some of those who joined the Aspirantate did not come from Salesian schools and settings. Of the 32 aspirants in the beginning of 1959, ten were eliminated; four however, entered the Novitiate. But by December of the same year, there were now only 23. Five returned or were asked to return to their families; of these, four were new and were already graduates. In the fourth year, there were still three; however, these, according to Fr. Battistello, were not very promising<sup>8</sup>.

In the mind of the Salesians, it would be better to get products of their schools. There would be more aspirants coming from their schools in Luzon. Although there were those who came from Negros and Cebu, still, the greater number was from Manila and its vicinity. Moreover, the parents of the aspirants who came from Luzon resented their children being brought away from them<sup>9</sup>. The aspirants were mere boys, with age from 12 to 16, in their high school studies. Their parents, obviously, preferred to see them as often as they could, because of their still tender age. On account of the distance of Victorias from Manila, they could not easily visit their sons.

Because of this, Fr. Braga had to push through with the plan he had promised to the Superiors during his visit in Turin sometime in November 1958, and which he had written in 1959 to the Rector Major. The Visitatoria would return the Aspirantate somewhere near Manila "in order to have a greater number of vocations and to be able to better test and guard them"<sup>10</sup>. Indeed, near Manila, the aspirants would be better followed-up and animated; there would be more recruits.

## 1.2. *On the Look for a Permanent Home*

Fr. Braga, Visitatore of the Philippines since 1958, was quick to act on his proposal to find a new location for the Aspirantate. He considered it as "conditio sine qua non" for the future development of the work in the Philippines<sup>11</sup>. By 21 July 1959, he had informed Fr. Ziggiotti that he already found a land which

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* (Braga a Ziggiotti, Makati, 21 luglio 1959).

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.* (Battistello a Fedrigotti, Victorias, 10 dicembre 1959).

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.* (Braga a Ziggiotti, Makati, 21 luglio 1959).

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.* (Braga a Ziggiotti, Makati, 19 febbraio 1959).

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.* (Braga a Puddu, Makati, 1 novembre 1959).

could serve as future site for the Aspirantate<sup>12</sup>. But he had not only found a place; he claimed that he found a piece of land where the Aspirantate could be built, “in a place on top of a hill, about 300 meters above the sea”. It was only about 36 kilometers from the capital, Manila. And if the construction was to begin at once, then the place would be ready by June of next year in time for the new school year. However, this would cost about \$10,000 at least, if only to put up the essentials for the construction. For this, Fr. Braga hoped that the economist general, Fr. Fedele Giraudi (1875-1964)<sup>13</sup>, would help him when the time came<sup>14</sup>.

The Visitatore wrote Fr. Fedrigotti about this land which he claimed could be bought for a good price, and which, if they decided, could be resold for double the original price. To emphasize on the wisdom of his choice and reason, he declared that other religious had been buying pieces of land in the area for their future houses of formation. Religious Sisters have in fact constructed convents while the prices were affordable<sup>15</sup>!

And so the first plan was to put the permanent Aspirantate somewhere in Tagaytay or Silang in the province of Cavite. It was the Bishop of the place who had offered the terrain to the Salesians, in the hope of having them there. However, this never materialized; nor did Fr. Braga buy the land nor locate the Aspirantate there<sup>16</sup>. The ever enthusiastic Salesian had received another offer, *anzi*, a better offer.

The Visitatore told Fr. Ziggiotti that the aspirants in Victorias could not go on anymore, with the “worldly” day students and boarders of the school

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.* (Braga a Ziggiotti, Makati, 21 luglio 1959): “Abbiamo trovato il terreno in bella posizione a trecento metri sul livello del mare, salubre e fresco adatto allo studio ed al raccoglimento”.

<sup>13</sup> SAS 92A062 Fr. Fedele Giraudi: born in Vercelli, Italy (11 January 1875), and died in Turin, Italy (6 April 1964) at 89 years, 72 years Salesian and 61 years priest. He was Provincial of the Salesian Province of Veneto Ovest (1919-1924) and Economist General of the Salesian Society (1924-1964).

<sup>14</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Braga a Ziggiotti, Makati, 21 luglio 1959). Instead, Fr. Braga claimed to Fr. Puddu that it would need about \$100,000 for the construction of the Aspirantate and for it to materialize. Cf *ibid.* (Braga a Puddu, Makati, 1 novembre 1959).

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.* (Braga a Fedrigotti, Makati, 2 settembre 1959): “Mi dimenticavo di dirle che il famoso terreno è comperato per un ottimo prezzo. Se volessi rivenderlo mi darebbero subito il doppio. Sono molti religiosi che stanno comperando terreni per le loro case di formazione sia a Silang che a Tagaytay. Diverse suore pure hanno già costruiti due conventi ed altre comperano per non trovarsi troppo in ritardo e coi prezzi non abbordabili”.

<sup>16</sup> Cf SAFIN Salesians: Antonio Battistello (Memoirs). The author interviewed Fr. Battistello on 19 Nov. 2003, Wednesday, at the provincial house of Don Bosco Verona, Italy. Fr. Battistello claimed that he, being in charge of the aspirants, in fact, accompanied Fr. Braga one day to see the offer.

contaminating the aspirants. Nor could he let the actual Novitiate remain where it was, along the national road, across which were bars and houses of ill-repute, as if even the devil did not want the Novitiate too<sup>17</sup>. He was now in need not only of a new place for the Aspirantate, but also for the Novitiate as well. But it seemed that he had already found a place for both. The Lord never seemed to stop working for him.

## 2. Don Bosco in Canlubang

The enthusiasm and audacity of Fr. Braga for the good of vocations in the Philippines could not be stifled. On 9 February 1960, a certain Mr. Jose Yulo (1894-1976) was ready to donate 60 hectares of land to the Salesians, about 50 kilometers from Manila, in a place called Canlubang<sup>18</sup>. In fact, the notarial process of ceding the land to them was already on going. Even this, Fr. Braga had already conceded and accepted, even without consulting or requesting the permission of the Superiors of Turin!

### 2.1. *An Unexpected but Timely Offer*

The only condition requested by Don Jose Yulo was that the Salesians provided a priest to direct Rizal Institute High School, which he had founded inside his sugar refinery. He had it constructed to counter the activities of the Protestants who have been zealously proselytising in the area. He was even ready to provide the water, light, gravel and sand for free, in order to build the road to the place, which he was offering to the Salesians, and to level the land, in view of the future construction, which the Salesians would do. Unfortunately, the school had fallen into the influence of the Protestants, of which he was very much against. The actual director of the school was in fact a Protestant<sup>19</sup>.

<sup>17</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Braga a Ziggotti, Tarlac 9 febbraio 1960).

<sup>18</sup> Cf *Filipinos in History*. III..., pp. 296-299. Don Jose Yulo, lawyer, agriculturist and statesman, acquired the 7,350-hectare Canlubang Sugar Estate from Vicente Madrigal in 1948. This property consisted of sugar land, farms for horses, pigs, chicken, and a vast plantation with 8,000 trees of coffee. His property was confined by the towns of Calamba and Santa Rosa, Laguna; Tanauan, Batangas; Silang, Cavite and Tagaytay City. He developed this estate into a model community, where he applied his ideas of social justice among the workers and residents. His interest was both to uplift their spiritual and material welfare. Besides his initial donation to the Salesians, Don Jose was ready to donate another 17 hectares for the future development of the Salesian work in his property.

<sup>19</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Braga a Fedrigotti, Makati, 9 agosto 1960).

Fr. Braga again saw no difficulty with the condition proposed. For him, the Aspirantate could be conveniently located and built in the place proposed which he considered providential. The place was only 30 minutes from the Muntinglupa Novitiate. Transportation passed the area every five minutes. A confrere put in charge of the school could easily go and come back every day to the Aspirantate, which when finished, would only be “a few steps” from the school, which the Salesians would accept as a condition for their receiving the donation. Besides, the confrere assigned to the said school could easily form part of the Salesian community in charge of the Aspirantate<sup>20</sup>.

Obviously, there would be the need to construct. And that meant money and the need of financial help, since the Visitatoria was short of funds. According to Fr. Braga, the construction would need a budget of \$150,000, an amount, which could be reduced to about \$120,000 since the benefactor, Don Jose Yulo, had promised free sand, gravel, water and electricity. To meet the expenses, he already had (here again, he was one step ahead of Turin) sought financial help from the Propaganda Fide through the Apostolic Nuncio and from the Cardinal of Cologne. At the same time, he already had started a fund-raising campaign. What he hoped was that the Rector Major would grant a sizeable sum during the year, so that by May 1961, the Aspirantate would be ready. He was so sure that Turin would approve his initiative, that he promptly begged the Superiors to at least already send someone who could teach Latin, as well as confreres-formators for the future Salesians<sup>21</sup>.

On 9 August 1960, Fr. Braga had reminded Fr. Fedrigotti regarding the six-hectare land offer in Canlubang, Laguna<sup>22</sup>, insisting on the advantage of such offer. It was only 56 kilometers south of Manila, making it an ideal place for future development, since it was strategically a meeting place of four provinces - Rizal, Cavite, Quezon and Batangas. Besides, he had plans not only to build the Aspirantate but also an elementary school and a technical school in the same place<sup>23</sup>.

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<sup>20</sup> Aside from the Aspirantate, Fr. Braga's plan for the Yulo donation was threefold: (1) establish an internato for elementary students from grades three to six which could serve as a source of the future aspirants; (2) expand the actual high school and send the girls enrolled therein to the Salesian Sisters who have already agreed to accept the education of these girls; (3) and after some years, add a technical school. Cf ASC F163 Philippine: Corrispondenza (Braga a Ziggotti, Tarlac, 9 febbraio 1960).

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> Canlubang was actually a barrio in the town of Calamba in the province of Laguna. But on account of its set-up as a thriving sugar central, it was somehow autonomous, even if it was dependent on the local government in Calamba.

<sup>23</sup> ASC F163 Philippine: Corrispondenza (Braga a Fedrigotti, Makati, 9 agosto 1960).

## 2.2. Rizal Institute - Canlubang

The Salesian house of Canlubang was the fruit of donation from a rich benefactor, who probably wanted to emulate the initiative of the owner of Vicmico. Fr. Braga had accepted the offer of Mr. Yulo without even waiting for the final decision of the Superiors of Turin. He, however, had informed them of his action. He quickly accepted the proposal, since the Salesians would not have any financial obligation; the conditions were similar to those of Don Bosco Victorias. On the other hand, he saw that accepting the offer would be to the very advantage of the Salesians.

Consequently, by August 1960, the Visitatore had appointed Fr. Johan Buchta<sup>24</sup>, who for Fr. Braga was the “only one capable of putting things in order” as director of the school offered by Don Yulo. He did not tell anyone though that he had improvised the appointment of the confrere, since he had originally intended him to be superior in Tarlac. The Protestant director of the school was paid by the Canlubang Sugar Mill Company the salary of an entire year, forcing him to retirement. With this, Fr. Braga’s appointee was free to do his work.

Fr. Buchta, upon his arrival, had kept the teachers who were qualified and eliminated those who did not have the titles and the qualifications. With his presence, the school changed its face: more catholic, more prayer, catechism and daily mass. What the parents complained previously had somehow been remedied: the lack of religious instruction and the poor education. He, who had hardly began his work, was already loved and esteemed by the teachers of the school. The Secretary of Education had even praised him in public, for having improved the school without offending anyone<sup>25</sup>.

In the mind of Fr. Braga, Fr. Buchta would not be a waste of personnel. He could easily be made a member of the formation community of the Aspirantate, which Fr. Braga planned to establish just across the road where the school was actually located. There, he could be confessor or teacher, and at the same time director of the school<sup>26</sup>.

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<sup>24</sup> SAS 25B118 Fr. Johannes Buchta: born in Ostrog, Alta Silesia, Germany (15 June 1906); first profession in Czerwinsk, Poland (5 August 1925); ordained in Hong Kong (15 June 1935); died in Cuneo, Italy (5 July 1972) at 66 years, 47 years Salesian and 37 years priest. Cf SAHK Corrispondenza (Acquistapace a Suppo, Manila, 4 giugno 1954); *ibid.* (Acquistapace a Suppo, Mandaluyong, 10 giugno 1954).

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> ASC F163 Philippine: Corrispondenza (Braga a Fedrigotti, Makati, 9 agosto 1960).

Don Bosco Canlubang was the first of the two Salesian houses founded during the epoch of the Philippine Visitatoria. It was not only an Aspirantate, but a school called St. Dominic Savio School (Rizal Memorial Institute) which was canonically erected by Fr. Ziggiotti on 21 September 1960<sup>27</sup>, destining the work “to an Oratory and School for the advantage of young boys of the place, as well as an Aspirantate for the formation of the young who aspire for the priesthood in the Salesian Society”.<sup>28</sup> This was transmitted by the Secretary General, Fr. Puddu, to Fr. Braga<sup>29</sup>, who had received the go-ahead letter from the Bishop of Lipa Diocese to proceed to the canonical erection of a Salesian house in Canlubang, Calamba, Laguna<sup>30</sup>.

The establishment of the house of Don Bosco Canlubang gave Fr. Braga the hope that his project for a new home for the aspirants would be fulfilled. But for some reason or another, he would change his mind and would not send the aspirants to Canlubang. They were unexpectedly transferred to San Fernando, Pampanga, where a school was being currently built by its founder, Fr. Godfrey Roozen. Instead, Fr. Braga would not realize that the Salesian who would be novice master in Canlubang would transform it into something more than just a Novitiate.

### 3. Don Bosco Juniorate: San Fernando

The Salesian house of San Fernando was another of the presences initiated by Fr. Braga; it was indeed the last of the “opere Salesiane” canonically erected during the period of the Visitatoria.

#### 3.1. Canonical Erection

The house of San Fernando, destined “to be a festive Oratory and elementary and high school for the boys of the place”<sup>31</sup>, was canonically erected by Fr.

<sup>27</sup> ASC F652 Canlubang San Domenico Savio (*Decretum canonicae erectionis Domus*, Ziggiotti, 21 septembris 1960).

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.* (Fedrigotti, request from the Holy See to proceed to the canonical erection of the Salesian House, Torino, 14 settembre 1960).

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.* (Puddu a Braga, Torino, 28 settembre 1960).

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.* (Olalia to Braga, Lipa City, 18 June 1960).

<sup>31</sup> ASC F548 San Fernando-Filippine (Ziggiotti, Torino, 24 agosto 1961).

Renato Ziggiotti on 8 September 1961<sup>32</sup>. Fr. Puddu sent the decree of erection to Fr. Braga the day after<sup>33</sup>.

However, it is interesting to note that the local Bishop's approval for the erection of this Salesian house dated back on 16 November 1956, five years earlier to its canonical erection. Bishop Cesar Ma. Guerrero of San Fernando<sup>34</sup> had the petition for the erection approved by the Diocesan Board of Consultors who met the previous day at the Mater Boni Consilii Seminary<sup>35</sup>. Three years later, Fr. Braga, when he applied to Turin for San Fernando's canonical erection, told Fr. Puddu, that he could not find the permission to erect the Salesian house of San Fernando given by Bishop Guerrero. He knew, however, that he had already asked the Bishop for a copy of it, and that the latter had already released it<sup>36</sup>.

The Provincial, Fr. Acquistapace, had promised that he would assure the normal development of the new institution with the help of "famous benefactors". Fr. Braga, who had kept Fr. Bellido and the Rector Major informed of the offer, had accepted it while the Provincial was in Italy sick. The Provincial had approved it, after the Rector Major had already approved it.

"... such foundation, having been approved by the Bishop and by the Rector Major, the Provincial "post factum" had to approve it [reluctantly]. Fr. Braga had it approved while I was sick in Italy ..."<sup>37</sup>.

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<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.* (*Decretum canonicae erectionis Domus*, 8 Septembris 1961). The house was destined "ad Oratorio Festivo ed a Scuole elementari e medie a vantaggio della gioventù maschile". Cf *ibid.* (Ziggiotti, Torino, 24 agosto 1961). Fr. Ziggiotti had previously asked the Holy Father (Pope John XXIII) for the apostolic approval "a norma del CJC canone 497", so that he might proceed to the legitimate erection of a religious house in San Fernando. Cf *ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.* (Puddu a Braga, 9 settembre 1961). It is interesting to note, that Fr. Braga's address was indicated as Don Bosco Boys Center, located in Makati. The Salesian house in Makati, in its beginnings, was called Boys Center, not Technical Institute. Later, it also served as seat of the Visitatoria.

<sup>34</sup> Cf Wilfrido Maria GUERRERO, *The Guerreros of Ermita*. Quezon City, 1988.

<sup>35</sup> ASC F548 San Fernando-Filippine (*Decree of Erection*, Cesar Ma. Guerrero, 16 November 1956).

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.* (Benato a Puddu, 6 Aprile 1957). Writing to Fr. Puddu, the Secretary General, Fr. Braga said that he could not find the decree of erection of the house of San Fernando, even if he had already asked the Bishop for a copy of it which the latter had in fact released. Cf *ibid.* (Braga a Puddu, Makati, 1 novembre 1959).

<sup>37</sup> SAHK Corrispondenza (Acquistapace a Puddu, Macao, 16 febbraio 1957): "... tale fondazione dopo avere avuta l'approvazione del Vescovo e del Rettor Maggiore da cui l'ottenne l'Ispettore che post factum (non però malvolentieri) dovette pure approvarla. D. Braga durante la mia malattia in Italia l'aveva accettata in condizioni speciali delle quali in almeno due lettere mi pare di aver messo al corrente il Sig. D. Bellido ed il venerato Rettor Maggiore, la cui lettera di approvazione conservo ad Hong Kong".

But the history of Don Bosco San Fernando was tied up with a Salesian who came to the Philippines after he had tried to make it in Vietnam. He left the China Province at odds with his former Provincial, only to meet him again in the Philippines as his Visitatore. The founder of Don Bosco San Fernando was Fr. Godfrey Roozen, “who lived a life of two years in extreme need and of intense work and ministry which attracted a lot sympathy from many”<sup>38</sup>. He had received a six-hectare land donation at the periphery of the town of San Fernando “along the national road, seen by thousands of passengers who transit day and night”<sup>39</sup>. The school, which he built, was also located in the part of the Diocese, which was the richest in terms of vocation. There were about 60 priests, of which four bishops and a cardinal, from this “large barrio” called Betis in Guagua town, which was of a Christian spirit<sup>40</sup>.

In fact, one reason why the Salesians have accepted the offer of Bishop Guerrero of San Fernando, who had respected so much Archbishop Piani that he had installed Mary Help of Christians as protectress of his Diocese, was “in view of the vocations which come from that Diocese”. The Salesians wanted to take advantage of this before other religious orders realized this<sup>41</sup>.

### 3.2. School That Was Born from Debt

Fr. Roozen, esteemed and supported by many and who presented “his school” as the best in the whole of the province Pampanga<sup>42</sup>, had to incur debt in order to put up this Salesian work. He, as superior in San Fernando, had asked Hong Kong and Turin if he could be permitted to loan Php200,000 for the construction of the school, that was, “quickly rising up on account of the construction work”. The Apostolic Nuncio in the Philippines, Archbishop Vagnozzi, consequently had written to the Prefect of the Vatican’s head of the Sacred Congregation for Religious, Cardinal Valerio Valeri, to authorize Fr.

<sup>38</sup> ASC F164 Filippine (Relazione Annuale 1961-1962).

<sup>39</sup> The donation is said to have been given by the De Leon family of San Fernando, Pampanga. Moreover, Fr. Godfrey Roozen, together with his co-national Fr. Clifford, personally experienced the Japanese occupation of Hong Kong. Mistaken as “Deutsch” when they declared themselves as “Dutch” to their Japanese interrogators, they managed to remain free. Cf Mario RASSIGA, *L’Opera Salesiana in Cina (Cenno Storico). Parte Terza (1937-1945)*. Hong Kong, Aberdeen Technical School 1975, pp. 79-80.

<sup>40</sup> ASC F164 Filippine (Relazione Annuale 1961-1962).

<sup>41</sup> SAHK Corrispondenza (Acquistapace a Puddu, Macao, 16 febbraio 1957).

<sup>42</sup> ASC F164 Filippine (Relazione Annuale 1961-1962).



Roozen to contract the loan “for the construction of the building of a school for high school and school of arts and trades for boys”<sup>43</sup>.

The loan was to be obtained from a bank, with a 6% interest. The mortgage was a terrain given to the Salesians by the Bishop of San Fernando for their use for 99 years. Fr. Roozen was sure that the debt could easily and surely be paid through the tuition fees, which should increase considerably as the school enrollment would grow in the future years, as well as through the donations of generous benefactors who would not be lacking in as much as they witnessed what the Salesians were doing<sup>44</sup>. Besides, Fr. Roozen was known to have benefactors from abroad; but he was also recognized to be a good administrator.

The initiative of Fr. Roozen on behalf of “Don Bosco Academy” was approved by the Provincial, and on 13 April 1957, by the Rector Major who now asked Rome to legitimise such initiative<sup>45</sup>. The economer general, Fr. Giraudi, had supposedly authorized the requested loan of Fr. Roozen who proceeded with his initiative, convinced that he had all the necessary permissions. However, Fr. Benato, provincial secretary of the China Province, informed the secretary general, Fr. Puddu, that he did not have any information regarding the approval of Fr. Giraudi dated 2 February, nor that of Fr. Fedrigotti, who had written Fr. Acquistapace about the loan on 5 February but who had not had any response<sup>46</sup>.

### 3.3. *Don Bosco Academy*

The school of San Fernando, in a letter of Fr. Braga to Fr. Ziggiotti from Tarlac on 9 February 1960, had 280 students of which 21 were considered as probable vocations, which unfortunately were destined mostly for the diocesan seminary<sup>47</sup>. According to his Annual Report of 1959-1960, a new school building and a small theatre, which was the old saloon plus the size of four classrooms,

<sup>43</sup> ASC F548 San Fernando-Filippine (Vagnozzi, Manila 16 gennaio 1957).

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, (Fedrigotti, Torino, 16 aprile 1957).

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, (Benato a Puddu, 6 aprile 1857).

<sup>47</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Braga a Ziggiotti, Tarlac, 9 febbraio 1960). Fr. Braga, based on his experience in China, declared that “le vocazioni iniziarono colla venuta dei primi novizi e chierici”. Cf *ibid.* He had foreseen that from this school of San Fernando, he would obtain vocations too for the Salesian Society. A study of the vocations, which came from this Salesian house, as well as from the other Salesian houses, will surely be an important and interesting topic for research and study. How many of the present Salesians did really come from this area?

were inaugurated. The first theatrical show given was the play of Msgr. Vincenzo Cimatti "Mark the Fisherman"<sup>48</sup>.

The early structures of the school had been possible for the audacity of Fr. Roozen who embarked into construction to put up the school, after obtaining the approval of a loan that he had asked. With this, he was able to build another school building with 12 classrooms, which also included the physics and chemistry laboratories, "perhaps, the best in the City". In December 1962, a third school building was blessed in the presence of the new Bishop of San Fernando, Emilio Cinense, Pampanga Governor Nepomuceno and Congresswoman Nepomuceno<sup>49</sup>.

Together with Fr. Roozen was Fr. Agustin Lopez<sup>50</sup>, who was very much involved in the Christian and social formation of the students. Communion during the daily mass at the school was numerous, because the two confreres were available for confessions. They also made use of plays and dramas and operettas in order to form the boys. Moreover, they also helped in the nearby churches and parishes. Besides, they were also chaplains to the Benedictine Sisters and their high school students. They have started to organize the alumni; unfortunately, they did not have an extra confrere to follow them up. Nonetheless, this was supposed to be an easy task, since most of the alumni of the school lived in the city or in the villages near the school<sup>51</sup>.

#### 4. The Salesian Novitiate (1956-1963)

Obviously, Fr. Acquistapace knew that he could not go on with the men who had gone to the Philippines to commence the Salesian work there. Nor could he depend on those who came to stingily augment the numbers in the country. Some of them were "already of age", some came for a change of mission place, or to try the missions for a change. Indeed, some came as young clerics and coadjutors; but these were formed in Hong Kong. Others came as young priests; still others have already experienced Hong Kong, which was not quite the same as Manila.

Fr. Acquistapace wanted young Salesians from the Philippines itself. He wanted to some extent to "Filipinize" the Salesians, perhaps if only to force it out from its "Chinese dependence". And he did not waste time; he started his

<sup>48</sup> ASC F164 Filippine (Relazione Annuale 1959-1960).

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.* (Relazione Annuale 1961-1962).

<sup>50</sup> Fr. Agustin Lopez was rector in San Fernando (1964-1967) and Mandaluyong (1971-1977).

<sup>51</sup> ASC F164 Filippine (Relazione Annuale 1961-1962).

Salesian recruitment while the work in the Philippines was still “fresh and warm”. He was in earnest to have novices to the Salesian life and to form these in the Philippines.

#### 4.1. A Filipino Novitiate

Almost three years after the coming of the Salesians in the Philippines, Fr. Acquistapace had first proposed in 1954 a Novitiate in the Philippines. He had, in fact, written to Fr. Salvatore Puddu on 15 November 1954, informing him that both provincial council in Hong Kong and delegation council in Manila recognized the opportunity to open a Novitiate in the Philippines in spite of the one which already existed in Hong Kong<sup>52</sup>.

The proposal was to establish the Novitiate in the Salesian school of Mandaluyong<sup>53</sup>, where the Salesians had recently begun. The work in Mandaluyong, was, in fact, a complex work. For it housed not only a technical school with both elementary and high schools; it also included a festive Oratory, an Aspirantate and a boarding house.

But why send the novices to Manila where there were no structures yet nor formators who could possibly give the needed solid formation to these candidates to the Salesian life? Why not to Hong Kong? And if not to Hong Kong, why not to Thailand nor to Japan where there were facilities, personnel and above all the experience for this initial phase of formation?

When Fr. Acquistapace discussed with Fr. Bellido, superior in charge of the missions, the issue of opening a Novitiate in the Philippines on 1 April 1954, he expressed his clear reasons for such initiative<sup>54</sup>. The first reason was that just in case the Salesians would have to get out of Hong Kong and would have to transfer their novices elsewhere, still on account of the on-going communist threat, then Manila would be available. The situation in Hong Kong remained unstable. The Chinese novices could not go to Japan; the unfriendly relation between the two countries during the last war was still fresh. Nor was it convenient to send them to Vietnam, which was also under communist siege.

<sup>52</sup> SAHK Correspondence (Acquistapace a Puddu, Hong Kong, 15 novembre 1954). The Novitiate in Hong Kong was with the address of Salesian Missionary House - 1, Island Road - Shaukiwan, Hong Kong.

<sup>53</sup> ASC F157 Cina: Corrispondenza (Notizie e programmi del Sig. D. Acquistapace, Hong Kong, 3 marzo 1954); *ibid.* (Acquistapace a Bellido, 1 aprile 1954).

<sup>54</sup> SAHK Minuti del Consiglio Ispettorale (Hong Kong, Casa Ispettorale, 16 aprile 1954). The provincial council had received the positive reply of the Superiors to their formal request to open a Novitiate in Manila; this consent of Turin was sent on 5 April 1954.

At the moment, the establishment of a Novitiate somewhere in Manila seemed to be providential.

Moreover, Manila had possibilities for the care of vocations, especially for those who wished to proceed to the priesthood. The centers of learning Philosophy and Theology of the Jesuits, Dominicans and Benedictines were at hand. Besides, it was not easy to obtain permission to enter Hong Kong. And then, there were differences in language and character between the Filipinos and the Chinese. And these might not make their formation together easy<sup>55</sup>.

Officially, there were no Filipino novices yet. But Fr. Acquistapace already thought of providing a Novitiate for the prospective vocations to be gained in the work in the Philippines alone. He was optimistic that there would be many. He must have witnessed how the other religious orders at work in the Philippines were faring and gaining with regards local vocations. Besides, with the local vocations, it would be easy to consolidate and develop the work in the Philippines, and to assure its continuance in the future. Furthermore, a Novitiate within the country would be a source of encouragement to the confreres to continue to work hard in order to have local personnel.

But the question, however, was, where in the Delegation should the Novitiate be?

#### 4.2. An "Undecided" Novitiate

The history of the Novitiate in the Philippines was a history in itself. For from 1955 to 1963, it had been erected in five different places: Mandaluyong (1955), Victorias (1955), Muntinglupa (1956), San Fernando (1962), and finally, Canlubang (1963).

##### 4.2.1. Novitiate One

The erection of the Novitiate of Mandaluyong was something peculiar. There was already an existing Novitiate located in Hong Kong<sup>56</sup>. But the Salesians both in Hong Kong and Manila had recognized the opportune opening of another Novitiate for the Filipinos in the Salesian house of Mandaluyong. The primary motive for this was:

<sup>55</sup> ASC F157 Cina: Corrispondenza (Acquistapace a Bellido, 1 aprile 1954).

<sup>56</sup> C.J.C. 554§2: "Plures in eadem provincia novitiatus domus, si religio in provincias divisa sit, designari nequeunt, nisi gravi de causa et cum speciali apostolico indulto".

“... in order to cultivate the promising native vocations, so necessary to consolidate and develop our works which are doing well in these Catholic islands. This is demonstrated by the enthusiastic welcomes we have received, the insistent requests for new foundations, the generous help offered us”<sup>57</sup>.

In this letter of Fr. Acquistapace to Fr. Puddu, there is an earlier date typewritten in the heading – 3 April 1954. It seemed that the plan to create a second Novitiate for the China Province has been pre-meditated months before the letter written by Fr. Acquistapace to the Secretary General in Turin. Fr. Benato, writing to Fr. Puddu on 16 November 1954, the day after Fr. Acquistapace also wrote Fr. Puddu, had, in fact, told him that he was the one who wrote the letter of Fr. Acquistapace on 3 April 1954 asking for the approval of a Novitiate in the Philippines. Unfortunately, the Provincial was not able to sign it since he had not gone back from Macao yet; he had been licensed by the Provincial to sign it himself and send it to Turin<sup>58</sup>. However, the move in April 1954 to ask for a Novitiate for the Philippines was considered still premature by the Superiors in Turin. And for this, they have asked to delay the request for the next year.

Fr. Acquistapace had sent the second request to open the Philippine Novitiate as early as 16 November 1954 in order to confront certain realities in the Philippines. Vacation in the Philippines lasted from March to the beginning of June. To begin the Novitiate on 15 August, as was customary in Europe, would be inconvenient. Confreres usually received their assignments earlier. Besides, scholastic courses have already begun by June. But there was yet a very practical motive why Fr. Acquistapace wanted to have the Novitiate established in Manila as soon as possible. The Rector Major was scheduled to visit Manila in April the coming year. He wanted him to do the investiture of the first novices. Thus, Fr. Acquistapace would have wanted that the Novitiate begin on the feast of Don Bosco of the following year, if it was possible<sup>59</sup>!

However, the provincial council in Hong Kong and the delegation council in Manila also agreed that this planned Novitiate in Mandaluyong should be a second Novitiate for the China-Philippine Province. They did not want that the existing Novitiate in Hong Kong be closed, but instead maintained. For this, they told the Superiors in Turin to ask the Holy See to concede this possibility

<sup>57</sup> ASC F548 San Fernando-Filippine (Acquistapace a Puddu, Hong Kong, 15 Novembre 1954): “... per coltivare le promettenti vocazioni indigene, tanto necessarie per consolidare e sviluppare le nostre opere che vanno avviandosi così bene in quelle Isole Cattoliche, come lo dimostra l’entusiasmo con cui furono accolte, le pressanti richieste di nuove fondazioni e gli aiuti generosi che ci vengono offerti”.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.* (Benato a Puddu, Hong Kong, 16 novembre 1954).

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*

of the Province of having two Novitiates. It would be similar to that which was conceded to Australia, which had recently become independent from the U.S.A. West Province and thus had decided to have its own Novitiate<sup>60</sup>.

According to Fr. Acquistapace, the reasons he asked the Superiors of Turin to allow the opening of a second Novitiate for the China-Philippine Province were realistic and convincing. The Philippines was far from Hong Kong. Besides, it was difficult to obtain permission from the Hong Kong government to enter the Crown Colony. Moreover, there was a big difference in language and in character between the Filipinos and the Chinese. And this would be difficult for a common formation. But if this would be done in each own ambient, then the formation would be a lot easier<sup>61</sup>.

Furthermore, it was already envisioned that the Philippines would be separated from China one day in order to become a Province by itself. The formation of its future personnel "in place" would definitely prepare and accelerate the creation of an independent jurisdiction. At the same time, it would help attract more vocations. A final motive for such a request from Turin was on account of the "indisputable problem of security" in Hong Kong. There, the effort was to keep away as much as possible those who were not strictly necessary. Thus, it would be imprudent to bring people to Hong Kong, who were already secured in their place<sup>62</sup>.

Fr. Fedrigotti quoted all the motives expressed by Fr. Acquistapace, when he asked the Holy See to allow the erection of a second Novitiate for the China-Philippine Salesian Province<sup>63</sup>. And his request was granted, so that the first Novitiate house in the Philippines was established in the name of the Rector Major on 15 January 1955<sup>64</sup>. The place chosen where to put this Novitiate, as already decided by the two councils of the Province, was Don Bosco Mandaluyong. This was already a canonically erected house; it had the space. Besides, there were Salesians in the school who could be formators to those who would be novices.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.* (Acquistapace a Puddu, Hong Kong, 15 novembre 1954). Australia was a delegation dependent on the San Francisco Province of the U.S.A. The Province had decided to put up a Novitiate in Australia, while maintaining the Novitiate in Newton, New Jersey where the novices of the two U.S.A. Salesian Provinces went. Australia had then become a Visitatoria; its Novitiate was in Sunbury, in the Archdiocese of Melbourne.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.* In 2002-2003, there were two Chinese confreres who did their Novitiate with the Filipinos in the Novitiate in Lawa-an.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.* (Fedrigotti, Torino, 10 Dicembre 1954). This was "a norma del Can. 554 §1 del C.J.C.". At the same time, it was in order to maintain the existing Novitiate in Hong Kong of the same Province "nonostante il prescritto del Can. 554 §2".

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.* (*Decretum*, 15 Januarii 1955).

Meanwhile, Fr. Acquistapace was visiting Manila when he wrote his secretary, Fr. Benato, on the feast of the Immaculate Conception in 1954. He told him that if Turin ever approved the Novitiate project, there was already a location where to put it in Manila<sup>65</sup>. With the help of Fr. Quaranta, Fr. Acquistapace had met a certain Mr. Bunye, who was ready to lease gratis his villa for a year in a place called Muntinglupa<sup>66</sup>. This could be used as the Novitiate. The owner's only condition was that he be allowed to freely visit the place with his friends and his family. The Provincial did not see any difficulty to the condition of the owner; he even hoped that the place would be donated to the Salesians in the future. Besides, the place would also be open for the confreres to come and have their excursions<sup>67</sup>.

However, Fr. Acquistapace wrote once more the provincial secretary in Hong Kong on 1 February 1955 and told him that he still was not sure yet on the Novitiate project. Indeed, the Apostolic Delegate, Archbishop Vagnozzi, was so favorable to have it in Manila. And putting it in Muntinglupa, its location would only be a few kilometers from the Salesian house of Makati, from where it could easily obtain help. Now, he thought of not making it a regular house, but instead one dependent on the house of Makati. Besides, he was also still unsure where to get the personnel to man it. Thus, he instructed Fr. Benato to exercise due caution regarding the matter; the Novitiate for the Philippines was not yet official<sup>68</sup>.

With this instruction to his secretary, Fr. Acquistapace definitely, had not yet received the news of the canonical erection of the Novitiate in Mandaluyong, which he had asked Turin in November of the previous year!

#### 4.2.2. Novitiate Two

On 20 April 1955, Fr. Benato wrote Fr. Puddu, informing him that the Provincial had decided to transfer the Novitiate to Victorias so as to comply with the demands of C.J.C. Canon 564<sup>69</sup>. Previously, Fr. Acquistapace had

<sup>65</sup> SAHK Correspondence (Acquistapace a Benato, Manila, 8 dicembre 1954).

<sup>66</sup> In the course of its history, the Salesian Novitiate in the Philippines continued to migrate. From Canlubang, Calamba, Laguna (1963-1989), it was transferred to the south of the Philippines, in Granada, Bacolod, Negros Occidental (1989-1995); and then to Lawa-an, Talisay, Cebu (1995 up to the present).

<sup>67</sup> SAHK Correspondence (Acquistapace a Benato, Manila, 8 dicembre 1954).

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.* (Acquistapace a Benato, Victorias, 4 febbraio 1955).

<sup>69</sup> C.J.C. 564: "§1. Novitatus ab ea parte domus, in qua degunt professi, sit, quantum fieri potest, segregatus ita ut, sine speciali causa ac Superioris vel Magisteri licentia, novitii nullam habeant communicationem cum professis, neque hi cum novitiis."

thought of transferring the canonically erected Novitiate in Mandaluyong to that villa in Muntinglupa, in that place outside of Manila but near Don Bosco Makati, offered by a benefactor. However, Fr. Benato had advised him that before Muntinglupa could be established as a Novitiate, it had to be erected canonically as a religious house first; moreover, it had to be provided with a sufficient number of confreres so as to form a council<sup>70</sup>.

Fr. Acquistapace must have realized that to establish the Novitiate in Muntinglupa, it would take more time and more confreres. Probably, he was such in a hurry in setting up a Novitiate, believing that he already had the novices, so he decided to put the Novitiate this time in Don Bosco Victorias, which was already canonically erected and had enough confreres as personnel<sup>71</sup>.

Thus, after almost four months of the Novitiate in Manila-Mandaluyong, Fr. Fedrigotti wrote once more to the Holy See, requesting the transfer of the Novitiate in Don Bosco Mandaluyong to Don Bosco Victorias. His declared reason for asking was because “the aspirants and students of the house of Manila-Mandaluyong have so increase in number, so that the actual house can no longer meet the demands of Canon 564 for the Novitiate house”<sup>72</sup>. The secretary of the General Council transmitted the decree of canonical erection of the Novitiate in Victorias by the Prefect General to Fr. Acquistapace in a letter dated 8 June 1955<sup>73</sup>.

Fr. Acquistapace did not manage to have novices to receive the investiture when Fr. Ziggotti came in April 1955; he had decided to start the Novitiate the following year. He had a Novitiate canonically erected; but there were still no novices to begin with. However, while he was visiting Don Bosco Victorias, he wrote to Archbishop Guglielmo Piani, now Apostolic Delegate to Mexico, saying that he hoped to have the first Novitiate group begin by the 15<sup>th</sup> of August of that year 1955<sup>74</sup>. The date came, but he did not have a Novitiate group yet. Nor did he have a real Novitiate as well.

#### 4.2.3. Novitiate Three

For the third time, Fr. Fedrigotti asked the Holy See on 5 May 1956, the permission to canonically erect the Salesian Novitiate in Muntinglupa<sup>75</sup>. And

<sup>70</sup> ASC F548 San Fernando-Filippine (Benato to Puddu, Hong Kong, 20 aprile 1955).

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.* (Fedrigotti, Torino, 4 maggio 1955).

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.* (Puddu to Acquistapace, Torino, 8 giugno 1955).

<sup>74</sup> SAHK Correspondence (Acquistapace a Piani, Victorias, 16 giugno 1955).

<sup>75</sup> ASC F548 San Fernando-Filippine (Fedrigotti, Torino, 5 maggio 1956).



this was supposed to be final, since there was now a place that was destined exclusively for the Novitiate. By 16 May 1956, the news of the concession for the Novitiate at Muntinglupa in the Philippines had reached Fr. Puddu<sup>76</sup>. So that by 5 June 1956, Fr. Puddu had sent the documents related with this request: the document on the canonical erection of the house of Muntinglupa, as well as that of the canonical erection of the Novitiate on 15 May 1956<sup>77</sup>.

Earlier, Fr. Puddu had written Fr. Braga to inform him on what to do in order to obtain the permission to have the canonical erection of the Novitiate in Muntinglupa<sup>78</sup>. However, when he sent him the document regarding the Novitiate's canonical erection, he had anticipated the date of erection for some days. Otherwise, the Novitiate would have been invalid. For the religious house, as well as the Novitiate, had begun even before they were canonically erected<sup>79</sup>. Luckily, he had advised Fr. Braga to inform him if he started the Novitiate before its canonical erection.

Now, however, there was a Novitiate; and now, there were novices too.

The Novitiate in Muntinglupa received only about five Novitiate batches when the Salesians started to use it in 1956. There was no Novitiate for the year 1959-1960. It resumed once more in Muntinglupa in 1961. The Novitiate group of 1962-1963 was transferred to San Fernando, after having started the Novitiate still in Muntinglupa.

#### 4.2.4. Novitiate Four

When the Novitiate in Muntinglupa<sup>80</sup> was closed in 1962, Fr. Braga had to look for a temporary place to put the novices. A house was already in construction in Canlubang; unfortunately, it was not finished yet. San Fernando was chosen to temporarily accommodate the novices, in view of finding "a suitable Novitiate house". And so the novices went to San Fernando, upon the invitation of Fr. Roozen. Pampanga, already known for its vocational fertility, became richer in terms of vocation with the temporary presence of the 6<sup>th</sup> batch of novices<sup>81</sup>.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.* (Schinetti a Puddu, Roma, 16 maggio 1956).

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.* (Fedrigotti, Torino, 15 maggio 1956).

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.* (Puddu a Braga, Torino, 19 aprile 1956). Fr. Puddu told Fr. Braga to get the canonical erection of the house and then of the Novitiate. But previously, he should obtain the consent of the local ordinary. Cf *ibid.*

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.* (Puddu a Acquistapace, Torino, 5 giugno 1956).

<sup>80</sup> SAS CB5629 Muntinglupa-Noviziato Sacro Cuore. Canonically erected on 15 May 1956. The Novitiate then passed to San Fernando with decree of 23 June 1962. Cf ASC F548 San Fernando-Filippine (*Decretum*, Ziggiotti, Torino, 23 giugno 1962).

<sup>81</sup> ASC F548 San Fernando-Filippine (Ziggiotti, Torino, 19 maggio 1962).

Again, Fr. Ziggiotti had asked the Holy Father the approval for the erection of the Novitiate in San Fernando “according to Canon 554 §1 of the C.J.C.”. Doing so, the existing Novitiate in Muntinglupa was consequently closed and thus suppressed. The official reason for the transfer of the Novitiate was on account of the establishment of “a house of ill-repute” at the side of the actual Novitiate in Muntinglupa. The Salesians tried to ask the civil authorities for the closure of such establishment; but they did not succeed. For this, they have instead requested for the transfer of the Novitiate<sup>82</sup>. Besides, the place called “Villa Amparo” was scheduled to be returned sometime in July 1962 to its owner<sup>83</sup>.

As a result, on 23 June 1962, the San Fernando Novitiate was canonically erected by decree of Fr. Ziggiotti<sup>84</sup>. However, the Novitiate year had already begun at the end of May. Fr. Ziggiotti had wisely asked for a “sanatoria”, knowing that the approval by Rome for the erection of the Novitiate would not arrive prior to the opening of the Novitiate year<sup>85</sup>.

#### 4.3. *First Novices*

By 1954, the Provincial Delegate to the Philippines had been optimistic that four were ready to begin their Novitiate; and the Salesians were hardly three years old in the Archipelago. However, the Provincial Superior judged that these candidates to the Salesian life were still immature<sup>86</sup>. Nonetheless, Fr. Acquistapace had promised the next year, they would perhaps start the Novitiate by then. By November 1954, there were already seven candidates to the new Novitiate in Manila: four Filipinos, one Vietnamese and two Chinese from Macao. The latter two were in fact coming as Portuguese nationals<sup>87</sup>. And these,

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<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>83</sup> SAFIN Victorias Correspondence (Braga a Baggio, Makati, 6 luglio 1962).

<sup>84</sup> ASC F548 San Fernando-Filippine (*Decretum*, Ziggiotti, Torino, 23 giugno 1962).

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.* (Ziggiotti, Torino, 19 maggio 1962). The decree of approval of the new Novitiate in San Fernando was sent by Fr. Puddu to Fr. Braga the month after. Cf *ibid.* (Puddu a Braga, Torino, 23 giugno 1962).

<sup>86</sup> ASC F157 Cina: Corrispondenza (Suppo a Fedrigotti, Torino, 12 giugno 1954). The numbers of novices cited are found in the Salesian Elenco or in the Directory of the Province of the Philippines. These numbers became the basis to get the number of those who are still presently Salesians. The numbers refer only to the Filipino novices and Salesians. The statistics provided are not definitive and yet indicative of the actual number of Salesians in comparison with the number of those who aspired to be Salesians as novices. One can also look into a list of novices prepared by Fr. Philip Lazatin and the novices. Cf also The Salesian Bulletin [Salesian Philippine Provinces] (Vol. 31/July-August 2001) pp. 8-10.

<sup>87</sup> ASC F548 San Fernando-Filippine (Benato to Puddu, Hong Kong, 16 novembre 1954).

he hoped, would receive investiture when the Rector Major came for his visit to the Philippines.

However, the Novitiate began in the Philippines one year after Fr. Acquistapace's announcement. By 1956, there was twice the original number of novices; and the group was even international at that<sup>88</sup>. In fact, the Novitiate in the Philippines, from the beginning, had hosted novices from the other countries of East Asia.

The first novices consisted of six Filipinos: Juan Gatmaitan (San Miguel Tarlac), Enrico Guzman (San Miguel Tarlac), Alfredo Manalili (Tarlac, Tarlac), Augusto Miranda (Baliwag, Bulacan), Jose Navarro (Tarlac, Tarlac) and Ronaldo Peroy (Bago, Negros, Occidental)<sup>89</sup>. All presented themselves wanting to be Salesian priests some day. All, except one, came from Luzon; four came from the province where the first Salesian house in the Philippines was located, in Tarlac. One came from Bulacan and the last from Negros Occidental. The remaining two novices came from the same Sino-Filipino-Vietnamese Province: Isidoro Le Huong (Huong Dau, Vietnam)<sup>90</sup> and Francis Xavier Ung (Macao)<sup>91</sup>. The latter came since there was no Novitiate that year in China. Both have also asked to be Salesian priests.

In 1957, the novices of the first group professed, and resulting into the first "Filipino Salesians"<sup>92</sup>. But interestingly no Filipino remained in this Novitiate group; they consequently left the Society. The two non-Filipinos, Ung and Le Huong, remained and returned to their mother Provinces and were later ordained priests. The former died in 2003; the latter, was ordained in Bollengo, Italy<sup>93</sup>.

<sup>88</sup> The Novitiate in the Philippines, in fact, would always be multi-cultural and multi-national, open to novices coming from other nations. Looking into the list of novices up to the present, one can enumerate some of the countries where the novices came from: Hong Kong, Sri Lanka, Papua New Guinea, Thailand, Vietnam and Korea.

<sup>89</sup> Juan Gatmaitan was assistant of the aspirants in Victorias, Alfredo Manalili in Mandaluyong, Jose Luis Navarro in Victorias, and Ronaldo Peroy in Tarlac. The last, rather sickly, was re-assigned to the Novitiate. Cf ASC F163 Philippine: Corrispondenza (Battistello a Fedrigotti, Victorias, 22 febbraio 1961).

<sup>90</sup> SAS 57B712 Fr. Isidoro Le Huong: born in Huong Dau, Vietnam (4 April 1926); first profession in Muntinglupa, Rizal (31 May 1957); ordained in Bollengo, Turin (25 March 1961). At present, he resides in a parish in Dac Minh, Daklak, Vietnam. Cf *Elenco Generale* (2005), I, p. 649.

<sup>91</sup> SAS 57B088 Fr. Francis Xavier Ung Wing Chiu: born in Macao, China (2 November 1930); first profession in Muntinglupa, Rizal (31 May 1957); ordained in Castellamare di Stabia, Naples (5 December 1964); died in Hong Kong (3 November 2003) at 73 years, 41 years Salesian and 39 years priest.

<sup>92</sup> Fr. Acquistapace had written the Provincial of Portugal, informing him that he was in the Philippines where they were concluding the spiritual retreat for the first Filipino novices, and were preparing a new Novitiate group of ten. Cf SAHK Corrispondenza (Acquistapace to the Provincial of Portugal, Mandaluyong, 29 maggio 1957).

<sup>93</sup> Cf *Elenco Generale* (1958), p. 428.

Fr. Le Huong came on 9 September 1954, hoping to start his Novitiate, which did not start that year. For this, he was made assistant in the Aspirantate in Don Bosco Mandaluyong (1954) and in Don Bosco Victorias (1955). He was also brother assistant while being novice, when the Novitiate started in Muntinglupa<sup>94</sup>.

Instead, it would be from the 2<sup>nd</sup> batch of novices that Filipino Salesians would be derived<sup>95</sup>. This Novitiate group was, this time, all-Filipino: Rodolfo Agana (Tarlac, Tarlac), Remo Bati (San Pablo, Laguna), Leo Drona (Pangil, Laguna), Diomedes Cruz, Arturo Doronilla, Cornelio Esplico (La Carlota, Negros Occidental), Ariston Montano, Hilarion Muyco (Victorias, Negros Occidental), Nicolas Tan and Raymundo Vertido. There were ten of them. Two (Cruz, Vertido) did not finish the Novitiate. Five left during the period of their first profession. Three were ordained Salesian priests.

There were two masters of novices for the first eight batches of novices: Fr. Vincenzo Ricaldone (batches 1 to 6) and Fr. Jose Luis Carreño (batches 7 to 8). The Novitiates were then held in three places: Muntinglupa (1956-1962), San Fernando (1962-1963), and Canlubang (1963-1964). There had been 61 novices from 1956 to 1964<sup>96</sup>. Of these, 48 made their first profession<sup>97</sup>; 13 left the Novitiate during the year<sup>98</sup>.

From 1956 to the first year of the Philippine Salesian Province (1963-1964), there were seven Novitiate batches. The Novitiate was, however, interrupted on the third year of the Visitatoria (1960-1961). Fr. Braga, Visitatore,

<sup>94</sup> SAFIN Salesians: Isidore Le Huong (Memoirs).

<sup>95</sup> Fr. Acquistapace wrote to Fr. Amihel, Provincial of French-Paris Province, regarding a Vietnamese novice (Thack van Thuy [?], born on 31 January 1934). He planned to send him to the Philippines for the Novitiate. SAHK Corrispondenza (Acquistapace a Amihel, Hong Kong, 28 febbraio 1957).

<sup>96</sup> The list of novices in each batch includes only those who were enumerated upon the publication of the *Elenco Generale*. This means, that there could have been more novices in the list. But since some novices must have left before the publication of the *Elenco Generale*, then they were not included in it anymore.

<sup>97</sup> Of the 48 novices who professed, however, only 17 are still listed as Salesians.

<sup>98</sup> Up to the present year, that is, 2001, there have been 41 Novitiate groups. In the history of the Salesian Novitiate, there have been five interruptions, that is, for five times, there were no novices (even if there was always a number which were preparing to enter the Novitiate). These were the years 1960, 1965, 1968, 1969 and 1999. Two reasons were responsible for this: a re-arrangement of the plan for formation of the Visitatoria and the new Province, which entailed in the delay of the admittance of candidates to the Novitiate and the lack of sufficient number or the absence of postulants for the Novitiate (1999). Two Novitiate groups had all those who made their first profession leave: the 1<sup>st</sup> Novitiate year (1956-1957) and the 36<sup>th</sup> Novitiate year (1991-1992). In the 1<sup>st</sup>, there were eight novices, of which two were foreigners; in the 36<sup>th</sup>, there were only four novices all of whom did not profess.

writing to Fr. Ziggotti on 9 February 1960 from Tarlac, informed him that there would not be any Novitiate group, because they wanted to give another year of Latin to the aspirants. Consequently, the confreres of the actual Novitiate, Fr. Vincenzo Ricaldone, Fr. Boscariol and Br. Nicolino Tambascia, were temporarily being re-assigned to the aspirants, whom Fr. Braga was thinking of transferring from Victorias<sup>99</sup>.

But the Novitiate resumed immediately the next year (1961-1962); this 5<sup>th</sup> batch of the novices was the biggest so far. On 13 September 1961, Fr. Braga informed the Vicar General that the previous day, the 11 novices received the investiture. Of these, seven were for the clerical and four for the coadjutorship. For the next year, he expressed the hope of having six coadjutors "high school graduates" and five clerics<sup>100</sup>. In this Novitiate year, the novice master, however, got sick twice. On the first time, Fr. Anthony Gircour who was then socius of Fr. Vincenzo, acted as novice master. On the second time, Fr. Jose Luis Carreño gave some conferences; he also preached the retreat in preparation for the first profession of the batch.

But when Fr. Braga wrote Fr. Fedrigotti the next year, on 21 September 1962, he declared that there were currently only seven novices in the 6<sup>th</sup> batch; three had withdrawn<sup>101</sup>. He remarked to the Vicar General:

"As in every work that begins, our situation needs men who are all for us, who live and feel the Salesian vocation and are ready for any sacrifice"<sup>102</sup>.

Nonetheless, the seven novices, who began their Novitiate last 31 May 1962, would be receiving their investiture from the hands of the new Apostolic Nuncio, Msgr. Salvatore Siino, in the chapel of Don Bosco San Fernando on 23 September. Members of the sodalities of the Salesian schools would be present during the occasion, which would serve as a campaign for vocations. In his opinion, they were prepared well by Fr. Carreño, new master of novices, who had their confidence. The confrere seemed to re-live his experience of

<sup>99</sup> ASC F163 Philippine: Corrispondenza (Braga a Ziggotti, Tarlac, 9 febbraio 1960) 1. Those who finished their Aspirantate in Victorias in 1960 had to wait for the next group. The Novitiate resumed by May 1961; those who made up this group made their first profession on 24 May 1962. The novices of this group received the cassock from the newly consecrated Auxiliary Bishop of Manila, Pedro Bantigue, on 8 September 1961, in the chapel of Don Bosco Mandaluyong. Cf SAFIN Salesians: Rolando Fernandez (memoirs).

<sup>100</sup> ASC F163 Philippine: Corrispondenza (Braga a Fedrigotti, Makati, 13 settembre 1961).

<sup>101</sup> ASC F548 San Fernando-Filippine (Barbero a Pianazzi, 25 giugno 1963). For the Novitiate group of 1963-1964, there were eight. Cf *ibid.* By this time, the number of aspirants in the Juniorate had almost doubled from 58 to 102.

<sup>102</sup> ASC F163 Philippine: Corrispondenza (Braga a Fedrigotti, Makati, 21 settembre 1962).

India. Moreover, he was also useful for conferences to the confreres and to different communities of religious in the island. Fr. Braga had to decline on his behalf the many invitations to preach retreats, so as not to overwork him<sup>103</sup>.

#### 4.4. *First Novice Master*

The Salesians were already working in five presences when the Novitiate started in 1956. There were 46 confreres at work in the Philippine Delegation: 22 in Victorias, six in Cebu, 15 in Manila-Mandaluyong, one in Manila-Makati and two in Tarlac. It was not easy for Fr. Acquistapace to pull out confreres who were currently assigned to these places. For it meant leaving a gap in the actual line-up. Besides, it was not just any confrere to do that particular service as director of novices.

##### 4.4.1. Fr. Vincenzo Ricaldone

When the Novitiate resumed for the year 1961-1962, Fr. Braga wrote Fr. Ziggotti on 30 July 1961, and informed him that there were 11 novices who were under the care of the novice master, Fr. Vincenzo Ricaldone. He even told him that the novice master gave these novices "a solid formation" and created in the Novitiate "a united family and healthily cheerful"<sup>104</sup>.

But by March 1962, Fr. Braga found himself at a loss to find a substitute for Fr. Vincenzo. The novice master was often sick and found it very hard to continue his function. He had been hospitalized; so, for the remaining three months of the Novitiate, there was the need of finding someone to substitute him. Unfortunately, it was not easy to find one. For this, Fr. Braga had pleaded to Fr. Ziggotti to send "il Maestro", that precious gift "which will always bind us evermore and better with our beloved Superiors"<sup>105</sup>. Fr. Carreño, who was courted to take Fr. Vincenzo's place, had not arrived yet, due to difficulty of obtaining a visa.

There were practically two masters of novices in the years between 1956 and 1964: Fr. Vincenzo Ricaldone (five terms: 1956-1960, 1961-1962) and Fr.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, 1-2. Fr. Braga said of the new novice master: "suscita letizia e buono spirito, dando esempio magnifico di ubbidienza e di adattamento cordiale e fattivo"; "Lo apprezzano molto per la sua dottrina serena ed incoraggiante: ottimista, che solleva e rinfranca". Cf *ibid.*

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.* (Braga a Ziggotti, Makati, 30 luglio 1961).

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.* (Braga a Ziggotti, Makati, 9 marzo 1962).

Jose Luis Carreño (three terms: 1962-1965)<sup>106</sup>. The former was a veteran of China; the latter was equally a veteran of India. Both have been masters of novices before they did the same task in Manila. Both had experience and surely orthodoxy. Both loved Don Bosco to the innermost of their selves. But each had his own story.

Fr. Vincenzo Ricaldone was a “crucial” man during the beginnings of the Salesians in the Philippines. It was to him that Fr. Acquistapace entrusted the delicate task of initiating the future Salesians among the Filipinos. One thing though was that Fr. Braga knew Fr. Vincenzo from the China days, someone whom he trusted as Salesian. One reason for his choice of Fr. Vincenzo was because he was the most adept in hearing the confessions of the people, and for this was “the best to know the soul of this people”<sup>107</sup>. Whatever this expression of Fr. Braga meant, Fr. Vincenzo was a veteran in the formation of young Salesians. Before he came to the Philippines, he was in fact rector of the Post-Novitiate in Hong Kong. And he had much experience as Salesian, already at age 61 when he came over to the Philippines.

However, by 1960, Fr. Vincenzo seemingly could not last long as master of novices. Already after the profession of the 1<sup>st</sup> batch of novices, there had been a problem in the Post-Novitiate. The socius and in charge of the newly professed had been well below the expectation of Fr. Acquistapace. The confrere, who transferred to the U.S.A. but later left the Society, had created more problems rather than help to the newly professed<sup>108</sup>.

After four years, the cracks in the person of the novice master became apparent. And the idea of substituting him came also from the one who had backed him up to the task of forming the first Salesians, Fr. Braga, who took the chance of doing so with the erection of the Visitatoria. He had written Fr. Fedrigotti on 9 August 1960, expressing his esteem for Fr. Vincenzo. But he thought that it was time to find someone to succeed him. He came to this conclusion for two motives. First, there was the need of another who knew English better. And second, there was the need for someone “who could keep the young always cheerful”<sup>109</sup>.

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<sup>106</sup> The other novice masters of the Philippine Novitiate were Fr. Julian Carpella (1966-1968), Fr. Lazaro Revilla (1970-1973), Fr. Alfredo Giuseppe Cogliandro (1973-1982), Fr. Jose Carbonnel (1982-1985), Fr. Francesco Panfilo (1985-1987), Fr. Andrew Wong (1987-1994), Fr. Felipe Lazatin (1994-1998), Fr. Godofredo Atienza (from 1999 up to the present).

<sup>107</sup> ASC F157 Cina (Notizie e programmi del Sig. Don Acquistapace, 3 marzo 1954).

<sup>108</sup> His assistant in the Philippines was a certain Fr. Ferdinando Rossotto, who later left the Congregation.

<sup>109</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Braga a Fedrigotti, Makati, 9 agosto 1960).

That Fr. Vincenzo did not know English well was a “defect” indeed of the elderly Salesians who first came to the Philippines. This obviously put into question how Fr. Vincenzo transmitted the theory on Don Bosco and the Salesian life to the novices. But that he failed to keep the young cheerful was a serious lack. For this was one essential element for the Salesian. One wondered why Fr. Braga made this particular observation on Fr. Vincenzo.

Fr. Braga thought of taking the chance to replace him sometime in 1960, because the Novitiate temporarily stopped that year. Although there were three who have asked to enter the Novitiate, Fr. Braga decided to make them wait for June of next year. Meanwhile, he thought it timely to send Fr. Vincenzo to Italy for vacation. The confrere, rather edifyingly, had not been to Italy for the past 23 years. He had not asked to go Italy, but Fr. Braga had thought of taking the initiative to tell him to go and take some vacation in as much as the Novitiate was temporarily suspended<sup>110</sup>.

But what did really happen with Fr. Vincenzo?

#### 4.4.2. Replacing Fr. Vincenzo Ricaldone

Fr. Braga wrote the Rector Major in December 1961 regarding the health of Fr. Vincenzo. The latter had resumed that same year his work as master of novice, after a year of pause from the Novitiate. Fr. Braga had not found anyone yet who could take his place. But now, Fr. Vincenzo was very sick and really needed a substitute. The Visitatore tried to give Fr. Vincenzo a three-month respite, but it was to no avail. He expressed his preoccupation to the Rector Major in unmeasured words.

“[Fr. Vincenzo] could not control himself with regards his ailments. He consults books of medicine and takes medicine without any criterion. He had fixed ideas: he feels that he is affected by thousands of inconveniences. He is so alarmed if he loses half a kilo of weight. He cannot stay put even for a moment....”<sup>111</sup>

From November 1961 to May 1962, Fr. Vincenzo was practically no longer novice master, even if he was observing the schedule and giving the conferences<sup>112</sup>. Consequently, Fr. Braga had asked Fr. Vincenzo to leave the

<sup>110</sup> In 1960, there was no Novitiate, which was postponed to the next year on account of the reduced number of novices. For this, Fr. Vincenzo was allowed to go for some vacation. He had never asked for vacation. Perhaps, he would be able to update himself during this vacation. Cf *ibid*.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.* (Braga a Ziggioni, Makati, 9 marzo 1961).

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.* (Braga a Fedrigotti, Makati, 26 novembre 1961).



Novitiate and proceed to Victorias to rest, where his younger brother was superior. He was convinced that Fr. Vincenzo was no longer in the position to continue to be novice master.

In another letter to Fr. Fedrigotti, Fr. Braga admitted that Fr. Vincenzo had a nervous breakdown, which was worsening. In his 15-day hospital confinement, the novice master was diagnosed with acute nervosis and uncontrolled insomnia.

“He does not sleep in the night, fearful of attacks by evil people, because nearby, some persons have been attacked by armed men. He needs to have a priest nearby in the night when he sleeps. He lives, preoccupied for nothing. He continues to lose weight; his health slowly wearing out”<sup>113</sup>.

Fr. Braga had no choice but to give him a prolonged rest, and to find someone to replace him. He was determined in his decision. For this, he again wrote to the Rector Major declaring that the confrere indeed was truly “out of use” and totally “exhausted in his nerves and his health”. He needed to subject himself to a specialist who could command him with authority and seriousness. For this, he wanted him to go to Italy once more by the end of May or the beginning of June. He could remain there even for a year, until he is cured. Meanwhile, Fr. Braga hoped that by that time, Turin shall have sent his replacement<sup>114</sup>.

The Prefect General, however, hinted to Fr. Braga that Fr. Vincenzo could still be novice master when he came back. The Visitatore had to remind the Prefect General that he should not forget the long crisis of the confrere. He reiterated the latter’s psychological unfitnes to assume the role. Lastly, he added another reason why Fr. Vincenzo’s should be retired: the latter’s English was so incorrect in grammar and pronunciation. In front of novices who came from educated families, this was not proper and acceptable<sup>115</sup>.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.* (Braga a Fedrigotti, Makati, 11 gennaio 1962). Later, Fr. Braga would have a problem with Fr. Vincenzo’s brother, Fr. Igino.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.* (Braga a Ziggiotti, Makati, 7 maggio 1962). During the moments of sickness of Fr. Vincenzo Ricaldone, Fr. Anthony Gircour and Fr. Jose Carreño temporarily substituted him. Cf. SAFIN Salesians: Roland Fernandez (Memoirs).

<sup>115</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Braga a Fedrigotti, Makati, 26 novembre 1962) 1. Fr. Fedrigotti ought not to forget the long crisis that Fr. Vincenzo underwent: “di mania di persecuzione, di squilibrio psichico gli pareva di dover morire ad ogni passo, non sapeva più che pesci pigliare, era indeciso, aveva paura di assalti notturni ed assoldò due guardie armate che vigilassero il noviziato: passò mesi di insonnia e nonostante pillole sedative e tranquillizzanti non chiudeva occhio”. Cf *ibid.* Moreover, Fr. Braga had another observation on Fr. Vincenzo: that the confrere somehow demanded strict observance in front of the community, but he was liberal with himself.

Earlier, Fr. Braga had also expressed his opinion to Fr. Fedrigotti that Fr. Vincenzo was not meant to be novice master anymore, in as much as the latter was really no longer psychologically fit for that office. The novices had been affected by their superior's "strangeness" and were really being tried. Even the assistant of the novice master had ended up imitating such unlikely image of the novice master<sup>116</sup>. Unfortunately, the issue of Fr. Braga with Fr. V. Ricaldone would coincide with his difficulty with the other Ricaldone.

Since November 1961 to May 1962, in fact, Fr. Vincenzo had been relieved of his office. Fr. Braga was in fact in research for a substitute. He had asked Fr. Tohill to send him Fr. Rudolf Haselsteiner<sup>117</sup>. But the latter could not do so, for that meant a change of Province. And Fr. Tohill, his Provincial, did not have the authority to effect that; this was the reason for refusing the confrere to his Philippine counterpart. Fr. Braga had thought of asking Fr. Thomas Hall<sup>118</sup>, Provincial of the English Province, to lend him for sometime Fr. Patrick Burns<sup>119</sup>. But Fr. Bellido, superior for the missions, had objected to this, since the confrere was supposed to be destined for the Guwahati Province of India<sup>120</sup>.

In December 1961, Fr. Braga himself had written to Fr. Zaggiotti regarding the unstable health of the actual novice master. He had ordered him to leave the Novitiate and had sent the confrere to Victorias where his brother was superior. Fr. Braga was afraid that Fr. Vincenzo would end up mentally ill.

#### 4.4.3. Transition

The new Provincial, Fr. Cogliandro, responding to Fr. Fedrigotti who still thought that Fr. Vincenzo should be novice master when he came back, re-echoed practically what Fr. Braga had told him. Fr. Vincenzo was scrupulous

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<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>117</sup> SAS 32B081 Fr. Rudolf Haselsteiner: born in Allhartsberg, Austria (3 December 1911); first profession in Enseldorf, Germany (7 August 1932); ordained in Shanghai, China (28 September 1941); died in Horn, Austria (28 June 1991) at 79 years, 59 years Salesian and 50 years Salesian. He was master of novices in Hong Kong for the China Province from 1952-1955.

<sup>118</sup> SAS 26B070 Fr. Thomas Hall: born in Westminster, England (9 March 1902); first profession in Oxford, England (18 September 1926); ordained in Turin, Italy (8 July 1934); died in Chertsey, England (8 April 1987) at 85 years, 61 years Salesian and 53 years priest. He was Provincial of the Province of Great Britain from 1952-1964.

<sup>119</sup> SAS 35B247 Fr. Patrick Burns: born in Belfast, Ireland (17 January 1916); first profession in Oxford, England (7 September 1934); ordained in Tirupattur, India (30 January 1944); died in Shillong, India (17 May 1981) at 65 years, 47 years Salesian and 37 years priest. He belonged to the Indian Guwahati Province.

<sup>120</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Braga a Fedrigotti, Makati, 11 gennaio 1962).

and “extremely fearful”; he said one thing but lived in another. Besides, the confreres were against the idea of reinstating Fr. Vincenzo. And Fr. Vincenzo’s English? He, who was quite fluent with English, could not understand the English of the written conferences Fr. Vincenzo gave to the novices<sup>121</sup>!

Fr. Cogliandro would write Fr. Fedrigotti once again, adding more reasons that might convince him to give up the idea of re-assigning Fr. Vincenzo. Certain confreres whom he had interviewed declared that ex-novice master’s method in forming the novices were questionable, if not Salesian. He could document these, if Fr. Fedrigotti wanted proofs of Fr. Vincenzo’s being unfit<sup>122</sup>.

When he came back late 1963, Fr. Vincenzo was assigned as confessor in Don Bosco Makati, replacing Fr. Peter Garbero who had been sent instead to be confessor in Victorias. Fr. Cogliandro was doubly triumphant with this: he not only had found a place for the confrere; except for Tarlac, he had almost finally put a regular confessor in each of the Salesian house<sup>123</sup>.

According to Fr. Cogliandro, it was now quite different with Fr. Carreño, the Salesian who took the place of Fr. Vincenzo<sup>124</sup>. There was a healthy, open and serene attitude among the novices; besides, there seemed to be stronger and more solid convictions in them. The novice master was not only a “born formator”, but also one who knew what he was doing, even if he was a “poet”<sup>125</sup>. To replace Fr. Carreño would be to disorient the novices<sup>126</sup>. Perhaps Fr. Vincenzo could do as confessor of some houses; unless of course Fr. Fedrigotti insisted that he should be made novice master<sup>127</sup>.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.* (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 31 ottobre 1963). Fr. Cogliandro claimed that he had with him three volumes of Fr. Vincenzo’s conferences; he just could not understand his English. Cf *ibid.* (Braga a Fedrigotti, Makati, 26 novembre 1963).

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.* (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 10 novembre 1963). Fr. Cogliandro wrote Fr. Fedrigotti that the documents regarding Fr. Vincenzo which he had were found in the archives, unguarded; and these were even filed and catalogued by an extern! How he wanted to destroy these documents. Cf *ibid.*

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.* (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 21 dicembre 1963). Fr. Vincenzo seemed to be happy with his new assignment. He was even scheduled to preach the mid-year retreat of the novices, as well as those of confreres scheduled for May 1964.

<sup>124</sup> In January 1962, Fr. Braga was elated when he learned that Fr. Carreño was coming to take charge of the novices. Cf ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Braga a Fedrigotti, Makati, 11 gennaio 1962). It was Fr. Giovanni Antal (+1967), Catechist General, who had in fact suggested this. Fr. Carreño arrived with Fr. Murray sometime in May 1962. Cf *ibid.* (Braga a Ziggotti, Makati, 7 maggio 1962).

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.* (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 10 novembre 1963).

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.* (Braga a Fedrigotti, Makati, 26 novembre 1963).

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.* (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 10 novembre 1963). Fr. Vincenzo, as confessor in Don Bosco Makati, also helped in San Ildefonso Parish where Fr. Rizzato was pastor. Cf *ibid.* (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 21 dicembre 1963); SAHK Corrispondenza (Braga a Massimino, Makati, 4 marzo 1964).

The fact was that Fr. Jose Luis Carreño had come sometime in May 1962 while Fr. Vincenzo was in Italy for his “forced vacation”. When Fr. Braga finally got him as a replacement for Fr. Vincenzo Ricaldone, the Visitatore did not know that he had one who would really be quite different. He did not even manage to predict the “revolution” which this confrere would commit the Visitatoria, soon to turn into a Province.

## 5. Theologate

Fr. Braga did not bother anymore about the studentate of Philosophy. For the moment, he was resigned in sending “his vocations” to Hong Kong, which obviously he knew very well. But what he wanted to envision was where to send “his vocations” after their period of practical training. There was no Theologate near the area.

The China-Philippine Province reflected on where to send its students of Theology. In early 1955, it thought of sending its students of China to Europe. But because the Philippines would also be interested in a few years time of the need of where to send its future students, the provincial council decided to listen to the deliberations of the delegation council first before finally deciding.

Meanwhile, Turin saw the future need of a Theologate for the students of Theology of the Far East region where it witnessed a flourishing of the works and most especially of vocations. It already had in mind a sort of an “international Theologate” where to put its students for the priesthood of the growing Provinces in China, Japan, Thailand, Philippines and Vietnam too.

### 5.1. *Foreseeing a Theologate*

As early as December 1953, Fr. Acquistapace had already begun to think of where to send the future students of Theology of the new Delegation. He had thought, in fact, of sending the personnel for formation to Japan. For this, he had written to Fr. Clodoveo Tassinari<sup>128</sup>, Provincial of Japan, asking for information: whether the Japanese Province was ready to receive these students from the Philippines, when the ecclesiastical school year begun, what should

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<sup>128</sup> SAS 29B166 Fr. Clodoveo Tassinari: born in Modena, Italy (9 March 1912); first profession in Chiari, Brescia (14 September 1929); ordained in Miyazaki, Japan (8 November 1939). He was Provincial of the Salesian Japanese from 1949-1955. He presently belongs to the house for elder confreres located in Beppu.

be done in order to enter Japan and to study there, whether the title obtained therein was recognized outside of Japan<sup>129</sup>.

Moreover, the Provincial of the China-Philippines Province presented the situation in Manila to Fr. Tassinari, if perhaps to make a point of possible comparison with Japan. Students of Theology in Manila could easily attend the ecclesiastical universities as well as those of the religious orders. It would be like students frequenting the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome, which offered the courses of Theology to candidates to the priesthood. Those who frequented the school of Theology of the Jesuits in Manila, for example, finished with an equivalent master's degree, which was recognized civilly<sup>130</sup>.

The fact was that in January 1954, Fr. Acquistapace had obtained from Turin permission to have Theology be studied in Manila for the moment<sup>131</sup>. For this, the two clerics, Iriarte and Lopez, who came from Spain to reinforce the Salesian Delegation, were sent to the Seminary of San Jose in Quezon City on June 1954 for their Theological studies<sup>132</sup>. Don Bosco Mandaluyong, was adjusted to accommodate them; from this house, they would travel daily to their school for their class by motorcycle via Highway Fifty-Four<sup>133</sup>. The confrere, Fr. Ferdinando Rossotto, served as their assistant.

Fr. Acquistapace, however, decided to send the confreres, European and Chinese students of Theology to Europe, while it had not yet been finalized whether the students of Theology of the Province should go to Manila or to Japan<sup>134</sup>. The Philippine government had not responded to the application of Chinese clerics who were supposed to go to the Jesuit Theology School. For this, the General Council had authorized their going to England, so that they might not lose one year of studies<sup>135</sup>.

By 1955, however, Hong Kong had come up with some deliberations on the issue. It would keep the option of putting up a studentate in Shaukiwan, depending on the availability of personnel, to keep the unity in spirit of the

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<sup>129</sup> SAHK Corrispondenza (Acquistapace a Tassinari, Mandaluyong, 21 dicembre 1953).

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>131</sup> SAHK Corrispondenza (Acquistapace a Suppo, Victorias, 31 gennaio 1954).

<sup>132</sup> SAHK Minutes of Provincial Meeting (Hong Kong, 10 febbraio 1954).

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>134</sup> SAHK Corrispondenza (Acquistapace a Alessi, Hong Kong, 10 agosto 1954). Earlier, Fr. Acquistapace had foreseen difficulties for confreres from China to enter Japan, thus inclining him to possibly choose Manila as center of Theological formation for the clerics of the Province. The travel expense to Manila would have cost HK\$1,000, the maintenance of each confrere, US\$30 monthly. The repair in Don Bosco Mandaluyong for a residence for students of Theology would have cost Php1,000. Cf SAHK Minutes of Provincial Council (Hong Kong, 27 ottobre 1953).

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.* (Hong Kong, 9 agosto 1954). The other alternative place where the clerics of the Province could be sent to study Theology was Bollengo in Italy.

Province and for the sake of economy. It would consider the desire of the Superiors in Turin, who believed that formation abroad was better, to send the Europeans and some non-Europeans to England or to Bollengo. However, it would still await the deliberation of the council in the Philippines before it finally came up with a definitive decision<sup>136</sup>, which it did two months later: the Theologate would be re-opened in the Salesian house of West Point-Saint Louis in Hong Kong<sup>137</sup>.

Nonetheless, it was quite different, though, in the case of some of the foreign clerics who came to the Philippines as practical trainees. They had gone back to their Provinces of origin for their Theology. Thus, the clerics Nello Pivetta (Lyon, France), Felix Glowicki and Patrick Corcoran (Melchet Court, England)<sup>138</sup>, Juan Andreu and Jesus Gomez (Barcelona, Spain), Valeriano Barbero (Bollengo, Turin) and Jaime Claret (Salamanca, Spain).

Still, others who have asked to go to the missions after their tirocinium, remained abroad and studied Theology there, as they awaited their coming to the Philippines. In preparation for their coming to the Philippines, they were sent to study Theology in English speaking centers: here, the case of Eduardo Revilla and Adolfo Faroni (Melchet Court), Jose Reinoso (Lyons).

Others, who were members of the China-Philippines Province but who were re-directed to the Philippines, among these, the clerics Pablo Bahillo, Antonio Battistello and Ercole Solaroli, studied two years of Theology in Hong Kong, and the latter two years in India. The reason for the transfer to India was on account of the lack of number of students of Theology and personnel in Hong Kong.

There was no one of the Filipinos of the 1<sup>st</sup> novitiate batch who professed ever got ordained. But seemingly one of them was sent to do Theology in Salamanca, Spain before he finally left the Salesian Society. The succeeding batches however, were sent for Theology abroad and were ordained there.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.* (Hong Kong, 29 marzo 1955).

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.* (Hong Kong, 4-11 maggio 1955). There were ten students for the first year, instead of 14 in as much as two Chinese (Joseph Zen and John Baptist Zen) were sent to Turin, while the two Irish clerics in the Philippines (Corcoran, Geoghegan) went to England. Cf *ibid.*

<sup>138</sup> SAS 50B339 Fr. Patrick Corcoran: born in Limerick Junction, Ireland (10 June 1928); first profession in Beckford, England (15 September 1950); ordained in Melchet Court, England (3 July 1960); died in Hong Kong (5 October 1971) at 43 years, 21 years Salesian and 11 years priest. The clerics Corcoran and Geoghegan were sent by the Provincial of the English Province, Fr. Thomas Hall. Fr. Acquistapace had asked Fr. Hall some more clerics to substitute the two, since they were soon to leave for Europe to study Theology. SAHK Corrispondenza (Acquistapace a Hall, Hong Kong, 12 gennaio 1955). Cf also *ibid.* (Acquistapace a Hall, Hong Kong, 28 luglio 1955); SAHK IN 18 (October 1960) 3-4.

## 5.2. Manila – “Roma dell’Estremo Oriente”

Nonetheless, it was Fr. Braga who logically foresaw the need of a place where to send the students for Theology of the Visitatoria. The first of “his boys”, the 1<sup>st</sup> batch of Filipino practical trainees should be ready for their Theology, by 1963 or at the latest 1964, after three years of Philosophy and their period of practical training. But where were they supposed to go and study Theology<sup>139</sup>?

### 5.2.1. Braga’s Proposal

The decision to stay in the Philippines to study Philosophy in 1963 urged the Provincial to come up with a concrete plan on where to send the young confreres for their Theology. Their practical training easily passed and by the time they realized it, it was time for them to begin their Theology.

Fr. Braga wrote to Fr. Archimede Pianazzi, councillor for formation of the General Council, on 7 September 1960, expressing his concern on the issue of where to send the Filipino clerics for their Theology. By 1964, some clerics would be ending their practical training. Fr. Braga’s initial plan was to make the Filipino Salesians join the Chinese and the Vietnamese, in the Theologate that the China Province was preparing in Hong Kong. He had several reasons for projecting this. Hong Kong was only two hours and 45 minutes from Manila. Thus, it was easy for him, as Superior, to visit the place at least once a year. The finances of the China Province were stable; he considered himself as the one responsible for that Province’s financial stability when he was Provincial. While now, he found himself starting again after working so much for China, and begging for help. He hoped that his former Province would be generous towards him and his clerics, perhaps, to accept them without financially burdening Manila.

But another reason why Fr. Braga wanted to send the Filipinos to Hong Kong was because, according to him, they needed “to see and to be ‘dragged’ by the example of the confreres of other nations”<sup>140</sup>. Hong Kong was also

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<sup>139</sup> But did any of these three really go for Theology abroad? In the Directory of 1964, Manalili is listed to have been in Salamanca for his (first year) Theology; but he left the same year. Instead, Navarro is listed among the coadjutors. Peroy is reported to have joined the diocesan seminary. Gatmaitan and Miranda left the Congregation in 1960. Instead, there is no information on Guzman.

<sup>140</sup> ASC F163 Philippine: Corrispondenza (Braga a Pianazzi, Makati, 7 settembre 1960).

international, with a good number of Salesians who came from Europe where the roots of the Salesian lay. And Fr. Braga still believed and for this he wanted “his boys”, who were still young and inexperienced, to feel and experience Don Bosco, in and with the other student-clerics, especially with the Europeans.

The Visitatore’s added wish, though, was that the Crocetta, the Salesians’ Pontificio Ateneo Salesiano, and Rome, the Jesuits’ Pontifical Gregorian University, the centers of studies where the Salesians studied to prepare themselves to be professors, should prepare the personnel for the Theologate in Hong Kong<sup>141</sup>.

Nonetheless, by December 1962, Fr. Pianazzi had opened the discussion in the General Council on the establishment of a studentate of Theology for the Far East. He, however, foresaw difficulties, on account of the contrasting suggestions on where to put such a center of studies. Hong Kong remained endangered, on account of the Chinese threat; the Japanese were not willing to go to Manila. But in his honest opinion, Fr. Pianazzi considered the latter would be the better place to establish the Theologate. There were three important Catholic Universities in Manila alone<sup>142</sup> at the disposition of students for further deepening of their studies. Besides, Manila was the capital of the only Catholic nation in Asia<sup>143</sup>. And it being Catholic was one reason why the Salesian clerics from China, Japan, Thailand and Vietnam should go to Manila.<sup>144</sup>

### 5.2.2. Braga’s Campaign - Manila

Two years after he wrote Fr. Pianazzi, Fr. Braga seemed to have changed his mind. Now he thought that the best place for a Theologate, and an international one at that, was in Manila. Thus, he wrote the Rector Major, Fr.

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<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.* But did Fr. Braga know that there were no prepared professors for Theology in Hong Kong? Perhaps, he should have known, since he was once Superior there. But somehow, he already had in mind of preparing the personnel of his Theologate in Manila.

<sup>142</sup> The councillor for formation of the Salesian Society must have been referring to the Royal and Pontifical University of Santo Tomas of the Dominicans and the School of Theology of the Jesuits at the Ateneo de Manila University. There were other seminaries in Manila where Theology was taught, among which that of the Benedictines. The Salesians esteemed them, in as much as these religious had been their first and generous hosts in their first years in Manila.

<sup>143</sup> ASC D877 Verballi (Torino, 28 dicembre 1962).

<sup>144</sup> Fr. Alfonso Crevacuore, Provincial of Japan, had expressed his desire that the Superior take into serious consideration and discussions the plan to establish “uno studentato inter-provinciale”. He believed, though, that the clerics of his province could obtain an adequate formation only in Japan. Cf. ASC 165 Giappone: Corrispondenza (Crevacuore a Ziggjotti, Chofu, 12 dicembre 1962).



Ziggiotti, on 7 May 1962, and suggested that the Salesian Center of Theology could be established in Manila. His reasons for such a bold proposal were very practical.

Land for the Theology Center in Manila could easily be found, and could even be gotten gratis. The cost of living in the Philippines was only one-third in comparison with the cost of living in Hong Kong. In Manila, there were Faculties of Theology, which could grant academic titles to its students, where doctorate degrees in Philosophy, Theology and Canon Law could be obtained<sup>145</sup>. The climate was as healthy as that of Thailand, Vietnam, South China and India. There was no need of clothes according to the seasons of the year. And he was definitely optimistic that his proposal would convince Turin, at the expense of his beloved China: "We are sure at 90% more than Hong Kong"<sup>146</sup>.

However, the Provincial of Hong Kong was of a very different mind. Fr. Tohill had earlier decided for a studentate of Theology for the China Province. In fact, he had already received an offer of land and building from the Hong Kong government and for a good price. The only problem that he encountered was the financing<sup>147</sup>.

Fr. Braga insisted on the councillor for formation in Turin that the proposed Theologate be put in Manila. He wrote Fr. Pianazzi on 9 September 1962 to push his plan and further elaborated its advantages. Indeed, he was confident that the plans for Hong Kong would not materialize, for reasons so clear, according to him. He sincerely believed that the communist threat continued to exist against the Island Colony. He knew very well that his former Province lacked the personnel for this particular service. For Manila, there was not much to spend for the acquisition of land. The buildings could be financed by "Misereor" and by the other funding agencies in Germany<sup>148</sup>. The latter, in fact, in line with its policy of helping project with regards the promotion of local seminaries and vocations, would easily accept the idea of a missionary-international studentate<sup>149</sup>.

Again, the Visitatore commented that the weather in the Philippines was really pleasant, very similar to that of Thailand or China, and surely better than that of India. Besides, it was not expensive in Manila. The standard of life was

<sup>145</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Braga a Pianazzi, Makati, 9 settembre 1962).

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.* (Braga a Ziggiotti, Makati, 7 maggio 1962).

<sup>147</sup> ASC F157 Cina: Corrispondenza (Tohill a Fedrigotti, Hong Kong, 7 agosto 1961).

<sup>148</sup> The "Misereor" was a German non-government agency, located in Essen, which answered requests for funding from countries of the so-called "Third World". Other German agencies, which worked for a similar intent, were "Missio" and "Adveniat".

<sup>149</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Braga a Pianazzi, Makati, 9 settembre 1962).

cheaper than that of Hong Kong. To make a comparison, he referred to the reasonable price for hospital services in the Archipelago<sup>150</sup>.

Besides, there was the possibility of teaching personnel. Professors could be asked to teach from the Theological faculties in the capital. And there were confreres prepared for the future studentate: Fr. Fortunato Zuccollo, Fr. Pier Luigi Ricciarelli, who had a licentiate in Theology from the Pontifical Gregorian University, and Fr. Jose Luis Carreño who was already author of several books<sup>151</sup>. Besides, there were also Fr. Quaranta, who had a degree from the Crocetta, and Fr. Baggio; both in fact, have taught in the Theologate of the China Province.

Moreover, the manifestations of Catholic life and intense Christian culture were numerous in Manila, due to the Spanish, so much influenced by Christian Spain. Manila was a city where churches were very much frequented, where the environment was indeed very Christian. Such a situation could be of great advantage to the non-Filipinos who would frequent the center, for those who did not easily witness such Christian expressions of faith.

“The environment could also influence the Chinese and Korean confreres who could never assist in functions, processions, congresses, which can gather even a million faithful”<sup>152</sup>.

Fr. Braga confessed that he did not quite understand why Manila should not be the place. Indeed, if Rome was a center of Christendom, then Manila for him was “the Rome of the Far East”. Moreover, this was the “dream” of Fr. Braga, which he considered was to the advantage of the Salesian Society. In Manila, there was more security, since the Philippine capital was a little more distant from the communists and was “the only one from Port Said which was not within the range of the communists”. Besides, the parents of missionaries, referring obviously to the European Salesian clerics, would be more at peace, knowing that their children studied in a Catholic country.

The Superior in the Philippines insisted on Manila, when he said “that there was already the place”. This was hinted by Fr. Fedrigotti to Fr. Tohill, as he asked him to become Provincial of San Francisco in place of Fr. Cogliandro<sup>153</sup>. The fact was that Fr. Pianazzi had the consent of the General Council for the establishment of the Studentate of Theology for the Far East in Manila<sup>154</sup>. However, the superior for formation did not pretend to push this decision on the other Provincials of the region.

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<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>153</sup> ASC F157 Cina: Corrispondenza (Fedrigotti a Tohill, Torino, 10 novembre 1962).

<sup>154</sup> ASC D877 Verbali (Torino, 29 maggio 1963).

### 5.3. Hong Kong's Position

The Superiors of Hong Kong were not enthusiastic in sending their young confreres to Manila for Theology. In fact, they have been scouting for a place of their own where they could construct their Theologate, convinced that they still would have sufficient vocations and would continue to have so to warrant a studentate all for their own. They, too, have received offers where they could in fact build their School of Theology.

The new Provincial of Hong Kong, Fr. Luigi Massimino<sup>155</sup>, wrote Fr. Fedrigotti on 31 March 1964. The Inter-Nuncio of China, Msgr. Giuseppe Caprio, had offered the Regional Seminary in Hong Kong to the Salesians who could use it for an indefinite time. They did not need to pay any rent; they just had to maintain the place. It would be at their disposition by the summer of 1965. And the Salesian School of Aberdeen was just near. Thus, Fr. Massimino saw no reason why the Theologate should not be in Hong Kong too<sup>156</sup>. Besides, he had gained an ally in Fr. Pietro Jellici, the Provincial of Thailand<sup>157</sup>.

Later in August 1965, Fr. Jellici was in a hurry to have a place to send "his theologians". And like Fr. Massimino, he also desired a center of studies for Orientals as soon as possible. He wanted it in Hong Kong. But Fr. Massimino, who admitted that they still did not have the facilities, was ready to offer the College of Tang King Po to house the confreres from Thailand<sup>158</sup>. The offer of the Inter-Nuncio did not seem to have materialized after all, nor had Turin approved his proposal for the moment.

The Provincial of Japan and the Philippines rejected the initial suggestion of Fr. Massimino, who considered the reason for their refusal of his offer as baseless and "somehow childish": fear rather than prudence, because the communists were so near<sup>159</sup>. However, Fr. Massimino did not yield. He had

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<sup>155</sup> SAS 23B042 Fr. Luigi Massimino: born in Villafranca Piemonte, Turin (5 February 1907); first profession in Foglizzo, Turin (5 October 1923); ordained in Cuneo, Italy (1 January 1932); died in Hong Kong (9 March 1991) at 84 years, 68 years Salesian and 59 years priest. He replaced Fr. Tohill as Provincial of Hong Kong (1962-1968) when the latter was appointed Provincial of the U.S.A. West Province. He had a doctorate in Theology, which probably was one reason why he thought that the projected Theologate in East Asia should be in Hong Kong.

<sup>156</sup> ASC F157 Cina: Corrispondenza (Massimino a Fedrigotti, Hong Kong, 31 marzo 1964).

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*, (Massimino a Ricceri, Hong Kong, 24 agosto 1965).

SAS 31B007 Fr. Pietro Jellici: born in Trent, Italy (18 September 1905); first profession in Bang Nok Khuek, Thailand (19 January 1931); ordained in Bang Nok Khuek (28 September 1940); died in Banpong, Thailand (5 October 1995) at 90 years, 64 years Salesian and 55 years priest. He was Provincial of Thailand from 1962 to 1968.

<sup>158</sup> ASC F157 Cina: Corrispondenza (Massimino a Ricceri, Hong Kong, 24 agosto 1965).

<sup>159</sup> *Ibid.* (Massimino a Ziggotti, Hong Kong, 1 giugno 1963).

another offer, if only to oppose the offer of Fr. Braga. The Theologate could be put in the city of Dalat in Vietnam, which was part of the China Province. This, he wrote to the Rector Major in June 1963.

Fr. Massimino explained to the Superior why he suggested Vietnam as home of the future Theologate this time. The place was on an immense plateau, at about 1,500 meters, “all pine-forest”, with temperature oscillating between 10 to 25 degrees celsius. It was a city where there were ecclesiastical centers, which he claimed did not exist in Manila. In Dalat, the Jesuits had a Pontifical Athenaeum. The Redemptorists had their schools of Philosophy and Theology. The Christian Brothers had two colleges. This was likewise for the Lazzarists, the religious of the Foreign Missions of Paris, etc.<sup>160</sup>

A French gentleman, a Savoiard, had offered him five hectares of land, which was situated not far from the city. And there was the possibility of buying another 30 hectares more, if the Salesians wanted to. The construction of the Theologate would be very cheap: it would cost half of Hong Kong and a third of Manila. And it would be facilitated: the Vietnamese President was ready to provide his personal architect and allow cement and steel to come from Japan tax-free. In Fr. Massimino’s calculations, it would cost every student \$600 yearly, a mere half of what was spent for a student who was sent to Italy for his studies. And if the Provinces of China, Philippines, Thailand, Japan and Vietnam were asked to give \$50,000 payable from two to three years, then a “Studentate worthy of the Congregation and of the East” would have been constructed<sup>161</sup>.

For the China Province Superior, this was an offer not to be taken for granted. He claimed that Fr. Acquistapace, his Delegate for Vietnam, and Fr. Jellici were very much favourable to this other plan. Hence, neither Japan nor the Philippines was worthy to have the Center of Theology in the Far East. Surely, not in Japan where the standard of living was expensive, and where it would be difficult to transfer 60 students of Theology from Vietnam or 40 from the Philippines; where, for six months, the climate could be very cold for young clerics who came from countries where it was warm almost the year long<sup>162</sup>.

Fr. Massimino continued to discredit the claim of Fr. Braga who definitely favored Manila. According to him, it would be very difficult for the Chinese to enter the Philippines, in spite of the assurances of Fr. Braga. In the Philippines, the weather was hot the whole year round; and this was not good for one who

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<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*

was studying. And he even dared to go “below the belt”, and came up with serious accusations against the Philippines. For according to him, the level of education was low in the Philippines, where there was “neither seriousness nor tradition”. The moral ecclesiastical environment was very low, for there were many priests who lived in concubinage. Besides, the standard of living was very high<sup>163</sup>.

Instead, Vietnam should be favored: Christian life was more active, the clergy exemplary. Moreover, the Chinese Province was indeed preparing the personnel in order to have the professors and specialists in various religious sciences - Dogma, Scriptures, Canon Law, History and Catechetics<sup>164</sup>. But to think, though, that Vietnam was another of those, which were under communist fire. Fr. Massimino seemingly just did not want to listen to the reasons of the others, and would not give reason to the others!

Luckily, though, the Superiors in Turin did not heed the proposal of Fr. Massimino. To them, the threat of the communist take-over of Vietnam, and the reality of the division of Vietnam between north and south was too tale-telling. And perhaps, the better set-up of the study of Theology being made in one's origins rather than being uprooted into a situation clearly not your own, little by little, was entering into the mind of Turin.

The negotiation on whether to put the proposed Theologate in Manila or elsewhere continued. The Provincials of the Far East, Jellici, Cogliandro and Massimino, met once more at Cheng Chau in Hong Kong from 9 to 11 December of 1965<sup>165</sup>. And one of the things they discussed was this “blessed Theologate”. But nothing concrete resulted.

Meanwhile, it was time for the Filipino Salesians to begin their Theology. But there was still no concrete decision regarding a Theologate in Manila, nor in the area of East Asia. For this, Fr. Cogliandro chose to do what he thought best for the moment. He sent the Filipino Salesians to centers where he thought they could best learn not only Theology, but also something more on Salesianity. And that meant, sending them abroad, to Europe<sup>166</sup>. When Fr. Tohill, now member of the General Council, reported on the Philippines during one of the sessions of the General Council in August 1966, he stated that all the ten Filipino

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<sup>163</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.* (Massimino a Fedrigotti, Hong Kong, 22 dicembre 1965).

<sup>166</sup> Among the Salesian centers of Theology in Europe where students from other countries were sent, there were the Crocetta and Bollengo (Turin), Castellamare di Stabia (Naples), the Pontificio Ateneo Salesiano (Rome), Salamanca and Seville (Spain) and Sherfield English (England).

Salesian students of Theology were studying abroad<sup>167</sup>. One could wonder with what tone he reported such situation of the young Philippine Province. The Salesian had become Filipino, indeed; but he was also being sent to Europe “to drink the genuine spirit” of the Salesian Society.<sup>168</sup>

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<sup>167</sup> ASC D877 Verballi (Torino, 2 agosto 1966). Fr. Tohill further spoke of the negative situation in the Philippines to the General Council in the same meeting. “Non c’è il corso di pastorale; invece il quinquennio funziona bene. Non c’è ancora il corso di magistero per i coadiutori. Il personale rimane inadeguato al rapido sviluppo presso dall’Ispettorato, che ha prodotto pure un dissesto finanziario”. Cf *ibid.*

<sup>168</sup> Cf Eugenio CERIA, *Vita del servo di Dio sac. Filippo Rinaldi*. SEI Torino [?], p. 401.

## Chapter Seven

### VISITATORIA (1958-1963)

The Salesians in the Philippines proved themselves dynamic so that the elevation of their presence from dependence to China into a Visitatoria or Vice-Province logically resulted. The Prefect General, Fr. Albino Fedrigotti, generously wrote of what he personally witnessed of the Salesian work when he was in the Philippines for an extraordinary visit. Definitely, the Salesians and their work were appreciated, so that people became generous benefactors for the Salesian cause, and vocations came about to live and maintain that cause. The Prefect General declared that the government itself was the first who expected so much from the Salesians and the good that they are doing.

“The government puts great trust in Don Bosco and his Sons for their contribution to the industrial development in which the young can play a great part. These young people are formed in the school of Don Bosco in order to be honest, to work and to be disciplined”<sup>1</sup>.

#### 1. Standing by One's Own

##### 1.1. *The Philippine Visitatoria*

The Philippine Delegation, which commenced in 1951 dependent of the China Province, was raised into a Visitatoria in 1958.

“The Philippine Islands. It is now very difficult for the Provincial of China to follow up the houses in the Philippines, because of the distance and obvious difference of the inhabitants by race and by religion from China. By secret votation, with a result of 9/9, we constitute a Visitatoria consisting of these houses...”<sup>2</sup>.

After almost seven years, the Salesians in the Philippines finally did not need to depend on their Mother China Province. They could now have their own Superior who reported directly to the Rector Major based in Turin. This new situation obviously challenged them to be fully autonomous so that they could soon be a Province.

<sup>1</sup> BS 83 (March 1959) 194-197.

<sup>2</sup> ASC D876 Verballi (9 agosto 1958).

The new Visitatoria was erected by the Rector Major, Fr. Renato Ziggotti. He was previously in the Philippines, in April 1954, and witnessed for himself the work of the Salesians. Definitely, he was not ignorant of the situation; he knew what he wanted for the Philippines. Later, in 1963, he himself would be responsible for the elevation of the Visitatoria finally into a Province. He had practically followed the growth of the Salesian work in the Philippines from its beginnings.

When the Visitatoria began, there were seven houses existing: Tarlac, Victorias, Mandaluyong, Cebu, Makati, Muntinglupa Novitiate and Muntinglupa Philosophate. When it was transformed into a Province, it had the same number of houses, with two houses being closed and substituted with the same number.

The logical choice for a Visitatore in the Philippines was Fr. Carlo Braga. He was the undisputed and respected leader of the "Filipino Salesians", in spite of his age. His experience and his person were enough to convince the confreres that they could go ahead with this "capo". When he was appointed Visitatore in 1959, Fr. Braga was already in his 70s<sup>3</sup>. At the same time, he was also rector of the house of Makati, an office, which he later asked to be relieved so that he could fulfill his duty as Superior of the whole Visitatore. But he never failed to live the life of a Salesian assistant, even if he was the Superior. He took time to be in the midst of the boys during their breaks and recreation<sup>4</sup>. This took too much of his time in Don Bosco Makati, where there were also oratorians who were in the school from five to nine in the evening<sup>5</sup>.

Fr. Braga was one who wanted to communicate directly with Turin. For this, he wanted to go and visit the Superiors to consult with them. In 1960, he asked twice to go to Italy. The first time, on 8 February 1960, he wrote to Fr. Ziggotti if he can stay in Italy for a month to discuss with them certain issues on the Visitatoria: to consult the Superiors regarding the appointment and change of rectors<sup>6</sup>; to ask for guidance regarding offers of land and of help by friends

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<sup>3</sup> Fr. Braga, in October 1960, had been diagnosed with nefrite and diabetis. He had been brought to the hospital administered by the Canossians in Hong Kong for a check up; he claimed, however, that everything was under control. Cf ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Braga a Ziggotti, Makati, 13 ottobre 1960).

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* (Braga a Ziggotti, Makati, 21 luglio 1959) 3. Fr. Braga declared to Fr. Ziggotti: "Son sempre il povero Braghese di una volta, sempre ragazzo, ma senza malizia...". He was ever ready to assist "senza però il giocare le partite che duravano, alle volte, tre giorni". Cf *ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* (Braga a Ziggotti, Makati, 2 settembre 1959).

<sup>6</sup> ASC D876 Verballi (27 agosto 1958). The following were the confreres who were appointed by Turin to be rectors of the houses: "Con 6/6 si elegge: direttore a Muntinglupa, D. Roozen; a Cebu, D. Clifford (2° tr.); a Tarlac, D. Baggio (2° tr.); a Manila Mandaluyong, D. Quaranta (2° tr.). Consiglieri: D. Roozen Godofredo, D. Buchta Giovanni, D. Quaranta Pietro, D. Baggio Emilio." All these were approved unanimously by the General Council.



and benefactors; to discuss on the lack of personnel; to beg Provincials who were his friends to send confreres to the Philippines; to talk of other matters which he could not put into writing<sup>7</sup>. But even if the Superiors in Turin said no to his request, he went anyway to confer with them<sup>8</sup>.

On 13 October of the same year, the Visitatore had a second chance to ask the Superiors if he could go to Turin. This time, he had a free ticket, courtesy of Royal Dutch Airlines (KLM), plus the backing of the council of the Visitatoria who encouraged him to avail of this possibility to get a direct contact with the Superiors and get some rest. He had tried to offer the ticket to some other confrere who had not been to Italy for a long time; but the confrere refused. For this, he had to go, hoping to be in Turin by November<sup>9</sup>; and thus, again, he was in Italy.

### 1.2. "Relazione Annuale"

A source for an answer to the question on how was the Visitatoria was the so-called "Relazione Annuale", the yearly report which the Superior of the Visitatoria sent to the Rector Major and his council on the actual situation of the Visitatoria. It served as a sort of reflection and evaluation for the Superior of the Visitatoria of his past year of leadership. It also helped to update and inform the Superiors in Turin on the situation of the Visitatoria, as well as how the Province was administered in the course of the year.

In the Central Archives of the Salesian Society in Rome, we find two Annual Reports made by Fr. Braga during his term as Visitatore of the Philippines: that for the year 1959-1960 and for the year 1961-1962. The annual report for 1959-1960 is divided into 13 points, containing varied topics in reference to the life of the Visitatoria; this, which was sent sometime in 1960, however, is undated<sup>10</sup>. Instead, the annual report for 1961-1962 is in the form of a long letter to the Rector Major, dated 17 May 1962; it is expounded in 15 pages<sup>11</sup>.

The contents of these two reports picture to us the status of the Visitatoria as it moved towards its creation as a Province of the Society. Unfortunately, in

<sup>7</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Braga a Ziggioni, Makati, 8 febbraio 1960). For this request, Turin responded negatively. Cf *ibid.* (Braga a Fedrigotti, Makati, 21 marzo 1960).

<sup>8</sup> ASC D876 Verbali (2 marzo 1960): "Braga D. Carlo, Visitatore Isole Filippine, verrebbe volentieri in Italia per conferire coi Superiori; lo sconsiglia ad astenersene, poiché è appena ... partito".

<sup>9</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Braga a Ziggioni, Makati, 13 ottobre 1960).

<sup>10</sup> ASC F164 Filippine: Relazione Annuale 1959-1960, 8.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 1961-1962, 15.

the course of our research, we did not encounter any annual report for 1958-1959, the year the Visitatoria commenced, for 1960-1961 and 1962-1963, last years of the Visitatoria<sup>12</sup>.

## 2. Situation of the Houses

The Visitatoria had six schools, four were technical schools (Victorias, Mandaluyong, Makati, Cebu) and the other two were academic schools (Tarlac and San Fernando). In these schools, the Salesians taught religion to the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades, and to the high school students as well; for the boys of the other elementary grades, lay teachers taught religion. These schools had extraordinary results in favor of the Salesians, "even if they had a lone Salesian in charge of every department". The Department of Education has exalted the Salesian schools in a recent national congress for schools "as the only ones which answers the needs of the nation". A commission from the U.S.A., who came to investigate technical schools, published in the newspapers "a sincere praise of our Institutions, declaring them as unique in kind and fully efficient"<sup>13</sup>.

Symbolic of this achievement in such a short span of time was Don Bosco Technical Institute in Victorias. In the public examinations held nationwide, the school of Victorias was first in the whole Island of Negros, and among the first 50 in the whole country. Don Bosco Victorias, according to Fr. Braga, was in fact the first of the technical schools, which gave fame and name to the Salesian<sup>14</sup>.

### 2.1. Don Bosco Mandaluyong

The Don Bosco Technical Institute Mandaluyong, where Fr. Quaranta was superior, was adjusting itself to its growing population. Besides the addition of a new building for the elementary<sup>15</sup>, there had been another finished construction.

The chapel, a very important point of any Salesian school, had been inaugurated. This place of worship could now accommodate 1,2000 young people in the benches. It had a marble altar and a precious "Via Crucis" painted by the

<sup>12</sup> But why the absence of these specific annual reports (Fr. Braga's first [1958-1959] and [1961-1962] [1962-1963] last years as Visitatore) by Fr. Braga? Who was the provincial secretary at that time? But perhaps Fr. Braga never made any annual report for these years.

<sup>13</sup> ASC F164 Philippine: *Relazione Annuale 1959-1960*, 4-5.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 1961-1962, 8: "...la nostra prima grande scuola professionale quella che diede fama e stima alla nostra cara Congregazione".

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 1959-1960, 1. The new elementary building consisted of two floors, with 20 classrooms, wide corridors, halls for the teachers, clinic, library and theater.

most renowned Filipino painter of the time, Mr. Botong Francisco<sup>16</sup>. For the sacred music, the chapel had a Hammon electric organ. The choir loft could accommodate 20 persons at the same time. The chapel was blessed by the Archbishop of Manila, who was very recently named Cardinal of the Church, the first for the Philippine Church. In fact, his blessing of the new chapel was his first official act after he was named Cardinal<sup>17</sup>.

During the same blessing, “a bronze plaque of distinction” was distributed to the various cooperators and benefactors of the Salesian work. But most specially, for this event, Senator Claro M. Recto (1890-1960)<sup>18</sup>, a controversial personality because of his political stand and nationalistic tendency, which tended very much to be anti-Church, was present. But he was a friend and an admirer of St. John Bosco on account of the life of the saint, which he read when he was young. Besides, he was one of the leading benefactors of the Salesians<sup>19</sup>.

The school in Mandaluyong organized two events for the benefit of the school. The first was an evening at Manila Hotel where more than 300 “among the most distinct personalities” of Manila were present. The funds generated were not that much, but the reason for such an activity was really “to make the Salesians known”. In this event, the wife of the President Carlos P. Garcia of the Philippines, Doña Leonida Garcia was present and spoke. The second was a special celebration of the feast of St. John Bosco, in which certain awards were given to three distinct categories of persons:

“Numerous and enthusiastic educators and students; businessmen and presidents of companies; bankers who were the most interested and who permitted efficacious help that facilitated loans and the allocations of American dollars to the official exchange rate for the acquisition of machines”<sup>20</sup>.

Don Bosco Mandaluyong remained to be the biggest, in terms of enrollment, of all the Salesian houses in the Philippines: 2,350 students in 1962, with 1,350 elementary and 1,000 in the high school. It was consistently creating a tradition of scholastic discipline and study, bearing good and consoling results not only for the school, but also for the Salesians. Fr. Braga claimed that it was

<sup>16</sup> This is a detail of Philippine Salesian history, which still needs to be answered. How did this happen in Mandaluyong? Who commissioned this known artist to these paintings for the Salesians?

<sup>17</sup> ASC F164 *Filippine: Relazione Annuale 1959-1960*, 1.

<sup>18</sup> Claro M. Recto was a poet-writer, barrister, parliamentarian, jurist and statesman. Cf *Filipinos in History*. III..., pp. 129-132.

<sup>19</sup> ASC F164 *Filippine: Relazione Annuale 1959-1960*, 1.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.* The Salesians were preoccupied in obtaining funds for their apostolate in the islands; hence, their interest in getting benefactors and collaborators to further their interests for the young.

functioning well, “even if it had little influence on the great majority”. It was the only Catholic school in the area. There were many schools for girls around the area, so the parents wanted a school for their boys. Don Bosco Mandaluyong answered this need of theirs. Fr. Braga speculated that the same thing would happen to Don Bosco Makati, since there had been an increase of population in the area. Soon, there would be the need also of a Catholic elementary school for boys<sup>21</sup>.

But in spite of all these, there were only 14 confreres who were available to carry on the work, a rather disproportionate number for an increased number of students<sup>22</sup>. These confreres, who sacrificed generously, were overworked, perhaps because they were forced to labor, on account of the unbridled initiatives of their superiors, who sometimes did not even consult nor discuss matters with them. And an advertent effect of such an imbalance in numbers was that the school remained just as it was in the beginning. It did not develop, nor did it progress. The Salesians were doing their best to maintain the work; but they were incapable of improving the work. They did not update nor adapt, but worked and worked. Besides, with only a confrere, assisted by some alumni, for every department, the theoretical side of the teaching was not prepared. But this probably was on account of the inability of the confreres to read or speak the language spoken in the Philippines. There was too much practice, but the theory was “scarce, poor and inadequate”.

“The teaching in the school remained as it was, somehow damaging the good name of the Salesian”<sup>23</sup>.

The Salesian school in Mandaluyong indeed, remained far from being perfect. Fr. Braga had several comments on it. He declared that there was a seeming obsession to gain in order to pay the debts incurred, so the teaching had been neglected. The rendiconti of the confreres were not received. The house council was not functioning. The clerics were not followed up, because the rector was busy following up the constructions and trying to find money to pay the debts. For this, the spiritual and the religious formation of the personnel were neglected; the preoccupation was to gain profit in order to meet the financial obligation<sup>24</sup>.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 1961-1962, 4-5.

<sup>22</sup> Cf *Elenco Generale* (1961), p. 462. The confreres of Don Bosco Mandaluyong in 1961 were the priests Quaranta (rector), Cuomo (principal), Candusso (catechist, high school), Boscariol (catechist, elementary), the coadjutors Bragion, De Reggi, Gamba, Mrzel, Prokopowicz and Viel, and the clerics Andreu and Gomez (tirocinanti).

<sup>23</sup> ASC F164 Philippine: Relazione Annuale 1961-1962, 5.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 4: “C”è poi una, direi, esagerata mania del guadagnare per pagare i debiti contratti”.

But a greater lament of the Visitatore regarding Don Bosco Mandaluyong was related to the finances of the house: the non-payment of debts incurred from a certain bank and the accumulated interests of the debts. This issue “threatened the name of the Salesians and which would also have damaged the other houses”<sup>25</sup>. Nonetheless, Fr. Braga had not asked why such debts were being incurred, when perhaps, it could have been avoided.

Fortunately for the Salesians, the Archbishop of Manila came to the Salesians’ rescue, saving them from embarrassment and humiliation. The respect for the school somehow has fallen because of this situation. Nonetheless, the debts of the school were now being paid regularly, so that esteem for the school was little by little being recovered<sup>26</sup>.

However, on account again of the limited number of Salesian personnel, the overworked confrere, burdened with several offices at the same time, ended up without making anyone happy. The school was badly administered. It did not really have any economer; the superior was handling both jobs, and seemingly was performing badly on both. And this concretely was resulting into serious and grave inconveniences in the financial administration of the school, as well as into violations of poverty on the part of some confreres<sup>27</sup>.

But a compounding and perhaps more serious issue about Don Bosco Mandaluyong which disturbed the Visitatore, and which he could not but sincerely report to Turin, was the strained relationships between the confreres and the superiors of the house: confreres, who were supposed to be consulted were not asked about their opinion; a superior who tended to do and to go all by himself<sup>28</sup>.

Definitely, the council of the house was not functioning. And the confreres were seemingly not harmonizing, in spite of the good will of all. The tension in the community life and relationship surely did not help to lighten up the work which was already onerous. Somehow, Fr. Braga had this frustration, when he reiterated what Fr. Acquistapace had always wanted Don Bosco Mandaluyong

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*: “... che minacciava il buon nome salesiano e che avrebbe portato gravi danni alle altre case avendo noi tutti lo stesso nome Don Bosco”. But who was incurring debts for the Congregation in the house of Mandaluyong?

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*: “... perché essi non sono mai consultati anche in casi di loro spettanza, e chi fa tutto, senza informare gli altri ... membri del capitolo...”. In 1962, Don Bosco Technical Institute Mandaluyong consisted of the following confreres: Quaranta (rector); Mario Cuomo (principal), Boscarior (catechist of elementary department). There were also the coadjutors Bragion, De Reggi, Gamba, Mrzel, Prokopowicz and Viel. As practical trainees, there were the clerics Agana and Gomez, and the coadjutor Tena. Cf *Elenco Generale* (1962), p. 464.

to be, example to the other Salesian houses, a sort of “Casa Madre” of the Salesian Society in the Philippines<sup>29</sup>.

There was, however, one consolation for Fr. Braga from the house of Mandaluyong: the vocations for that year. In his annual report, he proclaimed that there was even a possible vocation from the faculty of the school, another three for the lay brothers, and about 20 aspirants, out of the 25 students who originally submitted their names and who expressed their desire to enter the Juniorate<sup>30</sup>. Somehow, the school remained a fertile source for future Salesians. This was one step for its being a “Casa Madre” no doubt and for being a generous source of future Salesians who could one day redeem it from its debts.

## 2.2. *Don Bosco Makati*

At the beginning of the Visitatoria, the school of Don Bosco Makati had just started the construction of the school gymnasium. A new shop was also being constructed<sup>31</sup>.

By the end of the school year of 1959-1960, the guest for the graduation ceremonies was the Undersecretary of Education himself, Mr. Daniel Salcedo. According to Fr. Braga, the guest gave a wonderful speech regarding the efficiency of the Salesians’ technical schools. Fr. Braga recalled what this government personality had solemnly declared in that occasion praising the work that the Salesians were doing:

“[The schools of the Salesians] are the only ones in the nation which confront successfully the problem of industrialization of the Country”<sup>32</sup>.

By 1962, Fr. Braga had more things to say regarding the house of Don Bosco Makati, as this continued to develop and grow. He observed that there had been improvement in the religious observance of the community. And this was due to the arrival of the new rector, Fr. Emilio Baggio. The superior regularly received the confreres’ rendiconti. He followed up the monthly recollection of the confreres, and he gave the monthly conferences of the rector

<sup>29</sup> ASC F164 Filippine: Relazione Annuale 1959-1960, 5. “Quando la Provvidenza ci verrà in aiuto, la casa di Mandaluyong sarà davvero la nostra casa madre degna di Manila e della Congregazione”.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 1961-1962, 5.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 1959-1960, 1.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 1-2.

as well. Besides, he gave a "closer vigilance" of the confreres and the lay teachers<sup>33</sup>.

Financially, Don Bosco Makati was stable: the teachers and employees were paid, and the debts and interests of the house as well. The external personnel were treated according to the labor law of the country. And there was good rapport between them, the students and the Salesians. The school was respected and had a good name, especially the mechanics shop; its graduates could almost immediately find employment upon graduation. Moreover, the students of the school also excelled in sports, having won some tournaments in Manila. And the public appreciated the athletes of Don Bosco Makati, "for that air of goodness and simplicity which distinguish them". The real felt need was that of a stable confessor for the boys and the confreres<sup>34</sup>.

### 2.3. Don Bosco Tarlac

The situation of Don Bosco Tarlac was precarious. For there had been talks of closing the school and the Salesians going away. One confrere who was trying to make it survive was Fr. George Schwarz, considered as the "second founder" of the work.

According to the Annual Report of 1959-1960<sup>35</sup>, the school had undertaken maintenance works, which should have long been done. The Provincial during the period of the Delegation had listed several things that should have been acted upon earlier. But on account of the financial difficulties, which the school continued to undergo, these have not been done. Now, however, the wall surrounding the school had been put up "to eliminate the continuous incursions of the neighbors to pry into the school and to see the basketball games". The football field had been extended "in order to give more space to the big number of students who play". A class called speech clinic, "where with special equipments and headset, by which each student is able to listen to the right pronun-

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<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 1961-1962, 1. The confreres of Don Bosco Makati in 1962 were the priests Baggio (rector), Fels (prefect), Rizzato (parish priest), Bianchini (catechist and in charge of the Oratory), V. Ricaldone (confessor), Gircour (confessor) and Solaroli. The coadjutors were Orsolin, Rossi, Fontanilla and the Chinese Tchio. There was a lone tirocinante, the cleric Andreu. Cf *Elenco Generale* (1962), pp. 464-465.

<sup>34</sup> ASC F164 Filippine: Relazione Annuale 1961-1962, 1-2. "I nostri graduati hanno subito impiego in fabbriche ed officine di buona riputazione".

<sup>35</sup> Cf *Elenco Generale* (1959), p. 441. The confreres that constituted the school of Don Bosco Tarlac in 1959 were the priests Baggio (rector) and Schwarz (confessor), and the cleric Glowicki (tirocinante). Roozen was listed member of the community; but he was in charge of the foundation in San Fernando, which was still under construction.

ciation” had been added<sup>36</sup>. The science laboratories of the school, which had been very much appreciated by the Department of Education, had been updated. At the same time, several two-week science instrumentation seminars for high school teachers of science were conducted to school instructors on how to use certain science equipments and how to construct them using simple and local materials<sup>37</sup>. The presence of the German Salesian who was also a scientist, Fr. George Schwarz, helped the school make a name.

But in spite of the improvements done on behalf of the school, the enrollment had not increased. For this, there had been a move to definitely close the school. After having spent so much for the construction of new classrooms, a gymnasium, a new basketball court and laboratories, additional and better teachers have been hired. Classes for the 3<sup>rd</sup> to the 6<sup>th</sup> elementary grades had been initiated. But the response of the people from both the province and the town was almost nul, if not to the level of indifference<sup>38</sup>. Because of this, the Visitatore and the Salesians had seriously thought of returning the school to its previous owners, the military chaplains, who had founded the school and who had offered it to them<sup>39</sup>.

The collection from the school tuition fees was still not enough to pay the teachers and maintain the confreres. Besides, there was little hope of obtaining vocations from the school on account of the flagrant corruption in the city. The province, dominantly agricultural with few landowners who lorded it over the greater number of peasant farmers, was known as a center of an on-going struggle between government forces and a communist-inspired army; it was also notorious for its corrupt officials and the arrogance of a few who lorded it over the small and the poor.

Furthermore, the Salesians had the impression that the families of their students were not really concerned with the development of the school; the parents were not cooperative with the school activities and initiatives<sup>40</sup>. Al-

<sup>36</sup> ASC F164 Filippine: Relazione Annuale 1959-1960, 2.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.* This was the famous science instrumentation program of Fr. George Schwarz. He cleverly pioneered the use of local materials in order to create instruments used to demonstrate laws of physics and the other sciences. This was for the use of teachers of public schools where there were limited means in order to acquire such expensive laboratory instruments. Fr. Schwarz held a doctorate in Physics, which he obtained from the French Aurora University in Shanghai, China.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 1959-1960, 2.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.* In an interview with Fr. Glowicki in Don Bosco Victorias, in September 2001, the confrere described how he would hear Fr. Baggio lament at table that there was no money in the house. In front of a single piece of fish for dinner, Fr. Schwarz would offer the meal to him, in as much as he was the youngest, reasoning that he was more in need of it than they who were older.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.* Sociologically, the people who inhabited Tarlac town were people from the low income. The few landowners were controlling the land of the province, which was prevalently agriculture. For the moment, Tarlac as a province, was still economically backward.



though, it was also true that among the first aspirants who made their first profession, there were those who came from Tarlac and its surroundings. Indeed, the school was contributing somehow to the campaign for vocations, which was continuously launched by the Salesians<sup>41</sup>.

Fr. Braga declared three years earlier, that there were six confreres working zealously and with commitment in Don Bosco Tarlac, "but that notwithstanding their enthusiasm and efforts, the school was moving ahead so little"<sup>42</sup>. But it was also true, however, that this particular school was never reinforced with numerous confreres, since it was not a technical but an academic school. Besides, there was no effort to include in it a boarding school<sup>43</sup>.

The council of the Visitatoria was amenable to the idea of closing the school of Tarlac. The Visitatore had in fact informed Turin that their decision was to hand back the school to the military chaplains who had given it to the Salesians. And the General Council had also a favorable opinion to the proposal of the council of the Manila Visitatoria<sup>44</sup>.

The Prefect General, Fr. Albino Fedrigotti, had already in fact suggested that the Salesians got rid of the school, as he saw for himself the situation during his extraordinary visit in 1958. Even the Bishop of San Fernando to which Tarlac belonged, Emilio Cinense, was favorable to the decision of the Salesians<sup>45</sup>. With the closure of Tarlac, the confreres could then reinforce the team of Salesians working in the school of San Fernando in the adjacent province of Pampanga, which showed to have a better future rather than that of Tarlac<sup>46</sup>. It would not really be a loss for the Salesians, but would remain to be a gain for the Visitatoria.

However, changes have occurred to thwart this move to close Don Bosco Tarlac. Fr. Braga's Annual Report of 1961-1962 declared that there was a slight

<sup>41</sup> Among the first professed members of the Salesian Society who came from Tarlac, they are the following: Rodolfo Agana, Antonio Cura, Enrico Guzman, Juan Gatmaitan, Alfredo Manalili, Jose Navarro, and Jesus Tayag. This last is the only one who is still a member of the Salesian Society.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 2-3. Cf *Elenco Generale* (1957), p. 437. The community was composed of the priests Baggio (rector), Schwarz, Ryan and Roozen (in charge of San Fernando). The sixth confrere must have been Cuomo who was principal of the school.

<sup>43</sup> Cf *Elenco Generale* (1956), p. 435. In 1956, there were only two confreres who were listed for the house of Don Bosco Tarlac: Baggio (rector) and Cuomo (principal).

<sup>44</sup> ASC D876 Verbali (17 agosto 1960).

<sup>45</sup> ASC F164 Filippine: Relazione Annuale 1959-1960, 2. The Diocese of San Fernando, which was erected on 11 December 1948 and whose first Bishop was Cesar Guerrero, included the provinces of Pampanga, Bataan, Zambales and Tarlac. On 16 February 1963, the Diocese of Tarlac was created.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.* Pampanga was historically a lot wealthier as a province. It also had a greater tradition with regards vocations to the priesthood.

increase in enrollment in that particular school year, about a hundred more compared to the previous year<sup>47</sup>. Besides, there had been two events in which the school had been a protagonist and helped publicize and promote it. The Director of Private Schools had asked the school to organize a science instrumentation course for the region, which the school director, Fr. Schwarz, was at the helm. Furthermore, the Salesian Fr. Dante Sacchi had been assigned as principal of the school. His presence had a strong repercussion in the discipline and conduct of the students of the school<sup>48</sup>.

Besides, there had been an increase in the number of vocations from the school for the Aspirantate. This was due to the presence of a Filipino cleric practical trainee “who knows how to enthuse the students regarding Salesian life, showing himself as always playful and cheerful”<sup>49</sup>. Even the association of the past pupils was already moving slowly<sup>50</sup>. There were some good things, after all, that made the Salesians optimistic that everything would turn for the better in this house which was the first that they adopted.

### 3. Other Opere

In spite of the difficulties of their beginnings, the Salesian work in the Philippines revealed intensity and seriousness. This was not only in the area of education, but also in sectors in which the Salesians saw themselves in their apostolate with the young.

#### 3.1. Lourdes Parish Cebu

Our Lady of Lourdes Parish of Cebu came about on account of two events in the history of Cebu Boys Town. On 5 March 1955, the center for street children was transferred to its permanent site in Punta Princesa, after the gener-

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 1961-1962, 7.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.* Fr. Sacchi came to the Philippines sometime in 1961. He formerly worked in Colégio Don Bosco in Macao, China, which was under the Portuguese Province. Cf *Elenco Generale* (1962), p. 308. While in Tarlac, he was involved in the ministry in the nearby sugar refinery [Hacienda Luisita?].

<sup>49</sup> ASC F164 Filippine: Relazione Annuale 1961-1962, 7. Cf *Elenco Generale* (1962), p. 465. The community of Don Bosco Tarlac was constituted by the priests Schwarz (rector) and Sacchi (principal) and the cleric Bati (tirocinante).

<sup>50</sup> ASC F164 Filippine: Relazione Annuale 1961-1962, 7. The Alumni Association was still not flourishing in the school, since a good number of the former students of Don Bosco Academy Tarlac lived in Manila. Nonetheless, “si mostrano molto affezionati e sono sempre pronti a venirci in aiuto per feste e celebrazioni”. Cf *ibid.*

ous move of Don Ramon Aboitiz who bought and donated the land to the Salesians. On 15 August of the same year, Fr. Jan Clifford arrived from Hong Kong to take the place of Fr. Attilio Boscariol who had been in charge since the center began in March 1954.

For some reason or another, Fr. Clifford<sup>51</sup> has asked for a parish near Boys Town sometime in 1956 from Archbishop Julio Rosales, who must have been only too willing to create one. In 1937, the residents of the area had built a barrio chapel made of light materials in anticipation for the celebration of a Diocesan Eucharistic Congress. This initiative was already pre-heralded in the previous year by the laying of a cornerstone in the place where the planned chapel, in honor of the Blessed Virgin of Lourdes was to be constructed, an event which the Parish Priest himself presided. However, it was only after the war that the religious activities in the chapel resumed, which became ever more permanent when the Salesians took the initiative in 1957.

The Salesian Parish, carved out from the Parish of San Nicolas de Tolentino, began to be realized after a certain Don Pablo Atillo donated a 4,000 sq. meter terrain to Archbishop Rosales on 2 March 1956, and after a certain Elise Cornejo erected a small wooden structure to serve as convent. By 27 January 1957, Our Lady of Lourdes Parish was “officially and canonically established with Fr. Clifford as the first Parish Priest and Fr. Pericle Bianchini ... as assistant”, who later would be replaced by Fr. Jose Bosch, even if the Salesians have not even asked permission for such initiative from Turin, who finally approved it only when it was already done<sup>52</sup>.

When Fr. Acquistapace had informed Turin in February 1957 that the Archbishop of Cebu wanted to entrust to the Salesians a Parish “which for the moment did not even have a building of its own”, Turin clearly said no to the offer.

“The Council answers that the Salesians for the moment to disengage from the office of Parish Priest, and that they do not accept the Parish. This issue will be seen in the future”<sup>53</sup>.

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<sup>51</sup> Fr. Clifford is considered the founder of this Salesian Parish. In the 25<sup>th</sup> Souvenir Book of Lourdes Parish, it is written: “It was the combination of a builder, a visionary, a judicious mind plus a heap of guts which gave Fr. Clifford the image and the legitimacy to be called father and founder of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish”.

<sup>52</sup> BS 86 (Gennaio 1962) 23-29. When it was constituted by Archbishop Julio Rosales, the Parish had 16,000 parishioners, of which about 5,000 frequented the Sunday celebrations. The Salesians celebrated five masses in the first church built of wood and could contain 500 persons; other two masses were celebrated in nearby barrios. As a test of vitality of the ministry of the Salesians, it was said that in one year, there were 70,000 communions. Every First Friday of the month, the average communion was 300. Cf *ibid.*, p. 23.

<sup>53</sup> ASC D876 Verbali (Torino, 21 febbraio 1957).

But the Provincial had written Turin once more, seeking to convince the Superiors to say yes to the offer of a Parish. He gave the following reasons: the Parish was only about 800 meters from the Salesian community of Boys Town; the Parish Priest could always be a member of the Salesian community. Besides, it was to the common interest of the Salesians to have such a Parish, for the possible vocations it could yield, and the financial help it could give. Finally, he somehow insisted, that it would be better that they take it at once, since there were others who wanted to get the Parish. Meanwhile, according to Fr. Clifford, the Archbishop had obliged him to begin working already. And this, Fr. Acquistapace was informed “post factum”, of which he was ready to give explanations to the Superiors if they demanded these from him<sup>54</sup>.

Somehow, Turin agreed to accept another Parish, the second in three years. It gave conditions though: that the Parish be based and be administered from the Salesian school; that the Parish church be built at closest possible to the Salesian house<sup>55</sup>. But while Fr. Acquistapace was trying to meet the conditions of Turin, the Salesians were already working in the Parish.

The report of Fr. Braga on the Salesian work in Cebu Boys Town was rather trite. He stated that in Boys Town, once prevalently for the children of the streets and for orphans, there was now also a technical school with shops for mechanics and carpenters. There were 50 to 180 students, which included 95 interns<sup>56</sup> “who were possible vocations”. And this novelty has aroused the enthusiasm of some coadjutors<sup>57</sup>.

The Visitatore had enthusiastically spoken of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, the second Parish to be accepted by the Visitatoria. This Parish, which had about 10,000 parishioners, was made up of small businessmen, employees and teachers, who collaborated with the Parish Priest very well. In less than three years, they managed to construct and amplify a neat chapel conducive to prayer, with a capacity of about 600 persons. They had bought a ter-

<sup>54</sup> SAHK Corrispondenza (Acquistapace a Puddu, Macao, 16 febbraio 1957): “... l’Arcivescovo obbligò il Direttore ad incominciare ed io fui avvisato post factum...”.

<sup>55</sup> ASC D876 Verbali (Torino, 20 marzo 1957): “Il Capitolo concede che si accetti la parrocchia, raccomanda che la gestione di essa abbia sede nel nostro collegio e che la chiesa parrocchiale sia costruita più vicina alla nostra casa quanto sia possibile”.

<sup>56</sup> The interns indicated here were boys who came from the adjacent towns of Cebu and the areas around the City who enrolled in the school and were in need of a place to stay. The original residents of Boys Town, the street children and the orphans, were mixed with the interns. But they were relatively inferior in number. And they were enrolled more in the vocational school rather than in the academic school.

<sup>57</sup> ASC F164 Filippine: Relazione Annuale 1959-1960, 2. Cf *Elenco Generale* (1960), p. 456. The community of Boys Town was made up of priests Clifford (rector), Repetto, Ryan, Bosch and Guarino, and the coadjutor Nardin.

rain of about 8,400 square meters, where a bigger Parish church could be built in the future<sup>58</sup>.

Fr. Braga related that the Salesians had been very busy in the Parish work. Holy missions, preached by the Redemptorists Fathers, were celebrated with consoling results. Moreover, the months of May and October were celebrated “in a solemn and practical mode”, especially through the so-called “block rosary”. There were homilies, recitations of the rosary, vigils and confessions during these demonstrations of the people’s love for the Virgin. Fr. Braga, perhaps exaggeratingly, said that a priest alone had almost 2,000 confessions during these months<sup>59</sup>. But one who knew the reality of the place would have readily believed this.

Moreover, the Parish Priest Fr. Jose Bosch<sup>60</sup>, has founded the so-called “Defenders of the Faith”, a group made up of young and adult zealous men who sacrificed two hours every evening in order to be trained in apologetics and in order to study the catechism and the bible. This was to combat heresy and error, especially those promulgated by the Protestants. He had also published in Cebuano many leaflets in defense of the faith. The parishioners have even donated a jeepney to him, so that he could easily go to those parts of the Parish where the Protestants attempted to lure away the Catholics from the true faith. One thing lacking in this Parish was the school for boys and for girls. The Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, however, have promised to come and help the Parish Priest<sup>61</sup>.

It took almost 20 years before Lourdes Parish of Cebu could have its own Salesian community to manage it<sup>62</sup>. Now it could have three priests at its disposition to work full time. Not because the priests who were working earlier never gave it the full attention it deserved. Probably, these even got much of their time that they should have been giving to the earlier work for the street children when Cebu Boys Town began, and had given more of their attention to the

<sup>58</sup> ASC F164 Filippine: Relazione Annuale 1959-1960, 2, 5. This was no longer a donation from the Aboitiz. For the parish was not in line with the original intent of the founders of Boys Town.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 6. “La Madonna smuove i cuori e si segnalano numerosi ritorni alla pratica dei sacramenti e vere e perseveranti conversioni”. This was not surprising, knowing the religious situation in the Philippines and the tremendous devotion to the Blessed Mother that Filipinos were known to have.

<sup>60</sup> Fr. Jose Bosch Moll (1921-1995) first arrived in the Philippines on 24 February 1956. His first assignment was Cebu, where he worked for a long time. Considered as the founder of Lourdes Parish, even if perhaps the figure of Fr. Clifford could not be disregarded, his remains are buried in a cemetery adjacent to the church.

<sup>61</sup> ASC F164 Filippine: Relazione Annuale 1959-1960, 6.

<sup>62</sup> ASC F636 Cebu Punta Princesa N.S. di Lourdes (*Decretum canonicae erectionis Domus, 5 Novembris 1976*).

Parish. Nonetheless, the relation between the school and the Parish communities were bound to continue: Boys Town would continue to collaborate in the Parish ministry, Lourdes Parish in the confessions of the boys of the school<sup>63</sup>.

### 3.2. *San Ildefonso Parish Makati*

Meanwhile, the Parish of “Culi-Culi Makati” had more than 22,000 souls, and a church, which was, according to Fr. Braga, “extremely indecorous”. He even dared to state that not even the chapels in the China missions were in such similar condition. It was located in the worst angle of the city and was amongst houses of ill-repute and corruption.

But there were plans to construct a new church and other facilities for the different associations of the Parish, through the efforts of the Parish and the assurance of help from the Cardinal of Manila. In fact, Fr. Braga learned that they were actually putting the foundation of a hall, which would serve as a temporary church during the construction of the Parish church.

Where the Parish Priest lived was “very hot and very uncomfortable”; his life was “very hard”. Notwithstanding, he had been very active, as he was also assisted for confessions by some confreres coming from the Salesian school nearby. By 1960, he was able to organize all the mandated organizations requested by the Curia. He organized the teaching of catechism to almost 3,000 children of the elementary school with the help of the students from the Benedictine and Assumption Sisters, who came twice a week to teach<sup>64</sup>. Every year, they would prepare about 700 communicants for the first communion. When the Salesians arrived in 1954, the mass attendance increased by 50%. Now, there were 11 Sunday masses: six in the Parish (Barangay Pio del Pilar) and five in the chapel of the school of Don Bosco Makati (Barangay San Lorenzo)<sup>65</sup>.

The overriding concern of the Parish Priest was to transform this “Culi-Culi” Parish, which he considered his home, into a transforming presence for

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.* (Manila Provincial Council a Consiglio Superiore, Manila, 15 ottobre 1976). Fr. Jose Carbonell, who was then Provincial, had earlier asked the Cebu Archbishop permission to erect the Salesian religious community on 20 August 1976. Cf *ibid.* (Salvador a Cerbonell, Cebu, 23 August 1976).

<sup>64</sup> Sta. Scholastica School and Assumption School, were in fact, within the vicinity of the Parish of San Ildefonso. Assumption School was surely part of the Parish. But was Sta. Scholastica part of the Parish? It is interesting to note that there had been some collaboration between these religious nuns and the Salesians at this early stage.

<sup>65</sup> ASC F164 Philippine: Relazione Annuale 1959-1960, 5.

the people of the area. He had made efforts to combat the “mala vita” by refusing religious funerals to those who owned red houses, unless the relatives of the deceased promised to close those locales. As Parish Priest, he tried to immerse himself in the ministry, trying to learn to speak the language of the people if only to be able to influence their lives by his preaching and teaching. He had survived a bomb threat. And now, his dream was to put up a decent place of worship and a youth center, which could overwhelmingly rival and overthrow immoral commerce around<sup>66</sup>.

### 3.3. *The Oratories*

According to Fr. Braga’s Annual Report of 1959-1960, the festive Oratories of Tarlac, Mandaluyong, Makati and Victorias were the most frequented of the centers. The catechism, said to be taught three times a week, had a rather good attendance: Mandaluyong (an average of 700 for the whole year), Makati (300), Victorias (350) and Tarlac (150). Fr. Braga, however, lamented that there were very few Salesians involved in carrying on a real animation of the Oratories<sup>67</sup>.

Don Bosco Makati, as it was in Victorias, had a daily Oratory, as it was originally intended. There were now possibilities for vocation in these places. However, the facilities were so limited that they were not adapted to the bigger boys. There were more elementary students who came, rather than the high school and bigger ones who really were the ones more in need of catechism. Unfortunately, there were no clerics yet to help in the animation of these centers<sup>68</sup>. Fr. Braga informed Fr. Pianazzi that one reason why they had in fact put the Novitiate immediately after high school was because the Visitatoria urgently needed these clerics in order to help in its extraordinary development<sup>69</sup>.

The Visitatore had a particular observation regarding the Salesian Oratory in his first annual report. In Don Bosco Makati, where he was also rector, the festive Oratory, which started well, was now failing and was no longer frequented as before. According to him, there were several reasons for this. Earlier, as a means of attracting the boys to come, they would give goods to those who frequented the Oratory. They had benefactors, some of whom were Americans,

<sup>66</sup> GM 40 (Dicembre 1962) 7-11: “Oggi Culi-Culi è la mia casa, e la mia casa ha molti problemi: più di una dozzina di spacci di liquori; una gran quantità di bische; un alto grado di delinquenza giovanile...”.

<sup>67</sup> ASC F164 Filippine: Relazione Annuale 1959-1960, 6.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>69</sup> ASC F164 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Braga a Pianazzi, Makati, 7 settembre 1960).

who had been helping them with donations. But now, the number of boys has gone down, “since the Salesians did not have anymore rice, cheese and milk to distribute” to the young and to their parents. Moreover, there were other sports facilities around the Oratory now, when some years earlier, the Oratory was the only place where there were sports facilities. The Salesians, seemingly, did not know how to invent other means of attracting the boys to enjoy the Oratory<sup>70</sup>.

Fr. Braga, however, observed two other reasons why perhaps the work at the Makati Oratory had gone down. It lacked a confrere who was apt to such an important work, “a rector capable of organizing it”. Not all the Salesians were capable of running the Oratory, which was indeed very demanding. The personnel put in charge of this Oratory were unable to deal with those who frequented the center, especially the bigger boys and “middle age”. They received two weekly conferences, which they followed sincerely “with interest and profit”. But Fr. Braga had found out that they had been treated with violence and humiliation, for some small mistake and transgression. And because of this, he feared that the efforts of almost five years might have collapsed so easily<sup>71</sup>.

Here, Fr. Braga gave a reflection on who the Filipino young was and how he ought to be dealt with by the Salesian:

“The Filipino desires to be treated as a gentleman; when there was need of giving them observations, there was the need of giving it the way of Don Bosco”<sup>72</sup>.

And some have failed in keeping this in mind, so crucial for the Salesian educational system. Definitely, not all could be experts of the youth centers; but they were expected to be undeviating in the exercise of the Preventive System. It appeared further that this particular work of the Oratory was not their prime interest. Somehow, the cracks of some Salesians had also begun to manifest.

Notwithstanding, the Oratory of Makati was not without positive aspects. There were cooperators who were the first benefactors and collaborators of the Oratory. Although the alumni of the school were not yet organized for lack of personnel, some of them depended on the Salesians for their employment, es-

<sup>70</sup> ASC F164 Philippine: Relazione Annuale 1959-1960, 3. “Oggi ogni contrada ha i suoi [palla e canestro], dei quali alcuni cementati”. The Oratory of Mandaluyong had used the cinema in order to maintain vivid its Oratory work. While in Makai, “la mancanza assoluta del cinema, non supplito da altri svaghi ha anche nociuto ad una maggior frequenza”. Cf *ibid.*

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 1959-1960, 3: “A Makati manca l'uomo atto ad un si importante lavoro”.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*



pecially in the shops of the school, and were the ones “most affectionate” to the confreres<sup>73</sup>. And because of this, they generously involved themselves in the Oratory.

### 3.4. *The Organizations*

With the obvious development of the Salesian work in the Philippines, there came the need to establish the “mandated organizations” usual for the efficiency of the Salesian work. Thus, the Salesians in the Philippines tried their best to meet the establishment and the accompaniment of these “Salesian mandated organizations”: the Past Pupils, the Cooperators, the Archconfraternity of Mary Help of Christians, the Sodalities. Obviously, these were conditioned by the availability of the Salesians, their enthusiasm to start these groups, their conviction that these groups should be started.

There were alumni chapters in the Salesian schools of Tarlac, Mandaluyong and Victorias, according to the Annual Report of 1959-1960. They met every first Sunday of the month in Mandaluyong and the last Sunday of the month in Victorias for the “buona morte”. There had even been attempts to hold a spiritual retreat for them<sup>74</sup>. But what, according to Fr. Braga, was badly needed was a house for the alumni, “since in the Babylonia of Manila, it was easy to lose oneself”<sup>75</sup>. A number these alumni, coming from the periphery, went to Manila to work. Some risked losing themselves when they found themselves in such a metropolis. Don Bosco Mandaluyong, in fact, would host the first alumni center, in response to this particular exigency.

From the Annual Report of 1661-1662, the alumni were already organized into two sections: one for Luzon and another for Victorias. They have elected their own sets of officers, and have been meeting regularly every month for the “exercise of happy death”. Two spiritual retreats, preached by the Jesuits, have been organized for them. Their hosts were said to have been so impressed by their seriousness, that they were given special discount for the use of the retreat house<sup>76</sup>. The delegate for the alumni was Fr. Pierangelo Quaranta, who held office in Mandaluyong. He had organized an employment office, so he always found work for anyone who came<sup>77</sup>.

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<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 1961-1962, 5. “Furono così contenti che concessero una speciale riduzione sul contributo fisso”.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*

However, the Salesian Cooperators were not yet organized in the Salesian presences for lack of personnel. But efforts have been made to enroll some of the closest collaborators of the Salesians into the association, so that diplomas given by the Rector Major have been distributed to quite a number during the year 1959-1960 in diverse occasions. Not all those who were helping the Salesians were enrolled as cooperators. For some found it impossible to comply with the activities and practices of piety prescribed for the cooperators. Besides, there were no Salesians to follow them up; there was often no place to gather them<sup>78</sup>.

#### 4. Shadows in the Visitatoria

Fr. Braga probably never expected that he would have a quite trying problem with any confrere, and with a certain Fr. Iginò Ricaldone, at that. And perhaps, he never thought that he would have been tried so much, now that he was almost at the end of his seemingly successful career as Superior and trusted man of Turin.

The Visitatoria was indeed composed of men. And new people came to bolster the ranks of those at work in the Philippines. In the beginning, most of those who came to work were practically from one environment: China. But now others who came to the Philippines were from other environments: for example, India. Although these Salesians who worked in the Philippines were mostly Italian in origin, they did not necessarily share the same ideas, nor did they have the same characters. Obviously, they differed in personalities, for they carried with themselves their experiences, their own way of doing things. In essence, however, they were Salesian missionaries.

#### 4.1. "Caso Ricaldone"

##### 4.1.1. The Issue

Fr. Iginò Ricaldone, younger brother of Fr. Vincenzo Ricaldone, arrived in 1924 in India as a novice with the first part of the sixth missionary expedition. Sometime in October 1930, he got seriously sick and had to be brought to the hospital in Calcutta. He was appointed by his Provincial, Fr. Vincenzo Scuderi, as headmaster of St. Anthony's High School in Shillong in 1934. A few years

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<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 1959-1960, 7.

later, he was made superior of the school (1937-1940). During the war, on 11 February 1942, he was interred in the Sacred Heart College compound in Mawlai with other Italian nationals who were working in Assam and who have been in India for about 15 years<sup>79</sup>.

Fr. Iginò Ricaldone left India sometime in 1954. But before he came to the Philippines in 1957, he spent several years in the studentate of Theology of the U.S.A. West Province<sup>80</sup>. When he arrived in the Delegation in Manila, Fr. Acquistapace assigned him as rector in Don Bosco Victorias, where he was superior from 1957 to 1962, replacing Fr. Kreutzer who had repatriated for reasons of health. Then, he was transferred to Makati where he stayed until 1963. In June 1963, he was recalled to Turin through the request of Fr. Braga.

In the beginning, Fr. Braga, as Visitatore, had appreciated Fr. Iginò. The latter was in good relationship with the administration of Vicmico where he was assigned. He was cordial with everybody and was equally esteemed. He was exemplary in the observance of the Rule, precise in the rendiconti and in the prescribed conferences that the rector should give to the confreres. The school in Victorias had acquired a certain discipline and seriousness through him. And even if the school enrollment had decreased, this was to the advantage of the school<sup>81</sup>.

“As today, he was the best for the place as superior”, Fr. Braga would say sincerely of him. But he had also expressed his observation of the confrere. Fr. Iginò was isolated from the confreres and was alone in his decisions. By May 1962, Fr. Braga had informed Fr. Ziggìotti that he was transferring Fr. Iginò to Makati and was sending Fr. Baggio in his place in Victorias<sup>82</sup>. The reason for this transfer was that Fr. Iginò’s relation with Vicmico administration was getting seriously strained. The Vicmico administration had not approved the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> years of the college of engineering, which Fr. Iginò had started. It was an initiative he had personally undertaken, without consulting either Vicmico or his Superiors. And Vicmico had considered it as an initiative of the Salesians and not that of the company; therefore, they concluded that they had no obligation to finance it<sup>83</sup>.

Fr. Iginò had reached the point of threatening the administration of Vicmico that the Salesians would go away, if they did not give in to his demands. Fr. Braga had tried to intervene; he was in good terms with the owners and the Vicmico administration, and he did not wish to destroy the Salesian’s relation with their benefactors. So, he decided to put a stop to the initiative of Fr. Iginò,

<sup>79</sup> Cf N. LO GROÏ, *History of the Kolkata...*, pp. 70, 109, 136, 224.

<sup>80</sup> Cf *Elenco Generale* (1955), p. 399.

<sup>81</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Braga a Fedrigotti, Makati, 9 agosto 1960).

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.* (Braga a Ziggìotti, Makati, 7 maggio 1962).

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.* (Braga a Fedrigotti, Makati, 9 agosto 1960).

which he considered as inconvenient and illogical, in as much as the only Salesian involved in the teaching was Fr. Igino himself.

The problem was Fr. Igino. He believed that the school was of the Salesians, perhaps unknowing of the origins of how the Salesians came to work and administer the school within the Sugar Milling Company.

“Fr. Igino was zealously working and administering the school, as if it belonged completely to the Salesians. He was not aware of that dependence to the company, which in fact, gave glory and honor to the Salesians to administer the most famous technical school of the Philippines”<sup>84</sup>

This attitude of Fr. Igino could not but dampen the relationship that existed between the Salesians and the people of Vicmico, a rapport, which Fr. Braga had so generously and warmly built since the first moments of negotiations and establishment of the school.

Fr. Braga decided to transfer Fr. Igino as superior in Don Bosco Makati, believing that he would be able to keep the confrere under control and to follow him up. Makati was all Salesian. He believed that Fr. Igino could do much good there. As rector of the confreres, “he was most precise of all, and the most faithful to the prescribed rendiconti and the conferences to the confreres”<sup>85</sup>. Fr. Braga was sincere in his motives; he thought this was the best way to handle Fr. Igino. But this time, the Visitatore miscalculated this particular move of his.

Fr. Igino revealed himself as who he really was where he was currently assigned. As he was wont to do in Don Bosco Victorias, he was keen in observing and in acting as “padrone” of the place and the situation. But it was going the other way around: Fr. Igino was monitoring, if not conditioning, the good old Fr. Braga.

#### 4.1.2. An Unlikely Report to Turin

In December 1962, Fr. Igino wrote Fr. Fedrigotti with whom he was in familiar terms, on the strength of his being a nephew of Fr. Pietro Ricaldone, with whom the Prefect General was personally acquainted. He gave his “observations” to Fr. Fedrigotti on the situation of the Salesian house of Makati, which was not only a school, but which had a nearby Parish attached to it. It also housed the Visitatoria, where logically the good old Fr. Braga resided and held office. After being almost seven years in the Philippines, he felt that he had the duty to report certain “disorders” to the Superiors in Turin<sup>86</sup>.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.* (Braga a Ziggiotti, Makati, 7 maggio 1962).

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.* (Igino Ricaldone a Fedrigotti, Makati, 1 dicembre 1962).

According to Fr. Iginò, Fr. Braga was already old and no longer at the level of the office that he actually held<sup>87</sup>. He showed the defects of old age: "irritable, undecided, apprehensive and easy influenced". He accused Fr. Braga of lacking the energy and the courage "to be enterprising, to intervene, to cut, correct and guide". The confreres, who served as his councillors, were lacking in quality of wisdom. These, according to Fr. Iginò, were the ones running the Visitatoria. Fr. Buchta was the "legislator". What he said was "dogma" for Fr. Braga, who never acted without his approval. Coming to the Philippines, he had become influential once more, something which he could not do with Fr. Acquistapace<sup>88</sup>. Fr. Roozen was the "number two", whom Fr. Iginò accused as "a businessman and a commercialist of which it was difficult to find an equal"<sup>89</sup>. And then, there was Fr. Quaranta, whom he recognized as "enterprising and zealous" but who was also "imprudent" and lax, and who left the confreres free especially on the vows of poverty and obedience. As administrator, "he gets entangled with so many matters, that he does not know anymore how to disentangle himself". He was currently in deep debt; and the banks have lost faith in him for his inability to pay<sup>90</sup>.

Fr. Iginò told Turin that Fr. Braga had accepted the offer of Canlubang, again without any contract or any document. This risked repeating the same mistake as in Victorias<sup>91</sup>, meaning that the donors would only make slaves out of the Salesians.

"Nothing is stable and certain; everything is in the air. It makes us feel like commodities in the hands of owners who play on our ignorant simplicity and kind-heartedness, harassing us and making us suffer not so little"<sup>92</sup>.

<sup>87</sup> Fr. Braga was already 73 years of age when Fr. Iginò wrote about the "disorders" in Manila.

<sup>88</sup> Fr. Johannes Buchta was rector of Yuet Wah College in Macao from 1948 to 1954, before he came to the Philippines. He, who was actually in charge of the school in Canlubang, however, for the moment, lived in Don Bosco Makati, and who according to Fr. Iginò, "va continuamente su e giù, quanto mai incurante della scuola di cui ne è il Direttore". Cf ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Iginò Ricaldone a Fedrigotti, Makati, 1 dicembre 1962).

<sup>89</sup> Fr. Godfrey Roozen was rector of Don Bosco San Fernando from 1958 to 1964. Before coming to the Philippines, he was superior in Salesian School of Aberdeen in Hong Kong. Cf ASC CB3305 Hong Kong-Aberdeen. Cf also ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Iginò Ricaldone a Fedrigotti, Makati, 1 dicembre 1962).

<sup>90</sup> The Cardinal of Manila, who was Fr. Quaranta's personal friend, would later help Fr. Quaranta out of his economic woes. The latter was rector of Mandaluyong (1955-1964). His financial dealings had also put into embarrassment some confreres of the Salesian procurator's office in Rome. Cf ASC G336 Ispettorie - Estremo Oriente (Schinetti a Quaranta, Roma, 25 settembre 1956).

<sup>91</sup> Fr. Iginò had in mind his supposed "bad experience" with the people of Vicmico, when he insisted on his own initiatives regarding a college in Victorias, an initiative which was contrary to the ideas of the Vicmico people. Obviously, he pretended that the Salesians were the owners of the school.

<sup>92</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Iginò Ricaldone a Fedrigotti, 1 dicembre 1962).

Fr. Igino had also something to say about the confreres assigned in Don Bosco Makati. Fr. Braga, when he was rector of Makati, did not follow up the rendiconti of the confreres and easily let them off from meditation and spiritual reading. The confreres left the house without control; they spent freely. So when Fr. Igino came and tried to implement the rules, these confreres had discredited him. He declared that in Makati, there was a confrere who never went for the spiritual retreat ever since he arrived in the school. This confrere, according to him, was “almost completely independent and acts as he if did not have any superior”. Such an attitude was imitated by another confrere, who for three years did not go for the annual retreat.

The distraught confrere also referred to Turin the case of another confrere whom he said had not confessed for the past ten years, and had practically neglected praying the breviary. And more recently, there had been a confrere who had scandalized some people<sup>93</sup>. The economer of the house might be a good religious too, but he was very ineffective as administrator<sup>94</sup>. He complained about a confrere, supposedly destined to the Pius XII Catholic Center which was to open still that coming June, but who was still in the house of Makati. The confrere “went in and out of the house at his leisure”, without even saying a word to the superior. He was even attending a language course in Tagalog, at the “Women’s University” of Manila, with the approval of Fr. Braga<sup>95</sup>!

#### 4.2. In Defense of Braga

There was no doubt that the Salesians of the Visitatoria esteemed and respected Fr. Braga, their Superior. And they did not restrain themselves from manifesting this when the moment demanded it.

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<sup>93</sup> The case of this particular confrere is an isolated case. It was said that some students were to be expelled. To avoid this, they put the confrere into a compromising situation, and he fell into their trap. For this, they blackmailed the rector of the School: if he expelled them, they would have spoken in public about the fault of this confrere, which definitely would have embarrassed the Salesians.

<sup>94</sup> Fr. Igino also reported to Fr. Fedrigotti his conclusions on the other houses. In a house in the south, he stated that the monthly exercise of a happy death was not observed. The rector, who had been superior for the past eight years, did not give the monthly conference; a confrere was an “incorrigible smoker”. And the Visitatore, according to him, had not done anything.

Cf ASC F163 Philippine: Corrispondenza (Igino Ricaldone a Fedrigotti, Makati, 1 dicembre 1962).

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*

#### 4.2.1. Braga's Self-Defense

When Fr. Braga was confronted with these accusations of Fr. Igino, he logically defended himself. He wrote Fr. Fedrigotti on 11 January 1963 and declared that Fr. Igino might not be totally wrong, but that he should not have exaggerated his observations. Besides, it was not true that Fr. Braga was not doing anything with the problems that might have existed. Moreover, Fr. Igino ought to have been observant himself: he should not have done anything, without first consulting the Superior<sup>96</sup>.

For Fr. Braga, Fr. Igino had grossly exaggerated against him. For this, he had taken this affront as a personal matter<sup>97</sup>. Consequently, he wrote Fr. Fedrigotti again on 25 February 1963. He sincerely confessed this was only the sixth time he had written to Turin regarding a confrere. He hated to do this, but he could no longer remain like a "mute dog". He simply was hurt. If he remained silent, he would then be betraying the Congregation. He was not discouraged nor beaten. But it pained him to think that in his 60 years of Salesian life, Fr. Igino was the first with whom, he could not be in good relation with: "he was the first with whom he found it impossible to agree with"<sup>98</sup>.

The Visitatore considered such a situation very harmful to the confreres. For him, Fr. Igino was one who did what he wanted; he did not respect any council nor discussed anything. His supposed friends would never dare say anything against him nor against his ideas; and for those who worked with him, it was quite impossible to dialogue<sup>99</sup>. Fr. Braga could give examples if only to be real and concrete.

If Fr. Braga cited the constitutions to Fr. Igino for its observance, Fr. Igino would tranquilly answer:

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<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.* (Braga a Fedrigotti, Makati, 11 gennaio 1963): "Quello che le scrisse il caro don Igino (oggi è il suo onomastico) è in parte, vero, ma poi si dimentica di avvisare per compere e di farlo notare sul registro apposta ... e sorgono piccole dissenzioni. La situazione è toto coelo mutata in bene, ma, come dice anche lei, quel brav'uomo deve essere più posato e non partire in piena velocità quando ha concretata un'idea, senza prendere le necessarie autorizzazioni. La vita religiosa è ben regolata e tiene i confratelli osservanti".

<sup>97</sup> Fr. Giovanni Benna, who arrived in the Philippines at the end of the Visitatoria, remarked that the conflict between the Visitatore and the rector of Don Bosco Makati was so intense, that the Superior could not even enter the provincial house. Fr. Faroni, who was then a newly ordained priest when he came to the Philippines in 1957 and who was assigned in Don Bosco Victorias, also observed this conflict between Fr. Braga and Fr. Igino.

<sup>98</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Braga a Fedrigotti, Makati, 25 febbraio 1963).

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*: "Quelli che gli sono amici non diranno mai una parola contro, ma quanti debbono cooperare con lui si trovano nella impossibilità di farlo. Non esiste capitolo, nulla è sottoposto a discussione ad esame".

"I know them, but elsewhere they do differently ... people in Turin also interpret them"<sup>100</sup>.

According to Fr. Braga, this was how the confrere reasoned out while he was still in India; and the confrere was back to acting the same as before. He was hostile to the confrere who was in charge of the school administration and to the confrere who was principal; and yet they were ready to obey his directives, which he often forgot to give. For Fr. Braga, Fr. Igino never accepted his being removed from Victorias. In his displeasure, Fr. Igino even reached the point of threatening the President of Vicmico, that he would close the school if he were not allowed to open the 4<sup>th</sup> year college<sup>101</sup>.

How Fr. Igino was in India was surely known to the Superiors in Turin; how he was now in the Philippines did not perhaps surprise Turin anymore. But perhaps the one who ended surprised was Fr. Braga himself, who probably asked himself why he had accepted the confrere in his Visitatoria.

#### 4.2.2. Fels' Defense of Braga

Fr. Braga was not alone in defending himself from the assault of Fr. Igino. Fr. Fels, eonomer of the Visitatoria, wrote to Fr. Ziggotti and spoke in defense of his beloved Fr. Braga<sup>102</sup>.

Fr. Igino was indeed a "very controversial figure". He was scandalous in dealing with people, with confreres and most especially with Fr. Braga. He hated and abhorred the Superior; for months, he had not spoken with him. According to Fr. Fels, the reasons for such animosity on the part of Fr. Igino were twofold: because Fr. Braga had removed him from Victorias, and because Fr. Braga did not agree to his condition, that he should be superior both of the school of Makati and the house of the Visitatoria<sup>103</sup>.

Fr. Fels claimed that he had a copy of the last letter that Fr. Igino wrote against the Visitatore. And this letter revealed clearly what kind of person Fr. Igino was. He was ready to send a copy of letter to Fr. Ziggotti himself, if the

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.* (Braga a Fedrigotti, Makati, 25 febbraio 1963): "Le conosco, ma altrove si fa diverso...anche a Torino si interpretano!"

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>102</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Fels a Ziggotti, 18 aprile 1963).

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*



Superior so wanted. This same letter was the reason why Fr. Igino wanted and, in fact, had him removed as economer of Don Bosco Makati<sup>104</sup>.

According to Fr. Fels, Fr. Igino came to the Philippines and was rector of the house of Victorias for five years. But here, he came into conflict with the administration of Vicmico. And so, the administrators of the sugar refinery had asked Fr. Braga to remove him from Victorias. Fr. Braga, badly counselled by Fr. Quaranta, put him as rector of the provincial house, hoping to put him under control.

But what happened in Makati? As rector of Don Bosco Makati, Fr. Igino launched himself "into constructions, embellishments, luxury television, radio and car..."<sup>105</sup>. Moreover, he totally ignored the presence of Fr. Braga, because the former refused to be removed as prefect of the house, Fr. Fels, who had been provincial economer and administrator of the house of Makati for the past seven years. He declared that it was impossible for a provincial economer to be an honest prefect. For this, he accused Fr. Fels of extracting the money of the house for the use of the Province. He even dared to declare that he was not afraid to be removed, "because in Turin, Fr. Fedrigotti would surely favor him"<sup>106</sup>.

Fr. Archimede Pianazzi<sup>107</sup> was Provincial of Fr. Igino in 1951 in the Indian North Province, where Fr. Igino was rector of St. Anthony's School in Shillong and at the same time provincial councillor. He knew rather well who Fr. Igino was; he was no alien to the personality and character of this confrere. In a handwritten note to the Rector Major, he declared that he agreed with what Fr. Braga said about Fr. Igino. He was also aware of the problem in Makati. He believed that the document spoken about by Fr. Fels could be "an objective and enlightening document"<sup>108</sup>.

On the contrary, the Prefect General had another opinion with regards the issue on Fr. Igino. For him, Fr. Fels wrote in such tone against Fr. Igino, be-

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<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.* Fr. Fels was then both economer of the Visitatoria and the school of Makati. The school was then so poor, that he also had to be bus driver, if only to save on the expenses. Now that he was no longer connected with the school, he was afraid that Fr. Igino, who could go to extremes, would remove some of the employees of the school without regard of their financial situation and their families. This, Fr. Igino might do, in the pretext of saving money. However, this would be ironic, in as much as this same person was capable of throwing great amount of money for useless things. Cf *ibid.*

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*: "...perché a Torino Don Fedrigotti era per lui".

<sup>107</sup> Fr. Archimede Pianazzi was then general councillor for formation in the period of misunderstanding between Fr. Braga and Fr. Igino Ricaldone.

<sup>108</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza a Don Ziggotti (1963-1964).

cause he felt slighted by the superior of Don Bosco Makati. Moreover, he did not see any extravagance on the part of Fr. Ricaldone, as Fr. Fels put it. Although, he admitted that Fr. Igino was certainly “of a strong character and hard-headed”. For this, he personally believed that Fr. Igino should be removed as rector of Makati, as requested by Fr. Braga<sup>109</sup>.

#### 4.2.3. In Defense by Confreres

The issue on Fr. Igino grew, as to involve a group of “concerned confreres” who wrote their minds to Fr. Ziggiotti<sup>110</sup>. At the end of the annual retreat, on 18 May 1963, held in the house of San Fernando, these “concerned confreres” met to discuss on Fr. Igino<sup>111</sup>. They expressed their serious doubts about his actual mental equilibrium and health. For them, the situation had degenerated, in spite of the efforts made to pacify him. Fr. Braga, notwithstanding the humiliations he received from him, had suffered his “eccentricity”<sup>112</sup>. There seemed to be no solution to this situation in the Visitatoria. Thus, they decided, during this extraordinary meeting, to expose this situation to the Rector Major. They wanted the Superior to intervene, so as to give a peaceful solution to the problem. Perhaps, he could transfer Fr. Igino and give him a new obedience. But what they wished was honest and simple:

“We prefer the unity of government and direction, in the obedience and attachment to the person of the Provincial”<sup>113</sup>.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.* (Fedrigotti a Ziggiotti, 4 maggio 1963).

<sup>110</sup> These “concerned confreres” consisted of Fr. Quaranta (rector of Mandaluyong), Fr. Roozen (rector of San Fernando), Fr. Buchta (in charge of Canlubang School) and Fr. Baggio (rector of Victorias). Cf *ibid.* (Quaranta et al. a Ziggiotti, San Fernando, 18 maggio 1963). This meeting was pre-arranged by them. Fr. Quaranta had just came back from the United States.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.* (Quaranta et al. a Ziggiotti, 18 maggio 1963). At the end of this retreat, seven novices made their first profession, while four clerics renewed their vows.

<sup>112</sup> Fr. Braga had decided earlier to ask the opinion of an expert regarding the case and personality of Fr. Igino. He had kept the result of his consultation and had communicated it to Fr. Fedrigotti, when he realized that there was probable truth in what it contained. Cf *ibid.* (Braga a Fedrigotti, Makati 25 febbraio 1963) 1. The observation was given by Fr. Francesco Parisi S.J., a psychologist and director of Our Lady of Peace Guidance Center. Fr. Braga had sent him documents in order that he might give some judgment regarding the personality of Fr. Igino Ricaldone. He could not take for granted the response of the Jesuit. Cf *ibid.* (Parisi a Braga, Manila, 31 luglio 1962).

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.* (Quaranta et al. a Ziggiotti, 18 maggio 1963).

### 4.3. Overcoming Difficulties

#### 4.3.1. Braga as Always

Fr. Braga declared to Fr. Fedrigotti, that he was the first to recognize the merits of Fr. Igino, "our dear Rector", of his "intense spirit of work, his untiring industriousness". But he had to admit that though Fr. Igino did well, in several things, he was "extra viam"<sup>114</sup>. He contradicted himself. He pretended poverty, but he was richly in his manner of administering goods. He was observant of the rule. But there was no love-basis and love-root in his observing the rule. It was merely external, nothing internal. Fr. Igino was seemingly neither Salesian nor Filipino. He wanted big things: enrollment, schools, number of boys. He did not know how to relate with people: with the workers and the employees, with inferiors; he was a high-handed person. He collected funds, but spent the money for purposes other than that which was said to be the reason for the collection. He exaggerated the need, but did not spend the collection for the need expressed. Fr. Braga knew that Fr. Igino had some undeclared accounts. But he, as Superior, preferred to pay debts rather than perpetuate the situation, which was causing damage to the confreres and to the Congregation<sup>115</sup>.

For Fr. Braga, to write these things about Fr. Igino was a great sacrifice. He humbly confessed that it was "the first time that he must surrender, that he does not succeed to agree with a confrere". It was indeed difficult for him to "denounce" a confrere to the Superior, for he had never done this. But now, he had to suggest that Fr. Igino be transferred elsewhere in such a way that he could use his energy for the good souls. Perhaps, the confrere could be assigned to collect funds for the various projects of the Visitatoria, for the construction of the future Theologate in Manila, for example. In fact, he had done this once in America. Fr. Igino had often times said that it was better that he went "rather than live in this way...". Besides, he was terribly isolated. The ones who listened to him were two clerics and a coadjutor "in

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.* (Braga a Fedrigotti, 8 giugno 1963): "È un uomo isolato che fa tutto per conto suo, che elimina chi non la pensa come lui, che cambia parecchie volte e progetti e modo di eseguirli, che non conosce alcun spirito di povertà ed economia, che fa il gran signore e lascia una deleteria impressione sulla nostra Congregazione come se essa disponesse di ingenti capitali e li amministrasse senza criterio. È vero che nella sua casa le pratiche di pietà si compiono tutte, ma non so con quale efficacia, mancando il fondamento della carità che lo lega solo ai suoi eletti".

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*

whom he put all his confidence and to whom he expressed his bitterness"<sup>116</sup>.

The Rector Major wrote Fr. Braga on 11 July 1963, telling him that he was allowing Fr. Igino to return to Italy "where we hope to make him busy in whatever way"<sup>117</sup>. Fr. Braga was quick to answer the Rector Major, and once more expressed his desire that Fr. Igino be recalled at once,

"for he, involved in constructions, will not be able to do his job as rector; for we want our hands free in the organization of the school, of which the confrere is not an expert"<sup>118</sup>.

Earlier, however, Fr. Braga wrote to Fr. Fedrigotti on 9 July 1963, to inform him that he had received the three letters he had sent him. The letter for Fr. Quaranta had to wait, since the confrere was in Rome. But he had given the one for Fr. Igino, whose immediate reaction was strong and uncontrolled. Then and there, Fr. Igino had spited him and promised him a letter of defense to the Superiors in Turin. He threatened him, that it would be him who would be changed<sup>119</sup>.

Indeed, Fr. Igino had written Fr. Braga a letter, accusing him of enjoying the pain of his humiliation, having been asked by the Rector Major to return to Italy. But for Fr. Braga, it was completely the opposite of his real sentiment towards the confrere. He, as in charge of the Visitatoria, had no desire to be authoritative. He confessed to the Prefect General, that he himself felt the need to be changed.

"Dear Fr. Fedrigotti, there is indeed the need of changing, because we are out of the way, not in the sense of the spirit, but in the manner and means which we use. There is the need of a new hand to manage the helm and guide the ship towards great undertakings. There are no difficult cases or impossible characters: what we need is someone who can apply the regulations and have at least personnel for the councils of the houses"<sup>120</sup>.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.* Who were these clerics and coadjutor? One of the clerics had, in fact, finally decided to quit his studies. In the mind of Fr. Braga, his soul had been stained on account of "l'influenza deleteria di certi superiori in disaccordo coll'ispettore". Such adverse experience could provoke damage in souls even for their whole life. Cf SAHK Corrispondenza (Braga a Massimino, Makati, 14 giugno 1963).

<sup>117</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Ziggiotti a Braga, 11 luglio 1963). Fr. Cogliandro, writing to Fr. Fedrigotti while he was still in Hong Kong awaiting his visa in order to enter the Philippines, hoped that the stay of Fr. Igino in Italy be final and irrevocable, adding that "le sue conversioni (Fr. Igino's) ormai sono note in tutto l'Oriente". Cf *ibid.* (Braga a Fedrigotti, Hong Kong, 15 agosto 1963).

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.* (Braga a Ziggiotti, Makati, 18 luglio 1963).

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.* (Braga a Fedrigotti, Makati, 9 luglio 1963).

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*

Fr. Igino, indeed, wrote Fr. Braga a letter, expressing his angry sentiments for his recall to Turin<sup>121</sup>. But what were shocking in his seemingly understandable reaction were his last words to Fr. Braga:

“If not me, then respect at least my unforgettable uncle from whom you owe everything. Poor man! How much he will suffer for your ingratitude”<sup>122</sup>.

Fr. Igino, in spite of having been told by Fr. Fedrigotti to prepare to go to Italy, continued to act as superior of the school. He accepted back students who were kicked out because of immorality, and other students who were disqualified by the school regulations. He knew that the school lacked teachers; but he refused to do anything even if the school year was about to begin<sup>123</sup>.

For Fr. Braga, Fr. Igino did this in order that things might appear normal and serene and nothing might leak out, not because he wanted to make it still difficult for the Visitatore nor to the confreres. Fr. Braga refused to involve himself in the school so as not to contrast Fr. Igino, even if there were certain decisions, which the confrere would surely not agree, but which ought to be done for a smooth running of the school. Though Fr. Braga knew he was right, he did not want to shame the confrere.

The tuition fee of Don Bosco Makati had been increased, for the purpose of increasing the salary of the teachers. When Fr. Igino refused to comply with the promised of salary increase, a group of senior teachers, “good and affectionate persons” to the school, presented their resignation. Fr. Braga intervened, asking them to withdraw their resignation. They did, when he promised them that the increase would be given later<sup>124</sup>.

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<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.* (Igino Ricaldone a Braga, Makati) 1-2. He now refused to call him “Signor Ispettore”, but “Signor Don Braga”. He accused him to be a liar, as one who was “noto ormai a tutti per le sue menzogne e fantastiche esagerazioni”, as responsible for the lost of numerous souls, victims as well as his “predilected ones”. That he did intend to leave until he had made a detailed rendiconto to the Superiors. Neither did he desire that Fr. Fels “sua pupilla” arrange for his departure; he would take care of that himself. He told him that it was he who leaked out the issue about him to the others. His witness: Fr. Zuccollo, “un'altra sua cara pupilla”, who told him four months earlier about the changes in rectors. The same confrere declared to him that Fr. Braga had told him that a certain cleric was to go back to Hong Kong “per non essere testimone di cataclismi che sarebbero avvenuti a Makati”. In the mind of Fr. Igino, this was “un perfetto complotto”. He had never been considered a confidante of the Provincial, when he should have been one, in as much as he was superior of the provincial house. This conspiracy had succeeded, proven by the early departure of Fr. Braga’s “messo menzognero”, who was also “noto ormai a tutti per le sue bugie e fantastiche esagerazioni”. Cf *ibid.*

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*: “Se non me, rispetti almeno il mio indimenticabile zio a cui lei deve tutto ciò che è. Poveretto, quanto soffrirà di questa sua tanta ingratitude”.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.* (Braga a Fedrigotti, Makati, 12 luglio 1963).

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*

Fr. Braga never lost his amiability, his respect and sincere love for Fr. Igino, in spite of the ill inflicted on him. Although he would have wanted to give the confrere a “dignified despedida”, he feared that Fr. Igino might give compromising declarations. Besides, Fr. Igino probably would not accept such a gesture and would prefer to leave without saying what day and time he would go<sup>125</sup>.

But Fr. Braga was also truly worried to fix the situation in which the Visitatoria found itself. Fr. Igino was creating much damage, and Fr. Braga wanted to limit this. He wanted authorization from Fr. Fedrigotti to tell Fr. Igino to please leave as soon as possible, for the longer the confrere remained, the greater the damage that his stay was causing to him and to the confreres<sup>126</sup>.

At the end of his letter, Fr. Braga advised Fr. Fedrigotti to please answer him in two copies. He asked him to send one copy to Don Bosco Mandaluyong, and the other to Don Bosco Makati. The reason why he advised this was that recently, letters have either been lost in Makati, or have not reached him, in as much as it was the rector of the school who received the mail. Even passports have been lost. However, according to Fr. Braga, this happened “not for malice, but for distraction”<sup>127</sup>. Fr. Braga could not be more kind and gentle to Fr. Igino, even if the confrere made him suffer so much.

When Fr. Igino left Manila, he never thought that death would catch up on him. Neither did Fr. Braga know that his liberation of Fr. Igino would be that complete. He did not have any inkling that something would happen to Fr. Igino when he got back to Italy. A year earlier, he had advised Fr. Igino to undergo a detailed check-up by specialists; but Fr. Igino refused to heed the suggestion “for the love of his work....” Now, the official explanation for Fr. Igino’s sudden return to Italy was for health reasons; and this was seen by people who knew him as a sign of benevolence by the Superiors. For them, Fr. Igino indeed “suffered” because of his sickness; they did not realize, however, that the Salesian had only a few months to live<sup>128</sup>.

Fr. Braga considered the issue with Fr. Igino as a “tremendous parenthesis” in his Salesian life, “the worst” in his 60 years of profession, a moment of purification by the Lord. He would have wanted to suffer alone. But others had suffered, and they would continue to suffer. This “storm” had passed

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.* (Braga a Fedrigotti, Makati, 4 settembre 1963) 1: “Il male struggeva, lo dilaniava, lo torturava, ma non disse mai nulla per pudore di rivelare certi suoi incomodi. Ne avrà avuto merito nel soffrire in silenzio e nel portare la sua pesante croce.” Fr. Igino died of cancer in Turin on 1 September 1963, after only two months since he left Manila.

with saving effects; however, he could not deny that it had also left signs of deep wounds and death<sup>129</sup>.

#### 4.3.2. Cogliandro on the “Caso Ricaldone”

Fr. Cogliandro wrote Fr. Fedrigotti in Makati on 4 October 1963, two days after arriving from Hong Kong to start his work in Manila, regarding the “Caso Ricaldone”. In his evaluation, Fr. Braga had not been so much susceptible to changes, so that he took each change, even if it were for the good, a personal offense. Fr. Igino had effected “quite convenient” changes, with others still on the process of realization. These, however, were stopped by Fr. Braga; consequently, they remained half accomplished. For Fr. Cogliandro, the conflict between Fr. Igino and Fr. Braga was a usual case of two, who restricted in such a small space, that they easily disturbed each other, “resulting into reciprocal miseries”<sup>130</sup>.

The new Provincial tried his best to take the matter and case lightly. Probably, he was too new to realize the “landslide” that developed in the last months of the out-going Visitatore. When he mailed his letter to the Prefect General, he included in the envelope the letter which Fr. Ricaldone wrote Fr. Braga and which Fr. Fels referred earlier. His hope was that Turin would get rid of the letter, if only to avoid further compromise. He told Turin, though, that he would look on the issue and would try to deal with it objectively, so as to end the polarization of the new Province.

When Fr. Igino died, he had about Php12,000 (\$3,000) in his account. There were also the shares with J. M. Barcelon & Company Inc. with a value of

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<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*: “Non vedo l’ora di chiudere per sempre ed in pace questa tremenda parentesi della mia vita salesiana, la peggiore, senza dubbio dei miei quasi sessant’anni di professione. Il Signore mi sta purificando gliene sono grato; vorrei essere il solo a soffrire, a scontare, ma, purtroppo, altri soffrono e soffriranno ancora per parecchio tempo. Tutto sta passando come un tifone purificatore, ma, pur avendo di certo, effetti salutari, non si può negare che al suo passaggio lascia segni di morte e ferite profonde”. The death of Fr. Igino Ricaldone was advertised in the Manila Times Newspaper. “R.I.P. The Salesian Society of St. John Bosco, Philippine Province, deeply mourns the passing away of the Rev. Father Igino Ricaldone, SDB (former Rector of Don Bosco Technical College, Victorias, Negros. Occ. and Don Bosco Technical Institute, San Lorenzo Village, Makati, Rizal). Died in Turin, Italy, Sept. 1, 1963 at the age of 60. Don Bosco students, alumni and friends are requested to pray for the repose of his soul (“Manila Times” 8 September 1963).” Cf ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Manila Times, 3 September 1963).

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.* (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 4 ottobre 1963): “mi sembra che tutta la storia venga a risolversi nel solito caso di due galli in un piccolo pollaio ci furono delle miserie reciproche”.

Php37,000 registered in his name. Nonetheless, he had left a document declaring that it could be registered to the name of the Salesian Society of St. John Bosco.<sup>131</sup> Fr. Cogliandro also had to work on this, if only to regain some more needed funds for the Province, thanks to Fr. Igino.

## 5. Other Issues

Difficulties were never lacking for the Visitatoria. But solutions were also never lacking. And even if solutions were not found, the Salesians proceeded with the hope that time would correct and solve some of their preoccupations.

### 5.1. Personnel

In his Annual Report of 1959-1960, Fr. Braga did not really complain about the lack of personnel which was not new, since it had always been an issue since the beginning of the Salesian work in the Philippines. And he could easily testify to this: he was not only Superior of the Visitatoria; he was at the same time rector of Don Bosco Makati. But what he complained more was the lack of confreres prepared to govern a new and growing Visitatoria. This, for him, was a “serious and most damaging” problem.

“By 1961, I would want to change at least two rectors, and also to find someone who could substitute me. But we do not have confreres prepared who will know and who can assume such office of great responsibility”<sup>132</sup>.

The lack of stable confessors for the confreres and the boys continued. There were only two (Victorias, Mandaluyong) out of eight houses which had permanent confessors. For this, the confreres, and also the boys, approached the sacrament irregularly<sup>133</sup>. Not all the houses had councils due to the lack of number of confreres. There were only three houses (Victorias, Mandaluyong, Cebu), which had a house council. All the others (Tarlac, San Fernando, Makati,

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.* (Braga a Fedrigotti, Makati, 4 settembre 1963).

<sup>132</sup> ASC F164 Filippine: Relazione Annuale 1959-1960, 3. But why were there not people prepared to take over the task of rector of a community in the Philippines? One wondered rightly why Fr. Braga kept the same rectors in his term as Visitatore. He obviously knew personally the rectors he appointed for the houses of the Visitatoria, since they had been with him in China.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, 1959-1960, 4; *ibid.*, 1961-1962, 1.



Muntinglupa) did not have, since they practically had only two confreres each. Notwithstanding, they tried to function regularly. The confreres Iriarte and Lopez should have taken up pastoral courses, but they did not proceed on account of the lack of personnel. One was councillor in San Fernando, the other was catechist in Makati<sup>134</sup>. As a result of the lack of personnel, the sodalities in some of the schools could not be organized in a grand scale<sup>135</sup>. But Fr. Braga remained rather optimistic, in spite of this reality.

“Notwithstanding having few confreres and having a great number of lay teachers, the results are consoling. For we often succeed to make better the young, and to make them change their life and conduct”<sup>136</sup>.

However, the problem of the personnel, not having been solved by the Visitatore, his poor successor, the new Provincial, would have to try to remedy.

In the absence of sufficient personnel, and in line with the reality that they lived, the Salesians had to deal with the presence of lay collaborators and allow them to participate in the education that they gave. Unlike in Italy, where the majority of the teaching personnel were Salesians, it was not so in the Philippines. With so many lay people employed, a continuous preoccupation for the school administration was to provide them the just pay, taking into account the other expenses that had to be met for the administration of the schools.

According to Fr. Braga, the employees were treated according to the law of the country. The teachers' salaries were increased 10% for six years, until they reached the maximum of Php250 monthly. All the teachers and employees were enrolled at the “Cassa Mutua”. And in order to pay the contribution, the Salesian house helped to pay for the 2.5%<sup>137</sup>.

## 5.2. A Financial Situation

Fr. Braga gave a trite report on the finances of the Visitatoria in his annual report of 1959-1960.

“The income and donations were controlled, as well as the proceeds from the shops, the donations of friends, the proceeds of lotteries, theaters and movies”<sup>138</sup>.

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<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*, 1959-1960, 3.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

What had not been followed up were the mass registers of the houses. Fr. Braga's reason for such neglect was simple: the confreres lacked energy to update these registers, for the work overload they unfortunately underwent. Nonetheless, there have been no abuses nor wastage, even if perhaps things were not in order. In fairness, there was the need as soon as possible to celebrate masses to the amount of Php30,000 that a confrere had left uncelebrated<sup>139</sup>.

The formation of the confreres, too, was beginning to weigh in the still limited finances of the Visitatoria. And the care for vocations, so much sought for, was becoming a very costly venture.

Fr. Braga wrote the Rector Major from Don Bosco Tarlac on 9 February 1960 regarding the expenses of the Visitatoria for its people in formation:

- 32 aspirants (\$0.80 each/day) - \$8,334 yearly
- 14 novices (\$1 each/day) - \$1,460 yearly
- 14 students of Philosophy (\$1.50 each/day) - \$7,665 yearly.

The Visitatoria had six students of Theology: one in Spain, one in France, four in England. And for each of these, it cost the Visitatoria \$2 each/day - \$2,000 yearly<sup>140</sup>.

Fr. Braga informed Fr. Ziggiotti that the Visitatoria, since its erection in 1958, had not yet been the recipient of any financial help from the General Council, unlike the Chinese Province. Furthermore, he declared that in essence, the Visitatoria would need \$25,000 yearly. The amount would definitely go up, though. He foresaw that on account of the growing age of the confreres who were currently at work in the Philippines, which was accompanied by their growing failing health and tiredness, they would need an increase in financial assistance for their health maintenance. Besides, three houses of the Visitatoria, Mandaluyong, Tarlac and Makati, were in debt. They have borrowed money in order to procure machineries for the shops. Besides, there were also on-going constructions.

Fr. Braga added that the Protestants spent \$50,000 every year to finance their work in the Philippines. He, on the other hand, wanted to inject new confidence and hope to the confreres who tirelessly worked in the Visitatoria. Indeed, he had asked for personnel, especially clerics who could alleviate the work of their elders. But perhaps the Superior should consider seriously his request for financial aid too<sup>141</sup>.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*: "Per le S. Messe trovata l'elemosina a quelle 30,000 lasciateci dal D. Rossotto in generale si provvede alla pronta celebrazione di esse e non ci si carica di Messe da celebrare in tempo prolisso".

<sup>140</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Braga a Ziggiotti, Tarlac, 9 febbraio 1960).

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*

### 5.3. More Offers

Offers continue to come to the Salesians even if their hands were already full. Most probably, those who asked them were direct witnesses of what the Salesians were doing in their schools and Oratories.

Fr. Braga reported three more offers to the fledging Visitatoria in his Annual Report of 1959-1960. He had continued to entertain offers, in spite of his complain that he lacked personnel and money. There were two land offers, tax free and all other expenses paid for by the benefactors.

The first offer consisted of 12 hectares in Guinobatan, province of Albay. The offer was “adjacent to the city, along the national highway, facing the active Mayon volcano, with a stream of water and small hill towards the north”. The benefactors merely requested prayers in exchange:

“Gregorian mass for each of the spouses at their death, and a memento for them in the masses which shall be celebrated in the future house”<sup>142</sup>.

The second offer consisted of 15 hectares in Canlubang, Calamba, Laguna. Six hectares were for the works of formation, and the rest was for the future boarding house. Fr. Braga said that he had not taken any commitment regarding this offer – “the work could possibly commence from 15 to 20 years”<sup>143</sup>. As usual, Fr. Braga would not be able to wait that long. In less than a year’s time, he would accept the offer. He started by accepting the school with a condition for receiving the donation, and assigning the confrere Fr. Buchta as director of the school.

The third offer was 20 hectares of land, located “in the far island of Mindanao, which shall one day be the promised land of the Philippine Islands, for its climate and for its fertile soil”<sup>144</sup>. The Prefect Apostolic of Davao, Msgr. Gerard Thibault, had invited Fr. Ferrari and the Salesians to come and work there<sup>145</sup>. Earlier, he had insisted on Msgr. William Piani, then Apostolic Delegate to the Philippines, that the Salesians should come to Davao. On 18 February 1953, he reiterated the same invitation to a Salesian who was pass-

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.* Several years later, the Salesians would instead give about six hectares of this donation to the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, when they came to build their house of formation near the Seminary-College.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>145</sup> Davao was created a Prelature in 1949, and elevated into a Diocese in 1966 and into an Archdiocese in 1970. Cf *The 2002 Catholic Directory of the Philippines*. Quezon City, Claretian Publications 2002, p. 70.

ing by, a certain Fr. Margiaria, and asked him to insist on the offer to Fr. Acquistapace<sup>146</sup>. Fr. Margiaria, in fact, asked Fr. Acquistapace to visit the place if ever he went to the Philippines; he strongly encouraged him to realize this project<sup>147</sup>. The latter did not fail to discuss this offer in the provincial council, which decided to see the place and refer the proposal to the Superiors in Turin<sup>148</sup>. Msgr. Thibault wanted the Salesians to open shops for mechanics and carpentry which would surely of great success in Davao. Then, there was the need of organizing the young. In Davao, there was already a center named after Don Bosco. The Monsignor was ready to give to the Salesians two hectares of land, which would already cost about \$10,000<sup>149</sup>. The fact was that both religious and secular clergy wanted the Salesians to come and work in the Philippines.

Of these three offers, Fr. Braga realized the second, even if he had never given up the other requests. The other two died down, only to be resurrected sometime in the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and in the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

#### 5.4. Braga – Looking Back

The beginnings of the Visitatoria in 1958 were not easy for Fr. Braga, in spite of having been a veteran Superior. As Visitatore, he wrote to Fr. Ziggiotti in February 1959, after the extraordinary visitation made by the Prefect General. In this letter, he presented some of his observations regarding the new Visitatoria, by looking back at the Delegation from where he picked it up.

“In these last five years, they worried very much, perhaps too much, without discipline and unconditional dependence by the Superior: each rector felt himself like a little king with a government, more or less absolute. The observance was incomplete, with local infiltrations, with some accommodation to the customs and local usages, imitating blindly what the other was doing ... wanting to surpass the number of students and the

<sup>146</sup> SAHK Corrispondenza (Margiaria a Acquistapace, Davao 18 febbraio 1953). SAS 20B127 Fr. Angelo Margiaria: born in Cuneo, Italy (7 January 1898); first profession in Ivrea, Italy (26 September 1920); ordained in Ivrea, Italy (12 July 1924); died in Rome, Italy (31 January 1978) at 80 years, 58 years Salesian and 54 years priest. He was member of the Japanese Province, where he was rector of the house of Osaka when he passed by the Philippines. He was guest of the P.M.E. of Quebec when the boat he was riding made a stop at the port of Davao. It was there that he met Msgr. Thibault.

<sup>147</sup> SAHK Corrispondenza (Margiaria a Acquistapace, Davao, 2 febbraio 1953).

<sup>148</sup> SAHK Minutes of Provincial Council (Hong Kong, 16 aprile 1954).

<sup>149</sup> SAHK Corrispondenza (Margiaria a Acquistapace, Davao, 2 febbraio 1953).

grandiosity of the works, neglecting our true greatness to beg for ephemeral successes. Small and great criticisms ... infantile jealousies of primacy, they have impoverished and disoriented a little of everybody"<sup>150</sup>.

In the years of the Delegation, Fr. Braga had not been really in control of the confreres, specially the superiors, who somehow sought to outdo each other. This resulted into petty jealousies, which could not but affect the rank and file confreres and the various communities as well.

When Fr. Braga was told to be the Superior of the new Visitatoria, he felt he was starting again, as he did in 1930. But this time, however, he said that he did not have Salesians in the likes of Bernardini, Guarona, Wiczorek, Bardelli, Massimino, whom he considered as "men of great virtue and capacity ... of straight and sincere obedience and of self-sacrifice..."<sup>151</sup>. He felt handicapped, as he was nostalgic of the past, which he knew he could not bring back, of the Salesians with whom he thought he had developed the Salesian work in China.

Nonetheless, Fr. Braga was optimistic and proud of what he and the Salesians had done in the Philippines. For indeed, they had rightfully achieved so much, in such a short span of time. Even confreres like Clifford and Roozen, with whom he had contrasts before, he "had rediscovered them and today are among the best in the reconstructors of the spirit and of observance of the rule"<sup>152</sup>.

### 5.5. Braga – Looking Forward

The issue of the Italian Salesian Bulletin of October 1963 spoke very positively and optimistically about the Salesian work in the Philippines. It was the month when the new Province received its first Provincial.

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<sup>150</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Braga a Ziggiotti, Makati, 19 febbraio 1959): "In questi ultimi cinque anni si lavorò molto, forse troppo, senza disciplina ed incondizionata dipendenza dal Superiore: ogni direttore si sentiva come un piccolo re con governo, più o meno assoluto. L'osservanza era incompleta, con infiltrazione locali con qualche accomodamento ai costumi ed usi locali ad imitare ciecamente quanto faceva...". Fr. Braga had gone to Turin sometime in November of 1958, immediately after the Delegation was constituted into a Visitatoria. He must have expressed to the Superiors his fears in accepting the obedience.

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.* Eleuterio Bardelli (1883-1992), Vincenzo Bernardini (1887-1962), Luigi Massimino (1907-1991), Teodoro Wiczorek (1888-1957) and Giovanni Guarona (1887-1961) were veteran missionaries of China like Fr. Braga. They were all Salesians who held positions of authority and government as rectors or provincial eonomers during the time of Fr. Braga as Provincial of the China Province. For Fr. Braga, they were very trustworthy for their Salesian spirit.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*

“The Philippines constitute an area adapted for every Salesian initiative and a most fertile terrain of vocations. Our schools are very much in demand. The enrollments have just begun, but we have to close them for lack of place. In any circumstance, when we find ourselves in difficulty, it is enough that we declare that we are of Don Bosco that everything is facilitated and all doors open”<sup>153</sup>.

When Fr. Braga spoke about the Salesian minor seminary in San Fernando, he could not but marvel at the increase number of aspirants. In its first year (1962), there were 72 aspirants; the next year, there were 105, “and these, only one did not come from our institutes”. He boasted readily of the new Novitiate in the new house in Canlubang, which could contain even 70 students; he envisioned a future post-Novitiate, for another center for vocations<sup>154</sup>.

Fr. Braga never ceased to dream of the development of the Salesian work in the Philippines in the future, and he did not fail to share this with the Rector Major. Again, he spoke of offers to the Salesians, after those in the beginning of the Visitatoria. The Philippine government offered six hectares of land and a certain Andres Soriano was willing to donate a million pesos for the Salesians “to heal the most infamous district of Manila, Tondo”. A certain David Alegre was also offering a terrain, about a kilometer away from the capital of the province of Cavite; he asked for a technical school, developable in five years. The Bishop of Davao had renewed his offer of land. The same couple Ofracio of Guinobatan, Albay had again asked the Salesians to their region, where “the land is rich of vocations, the population is among the best in the Philippines, the influence of catholic education received by the elders is notable”<sup>155</sup>.

Indeed, for Fr. Braga, the blessings of God and the sympathy of men were not lacking for the Salesians in the Philippines. For this, that they should make the most of these requests, so that the work of Don Bosco might live long.

Fr. Braga and Fr. Massimino were good friends and companions in the work in China. The latter was now the Provincial, in place of Fr. Tohill who has been made Provincial of San Francisco, in the U.S.A. as successor of Fr. Cogliandro. Instead, Fr. Braga was at the end of his “career”. He probably felt that his time was ending. And in times of need, the best recourse for him was to

<sup>153</sup> BS 87 (Ottobre 1963) 337.

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.* Fr. Braga had written the Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of the Propaganda Fide, asking for a donation of \$100,000. Cf ASC G336 Ispettore – Estremo Oriente (Braga a Agagnianian, Makati, 17 dicembre 1959). He had appealed to Cardinal Agagnianian’s generosity, whom he knew had helped other religious institutes in the Philippines for the construction of their seminaries. Cf *ibid.* (Braga a Castano, Makati, 22 dicembre 1959).

<sup>155</sup> BS 87 (Ottobre 1963) 338.

work with someone with whom he was at home. Perhaps, Fr. Massimino would take him back to his original Province when the time came.

Probably by the beginning of 1963, Fr. Braga must have heard rumors of plans to make the Philippines a Province. More than that, he might have heard rumors of who might be appointed Provincial. He wrote Fr. Massimino on 27 March 1963 and invited him to pass by Manila as the latter was on his way back from Vietnam. He asked what the Superiors might have decided regarding the planned center of Theology for East Asia. He asked him to preach a series of retreat scheduled for the confreres of the Philippines<sup>156</sup>.

Fr. Braga spoke of a "novelty" in the Visitatoria to Fr. Massimino:

"It was assured that I shall be changed by the end of January ... and someone acted in conformity to the "voce del capitolo del cortile". I console myself that a year will soon pass and I shall finally be in peace. I would have never suspected that there would have been such eagerness for honors and positions. It is good that I am passed beyond the canonical age for every appointment"<sup>157</sup>!

About three months later, Fr. Braga wrote Fr. Massimino once more. He expressed some thoughts with regards his impending end as Superior of the Visitatoria. He told him that he had tried to lead according to the mind of Fr. Rinaldi. The thought of Pope John XXIII, "I have sought to live in charity and to govern with the laws of the heart", became a constant reminder for him when he was sometimes tempted to be strong in his treatment of confreres during the more difficult situations. He confessed, in fact, that he did fail in charity with some. He was now left with a few months before he brought a definitive ending of his mission. But, as a captain of a boat, he felt he was now ready "to fold the veils and let others unfold their veils through winds and tempests..."<sup>158</sup>.

Fr. Braga confessed that he held a displeasure, as he ended his term: he did not have clerics in practical training or in formation. He believed that if this continued, the future of the Visitatoria would be compromised. But he also noted how the grave lack of personnel could also affect the formation of the younger generation. He humbly admitted:

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<sup>156</sup> There was a series of retreat for the confreres: (a) for coadjutors (31 March 1963 to 6 April); (b) for priests (21 to 27 April). There were other two retreats for clerics of triennial or perpetual vows. Cf SAHK Corrispondenza: Braga (Braga a Massimino, Makati 27 March 1963).

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.* And who was this who pretended to be superior so soon? Fr. Braga declared that he had never expected that confrere was one so "tanta avidità di onori e di cariche". The "voce del capitolo del cortile": what was this?

<sup>158</sup> SAHK Corrispondenza (Braga a Massimino, Makati, 9 giugno 1963).

“We have lost precious years in the beginning and we shall still lose some more for this radical deficiency”<sup>159</sup>.

By 11 July 1963, Fr. Braga pathetically informed Fr. Massimino that Fr. Alfredo Cogliandro had been nominated as Superior of the new Province of the Philippines<sup>160</sup>.

<sup>159</sup> *Ibid.*, 2: “Abbiamo perso preziosi anni all’inizio e ne perderemo ancora altri per questa radicale deficienza”.

<sup>160</sup> SAHK Corrispondenza (Braga a Massimino, Makati, 11 luglio 1963).



## Chapter Eight

### PROVINCE (1963-1964)

In his brief history of the Philippine Province, which he submitted to Turin together with his annual report, Fr. Cogliandro commented on how the Salesian Province of the Philippines came about:

“At this point of our brief history, as if unexpectedly, with the decree of 12 August 1963, the Visitatoria is made into a regular Province, with Fr. Alfredo Cogliandro as Provincial”<sup>1</sup>.

When the Salesian Philippine Province was erected, it was somehow untimely. Fr. Braga had just requested Turin to take back Fr. Iginò Ricaldone and to rid him of a problem. At the same time, with the creation of the new Salesian Province, Fr. Braga was somehow “bypassed”. And instead of him, Fr. Cogliandro was appointed to be the first Provincial of the Philippines. This seeming bypass of Fr. Braga who seemed to be worthy of being a Provincial again was interpreted by some confreres as a mark of displeasure over Fr. Braga by Turin, which perhaps did not appreciate how he managed the Visitatoria.

#### 1. “Turn over”

It took practically less than five years for the Philippines to finally be a Province, independent and subsistent. The number of vocations the new Province nurtured and of the Salesians at work, somehow assured the Superiors in Turin that there would be enough personnel to secure and maintain that independence. Moreover, the Philippines seemingly could go on economically by itself, without being a financial liability to the Salesian Society. On their twelfth year of existence in the Philippines, the Salesians were already considered mature enough to stand for and by themselves.

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<sup>1</sup> ASC 163 Filippine: Relazione Annuale 1963-1964, 5: “A questo punto della nostra breve storia, improvvisamente quasi, con decreto del 12 agosto 1963, la Visitatoria veniva eretta in Ispettorato regolare, con Don Alfredo Cogliandro, come Ispettore”.

### 1.1. *The Houses of the Province*

When the new Province was erected by Fr. Renato Ziggiotti on 12 August 1963, it consisted of the following canonically erected houses: (1) Don Bosco Technical Institute, Victorias, (2) Rizal Institute, Canlubang, (3) Cebu Boys Town, (4) Don Bosco Technical Institute, Makati, (5) Don Bosco Technical Institute, Mandaluyong, (6) Don Bosco Academy, San Fernando, and (7) Don Bosco Academy, Tarlac<sup>2</sup>.

All seven presences were schools. Cebu was no longer known that much for being a haven for street children when it started in 1954. Victorias, Cebu, Makati and Mandaluyong were technical schools, with an average enrollment of about 1,500 students and a medium number of seven Salesians managing them. Some of the schools had a fine program of vocational education for the emarginated young. All of them had Oratories in their premises; but these were working in varying intensities.

Don Bosco Tarlac and Don Bosco San Fernando were academies. The latter had the center for aspirants to the Salesian life. Canlubang, as enlisted in the houses that made up the new Province, was an agro-technical school, which was being administered by a Salesian. But attached to it was the Salesian Novitiate, plus the future College which would serve both the pre-novices as well as the post-novices. Don Bosco Makati still had the Parish of San Ildefonso of Culi-Culi still attached to its community, and thus part of its ministry to the area. Don Bosco Cebu continued to collaborate intensely with the Salesians who worked very much for the people of the Parish of Our Lady of Lourdes in Punta Princesa. Don Bosco Victorias was ever more in charge of the chaplaincy of St. Joseph the Worker inside the Sugar Milling Company.

On the other hand, in line for acceptance into the new Province was Pius XII Catholic Center in Manila, plus that of a new center in Tondo<sup>3</sup>. Both works, in fact, were being insisted upon by Cardinal Rufino Santos of Manila on the Salesians.

### 1.2. *Who Could Be Provincial*

Fr. Alfred Cogliandro's annual report of 1963-1964 on the first year of his Provincialate was a very important source on how the Province managed its

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<sup>2</sup> ASC F163 Philippine (Decree of erection of the new Province, Torino, 12 agosto 1963).

<sup>3</sup> BS 93 (Gennaio 1969) 24-28: "Qui, siamo proprio in casa nostra".

first year of existence. But it also revealed how the transition was from the Visitatoria to the Province<sup>4</sup>.

As early as November 1962, Fr. Braga knew that the Superiors in Turin were about to turn the Philippines into a Province. When he answered Fr. Fedrigotti on 25 February 1963 in response to the latter's earlier letter<sup>5</sup>, he had spoken about his diabetes, with the sugar reduced to normal, and the nephritis with negative symptoms. He, in fact, had been on diet for the past two months as suggested by the doctors<sup>6</sup>.

At the same time, the Superior of the Philippine Visitatoria had now answered the question which the Prefect General had posted on him – who could be Provincial in the Philippines when the time came. Fr. Braga wrote Fr. Fedrigotti wrote out two names: Fr. Pierangelo Quaranta, whom he considered as one “born a Salesian”<sup>7</sup>, and Fr. Alfredo Cogliandro, whom he knew was seriously being considered by the Superiors as possible Provincial and whom he considered as “a complete man, but, who perhaps transplanted on a new place, would not be able to perform fully his action”. He suggested, instead, that Fr. Cogliandro be made rector of Don Bosco Mandaluyong in place of Fr. Quaranta who was finishing his term next year like him<sup>8</sup>. He knew that Fr. Cogliandro would have preferred to be master of novices in place of Fr. Carreño.

However, Fr. Braga was almost sure that Fr. Cogliandro would be Provincial, according to “vox capituli cortilis”<sup>9</sup>. Thus, when the Rector Major wrote Fr. Braga on 11 July 1963 to inform him about the erection of the new Salesian Province of the Philippines and the appointment of Fr. Cogliandro as Provincial, it was no surprise to him<sup>10</sup>. Somehow, he knew that the confrere would be one of those who would come to augment the number of Salesians in the Phil-

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<sup>4</sup> This document is made up of 31 pages plus an appendix of documents. It is divided into eleven parts: “introduzione, cronaca annuale, vita ispettoriale, vita religiosa, case di formazione, scuole professionali, parrocchie e oratori, situazione economica, varia, mancanza di personale, appendice di documenti”. Cf ASC F163 Filippine: Relazione Annuale 1963-1964.

<sup>5</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Fedrigotti a Braga, Torino, 20 novembre 1962).

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* (Braga a Fedrigotti, Makati, 25 febbraio 1963).

<sup>7</sup> Fr. Braga “defined” Fr. Quaranta as one “che ha vissuto a Valdocco tutta la sua giovinezza ed il tirocinio ... ha fatto gli studi alla Crocetta prendendo la sua licenza in teologia. Ha lavorato con immenso sacrificio ed ottimi risultati”. Cf *ibid.* (Braga a Fedrigotti, Makati, 25 febbraio 1963).

<sup>8</sup> Fr. Braga never finished six years as Visitatore of the Philippines. It was in fact on his sixth year, that he was substituted with a new Provincial, Fr. Cogliandro in a new Province.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.* (Braga a Fedrigotti, Makati, 25 febbraio 1963): “un uomo completo, ma, forse trapiantato su un terreno nuovo, non potrebbe svolgere appieno la sua azione”.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.* (Ziggiotti a Braga, Torino, 11 luglio 1963).

ppines, something which he had always sought and which he definitely would not refuse.

Fr. Fedrigotti had written Fr. Tohill of Hong Kong sometime in late 1962, asking him who could possibly substitute Fr. Braga “who was by now worthy to rest” as Superior in the Philippines. The Superiors did not think it wise to send Fr. Cogliandro to Manila immediately, since the latter too was in need of rest, “without responsibility”<sup>11</sup>. The response of Fr. Tohill to the Prefect General was clear and sincere. He suggested Fr. Roozen as Provincial, “in spite of what happened in the past”. Fr. Roozen was “a man capable and pious”. He was Dutch, for this, “he is sometimes hard”. Fr. Acquistapace, the former Provincial of China Province and who was now based in Vietnam, expressed the same opinion on Fr. Roozen as a possible Provincial for the Philippines, “even if perhaps he had made me suffer much”. Although, Fr. Tohill confessed that he heard that Turin “had their eyes” and seemingly favored Fr. Quaranta. As regards Fr. Carreño who was actually novice master in the Philippines, he stated that he was in no position to give an opinion on the confrere, since he did not know the confrere even if he heard good things about him. In his opinion, it would be either Roozen or Quaranta for the new Province in Asia<sup>12</sup>.

At the end, it would be Fr. Cogliandro as first Provincial in the Philippines, because Fr. Carreño refused to accept the office.

### 1.3. Turin's Choice

Fr. Alfredo Cogliandro had just finished his two terms as Provincial of the San Francisco Province in the United States, from 1952 to 1960. Before becoming Provincial in the United States, he had gone to India as missionary while still a novice in 1932 where he became master of novices<sup>13</sup>.

The former Provincial of United States West Province was then in Italy, in the early part of 1963, awaiting permission to re-enter India where he was destined by the Superiors. However, on account of the impossibility of obtaining a visa for him, the Superiors had changed his obedience: instead of India, he was now being asked to go to the Philippines as Provincial. Turin's choice for this veteran missionary of India was based on a practical purpose: “he, being practical with the eastern and western world, and knowing perfectly the English

<sup>11</sup> ASC F157 Cina: Corrispondenza (Fedrigotti a Tohill, Torino, 10 novembre 1962).

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.* (Tohill a Fedrigotti, Saigon, 21 novembre 1962).

<sup>13</sup> Fr. Alfredo Cogliandro (1911-1992) was master of novices in Kotagiri, India (24 March 1948 to 7 June 1950); he was Provincial of San Francisco Province, U.S.A. for two terms (7 June 1950 to 10 September 1962). During his time, Australia was part of the U.S.A. West Province.

language”<sup>14</sup>. But it was also because the other, who was not the first choice of the Superiors in Turin, Fr. Jose Luis Carreño, did not accept the offer<sup>15</sup>.

On 11 July 1963, Fr. Ziggotti asked Fr. Braga to please give Fr. Cogliandro the necessary collaboration for the “andamento” of the new Province and the solution for the current problems of the new Province<sup>16</sup>. Fr. Braga’s response to the Rector Major’s letter was one of simplicity and humility. He confessed his inadequacy and the mistakes and deficiencies he might have committed in the course of his office.

“I feel so light, so happy to return to the ranks, to remedy the past and to prepare myself with the encounter with God”<sup>17</sup>.

He put himself at the disposition of the Superior. He asked only one thing from the Superior: “not to leave me to choose my future destination ... that I may be given the consolation to simply obey as I have taught for many years”<sup>18</sup>.

Fr. Braga informed Fr. Massimino, who had substituted Fr. Tohill as Provincial of China, regarding the nomination of Fr. Cogliandro as Provincial. He said that he was thankful for this course of events. Now he hoped to just join the ranks of those “hidden ones”. Also, he could prepare better homilies. Perhaps, he could even learn Tagalog, so that he could hear the confessions of both the small and the big boys. He really did not see any difficulty in the pronunciation of this language. Those who have known the news about the appointment of Fr. Cogliandro wanted him to remain in the Philippines. He was only willing to do this, if only to make them happy. But obviously, this would depend not on him, but on the Superiors who would give him his new obedience<sup>19</sup>.

Fr. Braga told Fr. Massimino that at the end of his mandate, he felt at peace with the confreres of the Philippines, except with Fr. Igino Ricaldone, with whom he was in difficult terms, not because of bad will but because of differ-

<sup>14</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Ziggotti a Braga, Torino, 11 luglio 1963).

<sup>15</sup> Fr. Clifford wrote Fr. Ziggotti on 4 January 1962 from Cebu and suggested the Fr. Carreño as possible Provincial, because he considered this confrere as “una persona amabilissima, di buona stampa salesiana”. Cf *ibid.*, (Clifford a Ziggotti, Cebu, 4 gennaio 1962).

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.* (Ziggotti a Braga, Torino, 11 luglio 1963).

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.* (Braga a Ziggotti, Makati, 18 luglio 1963): “Mi sento così leggero; così contento di ritornare nei ranghi, rimediare il passato e prepararmi all’incontro con Dio”.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.* (Braga a Massimino, Makati, 20 luglio 1963). Fr. Braga knew that it would not be easy for him to learn another language, after his past effort to learn Chinese and English. “Peccato che il piemontese non c’entri per nulla”, he would remark to Fr. Massimino. His assignment, though, would bring him to the Aspirantate in San Fernando, Pampanga, where another dialect was spoken! Cf *ibid.*

ence in mentality. The confrere was, in fact, now going back to Italy, while his brother, Fr. Vincenzo Ricaldone was coming back to Manila after almost 15 months of absence<sup>20</sup>.

## 2. “Caso Braga”

The creation of the Salesian Province of the Philippines coincided with the twilight of Fr. Braga’s service as Superior. It was now his turn to be considered whether he should stay or go. But it was also a fine moment to reveal the jewel that was in him.

### 2.1. *The Confreres’ Opinion*

Fr. Fels, pretending to speak on behalf of the “Filipino confreres”, wrote to the Rector Major, Fr. Ziggotti, on 18 April 1963. He suggested retaining Fr. Braga in the Philippines, now that a Provincial had been chosen to the Philippines. In his mind, Fr. Braga would be a source of encouragement for the confreres, especially for the young ones<sup>21</sup>. He also wrote to the future Provincial and asked him to keep in the Philippine Province Fr. Braga, “a relic of Salesianity of the years of iron”<sup>22</sup>.

Earlier, Fr. Clifford, rector of Cebu Boys Town, had expressed to Fr. Ziggotti his opinion regarding Fr. Braga, whom he had known since 1931. For him, Fr. Braga had always been “a beloved father of all his sons”. He had personally witnessed this Salesian who lived “charity in a heroic manner, especially towards the confreres ... this at the cost of whatever personal sacrifice and sometimes incredible”. It was for this that Fr. Braga was so similar to the great Pope John XXIII, whom the Visitatore considered his model<sup>23</sup>.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.* (Braga a Massimino, Makati, 20 luglio 1963).

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.* (Fels a Ziggotti, 18 aprile 1963). For Fr. Fels, the presence of Fr. Braga would be a great encouragement to the “giovani salesiani filippini delle case di formazione” or “agli aspiranti”; he was for them like “luminoso lume di salesianità e di santità”. Cf *ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.* (Fels a Cogliandro, Makati, undated [settembre 1963]): “Nessuno di noi sa quale sarà la destinazione del signor Don Braga. La maggior parte di noi spera che egli rimarrà nelle Filippine. Egli è una reliquia della salesianità degli anni di ferro, egli è ben veduto, se non adorato dai Filippini, ed egli ancora potrebbe servire come trait d’union della opera nostra coi nostri amici e benefattori. Avremo questa fortuna di averlo con noi? Lui, personalmente è pronto a fare l’ubbidienza, ma non gli dispiacerebbe di rimanere tra i suoi Filippini. In questi giorni il concern di tutti è il futuro del signor Don Braga. Che differente reazione nel popolo quando vennero a sapere il richiamo di Don Ricaldone e la rimozione del signor Don Braga....”

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.* (Clifford a Ziggotti, Cebu, 4 gennaio 1962).

## 2.2. The Immediate Post-Igino

Later, Fr. Fels, the provincial economist, had written Fr. Cogliandro in response to the latter's question on how Fr. Braga was<sup>24</sup>. What he wrote revealed an actual state of the new Province, more than how Fr. Braga was. It was again related with the recent conflict between the Visitatore and Fr. Igino who had left the Philippines for Italy upon the request of the former from the Superiors of Turin. After a few months in Italy, Fr. Igino had died after coming out of the hospital in Turin where he had undergone a delicate operation.

It was known that Fr. Igino, even as rector of Don Makati, had dared to disrespect and discredit Fr. Braga and his authority, both in private and in public, to the scandal of the confreres, including the young clerics. The former had done this in the last two good nights he gave to his community of Don Bosco Makati before he left. He negatively influenced two confreres of the community, a priest and a coadjutor, so that these two expressed openly their rejection of Fr. Braga as Superior. They refused to make their rendiconti to him and boycotted their work in the school, until the new superior of their community was appointed and until the new Provincial arrived. According to Fr. Fels, these confreres did this at the instruction of Fr. Igino. As a consequence of this, the ageing Superior, Fr. Braga, could not but feel down and discouraged<sup>25</sup>.

Besides, the passage of the Visitatoria to a Province had taken Fr. Braga somehow by surprise. He thought all the while, like the rest of the confreres, that he would be made to finish the regular six years of being Visitatore. This would have coincided with his golden anniversary of ordination, a fitting climax of his service as Superior. He had obeyed without complaining, when the news about the appointment of a Provincial reached him. However, the timing of the recall of Fr. Igino by Turin and the appointment of Fr. Cogliandro as new Superior of the Philippines did not appear well to him, to the confreres and to the other people. For it seemed to confirm as correct the discredit expressed by the sympathizers of Fr. Igino towards Fr. Braga, as well as a seeming discontent of Turin towards how he had been managing the Visitatoria<sup>26</sup>.

There were other complications in the controversy. Fr. Braga felt "betrayed" by Fr. Quaranta who unexpectedly left for the United States, without informing him of the other issues regarding Fr. Igino. Moreover, there had been another

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.* (Fels a Cogliandro, Makati, undated [settembre 1963]). This document was a part of the letter sent by Fr. Fels to Fr. Cogliandro, which document Fr. Cogliandro sent to Fr. Fedrigotti "per sue informazioni". Cf *ibid.* (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Hong Kong 14 settembre 1963).

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.* (Fels a Cogliandro, Makati, undated): "una cosa simile ha buttato giù il nostro caro Don Braga, che ha tanta venerazione verso le decisioni dei Superiori".

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.* (Fels a Cogliandro, Makati, undated).

case against a confrere. There was, indeed, basis for the accusation against the confrere; but it had been greatly exaggerated and not clarified. Fr. Igino, who might have done something to solve it, had instead documented the issue regarding the confrere and had written to Fr. Fedrigotti, citing this example to demonstrate to Turin the incapacity of Fr. Braga to govern and control the confreres.

For Fr. Fels, such turn of events was something so unfair and so sad for someone who spent his life for the good of souls and who had held high the name of Don Bosco. He sincerely believed that Fr. Braga deserved a more honourable end to his office as Superior of the Visitatoria. For this, he was appealing to the Provincial to soften the impact of such events on the former Superior<sup>27</sup>.

### 2.3. Fr. Cogliandro's Decision

The Provincial had a personal talk with Fr. Braga when they met in Hong Kong before he finally came to Manila<sup>28</sup>. He had heard from the Visitatore himself what had been happening in Manila. There were, indeed, those who resented him. Or as Fr. Fels had put it, the discontent was expressed by confreres who really wanted to leave and repatriate, or who had lost their enthusiasm to be missionary, or who had nothing to do but gossip.

“It seems that there may be a sense of discontent. Of individuals who think of returning to their country, others who lose their missionary enthusiasm, and others who do nothing but gossip...”<sup>29</sup>.

But Fr. Cogliandro had reflected on this actual state of affairs, and had thought that the confrere was also responsible for his own undoing. For this, he had thought if it were wise to let Fr. Braga remain in the Philippines. The latter, anyway, was ready to go back to his former Province, China, specifically to Macao. But Fr. Cogliandro was also aware of the problem with the personnel in his future jurisdiction. And he did not want to lose another confrere and further be handicapped with numbers<sup>30</sup>.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> IN 50 (October 1963) 5.

<sup>29</sup> ASC F163 Philippine: Corrispondenza (Fels a Cogliandro, Makati, undated).

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.* (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Hong Kong, 25 settembre 1963). Fr. Cogliandro remarked on the outcome of his colloquies with Fr. Braga regarding the recent happenings in the new Province: “Egli stesso, forse, ne fu causa involontaria!” Cf. *ibid.*



On 4 October 1963, two days after his arrival in Manila, Fr. Cogliandro wrote Fr. Fedrigotti, on the problem on where to assign the good old Fr. Braga. He, as new Superior, might find it hard to have the former Superior around. He was not sure if he had to consult the former Superior; and if he consulted him, he was afraid that the confrere might feel insulted. Perhaps, Fr. Braga could be confessor. But where could he be confessor? In Macao or Hong Kong or Manila?

Fr. Cogliandro had his reservations, notwithstanding the suggestions that he was receiving from some of the confreres in the Philippines. Fr. Braga's continued presence in the Philippines might inhibit the confreres from their action. There was a good number of confreres who still resented him for what had happened recently. Moreover, Fr. Braga's continued presence might also inhibit his action as Provincial<sup>31</sup>.

At the end, the Provincial asked Fr. Braga to be rector of Don Bosco Makati for the mean time, and fill up the void left by Fr. Iginio. And as always, the latter obeyed in that strong sense of wanting always to be a faithful son of Don Bosco.

Towards the end of 1963, Fr. Braga wrote the Rector Major and told him, that he awaited the confrere who would be taking over the rectorship in Makati. He claimed that he was at home and at ease with the new Provincial. He asked the Superior to send more priests, who could be catechists in the schools and who care for vocations so as to send these to the Aspirantate<sup>32</sup>. At the end, he was happy to be assigned as confessor of the aspirants in San Fernando<sup>33</sup>. He was in the midst of the vocations he always wanted to foster, if only to assure the continuity of the work he had begun.

Besides, the former Provincial of China was also scheduled to go to Hong Kong and Macao and stay there for two weeks, for another round of celebrations on the occasion of his 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ordination. He had also requested for a month-long retreat with the Jesuits to prepare for this event. Where-

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.* (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 4 ottobre 1963): "...dopo tanti anni di superiorato gli torna naturalmente difficile non correggere tutti e tutto senza lasciare un poco di libertà d'azione ai confratelli nel disimpegno delle loro incombenze... fatte poche eccezioni un buon numero lo risentono alquanto".

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.* (Braga a Ziggiioti, senza data [1963, towards the feastday of St. Renato]). Cf also SAHK Corrispondenza (Braga a Massimino, Makati, 4 marzo 1964).

<sup>33</sup> There were 120 aspirants (plus 20 others who opted to do their Aspirantate in Victorias, since their parents refused to send them to the North) and about 600 day-students, when Fr. Braga came to San Fernando. He always had this idea because of this number of pupils in the Salesian schools: that the rector should stay for the six years "se ben accettato"; but that the principal should stay longer! Cf SAHK Corrispondenza (Braga a Massimino, Makati, 10 giugno 1964).

ever he went, he was “pampered”, which he simply enjoyed<sup>34</sup>. Fr. Braga remained after all, as he has always been – a happy Salesian, nay, a Salesian always so happy being a Salesian.

### 3. Confronting the New Province

Fr. Cogliandro was one who did not waste his time. He tried to put himself immediately to task, even if he was not in the islands yet. Besides, he was very much accustomed to work as Provincial.

#### 3.1. “Stranded” in Hong Kong

Fr. Cogliandro left Turin for Hong Kong in the beginning of August 1963 to await his visa, so he could enter Manila<sup>35</sup>. He thought that he would not be staying long in Hong Kong, and that he would obtain his visa quickly, he being a citizen of the United States, so he can proceed to the Philippines and begin his work<sup>36</sup>.

From there, he had written Fr. Braga to send him without delay the documents needed so that he could get the permit to enter the Philippines. He also corresponded with Fr. Fedrigotti with regards some issues related to the new Province. On the way to Hong Kong, he had stopped in Bangkok and had discussed with the Provincial of Thailand regarding the “oriental Theologate”; he hoped to send to the councillor for formation, Fr. Pianazzi, the results of his discussion with the Provincial of Thailand. He also hoped that Fr. Fedrigotti would make the return of Fr. Iginio Ricaldone to Italy final and irrevocable.

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<sup>34</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 17 giugno 1964). Fr. Braga was, indeed, in Hong Kong on 10 July 1964 for the celebration of his 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of priesthood. Cf *ibid.* (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, San Fernando, 10 luglio 1964); SAHK Corrispondenza (Braga a Massimino, Makati, 4 marzo 1964).

<sup>35</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Hong Kong, 15 agosto 1963). While Fr. Cogliandro was still in Italy, Fr. Braga had sent him a telegram, which he received in Turin on 30 July 1963. Fr. Braga informed him that his visa for the Philippines would arrive sometime in the middle of September in Hong Kong. Moreover, he was told by Fr. Braga to get his pre-paid ticket from the Alitalia Office in Turin. Cf *ibid.* (Braga a Cogliandro, Telegram, Manila, 30 luglio 1963).

<sup>36</sup> IN 49 (September 1963) 11. Fr. Cogliandro turned out in Cheng Chau on 15 August 1963 as he waited for his visa in order to enter the Philippines. Unfortunately, he could not obtain it immediately; for this, he busied himself by giving good nights and Sunday instructions to the students of Cheng Chau.

Moreover, he would try to follow up the issues on Fr. Fortunato Zuccollo and on the other confrere of the house of Makati, and promised to keep the Superiors informed<sup>37</sup>.

Things did not come out smooth in Hong Kong for the new Provincial. Somehow, he felt himself "stranded" in the island colony. He complained to the people of Manila why he could not obtain the visa for the Philippines so soon. If only the confreres in Manila had gone to higher levels, then perhaps the permit he needed would have been obtained easily<sup>38</sup>. Nonetheless, he still hoped to arrive in Manila by 24 September of that year<sup>39</sup>.

However, Fr. Cogliandro informed Fr. Fedrigotti that he was finally leaving Hong Kong for Manila by 2 October, with Fr. Braga who had come to Hong Kong to participate in the golden anniversary of ordination of Fr. Eleuterio Bardelli<sup>40</sup>, his ex-companion in the China missions<sup>41</sup>.

Fr. Cogliandro, nonetheless, kept himself busy while he was in Hong Kong. He not only visited the Filipino clerics who were actually studying Philosophy in the Salesian Center. He immersed himself in the affairs of the Province. The confreres whom he met in Hong Kong, and letters from those of Manila, kept him abreast of the seemingly "preoccupying" situation there in the absence of the Provincial<sup>42</sup>.

### 3.2. First Encounters

Both the new Provincial and the former Provincial arrived in Manila on 2 October 1963. It had been almost two months of waiting in Hong Kong; and during that time, the school year in the Philippines was already in full swing<sup>43</sup>. Fr. Cogliandro informed Fr. Fedrigotti of the solemn welcome that the confreres have generously given him, something which he would have wanted to avoid.

<sup>37</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Hong Kong, 15 agosto 1963).

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.* (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Hong Kong, 11 settembre 1963).

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.* (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Hong Kong, 14 settembre 1963).

<sup>40</sup> Fr. Eleuterio Bardelli died in Hong Kong (10 November 1982) at 99 years, 77 years Salesian and 69 years priest. He was novice master in Hong Kong from 1946-1949, while Fr. Braga was still Provincial of the China Province.

<sup>41</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Hong Kong, 25 settembre 1963). Cf also *ibid.* (Fels a Cogliandro, Makati, undated).

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.* (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Cheng Chau 6 September 1963). "Apparentemente tutti, dal vecchio visitatore ai confratelli più volenterosi, sono assai turbati, nervosi e tensiozi! Forse il troppo lavoro, il clima, le ultime incomprensioni e divisioni hanno dato un gran colpo!". Cf *ibid.*

<sup>43</sup> IN 51 (November 1963) 5.

At the same time, he wrote the Prefect General his immediate impression of the Province as early as 4 October 1963:

“There must have been so much of intrigues between one community and another, between confreres. How much pettiness in souls called to greatness”<sup>44</sup>.

In the first two weeks of October, the Provincial had already made a round of the houses. So that by 17 October, he wrote the Prefect General, and discussed immediately some of the first issues he wanted to deal with. He tried to be prudent, careful not to effect sudden changes. And so, he had decided to let Fr. Braga stay, and appointed him as acting rector in Don Bosco Makati up to the end of the school year.

Nonetheless, Fr. Cogliandro felt that he had to effect certain changes at the beginning of the new “Salesian Year” of 1964. One of the reasons why he wanted to make such changes was because practically all the rectors of the houses were beyond their second terms. His classical examples were Fr. Clifford and Fr. Quaranta, who “doing so many things ... do not have the time to be rector”, were already at the end of their third terms. And yet, he knew he had to be cautious too, for he saw the seriousness of the lack of personnel in his Province; he did not have enough to choose from just in case he implemented the changes<sup>45</sup>.

Fr. Cogliandro began his first “official” visitation of the Province from 24 October 1963 to 14 January 1964, if only to start a first official contact with the Province, and to make his interventions as new Superior consistent and realistic. He made a round of the houses: Makati (24 to 30 October), Canlubang, Novitiate and Rizal Institute (31 October to 7 November), Victorias (11 to 18 November), Mandaluyong (20 to 28 November), Tarlac (1 to 7 December), San Fernando (7 to 16 December), and finally Cebu (8 to 14 January 1964)<sup>46</sup>. Certainly, he had anticipated some of the problems that he would encounter. But he was in no position to determine if and how Turin would respond to his requests for help to solve some of the difficulties he encountered.

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<sup>44</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 4 ottobre 1963). Another impression he got was that the confreres expected a “castigamatti” in him, something that he, however, did not expound. Cf ASC F163 Filippine: Relazione Annuale 1963-1964, 9.

<sup>45</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 17 ottobre 1963).

<sup>46</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Relazione Annuale 1963-1964, 14-17.

### 3.3. "Risks" of Another Beginning

It was normal for the new Superior to confront the issues, which lingered with the transition. In the same way, it was normal that changes should occur with the arrival of a new Superior. Fr. Cogliandro was no exception to this reality. He had to face the issues and problems of the new Province, which had been entrusted to him.

There had been difficulties with some of the confreres of the recent Visitatoria. He told Fr. Fedrigotti that he would try to do what he could with the recent situations in Makati, especially with the confreres connected with the place<sup>47</sup>. He knew that Fr. Braga, who was temporarily rector of Makati, was trying his best to normalize the situation there.

#### 3.3.1. "Casi Confratelli"

There was the issue of Fr. Fortunato Zuccollo and his fall into disgrace. He had started so well in Mandaluyong as administrator. Fr. Braga even thought of assigning him as provincial economist or even as in charge of Pius XII Catholic Center, which the Cardinal of Manila wanted the Salesians to administer<sup>48</sup>.

But Fr. Zuccollo did not know how to deal with people; he was rather crude and rude with them, a defect of character<sup>49</sup>. The fact was that he had used insult to refer to the secretary of the Cardinal of Manila, as he called the attention of the coadjutor, whom the secretary was looking<sup>50</sup>. The Cardinal's secretary happened to understand Italian. He did not have second thoughts in reporting the incident to the Cardinal, as soon as he got back to the palace<sup>51</sup>.

For this, Fr. Braga had been summoned unexpectedly to the Archbishop's Palace by the Cardinal, who was so indignant and demanded the immediate departure of Fr. Zuccollo from the Philippines, not only from the Archdiocese. Fr. Braga said he had never seen the Cardinal so "badly impressed". So that

<sup>47</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Hong Kong, 11 settembre 1963).

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.* (Braga a Ziggotti, Makati, 7 maggio 1962).

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.* (Fels a Cogliandro, Makati, undated). Fr. Fels described Fr. Zuccollo: "Ha un modo così rozzo di trattare con la gente che ci stupisce tutti. Se non con tutti, con la maggior parte, specialmente quando le sue idee non combaciano con quelle dell'altra persona". Cf *ibid.*

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*: "Ehi, vieni, qui, che c'è una bestia nera che ti vuole".

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.* (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Hong Kong, 25 settembre 1963). Fr. Cogliandro was also told that Fr. Zuccollo had organized a night party for the teachers (male and female) of Don Bosco Mandaluyong "con forzata partecipazione dei Salesiani, e lui, sembra comportandosi non troppo da prete". Cf *ibid.*

every time they met, the Cardinal reminded him of the incident and his demand. Fr. Braga had returned home that day white as sheet. And to think, that this happened “a few hours after the last good night of Fr. Igino”, where he had been put into serious embarrassment by the confrere<sup>52</sup>.

Fr. Zuccollo had to absolutely leave the Philippines, if the Salesians wanted to pacify the Cardinal, unless, of course, Fr. Quaranta, who was his rector and was a confidant of the Manila Archbishop, managed to obtain amnesty for him from the Cardinal<sup>53</sup>. Fr. Quaranta wanted, in fact, to keep Fr. Zuccollo until the end of the school year, sometime up to April of 1964. He did not want to lose yet much needed personnel for the school. For now, the confrere acted like a meek lamb, humiliated and mortified on account of his own doing<sup>54</sup>.

Fr. Zuccollo had suggested if he could go to Australia to take care of the Italian immigrants, when he was finally sent away. Fr. Cogliandro, who knew him personally since the latter also was missionary in India, had asked permission from Fr. Fedrigotti if he could write to Fr. Bortolo<sup>55</sup>, Provincial of Australia. He planned to ask Fr. Bortolo, if he could take Fr. Zuccollo into his Province<sup>56</sup>. As a second possibility, he hoped that a Bishop in Australia would accept him into a diocese, where perhaps he could work for the migrant Italians<sup>57</sup>. For this, he also awaited some news from the Apostolic Nunciature in Manila<sup>58</sup>. However, he doubted whether it was prudent to give the confrere a ministry for the care of souls. According to him, Fr. Zuccollo was not only abusive but was also imprudent in spiritual direction<sup>59</sup>.

By February 1964, Fr. Zuccollo was still in Manila. Fr. Cogliandro had not received any answer from the Australian Provincial. It was not easy to find a

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.* (Fels a Cogliandro, Makati, undated). Fr. Cogliandro knew Fr. Zuccollo rather well, since they worked together in India. (Was Fr. Zuccollo a classical case of “a confrere non grata” transferred from one Province to another?) And with what had happened, he felt he was already compromised with the Cardinal. It would be up to him to do something with Fr. Zuccollo. Cf *ibid.* (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Hong Kong, 11 settembre 1963).

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.* (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 31 ottobre 1963). Fr. Cogliandro described the confrere as a “violent man”, who sometimes could not be held responsible for his actions. He was considered as a “murmurer”. Cf *ibid.* He knew the confrere personally, since they have studied together in India. Cf *ibid.* (Braga a Fedrigotti, Hong Kong, 15 agosto 1963).

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.* (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 10 novembre 1963).

<sup>55</sup> Cf SAS 19B055. Fr. Bortolo Fedrigotti died in Melbourne, Australia (23 March 1964) at 64 years, 45 years Salesian and 39 years priest. He was Provincial of Australia from 1958 to 1964. He was brother of the Prefect General of the Salesian Society, Fr. Albino Fedrigotti.

<sup>56</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 31 ottobre 1963).

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.* (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 21 dicembre 1963).

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.* (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 24 gennaio 1964). The secretary of the Nunciature of Manila had recommended Fr. Zuccollo to the secretary of the Apostolic Nunciature in Australia. Cf *ibid.*

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.* (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, San Fernando, 10 luglio 1964).

Bishop who would adopt him<sup>60</sup>. But by 23 March, he was ready to leave for Sydney, in the hope that Cardinal Archbishop of the city would accept him in his Archdiocese<sup>61</sup>.

### 3.3.2. Another Case

Fr. Cogliandro had also conducted his own investigation on the “case of the other confrere”, who was a member of the tumultuous community in Makati where Fr. Igino was superior. This confrere was said to have been guilty of some “disgrace” while he was assigned in Don Bosco Makati. Unfortunately, this had been blown out of proportion by some students, who, probably, wanted to vindicate themselves against him, who was known as one who exacted discipline. The same accusations hurled against him were also thrown against some other confreres. But these confreres were then “protected” by Fr. Igino, who managed to silence their accusers and thus the accusations against them. Such situation revealed the deep division and contrast of the members of the same community, a contrast, which unfortunately had been brewing for some time already.

When Fr. Braga came to know of the presumed “disgrace” of this confrere, he had him transferred to Don Bosco Mandaluyong, contrary to the desire of his rector of Don Bosco Makati. There was still the need to establish the veracity of the accusations against him. However, Fr. Cogliandro had decided to put this issue aside, so as to concentrate himself with the present situation as well as with what the future might present him<sup>62</sup>.

### 3.4. Pius XII Catholic Center

Pius XII Catholic Center was a burden for the new Provincial. It probably was already a weight for the previous Superior, who managed to “escape” it with his termination as Visitatore. It was a personal wish of the Cardinal of Manila, who indeed was a friend and benefactor of the Salesians that the Salesians should take over this project. He admired and favored the Salesians

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.* (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 12 febbraio 1964).

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.* (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 12 marzo 1964). Fr. Cogliandro had heard though that Fr. Zuccollo had “gone around the world”. Postcards were received from Japan, Holland, and perhaps even from the United States. His question was: where did Fr. Zuccollo get the money? Cf *ibid.* (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 17 giugno 1964).

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*

very much; and the Salesians only desired to reciprocate such benevolence of the Cardinal for them<sup>63</sup>.

From 21 to 22 October 1961, the Archbishop had gone to visit Valdocco in Turin, where he had been welcomed like a father by the Salesians and by the boys of the Mother House. In this particular visit, he had recalled his visit to Valdocco 32 years earlier, while he was still a student. He had praised the Salesian Archbishop Piani, who had been Apostolic Delegate in the Philippines for 26 years. He had expressed how happy he was with the Salesians, and added that this was the desire of the Holy Father that “the Opera of Don Bosco developed in the Philippines, especially for the formation of convinced Catholics among the young workers”. The reason why he had come to Valdocco was to ask for more sons of Don Bosco for his Archdiocese and for the Philippines as well<sup>64</sup>.

The Cardinal specifically wanted a Salesian to administer Pius XII Catholic Center; in fact, he wanted Fr. Quaranta to be its administrator. Unfortunately, the Salesians found it difficult to refuse the prelate’s request, in spite of the lack of confreres. They felt themselves compromised to him for two motives. The first was on account of the case of Fr. Zuccollo. The second was because of what the Cardinal had done on their behalf. Through the mediation of Fr. Quaranta, he was helping the Salesians pay the debt they had incurred<sup>65</sup>. The Salesians, accepting the work of Pius XII Catholic Center, would have pacified and have shown their gratefulness to the Cardinal for what he was doing for them.

On 21 December 1963, Fr. Cogliandro had a 45-minute colloquy with Cardinal Santos. He seemingly showed himself very favourable to the Salesians. The Catholic Center was supposed to start by May 1964. The Provincial had thought of sending two confreres, one was Fr. Braga who had volunteered to work in this new presence. When he went back to speak with the Cardinal, he

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<sup>63</sup> Cf BS 95 (1971) 14-16. In an interview by a certain Carlo de Ambrogio, Fr. Quaranta described Pius XII Catholic Center in Manila as a “piccolo Valdocco” during weekends. The reason why it was established by the Archbishop of Manila was to promote and support every religious, social and cultural initiatives, and to unite and coordinate all the Catholic forces in order “to restore all things in Christ”. The Salesians, who were in the confidence of the Archbishop, have been asked to administer the center since June 1964. Cf *ibid.*

<sup>64</sup> Cf BS 85 (1961) 415.

<sup>65</sup> ASC F164 Filippine: Relazione Annuale 1961-1962, 4. A great lament of Fr. Braga regarding Don Bosco Mandaluyong was related to the finances: the non-payment of the debts and its interests incurred from a certain bank (BPI? Monte de Piedad?) Or “che minacciava il buon nome salesiano e che avrebbe portato gravi danni alle altre case avendo noi tutti lo stesso nome ‘Don Bosco’”. But the Archbishop of Manila saved the Salesians from such embarrassment and humiliation. Consequently, the debts of the school were now being paid regularly, so that esteem for the school was little by little being recovered. Cf *ibid.*



planned to present three names (Carreño, Quaranta, Braga) from whom the Cardinal could choose freely; that whoever he chose would be in charge of the religious community. With all probability, the Cardinal would choose Fr. Quaranta<sup>66</sup>.

In spite of his effort to comply with the request of the Cardinal, Fr. Cogliandro still considered this Pius XII Catholic Center as a “white elephant”, which consumed the much needed personnel from the other houses. He was forced to condescend to the Cardinal, if only to save the name of Don Bosco<sup>67</sup>.

There were two dormitories, one for boys and another for girls. But these dormitories were really small rooms with one or two beds. The Daughters of Mary Help of Christians would take care of the girls’ dormitory. But the chapel, the cafeteria, the cultural organizations were common. The Cardinal was not yet disposed to present a contract, but wanted to study first the situation for one year and then decide<sup>68</sup>.

The Cardinal’s request was to the interest of Fr. Quaranta, who had been committed earlier by Fr. Braga to put personnel to the Cardinal’s new pastoral center in United Nations Avenue. Fr. Quaranta had to maintain his all-important connection with the Cardinal; Fr. Braga had to keep the Cardinal at peace with the Salesians. The latter had earlier attempted to fill in the requested administrator by the Cardinal to lead the Catholic Center. He had proposed Fr. Carreño; but he had to re-assign the confrere as novice master. He had sent Fr. Zuccolo who had still not provoked the ire of the prelate; but even he had to be re-called for lack of administrator for Don Bosco Mandaluyong. These seeming indecisions of Fr. Braga, however, had not pleased the Cardinal who had hoped that his man, Fr. Quaranta be the one assigned. This confrere was “protected and loved in a special manner by the Cardinal”. He had been helped financially by the Cardinal; the problem, however, was that he was still rector of Don Bosco Mandaluyong. Fr. Cogliandro did not yet intend to effect changes in Mandaluyong, except for Fr. Zuccollo whom he had to send elsewhere<sup>69</sup>.

The new Provincial inherited the task of putting the personnel to this new presence, at a time when the Province was struggling with the lack of personnel. Besides, the Superiors in Turin did not know and hence did not yet approve such new presence offered by the Manila Archbishop. This further puzzled Fr. Cogliandro why his predecessor had accepted this work from the Cardinal. He

<sup>66</sup> ASC F163 Philippine: Corrispondenza (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 21 dicembre 1963).

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.* (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 10 novembre 1963).

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.* (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 17 ottobre 1963).

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*

asked himself why he should be forced to accept a house where he did not have anyone to put and where he was reluctant to accept and to give personnel<sup>70</sup>.

#### 4. Don Bosco College-Seminary

The prospective for vocations in the Philippines was very good. In fact, the existence of the junior seminary since 1954 was assuring the output of vocation perspectives. These, if ever, would assure the Salesians of the Province the continuity of the work, which they have started.

##### 4.1. *First Post-Novitiate*

The Provincial of the China-Philippines Province, Fr. Acquistapace wrote to Fr. Hubert Amielh, Provincial of Lyons, France, on 27 May 1957, informing him that there would be the first profession of the first novices of Manila that Friday. There were eight of them: six Filipinos, a Vietnamese and a Chinese. Moreover, there were ten novices, this time all Filipinos, who were about to begin their Novitiate after<sup>71</sup>. His question, however, was where to send the newly professed.

Fr. Acquistapace had written on 12 April 1957 to Fr. Cogliandro, Provincial of the United States West Province. He had planned to send the newly professed to Fr. Cogliandro's Province. He informed him that the novices in Manila had finished their high school; their Novitiate was scheduled to end by 31 May. He asked him: if these Salesians remained three years in the Salesian studentate of Philosophy in the U.S.A., would they be able to obtain a degree which would be recognized by the Philippine government? What would be needed for their going to the U.S.A. and for their maintenance? The reason he gave to Fr. Cogliandro why he thought of sending the newly professed to him

<sup>70</sup> ASC CB835 Pius XII Catholic Center. The Center was never canonically erected; it was finally closed in 1974. The Pius XII Catholic Center was actually a work shared with the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians. There were two dormitories at the Center, one for boys, the other for girls. These dormitories were really small rooms with one or two beds. The chapel, the cafeteria and cultural organizations were common. The Daughters of Mary Help of Christians were supposed to take care of the girls' dormitory of the Archdiocesan center. Cf ASC F163 Philippine: Corrispondenza (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 21 dicembre 1963).

<sup>71</sup> SAHK Corrispondenza (Acquistapace a Amielh, Manila 27 maggio 1957). Fr. Hubert Placide Amielh (1885-1981) was master of novices (1928-1945) and Provincial of Lyons (1945-1958). Cf SAS 03B005.

was simple: "You know that everything which is American is sacred and esteemed in the Philippines"<sup>72</sup>.

This move to ask Fr. Cogliandro the possibility of hosting the Filipino clerics came about after the meeting of the provincial council with those in charge of Aspirantates and studentates of Philosophy. After having considered the proposals of Manila and Hong Kong, the development of the works in the Philippines, the suggestions of competent persons and the results of several meetings, Fr. Acquistapace had two possibilities. He could either send the newly professed to the studentate in the U.S.A., even if this would entail a lot of sacrifice and expense. He was sure at least, that the clerics would receive a complete formation adapted to them who considered America as a teacher and guide in the scholastic organization. Or he could put a residence for the students of Philosophy in the house of Don Bosco Mandaluyong, with its own classrooms and dormitory, but sharing the chapel and refectory of the house. For this, he would assign a formator, who could be in charge of the students and could give them Salesian formation. At the same time, he would send them for their humanistic formation to the college "exclusive for religious in the Abbey of the Benedictines". This was important, for without the college formation, the local clerics would be unable to teach in the schools during the period of their practical training<sup>73</sup>.

Fr. Acquistapace submitted his plans to Turin for consultation, in order that by the beginning of June 1957, he would know where to send the clerics. His plan to send the newly professed to the U.S.A. did not materialize. Instead, he decided to make the newly professed stay in Manila. He placed the young Salesian Fr. Ferdinando Rossotto in charge of the new Salesians, who were now ready to commence their study of Philosophy in Muntinglupa for the school year 1957-1958<sup>74</sup>.

But somehow, this first year experiment of Philosophy in the Philippines did not prove positive. Fr. Acquistapace had to close the post-Novitiate and re-assigned Fr. Rossotto outside of the Philippines. He wrote to the confrere from Saigon, offering him to choose which of the two houses of Vietnam he wished to go to and work<sup>75</sup>. He also hinted to Fr. Tohill that Hong Kong might have to host the Filipino clerics<sup>76</sup>.

<sup>72</sup> SAHK Corrispondenza (Acquistapace a Cogliandro, Manila 12 aprile 1957): "Lei sa che tutto quello che è U.S. nelle Filippine è sacrosanto e stimatissimo".

<sup>73</sup> SAHK Minutes of provincial council ([Manila] 11 aprile 1957).

<sup>74</sup> SAHK Corrispondenza (Acquistapace a Rossotto, Hong Kong, 7 agosto 1957). Muntinglupa hosted both the Novitiate and the post-Novitiate for the school year 1957-1958. However, the latter would be suppressed immediately after.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.* (Acquistapace a Rossotto, Saigon, 6 maggio 1958).

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.* (Acquistapace a Tohill, Manila [ ], maggio 1958).

The Superiors of Turin informed the Provincial that the students of Philosophy of the Philippines would join those of the studentate of Cheng Chau<sup>77</sup>. And so it was, that in the coming school year of 1958, the Filipino clerics were to go to Hong Kong to prepare themselves to work in the Philippines.

By September 1962, Fr. Braga, as Superior of the Visitatoria, could not just easily accept the accommodations of the Philippine government with regards the young clerics who came back from Hong Kong. The government esteemed so much the Salesians, that it tolerated the young Salesians, in spite of their lack of credentials. They generously immersed themselves in the actual Salesian work for their practical training in the various Salesian houses; but they were not really qualified to teach. This was unacceptable to Fr. Braga: “in conscience, I do not feel selling fire flies as lanterns”. He knew that to make the clerics study Philosophy in the Philippines would demand four years of schooling, so that they could obtain a title and be recognized by the Philippine government<sup>78</sup>. But then, he was in a hurry to have clerics who could attract vocations.

Earlier, he had made provisions to qualify the clerics for the study of Philosophy. He asked them to do a year of pre-Philosophy “to render them capable to study Latin texts”. Only after, they were made to study Philosophy and other subject matters, which should help the young clerics to obtain a degree<sup>79</sup>. However, that meant that the Superior would have to look for someone who could teach Latin to them.

#### 4.2. *Plan for an International Philosophate*

Sometime in 1962, the Superiors in Turin had been thinking of setting up an international studentate of Philosophy for the Salesian clerics of East Asia. In their mind, this center of study could be a place of convergence of clerics from different “Salesian origins” and which would provide them a “common Salesian formation”. They received various suggestions on where to put up this studentate.

Fr. Bernard Tohill, who succeeded Fr. Acquistapace as Provincial of China, declared that the studentate in Cheng Chau was already international. It served three Provinces and four countries: China-Vietnam, Japan-Korea and the Philippines<sup>80</sup>. However, Fr. Archimede Pianazzi, actual councillor for formation,

<sup>77</sup> SAHK Minutes of Provincial Council (Hong Kong, 15 maggio 1958).

<sup>78</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Braga a Pianazzi, Makati, 9 settembre 1962): “in coscienza non mi sento di vendere lucciole per lanterne”.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>80</sup> ASC F157 Cina: Corrispondenza (Tohill a Ziggioni, Hong Kong, 7 agosto 1961).

was not so much in favor of the center in Hong Kong. He considered it neither the ideal nor the safest place for the moment. Besides, he claimed that the Salesian clerics from Japan would not go to Hong Kong willingly. Instead, he favored the suggestion of Fr. Braga, that the best place to establish the studentate was logically in the Philippines<sup>81</sup>. The only problem was that Fr. Braga could only show him where he planned to put up one, not the actual center itself<sup>82</sup>. So when the new Salesian studentate in Hong Kong was inaugurated on the feast of St. Dominic Savio in May 1963, and was blessed by the Apostolic Nuncio, Msgr. Giuseppe Caprio<sup>83</sup>, the Filipino Salesian clerics were still there.

Then, there was the issue with Fr. Carreño. The latter had sent him a telegram informing him that the parents of the newly professed had refused to grant permission to their children, who were still minors, to go to Hong Kong for their study of Philosophy<sup>84</sup>. The confrere decided to start the college and the post-Novitiate in the Philippines, even if there were only three newly professed to start it<sup>85</sup>. He demanded that the 11 clerics who were already in Hong Kong be recalled<sup>86</sup>, all this, even if Fr. Braga or the new Provincial was against his initiative<sup>87</sup>. He even appealed to the Rector Major if only to explain his cause<sup>88</sup>. Fr. Cogliandro had written him that he should have tried to persuade the parents to let their children go to Hong Kong, being an eloquent speaker as he was. In response, Fr. Carreño had answered him with a twenty-page letter<sup>89</sup>! Indeed, what a way to start his Provincialship.

#### 4.3. Fr. Carreño

If the college-seminary in Canlubang came to be, it was because of the challenge, which a Salesian put up against his confreres and Superiors. Fr. Jose

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.* (Pianazzi, note behind the letter of Fr. Tohill to Fr. Ziggiotti).

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.* (Massimino a Ziggiotti, Hong Kong, 1 giugno 1963).

<sup>84</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Hong Kong, 11 settembre 1963).

<sup>85</sup> These three (Genaro Gegantoni, Celestino Lingad Jr. and Felipe Torres) did not go anymore to Hong Kong to study Philosophy, but instead were the pioneers of the studentate of Philosophy in Canlubang.

<sup>86</sup> The clerics who were actually in Hong Kong for their Philosophy were: (3<sup>rd</sup> year) Angeles, Espiritu, Evangelista, Manalili, Navarro, Peroy, (1<sup>st</sup> year) Carmona, Cura, Fernandez, Intal, Panizales. There were also clerics studying in Hong Kong, who were Italians, and who were destined to work in the Philippines: (2<sup>nd</sup> year) Pellizzato and Rota, and (1<sup>st</sup> year) Furlan and Venturini, respectively.

<sup>87</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Hong Kong, 25 settembre 1963).

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.* (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Hong Kong, 14 settembre 1963).

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.* (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Hong Kong, 11 settembre 1963).

Luis Carreño, as a good Basque, did not shy away from his plan to put up a college for the clerics. He was adamant that the newly professed clerics should no longer leave the Philippines to go to Hong Kong. Instead, he firmly believed that they should study Philosophy and obtain their college degree in the Philippines. For him, the time and place were now just right: in Canlubang, a college for the young Salesians and for those who wanted to become Salesians could be put up.

Fr. Carreño was not only a respected man; he was also a very well esteemed Salesian. When Fr. Clifford wrote Fr. Ziggiotti from Cebu on 4 January 1962 on who could be Provincial in the Philippines, he named Fr. Carreño, whom he considered as "a most loveable person, a solid Salesian"<sup>90</sup>. The latter had not even arrived in the Philippines.

Fr. Braga expressed his joy to Fr. Fedrigotti for the appointment of Fr. Carreño to Manila, since the presence of this confrere would be of great profit for the Visitatoria, for the confreres, as well as for the novices. The confrere had experience and virtues. He would be good in preaching retreats, since "we lack so much people of such gifts"<sup>91</sup>. Moreover, according to Fr. Braga, one who would be happy for the appointment of Fr. Carreño was the Cardinal of Manila himself. Of this, he would have the chance to inform him during an audience scheduled that week<sup>92</sup>. He already had a possible assignment for the confrere: that before he goes to the Philippines, he should first pass by the United States and make propaganda for the Philippines, especially for the construction of the new Aspirantate<sup>93</sup>.

Fr. Braga hoped that Fr. Carreño could come to the Philippines soon and substitute Fr. Vincenzo Ricaldone as novice master. This was in fact Fr. Antal's<sup>94</sup> suggestion as assignment for Fr. Carreño<sup>95</sup>. There were ten novices preparing for the profession; and there might be 12, who might be starting the Novitiate by May of 1962<sup>96</sup>. Indeed, he could not but manifest his pleasure to

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.* (Clifford a Ziggiotti, Cebu 4 gennaio 1962).

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.* (Braga a Fedrigotti, Makati, 11 gennaio 1962).

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.* Fr. Braga even stated that the Catholic agency for tourism (which was owned by the Archdiocese of Manila) would take care of the processing of Fr. Carreno's visa; the curia would even pay the ticket for his trip. Somehow, Fr. Carreño was not alien to Cardinal Santos.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>94</sup> SAS 10B010 Fr. Janos Antal: born in Csoz, Hungary (10 September 1892), first profession in Lombriasco, Turin (29 September 1910), ordained in Madrid (15 June 1919), died in Piosasco, Turin (1 May 1967) 75 years, 57 years Salesian and 48 years priest. He was Provincial of Hungary (1933-1951) and Ecuador (1951-1952) when he was elected as Catechist General (1952-1964) and member of the General Council.

<sup>95</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Braga a Ziggiotti, Makati, 7 maggio 1962).

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.* (Braga a Ziggiotti, Makati 9 marzo 1962).

Fr. Ziggitti when Fr. Carreño arrived on 7 May 1962 together with another Salesian, Fr. Murray<sup>97</sup>.

#### 4.4. *Don Bosco College-Seminary*

At first, Fr. Archimede Pianazzi<sup>98</sup>, missionary and former Superior of India, who knew both Fr. Carreño and Fr. Cogliandro, since all three of them worked in India, showed himself unfavourable to Fr. Carreño's intent that the clerics should study Philosophy in the Philippines<sup>99</sup>. He did not agree with the move of Fr. Carreño to start a college in Canlubang. For him, Fr. Carreño exaggerated, especially when the latter said that Hong Kong was no good for the young Filipino Salesians<sup>100</sup>.

As superior-in-charge of formation, but who never had a direct knowledge of the situations in both Hong Kong and the Philippine, Fr. Pianazzi had to express his opinion on the position of Fr. Carreño<sup>101</sup>. He defended the studentate in Cheng Chau. According to him, the place and the house were strategically in a good and healthy location, with good food. The Salesians there were qualified to be professors of Canon Law and Theology, as well as Pedagogy; they knew English too. Indeed, one could obtain an English degree in Hong Kong, even if perhaps this was not recognized in the Philippines, where the American rather the British system was followed. Furthermore, it was calumnious for Fr. Carreño to say that the Filipinos who went to Hong Kong came home sick with tuberculosis<sup>102</sup>.

However, he admitted that there was no one qualified to teach Philosophy in Cheng Chau. This was because the confrere who taught the course had been appointed Provincial. Moreover, he agreed that the professors at Cheng Chau were indeed mediocre in their preparation. Nonetheless, he countered that there was no personnel to run a college in the Philippines, even if Fr. Carreño thought it would be easy to obtain personnel from India or Spain. As the superior for

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.* (Braga a Ziggitti, Makati, 7 maggio 1962).

<sup>98</sup> SAS 23B309 Fr. Archimede Pianazzi: born in Modena, Italy (30 November 1906), first profession in Castel De' Britti, Bologna (16 September 1923), ordained in Shillong, India (20 July 1930), died in Rome, Italy (10 December 2000) at 94 years, 77 years Salesian and 70 years priest. He was Provincial of Gauhati and Bangalore, in India, until he was elected as councillor for formation and member of the General Council (1958-1972).

<sup>99</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Ziggitti, 1963-1964).

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.* Fr. Pianazzi and Fr. Carreño both worked in India, where they served as Provincials.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.* (Ziggitti, 1963-1964).

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*

formation, he knew the difficulty to find personnel for the studentates of the Society<sup>103</sup>.

The superior for formation also confessed that he really did not know Manila well, so as to be able to judge the merit of Fr. Carreño's plan. His impression was that Canlubang was too far from any university administered by religious. Moreover, he believed that no Salesian house in Manila was ready to host the students from Canlubang who would need to go to these universities in Manila<sup>104</sup>.

Nonetheless, Fr. Pianazzi was soon disposed to change his mind and to show himself favourable to the idea that the Filipino Salesians need not anymore go to Hong Kong. He himself had told Fr. Cogliandro that they could remain in the Philippines. On 24 September 1963, he wrote to the new Provincial and expressed his opinion regarding this issue<sup>105</sup>.

"When I visited the new Novitiate with Fr. Braga, he told me that he was intending to put there also the philosophers, and I fully agree that the communities will never be big enough so as to be independent, as long as they are separated"<sup>106</sup>.

The "renegade initiative" of Fr. Carreño was now in full swing. Hence, the college had to go on now. There was no turning back. Its originator was adamant. And he was the best to advance the initiative, this, in spite of the opposition of Fr. Braga and Fr. Cogliandro. Obviously, he now had a "padrino" in Fr. Pianazzi.

Fr. Carreño was indeed a poet, a dreamer at that, a man of visions, as St. John Bosco. He was of a different mind. Perhaps, Fr. Braga cradled the Filipinos paternalistically, in consonance with his character and sentiment. He thought that the novel Salesians were surer to be formed in his "beloved" China, not in the Philippines. Instead, Fr. Carreño was of the Spanish mind, already accustomed to the Filipinos as he belonged to those who were responsible in history in the moulding of the Filipinos. Although he was new in the Philippines, and yet he provisioned what he believed the Salesian Society needed most in the Philippines, if only that it might indeed truly progress.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.* One wonders how Fr. Iriarte and Fr. Lopez made it to San Jose Seminary. These two lived in Mandaluyong and went to the Jesuits. They were ordained in the Philippines, in the house of Mandaluyong. Although, Fr. Iriarte said in an interview, that their studying with the Jesuits at San Jose was because this was a way of paying some debts that the Jesuits supposedly had incurred to the Salesians in China.

<sup>105</sup> ASC F163 Philippine: Corrispondenza (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 31 ottobre 1963).

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*



For this, he provisioned a college where the newly professed Filipino Salesians should study in the Philippines “in loco” and obtain a degree to be direct educators in the Salesian schools.

Fr. Cogliandro, who still had not arrived in the Philippines, was not yet of the idea of Fr. Carreño. His first logical move was to maintain the previous practice in the Visitatoria. For this, although he still had not reached the Philippines and had not heard the confreres of the Philippines, he authorized the departure of the newly professed clerics to Hong Kong<sup>107</sup>. He would later retract this move.

#### 4.5. Why the College

After more than a year since he arrived, Fr. Carreño appealed on 5 September 1963 to the Rector Major as a last instance, in order to prevent the newly professed clerics of the Philippines from leaving the country and going to Hong Kong to study Philosophy there<sup>108</sup>. He knew that the in-coming Provincial was against his initiative even without listening to his reasons; the out-going Visitatore was also against his initiative in spite of having heard his reasons. However, of the four members of the provincial council, three were against the going of the clerics to Hong Kong<sup>109</sup>. Besides, practically all the rectors, too, of the Province agreed with his plan<sup>110</sup>.

Fr. Carreño believed that it was now anachronistic to send the young Filipino Salesian clerics to Hong Kong. It was now time that these young Salesians should remain in the Philippines. Perhaps, they might be today “naïve and inarticulate”, but later, they would realize how unfair it was to have been sent else-

<sup>107</sup> The newly professed Salesians constituted the 6<sup>th</sup> batch of novices of 1962-1963: Paul Chang, Jose Ferrer, Genaro Gegantoni, Celestino Lingad Jr. and Felipe Torres. The latter three were clerics; and they were the ones scheduled to go to Hong Kong for Philosophy. Cf *Salesian Novices in the Philippines: 1956-1997*. [unpublished manuscript]. Sacred Heart Novitiate, Lawa-an. Cebu, 1997, p. 5.

<sup>108</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Carreño a Ziggotti, Canlubang, 5 settembre 1963).

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.* The dissenting voice from the others (Baggio, Roozen, Buchta, Clifford) was Quaranta “che un movimento di cassa di 15 mila dollari al mese è in perpetuo debito, dovendo pagare una caterva di professori giacché dei Salesiani diplomati non ce n'è uno”.

<sup>110</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Carreño a Ziggotti, Canlubang, 5 settembre 1963). The members of the council of the Visitatoria at the arrival of Fr. Cogliandro were Braga (Visitatore), Fels, Baggio, Buchta and Quaranta. Current rectors of this year 1963 were Baggio (Victorias), Buchta (Canlubang in-charge), Clifford (Cebu), Quaranta (Mandaluyong), I. Ricaldone (Makati), Roozen (San Fernando) and Schwarz (Tarlac).

where, influenced by the growing nationalism in their own country<sup>111</sup>. For him, this “exodus” of these clerics was unjustifiable and abusive; and for this, his personal appeal to Fr. Ziggotti was to put an end to this. He did not waste word why he thought this way, as he used all possible reasons he could muster - Canon Law, Philosophy, Salesian Constitutions, etc. - to justify his position, revealing not only his intelligence, but above all his wisdom.

Philippine Law stated that minors should have the permission of their parents before leaving the country<sup>112</sup>. From the experience of Fr. Carreño, the parents of the clerics in the Philippines did not want their children to leave the country. It was not right to persuade the mothers of these clerics to allow the expatriation of their children, by asking them in the name of God, or by intimidating them, or by promising them a brilliant career for their children<sup>113</sup>.

The questions of Fr. Carreño were precise. Why deprive these clerics from seeing their parents and their families regularly? Why punish these families, who in fact have given the Salesians their children? Why defraud them of the hopes they have put in the Congregation? They were told that to send their children abroad was a “sacrifice”, which for him was a useless one. Why? And these clerics came back to Manila without any qualification to teach in the Salesian schools<sup>114</sup>.

For Fr. Carreño, sending the young clerics abroad was “anti-Filipino”. The current tendency in the Philippines was to nationalize the schools, meaning, to send away foreign teachers, to be able to provide work to those who were intellectually unemployed. In the Philippines, it was a fact that there was no one Filipino Salesian who had a diploma, after ten years! Besides, in the Philippines, it would not be difficult to start a college. On the contrary, it was easy to obtain from the government the accreditation of the studentate, or even just the permit to open a school. Fr. Carreño exclaimed:

“Oh, if only the Salesians had asked ... if only the Salesians could have wanted to ask”<sup>115</sup>.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*: “...potranno...imprimere alla loro protesta l’accento stridente di un senso nazionale oltraggiato”.

<sup>112</sup> The aspirants entered the Novitiate after their high school, so that they were normally age 16 when they became novices. Thus, they made their first profession practically at age 17. And then they were set off to Hong Kong for Philosophy. Truly, they were really minors when they left the Philippines.

<sup>113</sup> ASC F163 Philippine: Corrispondenza (Carreño a Ziggotti, Canlubang, 5 settembre 1963). Obviously the motivations used to convince the parents to allow their children to leave the Philippines were pragmatic and deceiving. It was the mind of the time though, where vocation to the priesthood, not really to the consecrated life, was seen as a career and one of prestige.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.* Here, Fr. Carreño quoted St. Thomas in his *Summa Theologiae* (1a 2a 2ae q.104).

What should happen to the young clerics should be the ordinary, not the extraordinary. Therefore, they should study in their place of origin<sup>116</sup>. It was the duty of the Congregation to provide the personnel for the studies of the confreres<sup>117</sup>. There were studentates, but there was not one with the qualification. Fr. Carreño was ready to go to Europe in order to look for the teaching personnel, if only the Superiors would allow him. In the Philippines, help was needed, not the law. Even outside professors could be brought into the studentate, if only to have the teaching personnel. He reminded the Rector Major that he spoke once in front of the General Council sometime in January 1947, and for this he was given two professors for the studentate in Madras, India<sup>118</sup>.

The Bishop of Lipa<sup>119</sup>, who was a good friend of the Salesians, remarked, on the occasion of his visit to Canlubang, that in San Pablo City, the Jesuits had 800 students. Of these, about 100 helped in re-Christianizing the Diocese, especially those in the barrios. The students of the Canossian Sisters were doing the same thing for the Diocese too. And the Salesians – what could they contribute with their Oratories and young clerics? The answer of Fr. Carreño was both tragic and comic: the young clerics could be of help only after three years, since they had to study Philosophy in the land of Confucius<sup>120</sup>!

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>117</sup> *Costituzioni della Società di San Francesco di Sales...*, art. 88: "Suo [dell'Ispettore] ufficio principale è di promuovere nell'Ispettorìa che gli è affidata il bene della Società, l'osservanza delle Costituzioni, la carità fraterna; d'invigilare sulla formazione religiosa dei novizi e dei giovani soci; di aver cura che i chierici facciano debitamente gli Studi Filosofici e Teologici prescritti dalle Costituzioni; di promuoverli, giusta le prescrizioni, agli Ordini, dopo udito il Consiglio della Casa e avuto l'assenso del Consiglio Ispettoriale; di provvedere assiduamente all'istruzione ed al perfezionamento dei soci coadiutori nelle rispettive arti od officii; di dirigere e controllare l'amministrazione dei beni tanto dell'Ispettorìa quanto di ciascuna Casa di essa".

<sup>118</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Carreño a Ziggotti, Canlubang, 5 settembre 1963). To note that Fr. Carreño was Provincial of South India from 1945-1951.

<sup>119</sup> Bishop Alejandro Olalia had granted Fr. Baga on 18 June 1960 the permission for the erection of the Salesian house of Canlubang, which was in fact officially canonically established by Fr. Ziggotti on 21 September 1960. The house was dedicated to St. Dominic Savio and was described as having an Oratory, a school and an Aspirantate. Cf. ASC F652 Canlubang St. Dominic Savio (Olalia to Braga, Lipa, 18 June 1960); *ibid.* (Ziggotti, Decretum canonicae erectionis domus 21 septembris 1960). Later, the Salesian house dedicated to the Sacred Heart would be canonically erected by Fr. Ziggotti on 15 May 1964. Cf. ASC F419 Canlubang Sacro Cuore (Ziggotti, Decretum canonicae erectionis domus, 15 maii 1964).

<sup>120</sup> The Diocese of Lipa, of which the province of Laguna was then part, was erected on 10 April 1910. It was elevated into an Archdiocese on 29 June 1972. The Diocese of San Pablo (Laguna) was created on 28 November 1966. The Jesuits directed the school Ateneo de San Pablo near the Cathedral of San Pablo City. The Canossian Sisters also had their own college there. Both involved their students in the pastoral life of the local church by asking them to help in the teaching of catechism in the public schools.

The good Bishop of Lipa added a fact: there were about a million babies born in the Philippines yearly. Only about 200,000 were baptized. The reason for such a limited number of baptisms was on account of the lack of priests and catechists<sup>121</sup>. If this reality continued, in 20 years time, "...the Catholics will only be 50%". At the arrival of the Americans, the Philippines were 95% Catholic. Fr. Carreño added a fact taken from Italy itself. There was the same number of Catholics in the Philippines during the time of Don Bosco. At that time though, there were 150,000 priests in Italy. In the Philippines, there were 3,700. Don Bosco gave five to six thousand priests. The Salesians in the Philippines seemed to be happy with five or six novices every year. He, however, was not<sup>122</sup>!

In Hong Kong, the Filipino clerics did not study Spanish; while in the Philippines, it was obligatory in the University, and for four years. They did not study Greek, or the national language, useful for their apostolate. In Hong Kong, they had to ration water; in the Philippines, they died of flooding! Hong Kong did not have the Christian life that existed in the Philippines. One could die of claustrophobia in Hong Kong. They had a miserable library in their study center. Fr. Carreño's list of reasons why the Filipinos should not go to Hong Kong was seemingly endless.

Fr. Carreño knew the professors only by their fruits; and he expected something more and better. This, he asked once more: why deprive these clerics from seeing their parents and their families regularly? Why punish their families who had given the Salesians their children? Why defraud them of the hopes they have put in the Congregation? These young people came from well-off families. And some of them returned from Hong Kong sick with tuberculosis<sup>123</sup>.

The ever zealous Spanish Salesian insisted that the "new house" of Canlubang could accommodate 50 novices and professed members, plus 12 professors; and there was still a big space for future constructions if the need would come. He offered a suggestion to his co-national, Fr. Modesto Bellido, superior-in-charge of the missions. He could send to the Philippines from Europe about 20 novices as he did once for India. They could learn Tagalog easily.

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<sup>121</sup> ASC F163 Philippine: Corrispondenza (Carreño a Ziggotti, Canlubang, 5 settembre 1963). Here the apostolic zeal and tenacity of the Salesian Fr. Giovanni Benna, whose first assignment in the Philippines was Canlubang, provided this added impetus to indeed work for the catechisation of the Philippines. Olalia, Carreño, Benna – these three saw the importance and the urgency of this ministry!

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.* (Carreño a Ziggotti, Canlubang, 5 settembre 1963).

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*

They could integrate early with the locals; in five years, they could acquire, if they wanted, the citizenship of the Philippines<sup>124</sup>.

For Fr. Carreño, what should be done at that moment were the following. Recall the clerics, who were in Hong Kong, those in their first year<sup>125</sup>. Start the process of obtaining the accreditation of the college with the scholastic authorities. Doing so, after only four years, the first Filipino Salesians could already be qualified to teach in the schools. Besides, the foreign clerics destined to the Philippines should already go and study in the Philippines, without going to Hong Kong. They and the Filipinos, studying and formed together, would be to their advantage<sup>126</sup>.

The rest of the Filipino clerics already in Hong Kong would only be recalled the next year, since they were in the midst of their school year. By 24 April 1964, it was announced to them that by the beginning of August that year, they would all be going back to the Philippines to continue their studies in the new studentate<sup>127</sup>. The year earlier, the last Filipino clerics to finish their Philosophy and graduate in Hong Kong had returned<sup>128</sup>.

#### 4.6. *Carreño Was Right*

The problem regarding Fr. Carreño was referred to Fr. Cogliandro while he was waiting for his visa to enter the Philippines. He had previously authorized the departure of the newly professed Filipino Salesians to Hong Kong. He knew that Fr. Carreño was pushing very hard for the clerics to remain in the Philippines. And he had expressed an early opinion on this extraordinary confrere whom he knew personally.

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<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*: "Questi giovani imparerebbero il Tagalog e potrebbero prendere la cittadinanza di qui in 5 anni, insieme ai titoli di insegnamento; la mescola coi filippini sarebbe vantaggiosa per ambedue".

<sup>125</sup> Those who were in their first year in Hong Kong were Pablo Barrientos, Demetrio Carmona, Noe Cumla, Antonio Cura, Rolando Fernandez, Felipe Intal, Herman Ong, Joaquin Palacio, Victor Panizales and Arturo Subaldo. They belonged to the 5<sup>th</sup> batch of novices of the year 1961-1962.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.* (Carreño a Ziggotti, Canlubang, 5 settembre 1963).

<sup>127</sup> IN 57 (May 1964) 10. The Filipino clerics who were re-called to Manila were Demetrio Carmona, Antonio Cura, Rolando Fernandez, Felipe Intal and Victor Panizales. In that same group were the clerics Felice Furlan and Giuliano Venturini who were preparing to go to the Philippines.

<sup>128</sup> IN 56 (June 1963) 10. On 7 May 1963, the following brothers returned to the Philippines from Hong Kong: Vicente Angeles, Edgardo Espiritu, Marciano Evangelista, Alfredo Manalili and Ronald Peroy. It would be interesting to make a study of the formation given to the clerics who studied in Hong Kong, specifically to the Filipino clerics.

"He is a poet, and what is he not? He is a scholar in any subject. His poetry is a healthy poetry, for what I know and for what I have known personally, now and in the past; it is a poetry that does good for the soul, a poetry crystallinely Salesian, and knowledge of Don Bosco which is orthodox. If the plant is known by the fruits: we have an excellent trunk, even if - among others - it is adorned with poetic flowers"<sup>129</sup>.

The new Provincial had written Fr. Albino Fedrigotti on 31 October 1963, hardly a month when he arrived in Manila. He wanted to discuss some of the more urgent issues of the new Salesian Province. One of these was the need to prepare the clerics, to make them acquire a degree, which would qualify them to teach in the schools during their tirocinium. He gave an example: no one of the Salesians assigned in Cebu was permitted to teach because they didn't have diplomas based on government law. The new Salesians were expected not only to teach catechism, when they arrived in the houses. Externs were practically the ones who were running the schools, according to Fr. Cogliandro, since they were the ones who were qualified. And they sometimes made it felt that they considered the Salesians inferior to them, due to lack of any college qualification<sup>130</sup>.

For the new Provincial, it was high time that the Salesians in the Philippines should start their own college for the Salesian clerics, with faculty and facilities. There was the space and the terrain. There was the proximity of schools to which the clerics could go for further studies, and thus work as practical trainees with qualifications. So that when the clerics go to the schools, they could be esteemed by their lay collaborators; their influence would increase among the students too<sup>131</sup>.

Fr. Cogliandro, after a moment of hesitation, had allowed the permanence in the Philippines of those who had recently made their profession in San Fernando and were supposed to go to Hong Kong. Although, he decided not to recall to Manila the Filipino clerics who were still in Hong Kong, even if his council would have wanted them re-called immediately<sup>132</sup>. School had already started in Chen Chau. Moreover, there was not enough space yet in the new studentate in Canlubang<sup>133</sup>.

Indeed, Fr. Carreño's initiative had proven timely and to the advantage of Fr. Cogliandro. Three clerics, "very capable", who had studied in Hong Kong,

<sup>129</sup> ASC F163 Philippine: Corrispondenza (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 31 ottobre 1963).

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.* (Cogliandro a Fedrigotto, Makati, 31 ottobre 1963).

<sup>132</sup> The 5<sup>th</sup> novitiate batch (1961-1962) was already in Hong Kong for their first year of Philosophy.

<sup>133</sup> ASC F163 Philippine: Corrispondenza (Cogliandro a Fedrigotto, Makati, 31 ottobre 1963).

were disqualified from teaching by the Philippine government, because they did not have the academic title. Fr. Carreño was correct after all; and Fr. Cogliandro could not and would not deny this.

History could have repeated itself in the case of the Salesians. In the past, the religious orders in the Philippines had been very slow in the creation and formation of a native clergy, as well as the presence of locals in their orders. The Provincial had changed his opinion on Fr. Carreño's move; nay, he had to change his mind, wise as he was. The college envisioned by Fr. Carreño solved one of his present difficulties as Superior. For him, the current superior now was Fr. Carreño, "the only one who can be rector", who was doing such a wonderful work and for the recognition of the college<sup>134</sup>. For the coming August, Canlubang, in fact, expected about 50 clerics between novices and students of Philosophy<sup>135</sup>.

Unfortunately, Fr. Carreño was not in the best of health. What was rather noticeable in him in those first years of the Province was that he was restless. That early, he probably realized that something was not going according to his understanding and vision of the Salesian work, which contrasted with that of the other Salesians in the Philippines. He, so realistic and so down-to-earth, probably felt that he would not be staying long in the Philippines and would have to go<sup>136</sup>.

## 5. Things Started to Happen

In the Annual Report of 1963-1964, the first Provincial of the Philippines presented a chronicle of events that transpired during the first year of his term, from October 1963 to the beginning of the new scholastic year in August 1964. This report revealed not what he was doing really, but what the confreres have been doing, to push the growth of the new Province. Obviously, however, his leadership had much to say for such a situation in his Province<sup>137</sup>.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.* (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 17 ottobre 1963).

<sup>135</sup> In the *Elenco Generale* (1965), pp. 202-203, there were in Don Bosco Canlubang 21 clerics (seven in 3<sup>rd</sup> year, three in 2<sup>nd</sup> year, and 11 in 1<sup>st</sup> year). Besides, there were 15 novices of the 8<sup>th</sup> Novitiate batch. Cf *Salesian Novices in the Philippines: 1956-1997...*

<sup>136</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, San Fernando, 10 July 1964).

<sup>137</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Relazione Annuale 1963-1964. This document is made up of 31 pages plus an appendix of documents. It is divided into eleven parts: "introduzione, cronaca annuale, vita ispettoriale, vita religiosa, case di formazione, scuole professionali, parrocchie e oratori, situazione economica, varia, mancanza di personale, appendice di documenti". Cf *ibid.*, 9-12.

### 5.1. A Busy First Year

As Provincial, Fr. Cogliandro presided the investiture of seven novices in the new studentate of Canlubang on 3 November 1963<sup>138</sup>. On the 24<sup>th</sup> of the same month, he participated in the annual lunch of the past-pupils who were under the care of Fr. Quaranta in Don Bosco Mandaluyong. He was even tendered a welcome dinner on 13 December by the Italian Ambassador to the Philippines, the Honorable Eugenio Rubino, after several months of having been already in the country<sup>139</sup>.

Early the next year, on 18 February 1964, Fr. Cogliandro participated in the public reception for the new Apostolic Nuncio to the Philippines, His Excellency Archbishop Carlo Martini, former Nuncio to Paraguay where he already came to know the Salesians<sup>140</sup>. On the 29<sup>th</sup> of the same month, he was present during the inauguration of the new shops of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians in Balic-Balic, which the Auxiliary Bishop of Manila, Bishop B. Antiporda, presided in the solemn blessing<sup>141</sup>.

On 7 March 1964, the Provincial also witnessed the first national meeting of about 400 sodality members of the five different Salesian schools, organized by Fr. Felix Glowicki in Don Bosco Academy San Fernando. It was an occasion for a real vocation campaign, as the venue of the event was also where the Salesian Juniorate was located. The next day, he presided the first meeting of the association of past pupils of Don Bosco Makati which he himself organized. The day after, he joined the celebration in honor of St. Dominic Savio in the same school. The solemn mass was presided by the new Apostolic Nuncio, who was moved to see about 1,134 students praying and singing together in the school gymnasium. On 5 April 1964, he was with Bishop Emilio Cinense who blessed the new gymnasium of Don Bosco Academy San Fernando. The edifice, considered the biggest in the Province, was another of the constructions, which Fr. Roozen had done for the same school. Both the Archbishop of Ma-

<sup>138</sup> These made up the 7<sup>th</sup> Novitiate batch, 1963-1964, with Fr. Carreño in his second year as novice master: Leopoldo Anoché, Fidel Araneta, Francisco Dinglasan, Abelardo Oca, Aguedo Palomo, Angelito Solis and Romeo Subaldo. This group started with eight (Andrew Sevilla did not profess). Of these, Fr. Aguedo Palomo, who is still a Salesian, is missionary in East Timor.

<sup>139</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Relazione Annuale 1963-1964, 9-12.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.* When Archbishop Carlo Martini was Nuncio in Paraguay, he was accused of favoring too much the Salesians. His answer to this accusation was: "Sono gli unici che lavorano". In the Philippines, he showed the same familiarity with the Salesians; he came once to Don Bosco Makati "without ceremony". Cf SAHK Corrispondenza (Braga a Massimino, Makati, 4 marzo 1964).

<sup>141</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Relazione Annuale 1963-1964, 9-12. Cf also BS 88 (1964) 234-235.



nila and the Apostolic Nuncio were present during the celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of priestly ordination of Fr. Carlo Braga in mid-April. On 1 May, the Cardinal also blessed Pius XII Catholic Center, to which Fr. Quaranta was proposed as chaplain. The confrere, in fact, was already holding office even before his official appointment<sup>142</sup>.

The second session of spiritual exercises scheduled in San Fernando for 5 July was transferred to 8 July due to a typhoon, which hit the area of Central Luzon. On the same month, however, another retreat was conducted in Canlubang for the clerics, as well as for the in-coming and out-going novices. The fact was that, at the end of the retreat on 24 July 1964, seven novices made their first profession. Meanwhile, 16 new novices began their Novitiate<sup>143</sup>!

Being a Province meant being financially autonomous; the Visitatoria should have built this economic independence in the course of its becoming a Province. But this was far from the reality in Manila, at least in the beginning.

Fr. Cogliandro wrote to Fr. Fedrigotti in the same month that he arrived in the Philippines, and referred to him an urgent issue<sup>144</sup>. Earlier too, he had written to Fr. Ruggiero Pilla (1911-1987)<sup>145</sup>, current economer general of the Congregation, regarding the debts and the concomitant interests that the new Province had to pay. There were financial commitments and these had deadlines. They could not be postponed; and the Province did not have the money to meet the deadlines. Moreover, there were the constructions to be done, especially in Canlubang and Makati, which "for singular circumstances, they cannot procrastinate for a single month"<sup>146</sup>. Again, there was not money to construct<sup>147</sup>.

Previously, Fr. Braga spoke of a project being prepared for Makati: construction of buildings to the amount of two to three million pesos. There was a planned construction too in Mandaluyong; in Canlubang, there was already the

<sup>142</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Relazione Annuale 1963-1964, 9-12.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.* The 8<sup>th</sup> batch of novices (1963-1964) was the biggest group so far. Of these, 16 professed: Edgardo Arellano, Rodito Demegillo, Sancho Garrote, Elias Posa, Raul Sarceda, Leandro Tapay, Wilfredo Villafania, Benjamin Uy, Jaime Carmona, Vicente Cervania, Melchor Ferrer, Emiliano Santos, Hilario Tamonan and Danilo Torres. The last six are still Salesians. Sancho Garrote is a priest of Tagum Diocese, Edgardo Arellano of San Jose Diocese of the province of Nueva Ecija.

<sup>144</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 29 ottobre 1963).

<sup>145</sup> SAS 27B122 Fr. Ruggiero Pilla: born in Benevento, Italy (27 April 1911); first profession in Portici, Naples (11 October 1927); ordained in Castellammare di Stabia, Naples (21 September 1935); died in Caserta, Italy (15 October 1987) at 76 years, 60 years Salesian and 52 years priest. He was economer general of the Salesian Society from 1963 to 1983.

<sup>146</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Cogliandro a Fedrigotto, Makati, 29 ottobre 1963).

<sup>147</sup> SAHK Corrispondenza (Braga a Massimino, Makati, 4 marzo 1964).

chapel and a new building for spiritual retreat and for residence of students. These, now, were the preoccupations of Fr. Cogliandro. Because of these commitments, debts would be incurred. This time, however, the Provincial would obtain the necessary permissions from Turin<sup>148</sup>.

### 5.2. *Renewing the Leadership*

Another move taken by the Provincial in his first months was to convoke the provincial council, something, which was not regular in the previous years. But before he could do this, he had to set up the council first. The previous Visitatoria did not seem to have a council that functioned. In fact, no documents could be found which referred to what might have transpired in this probable council of the Visitatoria.

One could have a glimpse though of the members of this previous council of the Visitatoria. It was constituted by the same Salesians who practically were members since the establishment of the Visitatoria: Buchta, Baggio, Quaranta, Roozen and the Visitatore Fr. Braga<sup>149</sup>.

For the new council of the Province, Fr. Cogliandro had not confirmed Fr. Buchta, who had an accident and had to go back to Italy. The accident had impaired his memory; he would never come back to the Philippines. Fr. Cogliandro had also confirmed Fr. Baggio, but who had to beg off because he was too far from Manila since he was rector in Victoria. To replace him, the Provincial had appointed Fr. Carreño. The new provincial council now consisted of the Provincial, Fr. Schwarz, Fr. Jose Carreño, Fr. Roozen and Fr. Quaranta. Fr. Cogliandro thought that these changes pleased the confreres. Moreover, he was now regularly meeting his council and was consulting it<sup>150</sup>.

The situation of the rectors of the houses preoccupied the new Provincial as he reported to the Superiors in Turin. There had been plans to nominate Fr.

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<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.* Fr. Cogliandro asked permission from Rome to contract a debt of Php3,000,000 which was approved by Turin on 1 February 1964 to construct the necessary buildings for Makati and Canlubang. Cf. ASC F253 Pratiche Economati Filippine (Lupo a Cogliandro, Torino, 9 marzo 1964). Later, Fr. Braga complained that the later constructions in Makati looked more like "magazzini" rather than shops. Cf. SAHK Corrispondenza (Braga a Massimino, San Fernando, 5 ottobre 1964).

<sup>149</sup> Cf. *Elenco Generale* (1959), p. 439; *ibid.*, (1964), p. 478.

<sup>150</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Relazione Annuale 1963-1964, 18. On the record, from December 1963 to July 1964, the provincial council met five times (11 December, 24 February, 24 April, 18 June, 15 July).

Mari Cuomo<sup>151</sup> as rector of one of the schools in Manila. But now, he was out of the nomination. This was because he was implicated with what had happened in Makati.<sup>152</sup>

These former rectors were accustomed to do things without consulting anyone, neither the Visitatore nor the house council, if there was any council of the house. In matters of finance, they did not render account to any one except to themselves. They changed things as they liked: schedules, house traditions. Moreover, they destroyed and constructed houses where they were assigned at their whim; they utilized finances without making any clear accounting to anyone<sup>153</sup>.

The local superiors of the previous Visitatoria were seemingly ignorant of the most elementary duties of a superior, of which they were most in need to be reminded of. What was worse, in the observation of the Provincial, was that they did not have the sense of the Province as a family. Each did what he wanted, even if he had to go in conflict with the other<sup>154</sup>. And perhaps, this was what the new Provincial wanted the confreres to feel and to work for: the Province as a family, of Salesians with an authentic sense of fraternal charity and solidarity for each other.

It was true that there existed very much correspondence between the Superior of the former Visitatoria with the Superiors in Turin. In fact, it was one of the characteristics of the early times – that constant exchange of letters and consultation by the Superior of the Delegation and the Visitatoria with the Rector Major and the other Superiors. This created a sense of familiarity between them, in fact, and perhaps, an assurance that the Salesianity and “spirit of the Valdocco” was maintained in the Philippines.

But it seemed that the confreres did not need to interact among themselves. One could ask whether the Visitatore was accustomed to consult the confreres,

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<sup>151</sup> Cf. ACS 40B511. Fr. Mario Cuomo made his first profession in Hong Kong (8 December 1937) and was ordained priest in Shanghai, China (8 June 1946). Later, he left the Society sometime in November 1965. Fr. Braga described this confrere during his crisis as someone “...che naviga in mare tempestoso e fa certi accenni di farmi temere assai”. Cf. SAHK Corrispondenza (Braga a Massimino, San Fernando, 5 ottobre 1964). Fr. Solaroli claimed that Fr. Cuomo, in his desire to re-enter the Society, lived and died in a Salesian house in Italy.

<sup>152</sup> ASC F 163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 17 ottobre 1963).

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.*: “I direttori si sono abituati a fare tutto loro, senza consultare mai nessuno, alle volte neppure l’ispettore, in cambi negli orari, nelle tradizioni della casa, nel costruire e demolire edifici, nell’arrangiarsi finanziariamente senza dare un resoconto chiaro a che sia”.

<sup>154</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Relazione Annuale 1963-1964, 20: “E ai direttori che costa un poco sentirsi mordere i freni ogni qualche volta che bisogna loro ricordare i più elementari doveri del Superiore, già elencati più sopra. Non sono ancora venuti nell’idea esatta che tutta l’Ispettorìa è una famiglia e che siamo uno per l’altro, e non uno contro l’altro armati, una cosa contro l’altra”.

specially the members of his council. The Salesians in the Philippines wrote letters to the Superiors in Turin. But they did not readily nor with frequency have written letters to their local superior or among them who were superiors. At the end, they were seemingly rivals of each other, victims of their characters, in spite of their good will.

There was one reason why the council of the Visitatoria did not work out properly perhaps. It was because local councils did not exist; thus, there were no councils to consult. Each rector felt himself free to do what he wanted and what he thought was best. After almost five years of Visitatoria, the basic organization and structure of an organization had not been set up and systematized. Probably, Fr. Braga was not one who was an organizer. He was indeed a leader, and a charismatic one.

Fr. Cogliandro declared that the solution to this would be the addition of confreres, resulting into the stabilization of house councils. Thus, the duties of each confrere would be better stated and underlined, most especially of the prefects.

Although the Provincial observed that the confreres generally did the meditation faithfully, he also noted that the *rendiconto* was rarely done by each confrere. Because of this, the confreres have been complaining that they have not been able to obtain any chance for colloquy with the superior. Fr. Cogliandro's observation was sharp: the rectors were often out of the house. Why? The Provincial's response was perhaps considerate but nonetheless straight: because "the rectors are too much interested, by necessity of things, in the life outside of the school"<sup>155</sup>.

The irony of it was that even if the number of members of some of the houses was so small, sometimes two or three, and yet, it still was not easy for the members to meet and discuss the problems of the house and of the confreres. The fact was that no minutes of house council meetings could be found in the first visitation made by the Provincial. Moreover, observations made by the Superior during the ordinary and extraordinary visitations were, indeed, recorded; but these were never given due importance so as to be complied. But there were other previous deficiencies. There had been no meetings for the monthly moral cases in the communities; nor had there been the traditional meetings to discuss the grades of the boys<sup>156</sup>. But even these would later be surpassed as the Province slowly developed in consonance to the times.

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<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.* Who were these rectors before the Province was established? Quaranta (Mandaluyong), Clifford (Cebu), Baggio (Victorias), Ricaldone (Makati), Schwarz (Tarlac), Roozen (San Fernando), Canlubang (Carreño).

<sup>156</sup> *Ibid.*

The former Visitatoria revealed a continuous improvisation, which did not accurately organize the future Province. It manifested a seeming lack of organization, system and order for a more fluid and fluent working of the Salesians in the Philippines. But with the nomination of new rectors, perhaps this problem would be solved<sup>157</sup>. They could be the agents of the new Province, in a new period, which would be marked by the Vatican Council II. It was a pity, since the Visitatoria was supposed to have given a clear sign that a system had been in place to have warranted the elevation of the Visitatoria to a Province. But somehow, it was not clearly and totally so, after almost 12 years.

### 5.3. *The First Year of the Province*

The General Chapter of 1965 was the first general assembly of the Salesian Society in which the Philippines was present as a Province. It was also the General Chapter, which elected a new Rector Major in the person of Luigi Ricceri (1901-1989)<sup>158</sup>. But it also further showed how fragile the state of personnel of the new Salesian Philippine Province.

At the end of December 1964, the Prefect General of the Salesian Society had sent the schedule of the General Chapter, which was to take place the next year. Fr. Cogliandro had first thought of not participating in this event, for the continuing lack of personnel in the new Province. His absence would have meant another confrere absent from the actual work. It could also be his manner of protest against the seeming indifference of Turin to his request for reinforcement. On second thought, however, he decided to go: it was not convenient to be an exception<sup>159</sup>.

But Fr. Cogliandro had a dilemma on who could take charge of the Philippines while he was away. To whom could he entrust the Province? Of the members of the provincial council, Fr. Roozen, who was provincial economist, had his hands full of work and also of debt. Fr. Schwarz was new and was not adapted to be acting superior. He preferred Fr. Carreño, who was the choice of the confreres to be delegate to the General Chapter. But he also knew how it would be difficult to find someone to substitute Fr. Carreño as master of nov-

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>158</sup> SAS 17B007 Fr. Luigi Michele Ricceri: born in Catania, Italy (8 May 1901); first profession in San Gregorio, Catania (9 May 1917); ordained in San Gregorio, Catania (19 September 1925); died in Castellammare di Stabia, Naples (14 June 1989) at 88 years, 72 years Salesian and 64 years priest. He was member of the General Council from 1953 to 1978, in which he was Rector Major from 1965 to 1978.

<sup>159</sup> ASC F163 Philippine: Corrispondenza (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati, 31 dicembre 1964).

ices, rector and teacher in Don Bosco Canlubang if the confrere decided to go. Besides, Fr. Carreño knew how much Fr. Braga wanted to go and participate in the General Chapter. In fact, the confrere had already made plans to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his ordination in Italy. Fr. Carreño really opted to remain, feigning that he could not leave the novices and post-novices unattended. Doing so, he gave way to Fr. Braga to go to Turin and to be delegate to the General Chapter. It was this decision of Fr. Carreño to stay behind that prompted Fr. Cogliandro to consider him as caretaker when he left for the General Chapter<sup>160</sup>.

The Provincial did not believe it was prudent to delegate Fr. Quaranta, because of the latter's character which was a little exaggerated and excessive. He was afraid of what the confrere was capable of doing during his absence – perhaps, accept so many foundations, if not start so many works, which the Salesians would be incapable of doing even in the next 20 years<sup>161</sup>!

As Fr. Cogliandro was ending the first year as Provincial, certain new things started to happen. At the end of the school year 1963-1964, he gave out letters of obedience for the summer and the coming school year. And for the first time, he came out with the catalogue of confreres of the Province on 24 April 1964<sup>162</sup>.

When the new school year 1964-1965 commenced, there were about a total of 7,350 students for all the seven schools of the Province<sup>163</sup>. Previously, there had been the presentation of the so-called “Faculty Handbook” to the confreres and its discussion, from 3 to 8 May 1964. The first session of spiritual exercises in Victorias was for rectors and prefects, followed by a three-day meeting of rectors and prefects. In this meeting, the following were discussed: the common schedule of the houses, various dispositions for religious discipline, the promulgation of the “Faculty Handbook” for the 348 teachers of the Salesian schools. In this first year of the Province, there had also been a “construction spree”. Don Bosco Makati had to have the buildings for the school as stipulated in the contract; Don Bosco Canlubang needed the building to have a place to fit in the pre-Novitiate and the post-Novitiate<sup>164</sup>.

The Novitiate was now stable in Canlubang during the first year of the Province. From San Fernando, the new batch of novices had gone to Canlubang

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<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.* Fr. Cogliandro did not favor Fr. Quaranta to be responsible of the Province while he was at the General Chapter.

<sup>162</sup> ASC F163 Philippine: Relazione Annuale 1963-1964, 9-12.

<sup>163</sup> *Ibid.* Roughly, the student population of the seven schools in the Province was distributed in the following manner: Makati 2,000, Mandaluyong 3,000, Tarlac 500, Canlubang 400, Cebu 450, San Fernando 500 and Victorias 500.

<sup>164</sup> ASC F163 Philippine: Relazione Annuale 1963-1964, 12-13.

now. The college too had finally begun, so that the newly professed now had the chance to obtain a college degree and at the same time study Philosophy. They did not need to go to Hong Kong anymore. In fact, the studentate had been approved on 7 April 1964<sup>165</sup>.

In the first year of the Province and in the first year of the studentate at Canlubang, there were 22 students: four (4<sup>th</sup> year), four (3<sup>rd</sup> year), five (2<sup>nd</sup> year) and nine (1<sup>st</sup> year). In the Novitiate, there were 16<sup>166</sup>. Moreover, there was also a section for the coadjutors: mechanics and electrical shops, plus the possibility of participating in the courses offered in the college. For this, they too could now become qualified technical instructors in the schools<sup>167</sup>. At the same time, the clerics were given pastoral exposure and which was possible in the nearby school of Rizal Institute inside the Sugar Mill. The young Salesians in fact helped in the surrounding barrios in the teaching of catechism and the organization of the festive Oratories. They taught catechism in the nearby public schools; they, too, assisted the priests in the animation of the Sunday celebrations, especially in the barrios which comprised the Parish. Furthermore, the Province now also foresaw the need of a plan to put up the pastoral course for these young confreres, as well as to promote the university studies for some specialization of clerics who were qualified when they have finished their college<sup>168</sup>.

Even the formation team was almost complete. Fr. Jose Carreño was both rector and master of novices. But he now had a prefect, a catechist, a principal, a confessor, and an additional teacher for Philosophy. To have six confreres was indeed consoling for the house of formation. Thus, the proper care of vocations and concentration in the formation of this young blood were expected to carry on the work, which began in 1951<sup>169</sup>.

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<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.*, 21.

<sup>166</sup> *Ibid.*, 22. The Seminary-College in Canlubang was equivalent to the Italian Liceo. For the Province, it was a sort of a "Collegio Universitario".

<sup>167</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.* The clerics were kept busy during their studies, also with the animation of the barrios (Mangumit, Majada, Sirang-Lupa, Mabato, Buntog etc.) within the Parish of St Joseph the Worker to which the College-Seminary belonged. This apostolate was initiated by Fr. Giovanni Benna, the catechist of the post-novices.

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.* Aside from Fr. Carreño, the formation team of the College-Seminary consisted of the following confreres: Benna, Bernacer, Bianchini, Monchiero and Pezzotta. Fr. Braga had tried to avoid the nomination of one of these as director of the agro-technical school of Canlubang, for his high-handedness and imprudence; he was judged to be "poco salesiano". For this, the confrere got into conflict with Don Jose Yulo Sr, who practically sent him away. Cf SAHK Corrispondenza (Braga a Massimino, Makati, 4 marzo 1964); *ibid.* (Braga a Massimino, Makati, 5 ottobre 1964).

Somehow, Fr. Cogliandro's effort to be in constant correspondence with the Superiors in Turin and attention to implement their orientations to the government of the Province was paying off. He was setting an example: he was coordinating; he was consulting; he was subordinating, doing things according to the rule, so that in this period, he had received a little more than 47 letters from the Superiors of Turin<sup>170</sup>.

By the end of 1964, the record revealed that in 13 years, there were now ten Salesian foundations in the Philippines, two more than the previous year, which were eight. The most recent and probably the most important of these foundations was the seminary for the local vocations. Such would now assure the continuity and development of the Salesian work started.

"The Seminary will prepare the necessary personnel to succeed the missionaries who came from Europe, and to assure the progress and the broadening of the activities already begun. The Filipino families are healthy and generous, and everything shows that a rapid flowering of vocations, which will consent to the Salesians to go much beyond the actual works"<sup>171</sup>.

Here once more was a sort of prophecy, which would have to be verified in the continuing history of the Salesians in the Philippines.

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<sup>170</sup> The correspondence from Turin in Fr. Cogliandro's first year as Provincial could be described in the following way: three from the Rector Major, 16 from the Prefect General, two from the Catechist General, ten from the Councillor for Studies, two from the Economist General, three from the Councillor for the Professional Schools and 11 from the Councillor for the Missions. Cf ASC F163 Philippine: Relazione Annuale 1963-1964, 18.

<sup>171</sup> BS 88 (Novembre 1964) 380.



## Chapter Nine

### EPILOGUE (1911-1912)

It was not the first time that the Salesians came to establish themselves in Manila that year, 1951. Even earlier than the coming of the Apostolic Delegate Archbishop Guglielmo Piani in 1922, Turin had already decided to implant the Salesian work in the Archipelago, and in fact had officially sent Salesians to begin the work. This first move by Turin in 1911 is now history; nonetheless, it too is historical.

#### 1. First Coming to the Philippines

The final coming of the Salesians in the Philippines occurred after almost 40 years of waiting, a waiting of mixed frustrations and occasions missed. But it revealed that history is indeed made by men.

##### 1.1. *First Time in Manila*

The pre-history of the coming of the Philippines had been treated by the Salesian Gregorio Bicomong Jr. in his book “The Arrival of Don Bosco in the Philippines”, where he presented the documents purporting to the requests made to the Salesians to come to the Philippines<sup>1</sup>. Already, when the Salesians came to the Philippines for the first time in December 1911, it was through the negotiations conducted by no less than the Salesian martyr Bishop Luigi Versiglia (1873-1930)<sup>2</sup> together with Fr. Louis Olive (1867-1912)<sup>3</sup>. Both, who were also

<sup>1</sup> Cf G. BICOMONG, *The arrival of Don Bosco in the Philippines...*, pp. 11-29, 31-67. Chapters 2 and 3 of Fr. Bicomong’s book deal with the request of the Archbishop Jeremiah Harty for the Salesians to administer a reformatory and the consequent arrival of Fathers Luigi Costamagna and Giovanni Fergnani to take over the work offered. For a review of Fr. Bicomong’s work, see *Ricerche Storiche Salesiane* 39 (Luglio-Dicembre 2001) 387-389.

<sup>2</sup> SAS 89A079 St. Luigi Versiglia: born in Oliva Gessi, Pavia (5 June 1873), first profession in Valsalice, Turin (11 October 1889), ordained priest in Ivrea, Turin (21 December 1895), consecrated Bishop (9 January 1921), martyred in Ling Kong How, China (25 February 1930) at 56 years, 41 years Salesian, 25 years priest and 10 years Bishop. He was canonized by Pope John Paul II in Rome on 1 October 2000.

<sup>3</sup> Mario RASSIGA, *Pionieri di Don Bosco nella Cina*. Torino, Sc. Graf. Salesiana 1978, pp. 5-22. SAS 88A058 Fr. Louis Olive: born in Marseille, France (2 February 1867), first profession in Marseille, France (30 May 1888), ordained in Marseille, France (16 September 1892), died in Canton, China (17 September 1919) at 52 years, 31 years Salesian and 27 years priest.

the pioneer missionaries to Macao and China, came to the Philippines sometime in January 1910 on the invitation of the Archbishop of Manila, Jeremiah Harty (+1916)<sup>4</sup> and the Apostolic Delegate to the Philippines, Archbishop Ambrosius Agius OSB (+1911). These prelates, in fact, had asked Turin if it could send Salesians to help in their work of maintaining Christianity in the Archipelago<sup>5</sup>.

Fr. Versiglia and the Salesians had in fact taken refuge in 1910 in Hong Kong because of the expulsion by the Portuguese government of religious who were based in Macao. In the British Island Colony, they awaited other offers which could open some other venues where they could do Salesian ministry<sup>6</sup>. A superior of a religious congregation at work in Manila, passing through Hong Kong on the way to the Philippines, had invited Fr. Versiglia to come to Manila free of charge. Fr. Versiglia did not refuse this unexpected occasion. Together with Fr. Olive, he left Hong Kong for Manila on 28 January 1911<sup>7</sup>.

Hosted by the Apostolic Delegate in their first visit, Archbishop Harty made the Salesians several offers: "a reformatory with a possibility of putting up an agricultural school; a hostel for students; a possible ministry among the Chinese population of Manila<sup>8</sup>; a house facing the sea in Manila". All these were situated within the Archdiocese of Manila. At the same time, the Bishop of Lipa, a certain Petrelli of Macerata, had proposed to them "an academic school, an agricultural school and the management of the seminary" in his Diocese which was recently erected<sup>9</sup>. The last of the offers would be repeated in the

<sup>4</sup> Archbishop Harty had gone to Turin to ask Fr. Michele Rua (1837-1910) to send the Salesians to the Philippines in order to administer an institute where there were already 70 boys.

Cf ASC D870 Verbalì (18 dicembre 1906): "Il Sig. D. Rua comunica che oggi fu all'oratorio l'arcivescovo di Manila nelle Filippine offrendo la direzione di un Istituto con 70 giovani per quali si passa la retta di circa Lire 2 ciascuno. Che pei capi d'arte si aggiusterebbero con persone esterne. Domanderebbe solo tre salesiani tra sacerdoti e chierici. Il Sig. D. Rua rispose già che era indisponibile causa la scarsezza di personale e i molti impegni".

<sup>5</sup> Archbishop Ambrosius Agius OSB was in Rome and had met the Salesian Procurator General Fr. Dante Carlo Munerati (+1941) to ask him when the Salesians were going to the Philippines. Cf ASC D870 Verbalì (11 aprile 1911): "A Mons. Ambrogio Agius, Delegato Apostolico a Manila nelle Filippine che insiste tanto per una fondazione in quella città si risponda che queste vacanze si farà di tutto per accontentarlo e si penserebbe a D. Grandis, D. Fergnani e qualche altro".

<sup>6</sup> Cf M. RASSIGA, *L'Opera Salesiana in Cina. Cenno Storico. Parte Prima (1906-1930)*..., pp. 14-15.

<sup>7</sup> ASC A351 Corrispondenza (Versiglia ad Albera, Hong Kong, 21 gennaio 1911).

<sup>8</sup> Note that one peculiar offer to the Salesians was the apostolate among the Chinese in Manila. This was specified by Bicomong as the offer of a parish (Binondo), which was at the moment under the jurisdiction of the Dominicans. It was a parish very much coveted by the secular, because of its rich income; for this, the Salesians as religious could not be concurrent to this intent of the secular so as not to antagonize them.

<sup>9</sup> ASC A984 Corrispondenza (Agius a Albera, Manila, 22 febbraio 1911); ASC A351 Corrispondenza (Versiglia a Albera, Hong Kong, 23 febbraio 1911).

second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when the Archbishop of Lipa, Rufino Santos, invited once more the Salesians to take over a school. And like the previous offer, this too the Salesians did not entertain.

Fr. Versiglia, showing himself enthusiastic and favourable to starting a presence in the Philippines, reported to the Rector Major his impression of his Manila visit<sup>10</sup>. By 11 February 1911, he had already entered into an agreement with the Manila Archbishop who compromised himself to the Salesians, if they accepted the administration of a reformatory school<sup>11</sup>. The agreement, which was sent to Fr. Paolo Albera (1845-1921) in Turin, was that the Salesians would accept the reformatory situated in a place called Lolomboy. Consequently, Archbishop Agius wrote the Rector Major on 22 February 1911 to express his satisfaction for the outcome of the visit of Fr. Versiglia and his joy for the promised coming of the Salesians<sup>12</sup>.

### 1.2. *Turin's Placet*

By 11 April 1911, Turin had practically agreed to send Salesians to the Philippines; but it just did not send them at once<sup>13</sup>. Only by November 1911 did the Salesians Fr. Luigi Costamagna (1866-1941)<sup>14</sup> and Fr. Giovanni Fergnani (1874-1932)<sup>15</sup> left with the missionary expedition of that year to go to the Philippines and start the Salesian presence. The former was a missionary in the Americas (Chile/Argentina), who was repatriated and sent to Spain. He came to Manila via Barcelona. The latter was already assigned in China as member of the first missionary expedition with Fr. Versiglia; but he had been sick and had gone back to Italy in order to rest. Fr. Versiglia thought he would be better

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<sup>10</sup> ASC A351 Corrispondenza (Versiglia a Albera, Hong Kong, 23 febbraio 1911).

<sup>11</sup> ASC F984 Manila Proposta (Compromesso dato da G. Harty Arcivescovo di Manila [11 febbraio 1911]).

<sup>12</sup> ASC F984 Corrispondenza (Agius a Albera, Manila, 22 febbraio 1911).

<sup>13</sup> ASC D870 Verbalì (11 aprile 1911).

<sup>14</sup> ASC 86A019. Fr. Luigi Costamagna: born in Caramagna, Cuneo, Italy (23 March 1866); first profession in San Benigno Canavese (3 October 1886); ordained a priest in Buenos Aires (1 September 1891); died in Santiago de Chile (11 August 1941) at 75 years, 55 years Salesian and 50 years priest. He was Provincial of Chile (1902-1906), provincial councillor in Barcelona, Spain (1907-1911) and in Bahía Blanca, Argentina (1923-1926).

<sup>15</sup> ASC 92A045. Fr. Giovanni Fergnani: born in Aguscello, Ferrara, Italy (16 July 1874); first profession in Foglizzo (2 October 1892); ordained a priest in Acireale, Sicily (21 December 1901); died in Jerusalem (29 December 1932) at 58 years, 40 years Salesian and 31 years priest. He came and left Manila together with Fr. Costamagna. He previously went to China in 1906.

off if he went to the Philippines instead. Besides, he thought that the confrere could be the right person to possibly handle the proposed ministry among the Chinese of Manila. Previously, Turin had already named another Salesian to go with Giovanni Fergnani to Manila: a confrere by the name of Luigi Grandis (1871-1940)<sup>16</sup>. He unfortunately never left for the Philippines, whose fate was left in the partnership of two “veteran” missionaries who ended up being the first to begin and close the Salesian presence in the Philippines.

It was in the evening of 12 October 1911, in the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians in Turin, that the send-off of 50 missionaries was celebrated with the blessing of the Archbishop of Turin, Cardinal Agostino Richelmy<sup>17</sup>. The one tasked to speak on behalf of the missionaries was Fr. Luigi Costamagna, who was to be the protagonist in the “Philippine affair”<sup>18</sup>. The same issue of the Salesian Bulletin of that year 1911, which published the account of the missionary send-off, also described the venue where Fr. Costamagna and Fr. Fergnani were supposed to labor with generosity and untiring work on behalf of the poor and abandoned boys targeted by the Salesians. Whoever wrote it perhaps never imagined what he was writing and how it would end up!<sup>19</sup>

Fr. Costamagna and Fr. Fergnani left for the Philippines, not after a series of follow-up letters, which Fr. Versiglia made to Turin regarding the request from the Philippines. Leaving the port of Marseilles on 5 November 1911, they arrived in Hong Kong on 4 December 1911. A week later, they left for Manila, and arrived on 14 December<sup>20</sup>.

The first news they encountered upon their arrival in Manila was the death of Archbishop Agius, a Maltese and Benedictine, whom the Salesians consid-

<sup>16</sup> Luigi Grandis was born in Turin (23 October 1871) and died in Ivrea (8 December 1940) at 69 years, 51 years Salesian and 45 years priest. After his ordination (21 December 1895), he went to Mexico where he was Provincial from 1902-1908.

<sup>17</sup> Agostino Richelmy: born in Turin, Italy on 29 November 1850; died in the same city on 10 August 1923. He was elected Archbishop of Turin in July 1897, and made a Cardinal on 19 June 1899. Cf *Enciclopedia Italiana*, vol. XXIX, Roma, 1949, p. 262.

<sup>18</sup> Cf BS 11 (novembre 1911) 324. The article had the title “Un Orfanotrofio a Manila nelle Filippine”: “La spedizione di 50 nuovi Missionari. Una nuova missione di Cina – Una fondazione nelle Filippine: Dopo il canto di un sacro mottetto, saliva in pulpito il missionario Don Luigi Costamagna, il quale, con teneri accenti, si accomiatava a nome di tutti dai Superiori, dai parenti, dai confratelli e da tutto il popolo raccolto nel Santuario...”.

<sup>19</sup> Cf *ibid.*: “Altri Missionari sono partiti alla volta delle Filippine, ove per le reiterate istanze del zelantissimo Arcivescovo di Manila, assumeranno in quella città la direzione di un Orfanotrofio con Scuole di Arti e Mestieri a favore della gioventù pericolante. Manila è la città più importante della Malesia, con circa 250,000 abitanti. Siamo orgogliosi di registrare questa nuova fondazione, perché un primo passo che l’Opera di d. Bosco fa verso l’Australia”.

<sup>20</sup> ASC A352 Corrispondenza (Versiglia a Gusmano, Hong Kong, 20 dicembre 1911).

ered as their patron<sup>21</sup>. They had expected much paternal assistance from this prelate. Now, they only had Archbishop Harty, Manila's first Archbishop from the U.S.A., to deal with. The prelate received them "with great amiability", and declared that he was very happy for their coming. They were even accompanied to the Archbishopric from the port in the carriage of the Archbishop.

### 1.3. A Refusal

The reaction of Fr. Costamagna, after his first visit at the Lolomboy institution offered to and accepted by Fr. Versiglia, was foreboding. He practically decided to reject then and there the offer accorded between Manila and Turin, for his understanding and evaluation of the place. His view point was certainly in sharp contrast with the optimism that Fr. Versiglia displayed when the latter saw almost a year earlier in February 1911, the offer of Manila which must have been very similar to that which the Salesians accepted when they first came to Macao in 1906<sup>22</sup>.

Fr. Versiglia saw Lolomboy after a brief visit (a visit of a few hours according to Costamagna) as an institution for boys in need of Salesians. It was described as a reformatory and an orphanage, whose name was "Pius X - Lolomboy Industrial School". One of its future plan was that the Salesians could later put up a school of arts and trades for the boys. In his dialogue with Archbishop Harty, Fr. Versiglia was promised by the prelate that the director of the institution would "have complete liberty in the administration, direction and regulating internal discipline"<sup>23</sup>.

Instead, Fr. Costamagna, after he said he had seen the place briefly, being offered to the Salesians, was quick to give his impression and report to Turin. He wrote unhesitatingly his position to the Rector Major, in a letter dated 27 December 1911, almost two weeks after his arrival in Manila<sup>24</sup>, and in a memorandum that he sent to Turin on 7 January 1912.

<sup>21</sup> ASC F984 Corrispondenza (Costamagna a Albera, Manila, 27 dicembre 1911).

<sup>22</sup> Cf M. RASSIGA, *L'Opera Salesiana in Cina. Parte Prima (1906-1930)*..., pp. 12-14. In Macao, the Salesians started with an orphanage offered by the bishop.

<sup>23</sup> ASC F984 Manila Proposta (Compromesso dato da S. Ecc. G. Harty Arcivescovo di Manila, 11 February 1911). In the first agreement between Archbishop Harty and Fr. Versiglia, points #3 and #4 were clear. (3) Will it allow the Director to have complete liberty in the administration, direction and in regulating internal discipline? Absolutely yes. (4) Under what conditions will the Director be allowed to dismiss a boy who according to the rules of the Institute would be considered unfit to remain in the Institute? The Director will alone must regulate this matter. Cf *ibid*.

<sup>24</sup> ASC F984 Corrispondenza (Costamagna a Albera, Manila, 27 dicembre 1911).

Fr. Costamagna and Fr. Fergnani visited Lolomboy, accompanied by the majordomo of the Archbishop. They came incognito, in order not to be recognized, to the place they thought to be distant from Manila, “more than Lanzo (Torinese) from Turin (City)”. Their immediate impression “was absolutely unfavorable”; they concluded that it was impossible for the Salesians to accept the institution.

According to Fr. Costamagna, who estimated and spoke for Fr. Fergnani too, there were “serious” motives why they refused to accept the Lolomboy Institution. First, because the place was 38 kilometers from Manila, in a place isolated and far from every communication; second, because it was neither a hospice, nor “a correctional institute”, but “a prison for minors condemned and sentenced regularly by tribunals, from six months to five years depending on their faults”; third, as a consequence, the young therein could not be at the disposition of the Salesians for the discipline nor for the program; excursions nor other liberties to be given by the Salesians to the young would not be permitted. Thus, in the opinion of Fr. Costamagna, it would be impossible to apply the Salesian system of education called Preventive System. If they accepted the offer, the Salesians would be mere paid employees at the command of the director of the institution, to whom acceptance, expulsion, reward, punishment of the “young inmate” naturally depended; they would be obliged to follow the orders and control of the judicial authorities<sup>25</sup>.

Fr. Costamagna claimed that the Archbishop also realized that the place was not for the Salesians, after having understood the Salesian system of education. He further expressed another disillusionment: that the Chinese mission spoken about by Archbishop Agius could still not be given to the Salesians, since it was still under the jurisdiction of the Dominicans. Such conclusion by Fr. Costamagna came after having met, and having been in contact with the Archbishop of Manila, without, however having met and spoken with Archbishop Agius.

The former missionary in Chile added other arguments why the Salesians should refuse the “prison”. (1) It was overcrowded (200 boys lived in a house for 50). It was unfurnished; potable water was scarce. (2) The climate was hard on foreigners; the rice field around the place caused infectious diseases. (3) The land around the house was fenced by a high wall, bristling with barbed wires, to prevent any escape of the inmates<sup>26</sup>. (4) The land offered could not

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.* Cf. also ASC F984 Costamagna (Memorandum, Casa Salesiana di Manila [Isole Filippine], 7 gennaio 1912).

<sup>26</sup> “Inmates” – this was the same name given to the first boys of Cebu Boys Town, who were often delinquents, picked up by the police and consigned to Fr. Boscarior for him “to remedy”.

possibly be for any agricultural school. Fr. Costamagna ended up stating categorically his unsolicited opinion: the work offered was not a place where the Salesians could apply the Preventive System.

“The conditions of the imprisoned youth of Lolomboy do not at all permit freedom in terms of education, and hinder to go to any type of outings. The repressive system is invoked by the regulations of the government and there is imprisonment in the same prison for any small infringement of the rules”<sup>27</sup>.

Funny the observations of the man who had also seen it for a few hours, who had not lived in the place, not even a day, who had supposed to have come to work for the emarginalized boys and the more needy ones, who was supposed to be missionary, predisposed to the hardships and inconveniences of being in the “missions”. But precisely, the Salesians were asked to change the atmosphere and give the place an educational environment. With such reasoning, who do you think could have been turned off? Fr. Costamagna remained adamant in his conclusions he took for rejecting Lolomboy. Fr. Fergnani never contradicted him; it was understood that he shared the same sentiments of the former.

## 2. “Arrivederci Manila”

### 2.1. *An Alternative Offer*

Nonetheless, Fr. Costamagna showed himself still hopeful that the Archbishop would give them the kind of work that he believed he could accept. So that when the Manila Archbishop offered him the old but definitely more prestigious church of Nuestra Señora de los Remedios in Malate, he was elated. It was not only a noted Marian shrine and a Parish plus its convent which were being offered to them, but also a terrain in which a future “Escuela de Artes y Oficios” could be constructed. The Archbishop promised that he would finance the construction of the building, as well as the travel expenses of the Salesians who would later come to work in the Philippines. Fr. Costamagna triumphantly described the second offer of Archbishop Harty:

<sup>27</sup> ASC F984 Costamagna (Memorandum, Casa Salesiana di Manila [Isole Filippine], 7 gennaio 1912): “La condizione di carcerati dei giovani di Lolomboy, non permette affatto l’indipendenza di educazione: proibito qualunque passeggio, sistema repressivo secondo i regolamenti del governo....” It is interesting to note, however, that members of a religious institute, the Daughters of Charity, were in charge of the laundry and kitchen of the so-called “prison” of Lolomboy. Cf *ibid*.

“The place can adapt itself according to the requirements of a Salesian house, capable of having 150 pupils with proportionate workshops etc. The Church with the annexed Institute is near the sea, in a pleasant and central place, very suitable for coming in touch with some of the richest people of Manila”<sup>28</sup>.

But after he and Fr. Versiglia settled a contract with the Archbishop on 5 March 1912<sup>29</sup>, a contract that he considered “a true miracle of Don Bosco”<sup>30</sup>, things did not turn the way he wanted them. After lauding so much the Archbishop as so generous in bestowing favours to them, he now accused him of inconsistency, ignoring the contract recently concluded and not giving the subsidy he promised for the project<sup>31</sup>.

Furthermore, Fr. Costamagna declared that the reasons for his and Fr. Fergnani’s crisis were two. The Apostolic Delegate, Archbishop Ambrosius Agius, whom he never met, who was so benevolent with the Salesians and who could have been their ally in negotiating with Archbishop Harty, had just died. The first official act they did when they arrived in the Philippines was to participate in the funeral celebration of this prelate. The Apostolic Delegate, like Archbishop Harty, wanted so much that the Salesians come to fill up that void which he had long wanted to fill up on behalf of the “Filipino young”<sup>32</sup>.

Besides, Fr. Costamagna accused Fr. Versiglia and Fr. Olive of having failed to go deeper and examine the offer when they came to Manila. He claimed that they saw the place for so little time, that they could not have given a right evaluation of the offer. This second reason, he declared in a letter to Fr. Rinaldi<sup>33</sup>. He, however, forgot that he had also visited Lolomboy for a couple of hours too!

<sup>28</sup> ASC F984 Corrispondenza (Costamagna a Albera, Manila 7 gennaio 1912).

<sup>29</sup> ASC F984 Contratto legale con l’Arcivescovo G. Harty (Manila, 5 marzo 1912).

<sup>30</sup> ASC F984 Corrispondenza (Costamagna a Albera, Manila, 7 marzo 1912). Cf ASC D871 Verbali (28 marzo 1912): “Manila. Si esporre quanto scrive D. Costamagna a riguardo della casa di Manila. Sono progetti che si succedono e si potranno leggere nelle lettere. La sostanza si è che si sperava di avere la chiesa di N.S. de los Remedios ch’è anche un Santuario-Parrocchia e si edificava accanto ad un Collegio a spese dell’arcivescovo”.

<sup>31</sup> ASC F984 Manila Proposta (Costamagna a Rinaldi, Manila, 16 aprile 1912): “...malgrado il contratto legale, il [ ] Arcivescovo non intende assicurarlo. Egli con il suo modo di agire, scancella con il gomito ciò che ha firmato con la mano”.

<sup>32</sup> ASC F984 Corrispondenza (Agius a Albera, Manila, 22 febbraio 1911): “Ed a questo proposito devo far notare alla S.V. che la gioventù Filippina, in verità molto numerosa, presterebbe ai PP. Salesiani un vastissimo campo di azione: essa in via ordinaria è docile ed animata da un vivo desiderio di perfezionarsi e progredire; e sebbene non abbia grandi disposizioni per lavori d’inventiva, nei lavori invece d’imitazione riesce benissimo; ed è per questo che io ho ferma convinzione che i PP. Salesiani potrebbero coi giovani Filippini istituire delle scuole di arti e mestieri eccellenti”.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.* (Costamagna a Rinaldi, Manila, 26 aprile 1912).



In order to support his rather negative conclusion on Archbishop Harty, Fr. Costamagna claimed to Turin that he and Fr. Fergnani had done their own investigation. The result of this was a confirmation of his conclusion: that the Archbishop was inconsistent; that he was not ready to subsidize their project.

“Having signed the contract, and having known that the Archbishop did not intend to fulfil it, treating us how he treated the Jesuits who had to abandon the Seminary of which they were rectors, and how he treated the Fathers of the Divine Word who too had to close their college after only one year of foundation, always because the Archbishop was not paying and was not maintaining his word”<sup>34</sup>.

For this he decided “with a heavy heart” to return to Italy, in order to report to the Superiors the difficulties encountered and the proofs why their mission failed. In less than half a year, he was back again to Turin. Nonetheless, the Jesuits remained in the Philippines, and so too the Fathers of the Divine Word.

## 2.2. Archbishop Harty and the Salesians

Fr. Costamagna had always claimed that the Archbishop treated them well from the day they arrived in Manila. He hosted them personally and in his house, and showed them “a goodness truly paternal”. Indeed, the Manila Archbishop really and sincerely wanted the Salesians to be in his Archdiocese. It was part of his strategy to have new religious orders come to the Philippines and to his Archdiocese<sup>35</sup>. He was doing the pastoral visitation of the province of Nueva Ecija which was then part of the Archdiocese of Manila, when Fr. Versiglia and Fr. Olive arrived. For this, he had begged Archbishop Agius to receive them for him and to keep them until his return. He dared to express to Archbishop Agius his sincere and earnest desire for the Salesians, even to the point of sacrifice:

“The opportunity for them is immense and I am willing to make great sacrifice to secure them. The salaries now paid to the seculars to look after the boys would be paid to the Fathers and Brothers”<sup>36</sup>.

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<sup>34</sup> ASC B935 Luigi Costamagna: Corrispondenza (Costamagna a Albera, [undated]). Cf also ASC F984 Interviste coi Gesuiti riguardo alle possibilità di opere nelle Filippine (Costamagna, Manila, 16 febbraio 1912).

<sup>35</sup> ASC F984 Corrispondenza (Costamagna a Albera, Manila 7 gennaio 1912): “una bontà veramente paterna”.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.* (Harty to Agius, Cabanatuan, [ ] February 1911). An Italian translation of the letter of the Archbishop of Manila to the Apostolic Delegate was provided to Turin, if perhaps to convince the Superiors of the good will of the Ordinary of Manila. Cf *ibid.* (Harty a Agius, Torino [Cabanatuan], [ ] February 1911).

Fr. Costamagna even said that the Archbishop had always shown them so much courtesy, accompanying them in his own carriage, introducing them personally to the local authorities and to the more important institutes, with words so high for the Congregation and “for the most reverend Fr. Rua, whom he knew personally and whom he remembered as a Saint”<sup>37</sup>.

The compromise that Archbishop Harty signed on 11 February 1911 in Victoria, Tarlac assured Fr. Versiglia certain things with regards the school which he wanted them to administer for “those who were sentenced to the reformatory school” in Lolomboy<sup>38</sup>. Besides, the “pro-memoria ... regarding the foundation in Manila” sent by Fr. Gusmano to Fr. Costamagna was very clear on what Archbishop Harty offered to the Salesians<sup>39</sup>.

But why could Fr. Costamagna not trust the Archbishop and take him for his words? Did the Archbishop really change his attitude towards the Salesians in the persons of Fr. Costamagna and Fr. Fergnani? If ever, how come the Archbishop changed his attitude towards the Salesians? Who did not truly keep the contract?

The Archbishop was supposed to be a man of honor. He signed a contract. Anyone in his right mind would not turn his back to a contract that he signed, especially if he was one of importance and of fame. The Archbishop declared that he would do any sacrifice if only to have the Salesians in the Archdiocese. And this, Fr. Costamagna and Fr. Fergnani experienced. He had always tried to make the Salesians stay, and said that he was disposed to make the necessary sacrifice, but perhaps up to a certain limit.

### 2.3. “Goodbye Manila”

By 28 March 1912, Fr. Costamagna had written Fr. Gusmano from Manila, informing him that he was leaving in a few days. By 12 April 1912, he had

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.* (Costamagna a Albera, Manila 7 gennaio 1912).

<sup>38</sup> ASC F984 Manila: Proposta (Compromesso de la S. Ecc. M. Harty Arcivescovo di Manila (11 febbraio 1911): (1) The experiment of Lolomboy was to be of two years. If it did not give the desired results as a School of Arts and Crafts, then the Archbishop would “provide them (Salesians) a convenient house in Manila to carry on the work”. (2) That the Archbishop and the board of directors of the San Jose Hospice will provide for the sustenance of the boys. (3) That the Director will be a Salesian, and who have “complete liberty in the administration, direction and in regulating internal discipline”. (4) That the same Director “will alone regulate” matter regarding the dismissal of a boy “who according to the rules of the Institute would be considered unfit to remain in the Institute”. (5) That the Archbishop of Manila will “undertake to defray the initial expense for the fitting up of workshops, schools, musical instruments etc.”. (6) That “for the up-keep and travelling expense of the Salesian Fathers”, the Archbishop promised “that a salary just and adequate will be paid” to the Fathers and Brothers.

<sup>39</sup> ASC F984 Pro-memoria al Sig. D. Costamagna Luigi (Gusmano, Torino, [1911 agosto]).

written from Hong Kong to Fr. Rinaldi who was then Prefect General, informing him that he should be arriving in Turin by the coming month of May. At the same time, he was asked to be sent back to America<sup>40</sup>. He would get what he wanted and would in fact go to Argentina. But was he wanted back by America? On 7 July 1912, he was present during the meeting of the General Council to explain what happened in Manila; once more, he presented his version of the “facenda” in Manila, pointing out the inconsistency of Archbishop Harty, who unfortunately was not there to present his side<sup>41</sup>.

Meanwhile, a Salesian house in Manila was listed as one of the new works of the Salesian Society for that year. The Shrine and Parish of Nuestra Señora de los Remedios in Malate, Manila, was in fact registered as a Salesian house dependent on the Italian Salesian Province of the Sub-Alpina<sup>42</sup>, as was suggested by Fr. Versiglia to Fr. Gusmano<sup>43</sup>. In the *Elenco Generale* of the Salesian Society for 1912, the following were indicated: Luigi Costamagna as rector, and Giovanni Fergnani as catechist for the new foundation. The reality, however, was that these two Salesians were already thousands of miles away from where obedience had sent them.

The first supposed enthusiasm of these two Salesians was easily spent out. They came December 1911 and “disappeared” sometime in March 1912. With the unexpected exit of these two Salesians, the Philippines would miss the chance of celebrating its own centenary in 2011. The Salesians in the Philippines would have been 100 years old in a few years time, well ahead of the Salesian Provinces of Thailand and Japan. But somehow, digging deeper into its history, one would have concluded that it was better that way.

### 3. A Sense of History

#### 3.1. *Costamagna's Preference*

If one did a more detailed reading of his reports to the Superiors in Turin, one could picture a Fr. Costamagna who was perhaps “confused”. This could

<sup>40</sup> ASC F984 Corrispondenza (Costamagna a Rinaldi, [Parroquia Santuario de Nuestra Señora de los Remedios, Distrito de Malate] Manila, 16 aprile 1912).

<sup>41</sup> ASC D871 Verbali (7 luglio 1912). “Ore 18 all’oratorio sotto la presidenza del Sig. D. Albera; sono assenti Barberis e Cerruti. Entra D. Costamagna Luigi e narra come si sono svolti i fatti a Manila facendo rilevare la incostanza di quello arcivescovo. Si conchiuse di attendere che scriva egli. Non conviene che ci facciamo vivi”.

<sup>42</sup> Cf *Elenco Generale* (1912/13). Cf also SAHK Cina Provincia dal 1906 (list of confreres of the province).

<sup>43</sup> ASC F984 Corrispondenza (Versiglia a Gusmano, Manila, 21 marzo 1912).

be noticed in two documents, which he had written. Describing the original offer of Archbishop Harty to the Salesians in his letter to Fr. Albera of 27 Dec. 1911, he said that there was an “old barn” formerly owned by the Dominicans in Lolomboy. In his memorandum of 7 January 1912 to the Superiors in Turin, he claimed that the building was owned by the Augustinians. In the first document, he wrote that Lolomboy was 38 kms. from Manila; in the latter, he said it was 42 kms. from the city. He spoke about the director of the prison in the former; of the vice-director of the prison in the latter. The Parish of the Chinese was found in Binondo, under the care of the Dominicans; in the memorandum, the Parish was of the Rosary, in Tondo, but under the secular clergy.

At the start of 1912, in January, an impression that one could pick up from Fr. Costamagna was that he intended to found and administer a school, not a place for difficult boys. He, in fact, had written to Fr. Albera on 7 January 1912, after having informed him earlier on 27 December of his observations of the offer of Lolomboy. The Archbishop was ready to give them a church in Malate, shrine of “Nuestra Señora de los Remedios”, which was also a Parish. Annexed to the church was an old convent “which was property” of the Archbishop, in the new American regime. Both convent and church were near the sea and near the rich of Manila. The locale was going to be adapted according to the “demands of a Salesian house” for about 150 students, with shops. For this, he was already projecting the need of personnel “able and virtuous” in as much as he saw “a great future of the Congregation not only in Manila but in the whole of the Philippines”, what with its eleven million inhabitants of which eight million were Catholics! Even Fr. Fergnani had begun to do apostolate among the Chinese. He claimed to the Rector Major that in the Philippines, “we can do much good”; that what he needed now were “excellent Salesians” to do this. He even advised the Superior that he would be sending some write-ups regarding his experience in Manila for publication in the *Salesian Bulletin*<sup>44</sup>!

So enthused was Fr. Costamagna that he easily enumerated what the Archbishop had done and what he wanted to do for the Salesians. (1) The Archbishop had already bought “a very vast” tract of land where the new part of the city would rise; in this place, he planned to put up a building, capable of 1,000 “artisans and students”. (2) In the same place, he promised to build a church dedicated to Mary Help of Christians, but this depending “from the first proofs of which we shall show our good will and capability”. (3) He was also about to

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<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.* (Costamagna a Albera, Manila, 7 gennaio 1912). Fr. Versiglia had also informed Fr. Gusmano of this contract, telling him that he had signed the contract on behalf of the Superiors of Turin. Cf *ibid.* (Versiglia a Gusmano, Manila, 21 marzo 1912).

send the money for the trip of the personnel who ought to leave for the Philippines by April to be ready for the school inauguration scheduled for mid-June 1912. He, “a practical man”, intended to name the school “Escuelas de Artes y Oficios de las Islas Filipinas”, so that the institute may be known and appreciated in the whole Archipelago. The shrine and the convent, which could be the “boarding house for the students”, would remain with the Salesians. The Archbishop had asked, in fact, the Salesians to take charge of the shrine by mid-15 January, in order that they could supervise the construction and do some ministry as well. And he, Fr. Costamagna was very sure that the Archbishop would do everything “to favor the continuity of the Salesian work in the Philippines”<sup>45</sup>.

### 3.2. A Second Contract

Fr. Costamagna insisted on the Archbishop that the Salesians start with the school, at the expense of the Archdiocese, and with a legal contract, so as to make sure that the Archdiocese paid for the school. Indeed, on 5 March 1912, Archbishop Harty and Fr. Versiglia, who came to Manila from China as official representative of Turin, signed a contract for a school of “Arte e Mestieri” in the Parish of N.S. de los Remedios in Malate<sup>46</sup>. Two days after the signing of the contract, Fr. Costamagna wrote Fr. Albera very optimistically on the issue with the Archbishop.

“The said contract publicly written and legal, assures us of a house, a shop for workers, a church, sanctuary for the Salesians and a portion for the young (60) and the trips back and forth. Such fact is for us the most beautiful proof that the Divine Providence wants that we stay in the Philippines. We continue to repeat that the approval of the said contract is a true miracle of Don Bosco, and as I already wrote to you, was in the intention of the most reverend Archbishop”<sup>47</sup>.

For Fr. Costamagna, this new arrangement was a solution, “the most convenient and most honorable for the Congregation”, after the failure of the first. He was so sure that all would go ahead, that he dared to tell the Superior that he ought to send “good personnel”<sup>48</sup>. But then, why did he not wait for the Archbishop, so accommodating to the Salesians, so that he could do his way?

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.* (Costamagna a Albera, Manila 7 gennaio 1912).

<sup>46</sup> ASC F984 Contratto legale con l'Arcivescovo G. Harty (Manila, 5 marzo 1912).

<sup>47</sup> ASC F984 Corrispondenza (Costamagna a Albera, Manila, 7 marzo 1912): “... Ci andiamo ripetendo che l'approvazione di detto contratto è un vero miracolo di D. Bosco, giacché come lo ho scritto era nell'intenzione del V. Arcivescovo”.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

Ironically, Fr. Costamagna ended his letter to Fr. Albera of 2 January 1912 with such docility and seemingly spiritual words:

“The things go ahead in a manner, which for us seem blessed by the Lord, and we are satisfied. We await from the prudence of the venerable Superiors all those enlightenments and commands which can be of wise guidance”<sup>49</sup>.

But Fr. Costamagna never informed nor asked permission from Fr. Versiglia that he had decided to abandon Manila. He and Fr. Fergnani just arrived in Hong Kong and presented themselves to Fr. Versiglia. He had forgotten, perhaps, that the one who signed the contract on 5 March 1912 with the Archbishop was Fr. Versiglia as “the representative of the Rector Major of the Salesians”<sup>50</sup>. Or maybe, he believed he could decide by himself, that he was ultimately responsible for his decision.

### 3.3. “*Post-Costamagna*”

Although the Salesians left the Philippines unceremoniously, Manila never abandoned the Salesians. For it continued to invite the Salesians to come and establish Don Bosco’s charism in spite of its past experience with them.

After the “Manila facenda”, one realized that offers extended to the Salesians to come back continued to be in line with the spirit of the first offer: for the young poor Filipinos. Bishop Cesar Guerrero, Auxiliary Bishop of Manila, had written the Rector Major of the Salesians, Fr. Ricaldone on 24 August 1939, to send the Salesians for the young poor Filipinos, echoing the previous invitation of Archbishop Harty to Fr. Rua. His clear motivation was that there was no single institution of Christian education in Manila that catered to the needs of poor boys forced to roam the streets. His letter was handed over to the Superiors in Turin personally by Msgr. Louis Morrow. This, he did obviously on behalf of Archbishop of O’Doherty. For this, he begged Fr. Ricaldone to have pity on the young Filipinos, who because of poverty and negligence of their parents, have become the prey of immorality and have no place to go<sup>51</sup>.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.* (Costamagna a Albera, Manila, 2 gennaio 1912).

<sup>50</sup> ASC F984 Contratto legale con l’Arcivescovo G. Harty (Manila, 5 marzo 1912).

<sup>51</sup> ASC F984 Corrispondenza (Guerrero a Ricaldone, Manila, 24 agosto 1939): “Qui abbiamo bisogno di un ricovero per ragazzi, maggiormente poveri; non vi è nessuna istituzione di educazione cristiana esclusivamente per i ragazzi poveri e perciò ce ne sono tanti che vagano per le strade senza idea di Dio”. Cf Also ASC D873 Verbali (24 aprile 1928): “Al Card. Laurenti che a nome del S. Padre chiede sacerdoti di nazionalità Nord Americana da mandare a Manila e Filippine a esercitare il loro ministero si risponde che purtroppo per qualche anno ancora non abbiamo alcuno disponibile. Con le solite preghiere si chiude la seduta alle ore 20”.

The day before, a Salesian cooperator named Emeterio Barcelon y Barcelo, had written the Rector Major, also asked for Salesians on behalf of the Salesian Cooperators. He also informed him that the Cooperators have received "offers of some persons very interested in seeing here the Salesian Fathers"<sup>52</sup>. Even earlier, Archbishop Michael O'Doherty himself, a successor of Archbishop Harty, had invited the Salesians to come to his Archdiocese for the same purpose of putting up a "school of arts and trades" in a house in Antipolo owned by the Archdiocese<sup>53</sup>.

Fr. Ricaldone's response was to tell the Archbishop to communicate with the Apostolic Delegate in Manila, who in case of necessity, "would call the Province of China to see and refer to the General Council the concrete proposals"<sup>54</sup>. Obviously, the word of the Apostolic Delegate, Archbishop Piani, a Salesian and who was an unofficial representative of the Society in the Philippines, was carefully considered by Turin if indeed the offer was worth calling the attention of the Provincial of China. History would tell us also that the relationship between the Archbishop of Manila and the Apostolic Delegate was not always smooth and easy.

When the Archbishop of Nueva Segovia, Santiago Sancho, presented his request for the Salesians in his Archdiocese, Archbishop Piani sincerely presented to Turin his opinion on the offer. The Salesians should start in the center, rather than in the periphery. San Vicente in Ilocos Sur was not worth entertaining, because it was far from Manila and too backward to start any Salesian work<sup>55</sup>. History again would tell us that the Salesians would not start in Manila but elsewhere, contrary to the opinion of the Archbishop.

Nonetheless, the next time the Superior in Turin would get involve with the Philippines, the Rector Major would personally and directly ask the Provincial

<sup>52</sup> ASC F984 Corrispondenza (Barcelon a Ricaldone, Manila, 23 agosto 1939).

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.* (O'Doherty a Costamagna, Manila, 31 de Julio de 1917).

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.* (Ricaldone a Guerrero, Torino, 14 novembre 1939).

<sup>55</sup> In his extraordinary visitation of the Salesian Province of the Philippines (October-November 1974), Fr. George Williams quoted Archbishop Piani as one who probably did not want the Salesians to come for fear that the Salesian virtues of family spirit and loving kindness might prove damaging in the country, on account of the people's character and temperament. "In quanto alla castità, conviene tener presente un'osservazione di S.E. Msgr. Guglielmo Piani, Salesiano (morto al 27 settembre 1956) che fu Nunzio Apostolico [he was actually only Apostolic Delegate] nelle Filippine molto prima del nostro arrivo ad esse. Disse egli che il nostro spirito di famiglia e di amorevolezza ci potrebbe risultare dannoso in tal paese a motivo del temperamento e del carattere della donna filippina, che è davvero aggressiva verso gli uomini, non eccettuati i sacerdoti; per questo motivo egli era contrario all'andata dei salesiani alle Filippine. Forse non conviene sopravvalutare il suo parere, ma il fatto sta (secondo me) che da parte dei salesiani ci vuole prudenza e riserva maggiori nelle Filippine che in qualsiasi altra regione della mia regione". Cf ASC F163 Filippine: Relazione Annuale 1970, 8.

of China to check on the requests from the Philippines. Fr. Ricaldone, who this time would pick up the initiative and move towards in the accomplishment, in fact, told Fr. Braga in 1949 to go to Manila and see for himself the offers and meet those who wished the Salesians to come. Manila was not the only one who wished the Salesians should come. This time, Turin was also very interested in sending the Salesians to the Philippines. For this, Turin did not want to miss the occasions that the Philippines offered.

#### 4. Looking Back to Understand

Fr. Costamagna had not even left Hong Kong and he was already telling the Superior to send him back to America. But who were these two Salesians who were sent to the Philippines to found the work there?

##### 4.1. *Fr. Luigi Costamagna*

##### 4.1.1. Costamagna before Manila

Fr. Luigi Costamagna, a late vocation who made his first profession in the hands of Don Bosco, was sent as a cleric to Buenos Aires where he arrived in December 1889. Within three months, he received the minor orders so that by Easter of 1890, he was ordained a priest. His first assignment was the Oratory of Almagro, in Buenos Aires (1892-1895). In 1896, he was sent to La Paz, Bolivia to start an agricultural school and a college for students. After three years, in 1899, he was called by his uncle, Fr. Giacomo Costamagna (1846-1921)<sup>56</sup>, then Provincial of Chile, to be rector of the house of “Il Patrocinio di San Giuseppe” in Santiago de Chile, where he remained until 1904, the year he was nominated Provincial of Chile. But strangely enough, he was in this office less than three years of the regular term. Something must not have gone well for him during this time.

In a meeting of the provincial council of the Chilean Province on 20 January 1907, the Provincial, Fr. Luigi Nai<sup>57</sup>, former Provincial of the Middle East

<sup>56</sup> SAS 67A002 Bishop Giacomo Costamagna: born in Caramagna, Cuneo (23 March 1846); first profession in Trofarello (27 September 1867); ordained in Turin, Italy (18 September 1868); consecrated Bishop in Turin, Italy (23 May 1895); died in Bernal, Argentina (9 September 1921) at 75 years, 54 years Salesian and 53 years priest and 27 years Bishop.

<sup>57</sup> Fr. Luigi Nai was born in Pavia, Italy and died in Turin, Italy (30 April 1932) at 77 years, 60 years Salesian and 55 years priest. He was Provincial of the Middle East Province (1902-1905) and Chile (1905-1925).



Province and then transferred to Chile, asked three members of his council if it was convenient to let Fr. Luigi Costamagna, who was actually in Italy, return to Chile. After a brief discussion, all three Salesians consulted voted no to the latter's re-entry to their Province, "judging his presence in the Province as damaging in every aspect"<sup>58</sup>.

A week before, one of the councillors, Fr. Ambrogio Turricea<sup>59</sup>, had written the Provincial expressing his reasons why he believed his former Provincial should not be re-admitted to Chile. The former Superior had procured a scandal, which had embarrassed the Salesians. He would only be the cause of the loss of charity and unity among the confreres. He had issues that could be imitated by unscrupulous confreres. Moreover, according to Fr. Turricea, the Apostolic Delegate, had written to Fr. Rua and had shared to him the same idea of keeping Fr. Costamagna out of the Province. This was the only way to achieve what the Rector Major had asked their Province, that "union of mind, of heart"<sup>60</sup>.

Earlier, on 8 December 1906, Fr. Costamagna had written to the General Council after he had been freed from the office of the Provincial, accusing certain confreres of calumny. He had asked the Superiors that these Salesians, whom he named, be tried and judged by an ecclesiastical tribunal, and thus be subjected to canonical punishment<sup>61</sup>. He demanded this from them in order to

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<sup>58</sup> ASC B935 Luigi Costamagna: Corrispondenza (Santiago, 20 gennaio 1907). The members of the provincial council presided by Fr. Luigi Nai who voted unfovarably for the return of Fr. Luigi Costamagna were Ambrogio Turricea [rector of Collegio-Convitto del Carmine, Santiago], Domenico Tomatis [rector of Collegio-Convitto di Arti e Mestieri del SS. Salvatore, Talca], Daniele Raimondo [confessore of the house of del Carmine]. Fr. Domenico Tomatis (1849-1912) was one of the boys of Valdocco during the time of Don Bosco. Cf SAS 67A005.

<sup>59</sup> Fr. Ambrogio Turricea was born in Ravenna, Italy (12 October 1865) and died in Santiago de Chile, Chile (11 July 1953) at 88 years, 70 years Salesian, 66 years priest. He was rector of several houses of the Province of Chile from 1912-1935 and provincial councillor from 1917-1952.

<sup>60</sup> ASC B935 Luigi Costamagna: Corrispondenza (Turricea a Nai, Santiago, 12 Enero 1907). Fr. Turricea was very concrete to exemplify his position. For him, Fr. Costamagna did not have the qualities of a superior: he had openly insulted confreres in the course of a spiritual retreat; he was known "per aver liberta di tener denaro"; he was incapable of being a source of unity "fra i direttori e il personale". Cf *ibid*.

<sup>61</sup> ASC B935 Luigi Costamagna: Corrispondenza (Costamagna a Capitolo Superiore, Torino, 8 dicembre 1906). Fr. Costamagna accused the following six Salesians (five priests and a cleric) of "calunnia...": Fr. Domenico Tomatis [rector of Collegio Convitto Ss. Salvatore, Talca, Chile], Fr. Ettore Barberis [prefect of Collegio Convitto Ss. Salvatore, Talca, Chile], Fr. Pasquale Richetta [prefect of Collegio-Convitto Don Bosco in La Paz, Bolivia], D. Carlo Amerio [prefect of Collegio Convitto del Carmine, Santiago, Chile], D. Guido Rocca [rector of Scuola Don Bosco Arte e Mestieri, in Quito, Ecuador] and Cl. Leopoldo Chazal [perpetually professed cleric of Collegio Convitto Sant'Agostino, Valparaiso, Chile].

regain his lost honor. Furthermore, he asked that he be made to return to Chile to clear his name<sup>62</sup>.

For the moment, the confreres of the Chilean Province had their opinion heard. Fr. Costamagna was to remain in Italy. After having re-called Fr. Costamagna to Europe, Fr. Rua had assigned him as superior of the Salesian house of Sarrià in Barcelona in 1908. But again, he did not stay long in this house and in the Province as well, as he was just difficult for the Provincial of Barcelona to deal with<sup>63</sup>. For after less than three years, in 1910, he was again re-called by the Superiors in Turin. This time, the motive was that he was being entrusted the “delicate mission of founding a college in the Philippine Islands”, which indeed he started but he never completed. The reason expressed strangely in his obituary letter for his inability to finish the work assigned him in the Philippines was “because the generous benefactor who had promised the means for subsistence has passed on to a better life”<sup>64</sup>. But there were obviously other reasons.

#### 4.1.2. Back in America

Fr. Costamagna was allowed to go back to America sometime in 1913, where he insisted to return after his brief stint in the Philippines. He was assigned as rector of the School of Arts and Trades of St. Francis of Sales and the Parish of N.S. de la Merced in Viedma, of the Argentinian Province of Patagonia<sup>65</sup>. In less than a year, he was transferred anew to be rector of Don Bosco School at Bahia Blanca. Neither did he stay long in this house; he, in fact, asked to be replaced<sup>66</sup>.

A confrere of Don Bosco School, Bahia Blanca, had written to the Rector Major, Fr. Albera, after two confreres of the same house had written to the Rector Major, as well as to their Provincial, to intervene on their rector. Their

<sup>62</sup> ASC D870 Verbali (11 dicembre 1906): “A D. Costamagna Luigi che vorrebbe ritornare al Chile per difendere il suo onore che crede leso. Gli si risponda animandolo ed assicurandolo che i superiori per mezzo del nuovo Ispettore faranno tutto quello che sarà necessario e ch’egli intanto vada a Sarrià dove è atteso”.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.* (12 settembre 1910): “Entra D. Manfredini, Ispettore dell’Ispettorìa Tarragonese, espone lo stato delle sue case e le varie proposte riguardo al cambio dei direttori e quanto intende fare per portare avanti l’opera del Tibidabo. Espone infine le difficoltà che incontra per andare d’accordo con D. Costamagna Luigi, Direttore della Casa di Sarrià”.

<sup>64</sup> ASC B935 Luigi Costamagna: Corrispondenza (Lettera Mortuaria, Santiago, 12 agosto 1941).

<sup>65</sup> ASC D871 Verbali (24 giugno 1912): “Si elegge come direttore della casa di Viedma D. Luigi Costamagna”.

<sup>66</sup> ASC B935 Luigi Costamagna: Corrispondenza (Costamagna a [Albera], [undated - 1914]).

call for intervention was without results. For this, the confrere wrote and complained against Fr. Costamagna:

"The Rector goes up and down as he wants: he does not convoke the house council; he spends at his pleasure; he is ... a true despot. He lies a tutta forza: in a word, if the Superiors do not act at once, something serious will happen, and we shall see some obliged to abandon the Congregation which we so much love and in which we have worked for so many years. We are treated as employees. We have asked the Provincial to intervene; but nothing has been done"<sup>67</sup>.

The confrere asked one little thing: "that a little justice might be done for the oppressed; it is convenient to respect and observe the decrees of the Holy See, which truly are trampled upon"<sup>68</sup>.

After a year in another Salesian school in Bahia Blanca, he was once more transferred to another house in the same city; this time, however, he was not the superior. It was now his turn to report his observations to the Superiors in Turin on this school where he had been once superior. He accused the Salesians of neglecting to celebrate mass and hear the confession of the students and interns of the school, of not teaching catechism to the boys, and of not caring for the sodalities. He even claimed that the confreres used corporal punishments<sup>69</sup>. He wrote the same observations to Fr. Barberis, who was his novice master and whom he considered as his spiritual father. He told Fr. Barberis that it was for these motives that he had given up his being rector of the school<sup>70</sup>. In 1918, he was transferred to the Agricultural School of S. Isidro at Viedma. From 1920 to 1925, he was rector at Punta Arenas, Valparaiso, having re-entered Chile.

Thus, from 1912 to 1925, he was superior of at least four houses, in two countries. From 1923 to 1925, he was even a provincial councillor of the Argentinian Province of Bahia Blanca. But it was in his last assignment that he was struck with paralysis and fell seriously sick.

"Struck by paralysis, he could no longer cross seas and reach continents. He arrived in the provincial house, where he recovered part of his memory and strength, but not the extraordinary activity of the past. However, he did the ministry of confessions in the

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<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.* (José M. Leonelli a Albera, Bahia Blanca, 10 ottobre 1914). Fr. José Ma. Leonelli was prefect of Colegio Don Bosco Sacra Famiglia in Bahia Blanca. He left the congregation in 1915.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.* (José M. Leonelli a Albera, Bahia Blanca, 10 ottobre 1914). Fr. Leonelli would eventually leave the Society.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.* (Costamagna a Albera, Choele-Choel, 6 gennaio 1918).

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.* (Costamagna a Barberis, Choele-Choel, 15 giugno 1918). Choele-Choel was a mission house in Rio Negro, Argentina. Fr. Costamagna admitted in this letter, a sort of rendiconto to his former novice master, that this "passione dominante è l'ira e l'impetuosità". Cf *ibid.*

houses and the institutes of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians, recite the rosary, walk in the playgrounds and porches, living the sweet remembrances of the Holy Founder and the development of the Salesian work and of his travels in the world”<sup>71</sup>.

Before he died, he had entrusted to the nurse assisting him a note to be given to the rector, asking him upon his death to wait for a couple of days before finally closing him up in his casket. Fifteen years earlier, they had almost buried him alive, believing that he was already dead. Fr. Costamagna did not want a repeat of it<sup>72</sup>.

## 4.2. *Fr. Giovanni Fergnani*

### 4.2.1. Wanting to Be a Missionary

Fr. Fergnani was a member of the first missionary expedition to China. In the Salesians’ initial foundation in Macao (1906), he was listed as catechist, while Fr. Luigi Versiglia was rector. The house was attached to the Province of Sant’Antonio of Portugal. Fr. Fergnani had gone back to Italy from China to recover from nervous breakdown, when Turin asked him to join Fr. Costamagna to start the work in the Philippines.

It was actually his Superior in China, Fr. Versiglia, who had suggested to Turin that it would be better for Fr. Fergnani to go to Manila rather than go back to China. The confrere being affected by the climate in China, Fr. Versiglia suggested that Fr. Fergnani should go to Manila instead, where, according to the Apostolic Delegate of the Philippine capital, the air was better than Macao<sup>73</sup>. For the confrere, however, it seemed that it was not his health as the reason why he was asked not to return to Macao. For if it were so, why was Fr. Versiglia insistent that he goes to Manila, whose climate, according to Fr. Fergnani, was “really warmer than that of Macao”<sup>74</sup>.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.* (Lettera Obituaria, Escuelas Profesionales “La Gratiud Nacional”, Chile, Santiago, 12 agosto 1941) 3.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.* This was what he wrote in the note which he asked his nurse to give to the rector: “Quando Iddio, nella sua infinita bontà, mi abbia chiamato all’eternità, prego caldamente di lasciarmi due giorni prima di rinchiudermi nella bara per seppellirmi, affinché non succeda che l’anima mia, non ancora separata dal corpo, si redisti nell’avello, ciò che sarebbe orribile”. Cf *ibid.*

<sup>73</sup> ASC F984 Corrispondenza (Agius a Albera, Manila, 22 febbraio 1911). The Apostolic Delegate in Manila, Archbishop Agius, described that the climate in Manila was different from that of China, so that for the Salesian who needed a better air, then Manila was the place to go. Cf *ibid.*

<sup>74</sup> ASC D872 C001 Giovanni Fergnani: Pro memoria ai superiori del Capitolo Superiore (Lanzo Torinese, 17 settembre 1912).

The fact was that there had been a lack of fraternal cordiality between him and Fr. Versiglia, in as much as they had disparity of ideas regarding the mission work in Macao. And this discord lasted about seven years (1906-1913)<sup>75</sup>. But there were other reasons why Fr. Versiglia saw the latter unfit for the work in China and for the missions at that.

Fr. Versiglia was sincere in his observations as one who was in charge of the missions and as one who had Fr. Fergnani under his command. He wrote Fr. Calogero Gusmano<sup>76</sup> his observations regarding Fr. Fergnani, which should not be taken as animosity or disharmony with the confrere. The problem was the confrere, who “either for real or meticulousness is unfit for this climate”. It had reached the point that he could not eat the morning bread, because “it was no longer fresh”. Fr. Fergnani had gone to a nearby island to see if he could do some good there with the Christians; he stayed to the extent that the provisions he brought with him lasted. He just could not eat Chinese food; he was incoherent. He showed himself enthusiastic about the missions; but he complained about his health on account of his supposed mission work. And in this, he was unreasonable. Fr. Versiglia had told him to remain in Italy. For if he returned to the missions, he would again want to escape back to Europe. Fr. Fergnani claimed that his sickness was due to the heavy work he was doing. Fr. Versiglia had consulted the best local doctors, who were intelligent persons: they claimed that Fr. Fergnani’s sickness was “of another kind”<sup>77</sup>.

When Fr. Fergnani went to Hong Kong after he left Manila, he was not allowed to stay there for long. He, who claimed the moral right to stay in the China mission “which had cost him so much sacrifice”, was not given the chance to stay in the Salesian house. In a manner “little praiseworthy”, he was forced to leave for Italy by Fr. Versiglia, who according to Fr. Fergnani, had treated him rudely<sup>78</sup>.

<sup>75</sup> ASC D872 C001 Giovanni Fergnani: Corrispondenza (Fergnani a Albera, Marina di Pisa, 28 marzo 1913).

<sup>76</sup> SAS 92A066 Fr. Calogero Gusmano: born in Messina, Italy (24 August 1872), first profession in Foglizzo, Turin (23 April 1892), ordained in Turin, Italy (13 April 1895), died in Nice, France (30 November 1935) at 63 years, 43 years Salesian and 40 years priest. He was secretary of the General Council from 1912 to 1935.

<sup>77</sup> ASC A352 Corrispondenza (Versiglia a Gusmano, Hong Kong, 2 ottobre 1911).

<sup>78</sup> ASC D872 C001 Giovanni Fergnani: Pro Memoria Ai Superiori del Capitolo Superior (Lanzo Torinese, 17 settembre 1912). Fr. Fergnani insisted that he had the right to be treated more civilly by Fr. Versiglia, after he had given almost six years of “extraordinary work” in Macao. Furthermore, he claimed that Fr. Versiglia had exaggerated in his reaction on account of that phrase written by Fr. Gusmano regarding Fr. Fergnani, that “it was because of the overwhelming work” which had been the cause of the nervous breakdown of the confrere. For this, according to Fr. Fergnani, Fr. Versiglia took an exaggerated conclusion “that Fr. Fergnani had affirmed that he had done everything, and Fr. Versiglia, nothing”. Cf *ibid.*

Back again in Italy after the “Manila facenda”, sometime in 1912, Fr. Fergnani was assigned in Marina di Pisa as Parish Vicar of the Salesian Parish, which belonged to the Salesian Province of Liguria. Later, immediately after World War I, he asked to go back to the missions and was thus sent to join the Middle East Province where he ended his life on 29 December 1932. In this Province, he worked in the houses of Constantinople, Adaha, Alexandria, Bethlehem and Beitgemal. It was in this last house where he supposedly made a study of the tomb of St. Stephen.

This Salesian never lost his “missionary dream” when he came back from Manila. For this, he somehow insisted to Turin that he was called to be missionary and this he requested once more that he be sent back to the missions<sup>79</sup>. Consequently, he was sent in 1923 to be missionary in Assam, India, a territory which was under the care of the Salesians and whose Superior was the Prefect Apostolic himself, Msgr. Louis Mathias (1987-1965)<sup>80</sup>. He ended giving trouble to one who did not deserve to be given such<sup>81</sup>.

The fact was that Fr. Fergnani never wanted to go to Manila. When he wrote on 23 April 1913 to Fr. Gusmano, with whom he considered to be close since they were companions, he had asked to go to the United States, in San Francisco, California<sup>82</sup>. Even if five years later, he would write Fr. Gusmano, asking him to intercede to Fr. Albera on his behalf so that he could go back to China, because his desire “to dedicate my last years in favour of the dear Chinese is always more ardent”<sup>83</sup>, he had asked the Rector Major a month earlier “to be transferred to the United States, and exactly in California, to where he wanted so much to go and to where he felt he was called to work<sup>84</sup>. While assigned in Marina di Pisa after his return from Manila, he had contrasted with the Provincial. For this, he had insisted with Turin that he be allowed to adhere to his “insistent desire to continue his mission in the United States”<sup>85</sup>.

<sup>79</sup> ASC D872 C001 Giovanni Fergnani (Lettera Mortuaria, Scuola Agricola Salesiana, Beitgemal, Palestina, 15 gennaio 1933).

<sup>80</sup> SAS 05B102 Msgr. Louis Mathias: born in Paris, France (20 July 1887), first profession in San Gregorio, Catania (6 May 1905), ordained in Foglizzo, Turin (20 July 1913), died in Legnano, Milan (3 August 1965) at 78 years, 60 years Salesian, 21 years priest and 31 years bishop. Archbishop Mathias was Provincial in Shillong, India (1926-1934) and Archbishop of Madras, India in 1935.

<sup>81</sup> Fr. Fergnani would, in fact, asked Fr. Gusmano to inform Fr. Mathias, “one of my closest acquaintances in Sicily”, about his coming to the missions in Assam, India. Cf ASC D872 C001 Giovanni Fergnani: Corrispondenza (Fergnani a Gusmano, Beitgemal, 7 luglio 1922).

<sup>82</sup> ASC D872 C001 Giovanni Fergnani: Corrispondenza (Fergnani a Gusmano, Marina di Pisa, 23 aprile 1913).

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.* (Fergnani a Gusmano, Collesalveti, 29 maggio 1918).

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.* (Fergnani a Albera, Marina di Pisa, 28 marzo 1913).

<sup>85</sup> ASC D872 C001 Giovanni Fergnani: Pro Memoria Ai Superiori del Capitolo Superiore (Lanzo Torinese, 17 settembre 1912). Fr. Fergnani described his supposed contrast as “col militarismo dell’Ispettore” of the Ligurian Province. Cf *ibid.*

#### 4.2.2. Fergnani on the “Manila Facenda”

Fr. Fergnani practically shared the same position of Fr. Costamagna regarding what happened in Manila. That Archbishop Harty had shown them paternal kindness during their stay in Manila and had demonstrated his love of the Congregation to them. However, the reasons why he disagreed to work in Lolomboy were the same as that of Fr. Costamagna. That they could not take the work among the Chinese of Binondo, nor that which was offered by the Bishop of Lipa; the former was still under the Dominicans, while the latter had already been entrusted to some other religious. That Fr. Costamagna was greatly discouraged and that the only thing left for them to do was to leave Manila”<sup>86</sup>.

Fr. Versiglia, annotating parts of the Fr. Fergnani’s letter to him, probably revealed his perplexity for the decision of the two confreres to abandon Manila. How could they found themselves embarrassed by the Archbishop if they were made to live in his own house and were driven around with his own car? How could they be easily appeased by the offer of a Parish located in an important and rich district of Manila? What was the use of Fr. Fergnani asking for music pieces to use as means of animation in the Parish given to them? That notwithstanding, in the same letter, Fr. Fergnani had declared that for him and for Fr. Costamagna the only thing for them to do after the supposedly fiasco of Lolomboy was “to retrace their steps and return to Turin”<sup>87</sup>.

When he arrived back in Italy after his supposedly bad experience of Manila, Fr. Fergnani wrote on 17 September 1912 a pro memoria to the Superiors of the General Council. The pro memoria was his self-defense, for his physical-moral health, one that he wrote “inspired by the love of truth, not by personal hatred”<sup>88</sup>. Part of this pro memoria gave an insight to the “Manila facenda” where he was personally involved.

Fr. Versiglia had accused Fr. Fergnani of having acted against his project in Manila. He also had declared that the Fr. Costamagna had acted imprudently, when he went away from Manila. Fr. Fergnani defended himself, denying that he had never opposed the will of the Superior. Moreover, he defended the action of Fr. Costamagna, claiming the contrary. The confrere had acted with prudence and for this had saved the Society from embarrassment. Besides, he had told

<sup>86</sup> ASC D872 C001 Giovanni Fergnani: Corrispondenza (Fergnani a Versiglia, Manila, 29 dicembre 1911).

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>88</sup> ASC D872 C001 Giovanni Fergnani: Pro Memoria Ai Superiori del Capitolo Superiore (Lanzo Torinese, 17 settembre 1912).

him the unpleasant things, which Fr. Versiglia had spoken to Fr. Costamagna about him<sup>89</sup>.

Instead, it was he, Fr. Fergnani, who was “bitterly deceived” with the vain promise of a mission in Manila. He, in fact, complained that in the promised Chinese mission by the Archbishop to the Salesians, he had met only “a single Chinese and a family who spoke Cantonese, the Chinese which he knew”<sup>90</sup>. Besides, even if there was indeed a Chinese mission, he questioned how it would have been possible to work simultaneously in Lolomboy and in Binondo<sup>91</sup>. At the end, he insinuated to the Superiors, whether it was fair that he should be blamed for the mistakes of Fr. Versiglia.

Almost after a year, Fr. Fergnani wrote to the Rector Major, Fr. Paolo Albera, on 28 March 1913, and gave his reaction to the “Manila facenda”, where a bishop had dared to “throw them out”, so that they found themselves at a lost on where to go. For him, Fr. Versiglia had frustrations regarding the Chinese missions. So his heart was disposed to Manila; that the possibility for the Salesians to work there was a mere fruit of his fantasy<sup>92</sup>. Their departure from Manila was to prove to the Archbishop that the Congregation did not need to be and was not obliged to be in the Philippines<sup>93</sup>.

It was different though, several years after. When Fr. Fergnani wrote Fr. Gusmano, secretary of the General Council, on 29 May 1918, six years after the embarrassment in Manila, he now blamed Fr. Costamagna for his woes. This confrere had been disloyal to him and was responsible for the increased animosity between him and Fr. Versiglia. Besides, he knew that Fr. Versiglia was no longer convinced that he was the one who wanted “to abandon

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<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.* Fr. Fergnani claimed that Fr. Versiglia had written a certain coadjutor by the name of Rota, declaring that Fr. Fergnani refused to heed his program. He further claimed that Fr. Costamagna “worked with maximum prudence, and to him was to be given the merit of having saved the Congregation from dangerous adventures”. Moreover, Fr. Costamagna had the weakness to refer to him everything that Fr. Versiglia said about him.

<sup>90</sup> ASC D872 C001 Giovanni Fergnani: Corrispondenza (Fergnani a Calogero, Marina di Pisa, 23 aprile 1913). Fr. Fergnani, though, had admitted to Fr. Versiglia that the majority of the Chinese in Manila spoke another Chinese language (Fo-kien), something that he did not foresee. *Ibid.* (Fergnani a Versiglia, Manila, 29 dicembre 1911).

<sup>91</sup> ASC D872 C001 Giovanni Fergnani: Pro Memoria Ai Superiori del Capitolo Superiore (Lanzo Torinese, 17 settembre 1912).

<sup>92</sup> ASC D872 C001 Giovanni Fergnani: Corrispondenza (Fergnani a Albera, Marina di Pisa, 28 marzo 1913): “I fallimenti in questi luoghi gli aprirono maggiormente il cuore verso Manila ... ma anche là il troppo buon desiderio gli fece vedere e pensare ciò che in gran parte non esisteva che nella sua fantasia”.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.* For Fr. Fergnani, what he and Fr. Costamagna did in Manila “avrà fatto comprendere che la dignità della nostra Congregazione non ha bisogno di nessun posto in particolare. Il mondo è largo”.



Manila”<sup>94</sup>. On the contrary, he claimed that it was he, who asked Fr. Costamagna to send a telegram to Versiglia in Macao, so that the latter as Superior, could negotiate personally with Archbishop Harty; that Fr. Costamagna should stay in Manila until Fr. Versiglia could deal about the matter directly with the Superiors<sup>95</sup>.

Still, on 22 July 1922, Fr. Fergnani wrote from Palestine to Fr. Gusmano, whom he considered his agent in the General Council. After he reiterated his supposed plan to return to China “had he not been sent to Manila”, he declared that he had left Manila “by order of Fr. Costamagna”<sup>96</sup>.

#### 4.2.3. Fergnani against Mathias

This Salesian Fergnani was a “strange confrere”. He had asked to work once more in the missions, convinced that this was his vocation. For this, he was sent to India in 1922, as he had requested, but only to create trouble.

On 3 November 1925, Fr. Mathias wrote Fr. Rinaldi from India to express his disgust of the confrere Fergnani, whom he had to endure for the almost three years while the confrere was in his missions. Together with his letter, he sent the Superior the latest letter that he had received from the confrere who had been writing him in the past six months letters “full of lies”. For him, Fr. Fergnani was a “vagabond” who had “a special art of fooling his neighbor”. He, however, would just not allow himself be fooled by this Salesian<sup>97</sup>.

Fr. Mathias had assigned Fr. Fergnani in Shillong when he arrived in India. But after several months, the confrere had asked to be changed, just because he could not get along with another confrere. After three years, Fr. Fergnani did not learn English. When he was sent to learn the language, he instead wrote about Palestine where he was, before he came to India. Those who lived with him marvelled that he did not study English. Worse, in the place where he was supposed to study the language, he had been imprudent not a few times<sup>98</sup>.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.* (Fergnani a Calogero, Collesalveti, 29 maggio 1918): “... poca lealtà di D. Costamagna, che per ringraziarsi D. Versiglia, da cui averne il denaro di viaggio, fece nascere pettegolezzi tra me e D. Versiglia, col quale s’era saputa nulla più cordiale”.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*: “... di restare solo a Manila affinché ... potuto trattare direttamente di quell’affare coi superiori”.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.* (Fergnani a Gusmano, Beitgemal, 7 luglio 1922).

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.* (Mathias a Rinaldi, Shillong, 3 novembre 1925).

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.* Mathias declared on Fr. Fergnani: “Non sa inglese e non può nemmeno balbettare il khasi”. Cf *ibid.* Khasi was one of the languages of the Assam region. One could ask, if Fr. Fergnani had ever really learned Chinese when he was in Macao.

Fr. Fergnani had asked Fr. Mathias “put him in a true mission area, something that he had always dreamed”. But after 15 days, he was back in Shillong. He asked that he be allowed to go around the missions, so that he might have ideas and materials to write. In fact, he had written in the Salesian Bulletin that he had been around the missions. Some months back, he had gone hunting for wild ducks, and for this, he got hurt. He even spoke of diabolic visions.

Now, Fr. Fergnani had decided to return to Italy. To do so, he had feigned sickness. This, he had written to the Rector Major, so that he might have him as an ally to convince Fr. Mathias to let him go back home. But Fr. Mathias refused to allow him to leave, telling him that he could not give the permission, since he was not the one who had asked him to come to India. It would have to be the Superior of Turin, Fr. Rinaldi, who would have to be the one to decide.

Fr. Mathias told Fr. Rinaldi that he tried his best to rehabilitate the confrere. He even made him rector of the Salesian house of Raliang<sup>99</sup>, together with the confrere Fr. Giovanni Mazzetti<sup>100</sup>, in the hope of “rendering him more serious”. Instead, Fr. Fergnani had abandoned the district, avoiding any work and trying to keep himself as comfortable as possible. For this, he had begun to empty bottles of mass wine which cost much in the missions. Fr. Mathias pleaded to the Rector Major on behalf of the “idler”: not to send him elsewhere when he leaves Assam! Not to allow him to publish “those rubbish” that he wanted to write about the Assam missions<sup>101</sup>.

Fr. Fergnani, however, was determined to leave his assignment once more. He had expected Fr. Mathias to send him to Calcutta to proceed with the practica for his repatriation. But the latter would not take the responsibility of the personal design of this confrere, “a poor dupe who confuses the notion of duty with that of pleasure, and who will never be able to conclude anything”<sup>102</sup>.

Fr. Fergnani had earlier written to Fr. Mathias on 30 October 1925, letter that Fr. Mathias forwarded to Fr. Rinaldi. In this letter, Fr. Fergnani wrote about his illness: his worsening nerves; pains in the brain that prevented him from working intellectually and that made his memory suffer; the consequent in-

<sup>99</sup> Raliang was a Salesian work started in 1922 in Shillong. It is actually a Salesian work consisting of a parish, an Oratory, a college with elementary and high school levels.

<sup>100</sup> SAS 09B082 Fr. Giovanni Mazzetti: born in Alessandria, Italy (2 February 1887); first profession in Lombriasco, Turin (29 September 1909); ordained in Venice, Italy (29 May 1920); died in Ivrea, Turin (16 June 1949) at 62 years, 40 years Salesian and 29 years priest. He came to India on 31 October 1922.

<sup>101</sup> ASC D872 C001 Giovanni Fergnani: Corrispondenza (Mathias a Rinaldi, Shillong, 3 novembre 1925): “... preoccupandosi di stare il meglio possibile e vuotando bottiglie di vino da messa che a noi vengono costar più di 20 lire al litro”.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*

somnia<sup>103</sup>. In his mind, it was time for him to renounce “the true missionary life”. He had already informed Fr. Rinaldi of the state of his health. There was no other thing to do but to return to Italy. His companion in the missions of Raliang, Fr. Mazzetti, did not mind being alone. However, he believed that he could still be useful for the missions. For if it was alright with Fr. Mathias, then he could become a propagandist for the missions<sup>104</sup>.

Indeed, this Salesian was good in conditioning his Superiors, if only to get what he wanted. But there was one more story to be told, probably more serious than the previous, revealing cracks within the poor confrere and proving his presumed imbalance.

#### 4.2.4. Rinaldi and Fergnani

A week after having written the Superior, Fr. Mathias again wrote to Fr. Rinaldi on 10 November from Shillong regarding Fr. Fergnani, “his thorn”, who really made him very angry. He was scheduled to meet the confrere, and planned not to restrain the possible explosion of his emotion on the confrere when they meet. He was writing this in advance to the Superior and sending the letter, even before his encounter with the confrere, because the mail for Europe was departing that day. But he assured Fr. Rinaldi “that Fergnani will remember his last meeting with him and will have nothing to be proud of”<sup>105</sup>.

But why did Fr. Mathias write this way to Fr. Rinaldi? Because Fr. Fergnani had declared to Fr. Mathias that he was leaving for Italy, on 1 December, from Bombay, with or without the permission of his Provincial nor of his Prefect Apostolic, and with or without the consent of Turin<sup>106</sup>! Because Fr. Fergnani

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.* (Mathias a Rinaldi, Shillong, 10 novembre 1925). Fr. Mathias told Fr. Rinaldi that he had investigated and had asked Fr. Mazzetti whether Fr. Fergnani was indeed unable to sleep during the night. And he had been told the confrere “dormiva non soltanto di notte ma tutto il giorno”. Maliciously, Fr. Mathias added that the doctor whom he had asked to check on Fr. Fergnani had reported to him a month earlier that the confrere “... mancava una ruota e forse la ruota maestra”. Cf *ibid.*

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.* (Fergnani a Mathias, Raliang, 30 ottobre 1925). Fr. Fergnani poetically described his supposed ailment to Fr. Mathias, revealing his indeed unusual gift of writing: “Uno strano ronzio mi fischia sempre nel cervello, con l’effetto di una pioggia lontana, che mi dà molta noia, specie nelle ore di quiete”. Cf *ibid.*

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.* (Mathias a Rinaldi, Shillong, 10 novembre 1925).

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.* (Fergnani a Mathias, Raliang, 5 novembre 1925): “... non occorre un permesso da Torino. La carità in questo caso non solo è una giustificazione ma forma un obbligo di coscienza...”.

had taken under his protection an ex-nun and was in fact travelling with her, a former religious with a story as strange as his<sup>107</sup>!

Indeed, Fr. Fergnani had written the Rector Major twice, informing him of his plan to go back to Italy. In his first letter, that of 6 August 1925, he told Fr. Rinaldi that it was impossible for him to remain in the Assam missions because of his sickness. He requested, therefore, the Superior to allow him to return to Palestine. Then, he told the Superior of a vision he had: that the Lord told him that he should consecrate the remaining years of his life with the lepers of Palestine<sup>108</sup>.

Fr. Fergnani had expressed the same thing in his second letter of 26 October to the Rector Major<sup>109</sup>, who was not lacking in answering the confrere. Fr. Rinaldi had very clear words to him: "that you remain where you are ... in conformity to the obedience you have received". He even declared that he, as Superior General, was assuming all the responsibility for him<sup>110</sup>.

Fr. Fr. Fergnani was well on the way home when Fr. Fr. Rinaldi wrote him, and probably did not even receive the letter. But one thing was clear: he again left his obedience contrary to the will of the Superior.

#### 4.3. *Conclusion*

Fr. Versiglia had consistently advised Turin regarding the personnel to send when it had finally decided to send Salesians as response to the request made by Archbishop Harty and Archbishop Agius of Manila<sup>111</sup>. Somehow, somewhere, Turin had shown a possible light-headedness and had been remiss on this regard. Or perhaps it had opted to utilize that tested formula of sending those who

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.* (Mathias a Rinaldi, Shillong, 10 novembre 1925). A former religious of the Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions and a convert from Protestantism [Sister Magdala, aka Madamemoiselle Helene] and who had dreamed of curing lepers, was said to have cured Fr. Fergnani of his sickness. She had escaped from her superiors to Raliang, residence of Fr. Fergnani, who had taken her as her protector and who had decided that she should join the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians. For this, the ex-nun was with him ... already travelling for three days to Shillong. Cf *ibid.*

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.* (Fergnani a Rinaldi, Raliang, 6 agosto 1925). In this letter, he added that his aspiration was to work with lepers in imitation of the Salesian Fr. Unia.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.* (Fergnani a Rinaldi, Raliang, 26 ottobre 1925).

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.* (Rinaldi a Fergnani, Torino, 1 dicembre 1925).

<sup>111</sup> ASC A352 Corrispondenza (Vermiglia a Gusmano, Macao, 29 luglio 1911): "A Manila... tutto è pronto per un buon inizio e tutto è pronto per un eccellente sviluppo e noi siamo persuasi che se il personale verrà inviato sarà abile e serio non potrà mancare uno splendido risultato...." Cf *ibid.*, (Versiglia a Gusmano, Hong Kong, 2 ottobre 1910): "...le sollecitudini per Manila ove ripeto, se si manderà un personale atto, ci aspetta un futuro splendido. Ho già detto e ripetuto diverse volte il personale che si esigerebbe per Manila non sto quindi a ripetere altra volta".

were problematic elsewhere, hoping that they would change. Or maybe, it just did not have the right personnel to send. The fact of the unceremonious exit of Fr. Costamagna and Fr. Fergnani from Manila would be difficult to contradict. However, Manila and its Archbishop were not the only one to be faulted, surely, for what had happened there in 1912.

Fr. Versiglia had been very clever in getting rid of Fr. Fergnani from China. Perhaps, he did not really have any serious misgivings for the departure of Fr. Costamagna, too. Who knows, if Archbishop Harty had been so intelligent too, so as to “frustrate” both Fr. Costmagna and Fr. Fergnani, so that both went away of their own accord, making them believe that they had indeed been wise to leave.

Fr. Fergnani wanted to go to China, to the U.S.A., to Palestine ... but perhaps not to the Philippines. Fr. Costamagna wanted to go back to his beloved America for a reason of his own ... and thus perhaps never really thought of staying in the Philippines seriously. It was very probable that Fr. Costamagna and Fr. Fergnani were not the right persons to be sent to Manila to initiate the Salesian work. At the end, it might have been good that they did not stay.

## 5. Remembering Those Who Have Gone before Us

The Provincial Directory of the Salesians of the Philippines publishes every year a list of deceased confreres who have worked in the Philippines. Since the division of the Philippine Salesian Province in 1992 into two Provinces, the list had remained “intact”, that is, each Province continue to keep the list, as if all those listed worked in their respective Provinces<sup>112</sup>.

The list contains a list of confreres who have truly belonged to and worked in the Philippines. But it also includes names of Salesians, who never worked and never belonged to the Philippine Province.

### 5.1. *Significance of the Necrological List*

When we look at the list published every year in the Provincial Directory, we have a document for the memory of history, very useful to our study of the Salesians in the Philippines, in their first twelve years. It contains the names of those who have been in the Philippines, who worked in the Philippines. It is a document of importance: for the confreres listed have indeed contributed to the making of the Salesian history in the Philippines.

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<sup>112</sup> Cf. *Directory of the Salesian Family in the Philippines 2003-2004*, Manila 2004, pp. 72-73.

But this list remains to be a document, which can tell us a lot of history and not merely story. For it contains the names of Salesians, of concrete persons who actually laboured to build that on which actually stands as the Province. They laboured a lot, with much sacrifice. They tried to be like Don Bosco. They loved the Congregation; they loved more Don Bosco. But one clear point: they died as Salesians in the labor for the cause of the Congregation.

It is a faulty one though. In as much as it is incomplete: not all those who have been and who have worked in the Philippines are listed therein. In as much as it is excessive: there are names who have never been and who have never worked in the Philippines.

We are re-writing the list of deceased Salesian confreres who have supposedly worked in the Philippines. To this, however, we have established a minimum of a criterion of historical nature, in order to create a list faithful to the Salesian History in the Archipelago.

A first criterion is that the names listed in the official directory were Salesians, who have been in the Philippines physically. Somehow, they have worked in the Philippines. Archbishop Piani had in his staff in the Apostolic Delegation the Salesians Zolin, Castella and Morrow. The Japanese clerics Nishimura and Masaji Maky found themselves in the Philippines on account of the Second World War. Both of them died during the war; in fact, the first of these two died in Manila, during the days of "liberation" of the city. These confreres were in the Philippines even before the official Salesian Philippine Delegation started in 1951.

A second criterion is that these Salesians worked for the coming of the Salesians in the Philippines, even if perhaps they did not necessarily belong to the Philippine Province. As an example, Versiglia and Olive could be considered "Filipino Salesians" by devotion. Some others came to the Philippines, indeed, and worked as Salesians; even if perhaps they had repatriated and returned to their original Province or have transferred to another. In a sense, they could be considered as "ex-Philippine Salesians" if not "ex-Filipino Salesians".

Obviously, those who ought to be listed should be confreres, who died as Salesians and as members working for the "da mihi animas" of St. John Bosco. Even if perhaps they underwent crisis, they had remained Salesians.

In this new list, we have written the original names of the confreres concerned. Moreover, we have added their date and place of birth, their date and place of death. In preparing this revised list, we have used the following sources with care: the "Fondatori" document; the list contained in the Provincial Directory of 1964-1965; documents related to the individual confreres and the other documents which we have used in this study.

## 5.2. *The Names*

We have maintained the majority of the names of those in the traditional list, as we found out that they indeed have been and have worked in the Philippines. But we have added other names which ought to be included in the list; and we have removed names which we believe do not belong to the list.

In this list, we included the names of those who attempted to plant the Salesian charism in the Philippines for the first time in February 1911: the Saint Bishop Luigi Versiglia and Fr. Louis Olive. The two came to Manila from Macao and negotiated with the Archbishop of Manila and the Apostolic Delegate to the Philippines in order that the Salesians come to the Philippines in 1911. They were the first to be directly responsible for the coming of the Salesians in the Philippines.

We have also added those who were first assigned to start the work in the Philippines. Fr. Luigi Costamagna and Fr. Giovanni Fergnani were sent and actually came to the Philippines in 1911, only to have left unexpectedly the capital sometime in March 1912. In the months that they were here, they "tried" indeed to begin the Salesian work. They would have been practically the first to form a community of Salesians in the Philippines.

The names of the Apostolic Delegate in the Philippines, Archbishop Guglielmo Piani, and one of those who served as his secretary who later became Bishop of Krishnagar, Bishop Louis Morrow, have already been constantly listed in the elenco of those who worked in the Philippines.

However, there are two other confreres who have never been included and have assisted the good Archbishop while he was at service of the Holy See in the Philippines. Fr. Paolo Zolin<sup>113</sup> was secretary of the Archbishop in the place of Bishop Morrow who left for India. He had gone as missionary to the United States, where he was director of several presences in the country and was also provincial councillor. He came to the Philippines in 1939 and remained as secretary of the Apostolic Delegate until 1948, after which he transferred to Oceania to join the Salesians in Australia<sup>114</sup>.

Br. Giovanni Castella<sup>115</sup> was member of the household and staff of the Apostolic Delegation. He had gone to Argentina as missionary. For five years, he

<sup>113</sup> SAS 98A164 Fr. Paolo Zolin: Born in Vicenza, Italy (21 July 1879); first profession in Foglizzo, Turin (31 October 1898); ordained in Albany, New York (23 December 1908); died in Melbourne, Australia (21 August 1963) at 84 years, 65 years Salesian and 55 years priest.

<sup>114</sup> During the Japanese occupation, Fr. Zolin was made prisoner. Upon his liberation at the end of the war, he was decorated as a hero by General Douglas MacArthur. Cf BS 70 (1946) 63.

<sup>115</sup> SAS 06B036 Br. Giovanni Castella: born in Cuneo, Italy (28 July 1880); first profession in Viedma, Argentina (11 January 1906; perpetual profession in Viedma, Argentina (27 January 1912); died in Piosasco, Turin (21 May 1964) at 84 years, 58 years Salesian.

was member of the staff of the Apostolic Delegation in Manila. In 1932, he had gone back to Italy upon the request of his ailing and old mother who wanted to see him<sup>116</sup>. He, together with Fr. Zolin, became members of the “unofficial Salesian presence” in Manila, before the Salesians’ official establishment in the Philippine.

Br. Mariano Lopez was another coadjutor who worked at the Apostolic Delegation<sup>117</sup>; but we did not include him in the renewed list. He came to China sometime in 1921. On that same year, he passed on to Manila, where he served in the office of Archbishop Piani up to 1925. After, he went to join the Salesian Province of Bogotá, in Colombia. He, however, left the Congregation sometime in 1931<sup>118</sup>.

We have also added the names of two Japanese clerics who came to the Philippines as soldiers of the Japanese Imperial Army. It is believed that both died in the Philippines during the war. The Cleric Yohane Nishimura died in Manila (1945) during World War II<sup>119</sup>. The Apostolic Delegate of Manila announced the death of this young Salesian, describing it “after an edifying life, a saintly death”<sup>120</sup>. The other Japanese confrere, the Cleric Sebastian Masaji Maki, was called to military service in 1944 while he was doing his course of Theology. He was believed to have fought in the Philippines during the war. His death was officially announced to the Salesians only in 1948<sup>121</sup>.

However, we have removed from the list the names of four confreres, three Portuguese and an Italian: Br. Joaquim Pinto (+1953), Fr. Joaquim Marvao (+1961), Fr. Jose Antonio Rola (+1967) and Fr. Ernesto Fontana (+1942). They were really members of the Portuguese Province who worked in the Salesian presence in East Timor when this was still under the jurisdiction of Portugal. When they died, East Timor was not yet made part of the Salesian Province of the Philippines.

In January 1927, the Bishop of Macao, Jose da Costa Nuñez (1919-1940) presented a request for a Salesian foundation in Timor to the Salesian Provincial of China, Fr. Ignazio Canazei. So that by April of the same year, the Salesians,

<sup>116</sup> ASC B733 Piani Corrispondenza (Piani a Berruti, Manila, 16 novembre 1932).

<sup>117</sup> Cf SAHK Cina 1906 – List of confreres of the Province.

<sup>118</sup> ACS 99A217. Br. Mariano Lopez Rodriguez: born in Seville, Spain (24 August 1879); first profession in Seville (2 April 1899).

<sup>119</sup> SAS Cleric Yohane Nishimura: born in Miyazaki, Japan (8 March 1915); first profession in Tokyo, Japan (29 December 1936); died in Manila, Philippines (15 February 1945) at 30 years and 9 years Salesian.

<sup>120</sup> ASC F168 Giappone: Tokyo, Cronaca (Cronistoria dei primi 25° anni [di Vincenzo Cimatti]), 219.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, 220. Cleric Sebastiano Maki Masaji: born in Shitsu, Nagasaki, Japan (5 November 1912); died during World War II in the Philippines [1 November 1944], at 32 years and 7 years Salesian.



led by Fr. Herminio Rossetti with Fr. Callisto Caravario as the youngest member of the group, arrived in Dili to start a school where carpentry, shoe-making and mechanics were taught. Unfortunately, Fr. Pietro Ricaldone, Extraordinary Visitor of the Salesian missions in the Far East, ordered the withdrawal of the Salesians in 1928, declaring the distance and the isolation of the Salesians as motives for such move from Turin. The Salesians, reluctantly obeying the order of the Superior, left the promising work they had just started in November 1928. After World War II, sometime in 1946, the Salesians belonging to the Portuguese Salesian Province returned to East Timor and finally stayed<sup>122</sup>.

The Salesian Portuguese Province of Sant'Antonio withdrew its personnel from East Timor in 1983, due to the distance of the island and the lack of personnel. As a consequence of this, in May 1983, the General Council decided to attach the Salesian works in this former Portuguese Colony to the Province of the Saint John Bosco based in Manila in the Philippines<sup>123</sup>. From then on, the names of the Salesians mentioned earlier began to be included among the deceased Salesians, who worked in the Philippines, in an obvious recognition of East Timor as now being part of the Philippine Province<sup>124</sup>. However, when one looks at the year of their death, one realizes that they died long before East Timor became part of the Philippine Province.

The same thing too, perhaps, can be deduced, with the addition of the name of St. Callisto Caravario in the Philippine Directory<sup>125</sup>. To note that he is still indicated as Blessed in the most recent directory issued for the two Salesian Province of the Philippines, when the historical reality is that he had been canonized already five years earlier, on 1 October 2000. The reference to him as part of the Philippine Province is not historically exact.

Indeed, St. Caravario was one of the pioneers of the first attempt to establish the Salesian presence in East Timor. But he never worked in the Philippines. When Timor was made part of the Philippine Province in 1983, he was long gone, having been martyred in China in 1930. Nor when the work in the

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<sup>122</sup> Cf Amador ANJOS, *The First Salesian Presence in Timor (1927-1929)*, in Nestor IMPELIDO (ed.), *The Beginnings of the Salesian Presence in East Asia*. vol. I, Don Bosco Press, Makati City, 2006, pp. 111-137. East Timor was a colony of Portugal. When the Portuguese left the colony, the Indonesians took over this part of the Island. As a result, a war erupted between the East Timorese and the Indonesians. Later, East Timor obtained its independence.

<sup>123</sup> ASC F229 Filippine-Vietnam (Viganò, Roma, 30 maggio 1983).

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*: Decree 154/83 (Viganò, Roma, 30 May 1983). Fr. Egidio Viganò, Rector Major of the Salesian Society, transferred the Salesian houses of Timor and the confreres there assigned from the Salesian Province "Sant'Antonio" of Portugal to the Province "San Giovanni Bosco" of the Philippines. The decree entered in vigour on 10 June 1983, Solemnity of the Sacred Heart.

<sup>125</sup> Cf *Directory of the Salesian Family in the Philippines 2004-2005...*, p. 71.

Philippines began, he was neither around to come and work. Instead, his companion of martyrdom, Bishop Versiglia, was truly involved in the early negotiations so that the Salesians could establish themselves in the Philippine Archipelago.

Finally, the Provincial Directory of the past two years (2003-2004/2004-2005) continue to maintain the list of the previous years, failing to be complete its up-date of the deceased Salesians who logically worked in the Philippines. Again, the latest directory failed to include the names of two Salesians who have been involved in the development of the work in the Philippines. The presence of the Salesians Fr. Mario Acquistapace and Fr. Anthony Di Falco in the Philippine Delegation was crucial for the beginnings of the Salesians in the Philippines. The former, who died in Hong Kong on 25 September 2002, was the first Superior and Provincial of the Philippines. The latter, who died in Oakland, California on 23 March 2003, was the first Salesian to come to work for the young in the first Salesian house in the Philippines, Don Bosco Tarlac; he too was founder of the first Salesian work in the Archipelago.

### 5.3. *An Evaluation*

As one looks at the renewed list of the deceased Salesians who worked and belonged to the Philippine Province, several observations can be made which can be related to the history of the Salesians in the Philippines in the first 12 years of its life.

The total number of Salesians listed as deceased is 65. This could be broken down into the following: one archbishop, one bishop, 43 priests, 14 coadjutors, four clerics and two novices. Of these, however, only 23 are actually interred in the Philippines (Braga, Guarino, Sacchi, Clifford, Quaranta, Soberano, Garbero, Bragion, Mrzel, Dajao, Forcadilla, Caibiran, Monchiero, Rossi, Cogliandro, Rizzato, Bernales, Bosch, Marrocchino, Tambascia, Ryan, Balocco, Roozen).

There is a total of 16 Salesians, who are original members of the Philippine Province when it started in 1963 (Braga, Guarino, Sacchi, Clifford, Quaranta, Garbero, Bragion, Mrzel, Monchiero, Rossi, Cogliandro, Rizzato, Bosch, Tambascia, Ryan, Roozen). Except for Fr. Cogliandro, all these were already listed as "Fondatori" of the Philippine Visitatoria of 1958. They remained behind and worked in the Philippines and died in their "line of duty"<sup>126</sup>.

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<sup>126</sup> To note that among the "Fondatori", there still remains the following: Battistello, Gircour, Iriarte, Schwarz, L. Nardin, Glowicki, Solaroli, Bati, Drona, Fontanilla, Tarrosa, Tayag, Solaroli.

The rest of the names listed left the Philippines for some reason or another later. These, a total of 40 names, either returned to their countries or Province of origin, or went to some other countries and eventually died there (Murray, Kreutzer, Stoppa Sady, Deina, Orsolin, Repetto, Di Falco, Moretti, Candusso, Castella, Carreño, Santos, Gamba, Buchta, Izquierdo, Zuccollo, Barattoni, De Reggi, Savina, Zolìn, Morrow, the Ricaldone brothers, Baggio, Acquistapace, S. Rettore, Venturini, Piani, Corcoran, De Meulenaere, Righetti, Massi, Ferrari, Prokopowicz, Fels, C. Nardin, Rauh, Rutkowski, Marcos, Boscarìol).

The history of the Salesians in the Philippines is first a history created and written by Salesians. And in this, there is a duty to conserve the patrimony of these persons to whom the present Salesians owe so much. They cannot be forgotten, nor can they be neglected. They have to be rightfully recognized. Even the mere list of the deceased Salesians should provoke every living Salesian of looking back to his past history, so as perhaps to make his present more actual and real.

The first step in the process of identifying the problem is to determine the nature of the problem. This is done by asking a series of questions that help to define the problem and its scope. The next step is to identify the causes of the problem. This is done by looking for patterns in the data and by asking questions that help to identify the underlying causes. The third step is to develop a plan of action. This is done by identifying the goals of the plan and by determining the steps that need to be taken to achieve those goals. The fourth step is to implement the plan. This is done by putting the plan into action and by monitoring the progress of the plan. The fifth step is to evaluate the results of the plan. This is done by comparing the actual results with the expected results and by determining the reasons for any differences.

## CONCLUSION

This work does not and cannot substitute the writing of the history of each Salesian house in the Philippines. To date, only the Salesian Parish of Mary Help of Christians or Don Bosco Mayapa in Calamba, Laguna has its own written history<sup>1</sup>, formulated on the occasion of its 25<sup>th</sup> year of foundation in 2003. However, it is also because this particular Salesian parish has an archive, painstakingly organized and conserved by the first parish priest, and which preserves documents regarding the beginning of its existence that this Parish history was possible.

This opens us to the critical issue on the need of conserving and preserving documents by each house, as well as the provincial office, as demanded by the very Constitutions of the Salesian Society<sup>2</sup>. Without documents, one cannot write history. If there is one reason why this history of the Salesians in the Philippines from 1951 to 1963 has been handicapped, it was because of a certain deficiency in archival materials.

For future research and study, one could dwell on the topic of the first Salesians in the Philippines: their lives, origins, background. So that these confreres may not be forgotten and not be lost into oblivion.

Every deceased Salesian ought to have his obituary letter for future memory. One could check the archives of each Province, and see if all the deceased confreres of the Province have their own *lettera mortuaria*. One can put a precise question, if only to exemplify: do the obituary letters of Fr. Luigi Ferrari and Fr. Saverio Fels exist? Indeed, the obituary letter is a basic for the history of each confrere<sup>3</sup>.

The Salesians began with schools upon their arrival in the Philippines. In fact, almost all the early works they started were schools: Tarlac, Victorias, Mandaluyong, Makati, and later Cebu. And most of these already provided technical education for the high school boys, which was a first in the history of education in the Philippines. The study of the contribution of the Salesians to

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<sup>1</sup> Cf Andres MOLINGTAPANG, *Parish of Mary Help of Christians / Parokya ng Mayapa / Don Bosco Mayapa*, Don Bosco Press, Inc., Makati City, 2004.

<sup>2</sup> *The Regulations of the Society of St. Francis of Sales*, Rome, 1999, articles 62, 159 and 178.

<sup>3</sup> Fr. Luigi Ferrari and Fr. Saverio Fels died as members of the Italian Romana Province. In a colloquy, the author was told by the provincial secretary of the Romana Province, Fr. Mario Marchioli, that Fr. Ferrari and Fr. Fels did not yet have obituary letters in their archives. This is unfortunate, in as much as the obituary letter is a must for the rector of the house of the confrere who passed away.

Philippine education, especially in the technical, is an important assignment for a greater knowledge of the Salesians in the Philippines.

There was surely an impact of the Salesian works for the growing industrialization in the Philippines. It is a fact, that the early graduates of the Salesian technical schools were greatly appreciated<sup>4</sup>. It was the same sentiment for the so-called out-of-school youth graduates of these centers, who learned some trade. These, together with the high school students, learned well the skills which helped them to normally and easily find work in the industries which demanded their technical capability. The “technically empowering-encapableng Salesians” did contribute to a country in the process of industrialization. But how did this come about?

But to add, there is the need of studying the crucial role of the Salesian coadjutors in the contribution of the Salesians to technical education in the Philippines. Reading through the documents regarding the Salesian work, there is practically nothing which could show how these Salesians labored to make their technical schools prominent. They practically were the ones who were immersed in the technical shops of the school.

Another novelty that the Salesians contributed to the Philippines was the Oratory, or the Youth Center, whether festive or daily. The Salesians had schools, so good so that they somehow could be at par with the schools of the veteran religious orders who had long established their names in education. But there was an obvious and significant difference in the beginning of the Salesian work: these schools were opened also on weekends, through the so-called Salesian Oratory, as an essential part of the continuing education which the Salesians wanted to give to the young. In these youth centers, the young were given wholesome sports and religious instruction among many others. While with other schools, the Oratory also existed wherever the Salesians worked. What impact did it have on the social environment, especially on the young of the area?

A question that can and perhaps must be studied: why did the so-called “Chinese confreres” transfer to the Philippines? Who among them who came to the Philippines did really suffer the actual communist persecution and the subsequent expulsion? The answers to these questions can give precision and veracity in history: they can give a more realistic knowledge of the motives for the transfer and going to the Philippines, and consequently the reasons for their actions.

Moreover, there is a need to study the “real contribution” of the China Province to the establishment of the Salesian work in the Philippines. One

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<sup>4</sup> The Salesians would call this type of schools “di arte e mestiere”. This was more for the boys, who usually were not the better off and who did not go to study the literature and languages.

should remember that the Philippines, as a Delegation, was for seven years in direct dependence on China Province based in Hong Kong. The “China-Philippines link” was an influence and an exchange, not only of personnel but also in the material, cultural, spiritual, formational, etc. Definitely, the influence of the Salesians from the China Province was very much felt in the formative years of the Salesian presence in the Philippines. The “experience of China” was something that the first Salesians brought with them to the Philippines.

Confreres from Hong Kong came to preach retreats, not only to the Salesians in the Philippines, but also to the students of the Salesian schools. The schools in the Archipelago were patterned to some of those of Hong Kong. Besides, the finances during the period of the Delegation were ultimately handled by the provincial economer in Hong Kong.

The figure and the contribution of Fr. Mario Acquistapace as first Provincial of the Philippines in its period as a Delegation, is an important element to acknowledge and to reflect upon. This is a lacuna which has to be filled. Fr. Ferrari, Fr. Braga and the Salesians really depended and definitely should have depended on Fr. Acquistapace as their Provincial. It was the norm, even if perhaps the distance, which was not really considerable (Hong Kong – Manila is now a mere an hour and a half flight), somehow made whoever was in charge of the Delegation to go sometimes on his own, with little consultation of the Provincial. It was true that Fr. Ferrari, Provincial Delegate in Manila, thought and sometimes presented himself as “Provincial” in the Philippines. But Fr. Acquistapace was his Provincial and that of the Philippines. It should have been the same too with Fr. Braga, who substituted Fr. Ferrari as Provincial Delegate in the Philippines.

Furthermore, one could also study the situation of the Congregation in terms of the preparation for the rectors of the various foundations, as well as the confreres themselves. The observations given by the first Provincial of the Philippines, Fr. Cogliandro, can serve as stimuli to seek a better understanding of how the Salesian works were administered by its first handlers.

Seemingly, in the beginning of the Salesians in the Philippines, there was much improvisation – in the choice of the superiors of the works; in the manner these superiors managed the works, as well as the confreres entrusted to them. Although, it was also true that the Provincial Superior had to make the most of the personnel he had, in order to administer the foundations that he established or initiated, and inherited from his predecessor.

There had been works founded in the beginnings, without considering the personnel available. The Superior was seemingly guided not only by the possibility of doing good with the offers extended to him, but also perhaps by an inadvertent wish to spread the work of Don Bosco in the Philippines. And

after having accepted an offer, even without the knowledge of Turin, he would complain about the lack of confreres, and thus challenge Turin to take a look at the *Elenco Generale* to check on the confreres who were not where they were listed to be, or were listed where they were not supposed to be.

There were indeed moments of delusions and difficulties, when people would counsel patience. They were starting; in a way, this might be true. But it was also equally true that the Salesians and their Superiors who came to the Philippines were not beginners in the kind of work they decided to establish in the Archipelago. They continued to do what they believed had to be done, guided by their “Salesian instinct”, not really by what Turin told them; by the way they understood Don Bosco would do in the place where they were actually at work. They worked and worked. But one could ask, to what sense and to what direction.

A final possible study and theme for future research is the issue on the Salesian benefactors, those who generously helped the Salesians start in the Philippines. At this point, it could easily be said that we do not know our benefactors — persons who knew Don Bosco even before his Salesians even came to the Philippines; who came to know Don Bosco when the Salesians finally came to work in the Philippines. Or perhaps, it might be that we have forgotten them, without whom, the Salesians would not have begun nor would have easily continued on.

As we end this study, we can come up with certain conclusions, which can serve as a synthesis of all that has been related.

There was a close connection between the Salesians in the Philippines and the Superiors in Turin, especially through correspondence. Perhaps, there was not much of the telephone yet. But surely they had always tried to stay on-line as much as they could. Just to note the amount of letters we have studied to write this history of the Salesians in the Philippines.

The correspondence revealed the mind of the “Filipino Salesians” and those of Turin. Much of this concerned on how to work out the presence of the Salesians; how the Salesians were working out in spite of the odds that they encountered; how the Salesians were relating to each other in the Philippines; and how the Salesians were consulting those in Turin in managing offers, crises, initiatives that came their way.

For the first Salesians in the Philippines, the connection with Turin was always “warm”. This was especially between the Superior in the Philippines and the Superiors in Turin, whether the Rector Major or the Prefect General.

The seeming prevalent origin of work and work experience of those who first worked in the Philippines was Chinese. This is partially true, at least in the period of what we have studied. Although Tarlac started with “American



Salesians” (Fr. Di Falco and Fr. Rutkowski), because they needed to have someone who spoke English fluently and because the school in Tarlac was established by an American, it was soon taken over by “Chinese Salesians” (Baggio, Schwarz). And this became so for all the foundations started. Only Don Bosco Canlubang, founded within the period of our study, was the initiative of a “non-Chinese Salesian” (Fr. Carreño was of different mind with respect to the other Salesians).

In spite of the urgings that those who should come should be proficient in English, a good number of the first Salesians who came in the beginning did not really know English and the languages of the Filipinos. Some of them, perhaps those who were *portati a la lingua*, did try to learn the languages in the Philippines. Not many learned them fluently; some remained with English. For those who came from China, to learn English and Pilipino, or some other local languages in the Philippines, after having had to learn Chinese, was definitely taxing.

The prevalent urge of those who first worked in the Philippines was to establish schools. In all three stages of their first 12 years, the Salesians have concentrated in the creation of schools. The Salesian Society and its members were, in fact, known as educators; they were good in “running” schools. This was a benchmark of theirs in China. Somehow, it was clear to them that the Philippines, which was dominantly Catholic, was no missions in the strict sense.

One could readily see that the concern of the Superiors was on the good-going of the schools: its enrollment, buildings, prestige. Precisely because they founded schools, the Salesians began to offer these as alternative to the schools of the other religious orders, which really catered to the higher end of Philippine society.

However, the Salesians in the Philippines in its beginnings pioneered and contributed something that the Philippines needed, and was in harmony with the Philippine government’s ideal of meeting the present need of an education which Salesian technical schools timely answered. With their schools, the “Filipino Salesians” transformed the country’s working habit and attitudes, helping to make the young overcome the “carabao-plow stage” of education to the creation of a skilled manpower and craftsmen. But it was also through this technical education that they made effort to provide the possibility of education for those who could not proceed to higher education and were in dire need of getting an education so that they could work and live with quality.

The Salesians in the Philippines did not forget, though, the Oratory apostolate. It was always a first motive for every foundation they started, after that of the school. But it seemingly remained at the sideline. It was often attached to the school. It functioned more or less, depending on the Salesian assigned to

this sector of the entire presence, a sort of an appendix of the over-all work. Only in Don Bosco Mandaluyong, somehow, the Oratory became rooted and remained a healthy tradition.

The parishes entrusted to the Salesians flourished because of those who were put to care for them. Fr. Bosch left the main mark for Lourdes Parish in Cebu. Although Fr. Righetti managed San Ildefonso for less than two years, Fr. Rizzato made it to what it is known today; perhaps, it has not even changed since he passed away. Meanwhile, the chaplaincy in Victorias passed from one Salesian to another, depending on the availability and ability of the Salesians.

Fr. Ferrari was supposed to have been a first leader in Philippine soil. But this would perhaps come later, when he would be Provincial (1969-1975). He tried to lead when he was Delegate (1952-1955), but he left. But after he had become Provincial, curiously, he again would leave for Italy.

The Superior of the Salesians in the first 12 years of their presence had been one and unique: Fr. Braga, even if Fr. Acquistapace was the Provincial in the first phase of the Salesians. The impact and imprint of Fr. Braga is certainly undeniable and certainly distinguishable. Fr. Braga was one who never failed the urge to lead and command, to enthrall and animate. He was the indisputable leader of the birth of the Salesians in the Philippines.

One thing everybody appreciated in Fr. Braga was his “big heart”. Another thing recognized in him: his “being a true Salesian”. A third thing brilliant in him was his “optimistic dare”. He was a known enthusiast in founding presences without sometimes respecting protocol. But perhaps, this was the accepted code for those who were in the position: to go ahead with their initiatives, and then inform Turin such initiatives had been taken. They knew better than Turin, in as much as they were in loco. But we add a question: did Fr. Braga ever become “Filipino”?

Instead, Fr. Mario Acquistapace was the silent figure of the Delegation. He was seemingly overshadowed by Fr. Braga; but he was still ultimately responsible for the Philippine Delegation. He managed to remain in the background, and perhaps willingly allowed his former Provincial to be Superior.

Nonetheless, Fr. Alfredo Cogliandro was the emerging leader of the new Philippine Province. He had experience as Fr. Braga had, perhaps, even a wider and more formidable, having been in different worlds, since he worked in India and the United States before coming to the Philippines. This was perhaps his asset and advantage to the former Visitatore: he was not only Asian and European; he was also American, something to which the Filipinos were easily attached to.

At the end, though, the Superiors of the Delegazione-Visitatoria-Provincia definitely were good and true Salesians. And this is one point that the subsequent Salesians could lean on, if only to grow.

The Salesians could not have come to the Philippines and worked on their own initiative. There were persons who highlighted the Salesians, and who served as their partisans. They were Archbishop Vagnozzi, the Apostolic Nuncio, and Archbishop Santos of Manila, and Fr. Wilson at that. But there were also the Ossorios, the Aboitiz, the Yulos, the McMickings. These people were crucial. Without them, the Salesian work in the islands would not have gone that far. Unfortunately, they risked to be forgotten, and not be given the right credit for what they have contributed.

The Salesians rightfully decided to stand by themselves once the works had been established. They sought their own sources for help, knowing that their benefactors had given them the first help and impulse to go ahead. Even this reality is not to be put aside, but must be studied for future history.

Finally, the Salesian presence in the Philippines started and grew by the “force of personality” of some Salesians, who certainly wanted to be like Don Bosco. They became “founders” of works, on account of the chance given them, and the possibilities and resources they found along their way.

Don Bosco Mandaluyong, started by Fr. Ferrari, but was developed by Fr. Quaranta. Fr. Di Falco and Fr. Baggio sustained the very difficult beginnings of Don Bosco Tarlac. But it progressed in great strides on account of Fr. Schwarz, who was responsible for the more permanent structures of the school. But one should not take for granted his contribution to science education in the Philippines.

Don Bosco San Fernando was started by Fr. Roozen. By the time he was transferred to Makati, San Fernando was more or less stable with its structures. Don Bosco Cebu as Boys Town was Fr. Boscariol’s initial zealous work; and this particular work was not an easy one. But as a technical school then, it was Fr. Clifford’s great contribution. Don Bosco Seminary in Canlubang was definitely the unprecedented initiative of Fr. Carreño.

These Salesians were indeed adults, perhaps men who were difficult to bend anymore, accustomed to their ideas which were generally sane and Salesian, with their characters which might have contrasted with each other<sup>5</sup>. They were indeed great workers. In fact, it was said that they often overworked, unfortunately also sometimes by themselves. Each superior of a work was sometimes the equivalent “financier” of his work. Solidarity apparently did not exist among them.

These Salesians did not shy away from the challenge in moving forward St. John Bosco’s ideal. Because they had “adult ideas”, tested and proven,

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<sup>5</sup> Nestor IMPELIDO, *The Salesians in the Philippines (1951-1963)*: “Dove la nostra opera vi era nata ... già adulta”, in *Ricerche Storiche Salesiane* 45 (2004) 429-455.

clear and deeply rooted, that they were surer in going ahead. For this, they wrote history. A study of the different Salesian opere would show the imprint of their personalities, even if perhaps an inevitable question is whether they were able to transmit or communicate what they wanted to the succeeding generation.

We had to exercise a certain caution in the course of this study. For some of the “original” Salesians, from whom we have tried to obtain information and details to certain questions of our research and named in the study, are still alive. The risk is that some of them might be touched sensibly by some of the issues dealt in the study. Also, some other Salesians, mostly Filipinos, were already present in the period that we dealt with. However, they surely were still “unconscious” or were not “al corrente” to some of the controversies, on account of their age and their current state.

This work is neither a complete nor a perfect one. But it is a contribution to the History of the Philippines, the Salesian Society and the Church.

APPENDIX

**APPENDIX**

## APPENDIX (ONE)

## THE "FOUNDERS" OF THE SALESIAN PHILIPPINE VISITATORIA

NAME <sup>1</sup>	Nationality	Birth	First Vows	Priest	Death	Exit <sup>2</sup>	Origin <sup>3</sup>
Emilio BAGGIO	Italian	1914	1931	1940	2002		China
Pablo BAHILLO	Spaniard	1926	1945	1954		1976	China
Antonio BATTISTELLO	Italian	1926	1944	1954			China
Pericle BIANCHINI	Italian	1922	1943	1952		1973	China
Attilio BOSCARIOL	Italian	1915	1938	1944	1976		China
Jose BOSCH	Spaniard	1921	1940	1951	1995		Spain
Carlo BRAGA	Italian	1889	1906	1914	1971		China
Johannes BUCHTA	German	1906	1925	1935	1972		China
Maurilio CANDUSSO	Italian	1909	1935	1943	1972		China
Jan Peter CLIFFORD	Dutch	1911	1931	1940	2000		China
Mario CUOMO	Italian	1919	1931	1940		1965	China
Guido D'AMORE	Italian	1917	1934	1943		1965	China
Adolfo FARONI	Italian	1923	1947	1957			Argentina
Saverio FELS	Italian	1919	1936	1946	1990		China
Albino FERNANDEZ	Spaniard	1915	1932	1943			China
Luigi FERRARI	Italian	1908	1926	1934	1990		China
Pietro GARBERO	Italian	1901	1921	1927	1992		China
Anthony GIRCOUR	Dutch	1919	1940	1948			China
Giuseppe GUARINO	Italian	1923	1947	1953	1983		France
Luis IRIARTE	Spaniard	1929	1948	1958			Spain
Mathias KREUTZER	German	1905	1930	1939	1970		China
Agustfn LOPEZ	Spaniard	1931	1948	1958		1980	Spain
Giovanni MONCHIERO	Italian	1915	1931	1940	1976		China
Pierangelo QUARANTA	Italian	1916	1933	1943	1992		China
Johannes RAUH	German	1918	1936	1946	1995		China
Lino REPETTO	Italian	1906	1927	1935	1982		China
Igino RICALDONE	Italian	1903	1921	1928	1963		India
Vincenzo RICALDONE	Italian	1897	1918	1923	1975		China
Giovanni RIGHETTI	Italian	1915	1940	1943	1990		China
Giovanni RIZZATO	Italian	1911	1930	1939	1991		China
Godfrey ROOZEN	Dutch	1912	1931	1940	1997		China
Ferdinando ROSSOTO	Italian	1920	1936	1947		1959	China
Patrick RYAN	Irish	1918	1938	1948	1988		China
Georg SCHWARZ	German	1914	1932	1940			China
Andrea BRAGION	Italian	1905	1926		1996		China

<sup>1</sup> We have tried to place the original first name of the confrere, based on information from the obituary letters and the Schede Anagrafiche Segretaria Generale (SAS).

<sup>2</sup> The year of exit from the Salesian Society indicated is approximative. One should note the date when the confrere received the dispensation and the time the confrere actually left the Salesian Society.

<sup>3</sup> We tried to indicate the country of the original province where the confrere originated before coming to the Philippines.

Giovanni DE REGGI	Italian	1914	1936		1992		China
Edvige FLORIS	Italian	1925	1943			1963	China
Valentino FLORIS	Italian	1929	1945			1963	China
Romildo GAMBA	Italian	1912	1931		1990		China
Michele GAROMBO	Italian	1926	1944			1980	China
Bernabé MARCOS	Spaniard	1906	1929		1984		China
Rafael MRZEL	Slovenian	1912	1938		1994		China
Tommaso ORSOLIN	Italian	1907	1936		1971		China
Pawel PROKOPOWICZ	Polish	1910	1931		1983		China
Mario ROSSI	Italian	1913	1936		1994		China
Nicolino TAMBASCIA	Italian	1916	1937		1979		China
Joseph TCHIO	Chinese	1927	1952			1964	China
Mario TESTA	Italian	1906	1925			1970	China
Mario VIEL	Italian	1928	1949			1967	Italy
Luciano GORLA	Italian	1929	1955			1973	Italy
Lorenzo NARDIN	Italian	1922	1940				Italy
Patrick CORCORAN	Irish	1928	1950	1960	1971		China
Antonio PEZZOTTA	Italian	1935	1951	1961		1974	Italy
Nelo PIVETTA	Italian	1930	1955	1961		1975	Italy
Felix GLOWICKI	Polish	1931	1953	1963			England
Rodolfo AGANA	Filipino	1941	1958	1968		1974	Tarlac
Remo BATI	Filipino	1940	1958	1968			Manila
Antonio CLARET	Spaniard	1939	1957	1967		1976	Spain
Leo DRONA	Filippino	1941	1958	1967			Manila
Cornelio ESPLICO	Filipino	1938	1958			1968	Negros Oc
Juan GATMAITAN	Filipino	1939	1957			1960	Tarlac
Felicissimo JUAN	Spaniard	1940	1957			1964	Spain
Silverio JUSTO	Spaniard	1940	1957			1964	Spain
Alfredo MANALILI	Filipino	1938	1957			1964	Tarlac
Augusto MIRANDA	Filipino	1938	1957			1960	Bulacan
Hilario MUYCO	Filipino	1939	1958			1964	Negros Oc
Jose Luis NAVARRO	Filipino	1934	1957			1964	Tarlac
Ronaldo PEROY	Filipino	1936	1957			1963	Negros Oc
Pedro ALABE	Filipino						
Norberto CHAVEZ	Filipino						
Bernardo FONTANILLA	Filipino	1930	1959	1965			Capiz
Delfin LEONARDO	Filipino	1941	1959			1965	Bulacan
Marcelino PRUDENTE	Filipino	1941	1959			1964	Manila
Antonio SERRANO	Filipino						
Leandro TAPAY	Filipino	1937	1959			1971	Bohol
Mariano TARROSA	Filipino	1942	1959	1969			Negros Oc
Jesus TAYAG	Filipino	1941	1959	1969			Tarlac
Alberto DURAN	Mexican	1937	1958	1968			Mexico
Raul HERNÁNDEZ	Mexican	1941	1958			1966	Mexico
Angel IZQUIERDO	Spaniard	1936	1954	1962	1992		Spain
Francisco CASTILLO	Mexican	1938	1957	1967		1981	Mexico
Ercole SOLAROLI	Italian	1927	1944	1954			China



## APPENDIX (TWO)

### CONFRERES OF THE NEW PHILIPPINE PROVINCE (1964)<sup>14</sup>

The **priests** of the new Philippine Province:

CONFRERE	BIRTH	FIRST VOWS	ORIGIN / MISSION ARR	STATUS	RESIDENCE
1. Emilio BAGGIO	25 Jan 1914	24 Oct 1931	Miss 24 Nov 1931	Ord 29 Sept 1940	Victorias
2. Antonio BATTISTELLO	24 Jun 1926	16 Aug 1944	Miss 5 Jan 1948	Ord 25 Jul 1954	San Fernando
3. Giovanni BENNA	20 Nov 1933	16 Aug 1951	Miss 1 Dec 1962	Ord 25 May 1961	Canlubang
4. Jose BERNACER	25 Nov 1937	16 Aug 1954	Miss 4 Aug 1964	Ord 19 Mar 1964	Canlubang
5. Pericle BIANCHINI	29 Aug 1922	16 Aug 1943	Miss 26 Feb 1954	Ord 29 Jun 1952	Canlubang
6. Jose BOSCH	28 Mar 1921	11 Sept 1940	Miss 24 Feb 1956	Ord 24 Jun 1951	Cebu
7. Carlo BRAGA	23 May 1889	30 July 1906	Miss 24 Aug 1919	Ord 11 Apr 1914	San Fernando
8. Johannes BUCHTA	15 Jun 1906	5 Aug 1925	Miss 4 Dec 1929	Ord 15 June 1935	Mandaluyong
9. Maurizio CANDUSSO	27 Aug 1909	11 Jan 1935	Miss 1 Nov 1935	Ord 29 Jan 1943	Mandaluyong
10. Jose CARREÑO	23 Oct 1905	25 Jul 1922	Miss 4 Jul 1933	Ord 21 May 1932	Canlubang
11. Jan CLIFFORD	8 Aug 1911	26 Aug 1931	Miss 14 Dec 1931	Ord 15 Aug 1940	Victorias
12. Alfredo COGLIANDRO	16 May 1911	8 Dec 1933	Miss 4 Dec 1932	Ord 30 Jan 1943	Makati
13. Mario CUOMO	19 Aug 1919	8 Dec 1937	Miss 1 Oct 1936	Ord 8 Jun 1946	Makati
14. Adolfo FARONI	9 Feb 1923	19 Mar 1946	Miss 14 Nov 1957	Ord 15 Jul 1957	Victorias
15. Saverio FELS	6 Sept 1918	8 Nov 1939	Miss 6 May 1948	Ord 28 Apr 1946	Tarlac

<sup>14</sup> The Provincial Directory for the school year 1964-1965 gives a list of those who constituted the Philippine Province during the Provincialate of Fr. Alfred Cogliandro. This list is important in as much as it gives an updated list of the confreres of the recently established Philippine Province. It will show the age constitution of the "Filipino Salesians", their places of origin, their experience. In the Provincial Director of 1964-1965, there are 38 priests, 29 coadjutors and 47 clerics listed. Of the coadjutors, 20 are perpetually professed while 9 are temporarily professed. Of the clerics, 11 are perpetually professed while 36 are temporarily professed. The total number of confreres who made up the Philippine Province in its first years is 113. However some of the data may be inaccurate. Unfortunately, we have not corrected these possible inaccuracies for lack of information.

16. Pietro GARBERO	23 Aug 1901	24 Sept 1921	Miss 24 Apr 1927	Ord 25 Dec 1926	Victorias
17. Anthony GIRCOUR	30 May 1919	16 Aug 1941	Miss 5 Jul 1948	Ord 7 Apr 1948	Tarlac
18. Felix GLOWICKI	18 May 1931	8 Sept 1953	Miss 4 Jan 1957	Ord 25 Mar 1963	Mandaluyong
19. Giuseppe GUARINO	19 Aug 1923	12 Nov 1947	Miss 25 Feb 1954	Ord 30 Jun 1953	Cebu
20. Luis IRIARTE	18 Aug 1929	16 Aug 1948	Miss 9 Jul 1952	Ord 22 Mar 1958	Victorias
21. Angel IZQUIERDO	12 Feb 1936	9 Mar 1954	Miss 14 Sept 1962	Ord 17 Mar 1962	Makati
22. Agustín LOPEZ	11 Sept 1931	16 Aug 1948	Miss 9 Jul 1953	Ord 22 Mar 1958	San Fernando
23. Giovanni MONCHIERO	1 May 1915	17 Sept 1931	Miss 24 Apr 1947	Ord 2 Jun 1940	Canlubang
24. Michael MURRAY	26 Jan 1899	8 Sept 1922	Miss 1 Jan 1924	Ord 16 Dec 1928	Makati
25. Antonio PEZZOTTA	22 Jan 1935	16 Aug 1951	Miss 31 Aug 1961	Ord 11 Feb 1961	Canlubang
26. Nello PIVETTA	5 May 1930	14 Sept 1952	Miss 24 May 1954	Ord 25 Mar 1961	Cebu
27. Ruggero PRIORESCHI	8 May 1936	16 Aug 1954	Miss 31 Jul 1964	Ord 1 Mar 1964	San Fernando
28. Pierangelo QUARANTA	9 Nov 1916	16 Aug 1933	Miss 20 Oct 1948	Ord 29 Jun 1943	Makati
29. Lino REPETTO	28 May 1906	27 Sept 1927	Miss 24 Jan 1930	Ord 14 Jun 1935	Cebu
30. Eduardo REVILLA	7 Dec 1937	16 Aug 1953	Miss 31 Oct 1962	Ord 17 Mar 1962	Victorias
31. Vincenzo RICALDONE	27 Feb 1897	13 Sept 1918	Miss 6 Jan 1924	Ord 19 Feb 1923	Makati
32. Pietro RICCIARELLI	9 Nov 1929	16 Aug 1946	Miss 1 Dec 1962	Ord 8 Dec 1954	Cebu
33. Giovanni RIZZATO	15 Aug 1911	13 Sept 1930	Miss 1 Nov 1939	Ord 7 Dec 1939	Makati
34. Godfrey ROOZEN	20 May 1912	16 Aug 1931	Miss 15 Dec 1931	Ord 15 Aug 1940	Makati
35. Patrick RYAN	19 Jan 1918	31 Aug 1938	Miss 24 Oct 1929	Ord 1 July 1948	Makati
36. Dante SACCHI	23 Feb 1920	29 Oct 1939	Miss 15 Oct 1938	Ord 29 Jun 1949	San Fernando
37. Georg SCHWARZ	31 Oct 1914	16 Aug 1932	Miss 5 Jan 1935	Ord 29 Sept 1940	Tarlac
38. Ercole SOLAROLI	29 Sept 1927	16 Aug 1944	Miss 21 Dec 1947	Ord 24 Jul 1954	Mandaluyong

Total: 38

The **coadjutor brothers** of the new Philippine Province:

1. Pablo BARRIENTOS	9 Mar 1933	24 May 1963	From Pangasinan	Tailoring	Mandaluyong
2. Andrea BRAGION	19 July 1905	18 Sept 1926	Miss 18 Dec 1928	Mechanic	Mandaluyong
3. Tiziano DE CECCHI	18 May 1940	24 May 1962	Miss 4 Nov 1962	3 <sup>rd</sup> year Coll	Makati
4. Giovanni DE REGGI	12 Oct 1914	24 Oct 1936	Miss 13 Nov 1936	Cabinet-making	Mandaluyong
5. Valentino FLORIS	1 Jan 1929	16 Aug 1945	Miss 15 Jan 1941	Electronics	Victorias
6. Romildo GAMBA	18 Nov 1912	17 Sept 1931	Miss 13 Nov 1936	Musician	Victorias
7. Michele GAROMBO	26 May 1926	16 Aug 1944	Miss 26 Feb 1955	Machinist	Victorias
8. Luciano GORLA	7 Jan 1929	16 Aug 1955	Miss 25 Dec 1957	Electricity	Canlubang
9. Salvatore MASSI	5 Apr 1912	17 Sept 1931	Miss 13 Nov 1936	Musician	Mandaluyong
10. Rafael MRZEL	12 Sept 1912	16 Aug 1939	Miss 22 Feb 1948	Tailoring	Mandaluyong
11. Lorenzo NARDIN	27 Mar 1922	16 Aug 1940	Miss 13 Feb 1953	Tailoring	Cebu
12. Jose NAVARRO	8 Oct 1935	24 May 1957	From Tarlac	Electronics	Tarlac
13. Tommaso ORSOLIN	11 Aug 1907	12 Jan 1936	Miss 5 Jan 1935	Cabinet-making	Cebu
14. Joaquin PALACIO	19 Dec 1943	24 May 1962	From Rizal	Electronics	Victorias
15. Pawel PROKOPOWICZ	25 Jan 1910	26 July 1931	Miss 15 Oct 1937	Accountant	Mandaluyong
16. Giuseppe RETTORE	2 Mar 1938	16 Aug 1956	Miss 30 Oct 1961	Machinist	Cebu
17. Mario ROSSI	19 Jan 1913	31 Jan 1935	Miss 5 Jan 1935	Machinist	Makati
18. Nicolino TAMBASCIA	14 Feb 1916	8 Dec 1936	Miss 26 Dec 1936	Agriculture	Canlubang
19. Joseph TCHIO	1 Mar 1927	16 Aug 1948	Miss 24 June 1954	Machinist	Makati
20. Mario VIEL	7 Oct 1928	16 Aug 1949	Miss 19 Oct 1949	Electronics	Mandaluyong
21. Sylvan ZERMINI	1 Nov 1936	16 Aug 1954	Miss 1 Sept 1964	Printing	Makati
22. Paul CHANG	26 Jan 1945	31 May 1963	From Rizal	2 <sup>nd</sup> year Theo	So San Gabriel, Cal
23. Noe CUMLA	12 Feb 1941	24 May 1962	From Negros Oc	Cabinet-making	Makati
24. Cornelio ESPLICO	2 Feb 1938	22 Feb 1958	From Negros Oc	4 <sup>th</sup> year Coll	Cebu
25. Jose FERRER	14 Sept 1946	31 May 1963	From Rizal	2 <sup>nd</sup> year Coll	So San Gabriel, Cal
26. Bernardo FONTANILLA	20 May 1913	24 May 1959	From Negros Oc	Machinist	Makati

27. Herman ONG	13 Jan 1942	24 May 1951	From Ilo-ilo	3 <sup>rd</sup> yr Coll	Canlubang
28. Luigi PAROLIN	16 June 1940	16 Aug 1957	Miss 24 Oct 1960	Cabinet-making	Victorias
29. Lamberto TENA	16 Apr 1940	24 May 1960	From Quezon	Electronics	Tarlac

Total: 29 = 21 (perpetual) + 8 (temporary)

The **clerics** of the new Philippine Salesian Province:

1. Juan ANDREU	7 May 1938	16 Aug 1957	Miss 25 Nov 1959	2 <sup>nd</sup> yr Theo	Barcelona
2. Valeriano BARBERO	31 Aug 1938	16 Aug 1956	Miss 23 Feb 1961	2 <sup>nd</sup> yr Theo	Bollengo
3. Remo BATI	10 Mar 1940	2 Jun 1957	From Rizal	1 <sup>st</sup> yr Theo	Salamanca
4. Francisco CASTILLO	21 Jul 1938	16 Aug 1957	Miss 13 Feb 1961	2 <sup>nd</sup> yr Theo	Salamanca
5. Jaime CLARET	5 May 1939	20 Aug 1957	Miss 26 Oct 1957	2 <sup>nd</sup> yr Theo	Salamanca
6. Leo DRONA	18 Oct 1941	2 Jul 1958	From Laguna	1 <sup>st</sup> yr Theo	Rome
7. Felice FURLAN	27 Sept 1942	16 Aug 1962	Miss 26 Nov 1962	3 <sup>rd</sup> yr Coll	Canlubang
8. Jesus GOMEZ	13 Apr 1940	16 Aug 1957	Miss 25 Nov 1959	2 <sup>nd</sup> yr Theo	Barcelona
9. Alfredo MANALILI	23 Jun 1938	31 May 1957	From Tarlac		Salamanca
10. Adolfo MARTINEZ	28 Feb 1935	25 Sept 1954	Miss 15 Aug 1964	Ord 19 Mar 1964	Cebu
11. Hilario MUYCO	21 Oct 1939	2 Jun 1958	From Negros Oc	1 <sup>st</sup> yr Theo	Salamanca
12. Jose REINOSO	12 Aug 1936	16 Aug 1955	Miss 30 Sept 1966	4 <sup>th</sup> yr Theo	Lyons
13. Rodolfo AGANA	3 Dec 1940	1 Jun 1958	From Tarlac	1 <sup>st</sup> yr Theo	Salamanca
14. Vincente ANGELES	8 Jul 1943	18 May 1960	From Laguna	2 <sup>nd</sup> yr Train	Mandaluyong
15. Leopoldo ANOCHE	19 Mar 1946	25 Jul 1964	From Negros Oc	1 <sup>st</sup> yr Coll	Canlubang
16. Fidel ARANETA	23 Jun 1947	25 Jul 1964	From Cebu	1 <sup>st</sup> yr Coll	Canlubang
17. Antonio CAMPO	15 Feb 1943	16 Aug 1963	Miss 9 Nov 1963	2 <sup>nd</sup> yr Coll	Canlubang
18. Demetrio CARMONA	13 Apr 1944	24 May 1962	From Negros Oc	3 <sup>rd</sup> yr Coll	Canlubang
19. Antonio CURA	26 May 1942	16 Aug 1957	From Tarlac	Cabinet-making	Canlubang
20. Francisco DINGLASAN	28 Feb 1947	25 Jul 1964	From Rizal	1 <sup>st</sup> yr Coll	Canlubang
21. Edgardo ESPIRITU	24 Aug 1941	17 Sept 1960	From Negros Oc	2 <sup>nd</sup> yr Train	Cebu

22. Marciano EVANGELISTA	6 Mar 1943	18 May 1960	From Pampanga	2 <sup>nd</sup> yr Train	San Fernando
23. Rolando FERNANDEZ	27 Oct 1944	24 May 1962	From Pangasinan	3 <sup>rd</sup> yr Coll	Canlubang
24. Eliseo GALLINA	6 Jan 1947	16 Aug 1964	Miss 3 Sept 1964	1 <sup>st</sup> yr Coll	Canlubang
25. Genaro GEGANTONI	27 Feb 1945	31 May 1963	From Negros Oc	2 <sup>nd</sup> yr Coll	Canlubang
26. Anthony HOPIDA	4 May 1941	18 May 1960	From Negros Oc	1 <sup>st</sup> yr Train	Victorias
27. Felix INTAL	21 Apr 1945	24 May 1962	From Pampanga	3 <sup>rd</sup> yr Coll	Canlubang
28. Delfin LEONARDO	5 Jan 1941	24 Mar 1959	From Rizal	3 <sup>rd</sup> yr Train	San Fernando
29. Joseph LIMMER			Miss 16 Apr 1964	1 <sup>st</sup> yr Theo	Mandaluyong
30. Celestino LINGAD	6 Aug 1946	17 Jun 1963	From Rizal	2 <sup>nd</sup> yr Train	Canlubang
31. Lawrence MICKARTZ	16 Jan 1945	16 Aug 1963	Miss 19 Oct 1963	2 <sup>nd</sup> yr Coll	Canlubang
32. Benjamin MORANDO	4 July 1943	16 Aug 1964	Miss 3 Sept 1964	1 <sup>st</sup> yr Coll	Canlubang
33. Abelardo OCA	22 Mar 1947	25 Jul 1964	From Rizal	1 <sup>st</sup> yr Coll	Canlubang
34. Aguedo PALOMO	5 Feb 1947	25 July 1964	From Negros Oc	1 <sup>st</sup> yr Coll	Canlubang
35. Victor PANIZALES	17 Oct 1943	24 May 1962	From Negros Oc	3 <sup>rd</sup> yr Coll	Canlubang
36. Lawrence PELIZZATO	17 Apr 1941	16 Aug 1961	Miss 26 Dec 1961	1 <sup>st</sup> yr Train	San Fernando
37. Marcelino PRUDENTE	25 Sept 1942	24 May 1958	From Rizal	3 <sup>rd</sup> yr Train	Cebu
38. Angelo ROTA	28 Dec 1943	16 Aug 1961	Miss 12 Dec 1961	1 <sup>st</sup> yr Train	Victorias
39. Angel SOLIS	6 Jan 1948	25 Jul 1964	From Rizal	1 <sup>st</sup> yr Coll	Canlubang
40. Romeo SUBALDO	7 Jan 1947	25 July 1964	From Negros Oc	1 <sup>st</sup> yr Coll	Canlubang
41. Mariano TARROSA	2 Nov 1942	24 May 1959	From Negros Oc	3 <sup>rd</sup> yr Train	Makati
42. Jesus TAYAG	21 Mar 1942	24 May 1959	From Tarlac	3 <sup>rd</sup> yr Train	Makati
43. Felipe TORRES	15 Sept 1946	31 May 1963	From Rizal	2 <sup>nd</sup> yr Coll	Canlubang
44. Pietro URAS	19 Mar 1944	8 Oct 1964	Miss 10 Mar 1964	1 <sup>st</sup> yr Coll	Canlubang
45. Giuliano VENTURINI	4 July 1944	16 Aug 1962	Miss 26 Nov 1962	3 <sup>rd</sup> yr Coll	Canlubang
46. Ovidio ZACCHEDDU	1 Jul 1946	8 Oct 1964	Miss 1 Sept 1964	1 <sup>st</sup> yr Coll	Canlubang
47. Giuseppe ZUCHELLI	14 Feb 1942	8 Oct 1964	Miss 10 Mar 1964	1 <sup>st</sup> yr Coll	Canlubang

Total: 47 = 12 (perpetual) + 35 (temporary)

## APPENDIX (THREE)

### A HISTORICAL LIST OF DECEASED SALESIANS OF THE PHILIPPINES

<b>January</b>		
3	Fr. Carlo Braga	1889 (Italy) +1971 (Philippines)
14	Fr. Michael Murray	1899 (Ireland) + 1981 (Ireland)
15	Fr. Giuseppe Guarino	1923 (Italy) +1983 (Philippines)
28	Fr. Mathias Kreutzer	1905 (Germany) +1970 (Germany)
<b>February</b>		
14	Fr. Dante Sacchi	1920 (Italy) +2000 (Philippines)
22	Br. Francesco Stoppa Sady	1913 (Switzerland) +1980 (Hong Kong)
25	Bp. Luigi Versiglia	1873 (Italy) + 1930 (China)
<b>March</b>		
6	Fr. Giovanni Deiana	1929 (Italy) +1996 (Italy)
8	Cl. Yohane Nishimura	1915 (Japan) +1945 (Philippines)
9	Br. Tommaso Orsolin	1907 (Italy) +1971 (Italy)
20	Fr. Lino Repetto	1906 (Italy) +1982 (Italy)
23	Fr. Anthony Di Falco	1914 (USA) +2003 (USA)
<b>April</b>		
6	Fr. Jan Peter Clifford	1911 (Netherlands) +2000 (Philippines)
11	Fr. Giuliano Carpella	1923 (Italy) +2006 (Hong Kong)
12	Fr. Pierangelo Quaranta	1916 (Italy) +1992 (Philippines)
13	Cl. Jovito Soberano	1957 (Philippines) +1982 (Philippines)
14	Fr. Pietro Garbero	1901 (Italy) +1992 (Philippines)
15	Br. Andrea Bragion	1905 (Italy) +1996 (Philippines)
16	Br. Rafael Mrzel	1912 (Slovenia) +1994 (Philippines)
18	Fr. Cesare Moretti	1941 (Italy) +1974 (Italy)
<b>May</b>		
4	Fr. Firmo Chito Dajao	1953 (Philippines) +2001 (Philippines)
8	Nv. Jomar Forcadilla	1964 (Philippines) +1985 (Philippines)
12	Fr. Maurilio Candusso	1909 (Italy) +1972 (Italy)
16	Nv. Ariel Caibiran	1966 (Philippines) +1985 (Philippines)
17	Fr. Giovanni Monchiero	1915 (Italy) +1976 (Philippines)
21	Br. Giovanni Castella	1880 (Italy) +1964 (Italy)
29	Fr. Jose Luis Carreño	1906 (Spain) +1986 (Spain)
<b>June</b>		
4	Fr. Ernesto Santos	1948 (Philippines) +1992 (East Timor)
27	Br. Romildo Gamba	1912 (Italy) +1990 (Italy)
<b>July</b>		
5	Fr. Johannes Buchta	1906 (Germany) +1972 (Italy)
10	Fr. Angel Izquierdo	1936 (Spain) +1992 (Spain)
16	Fr. Fortunato Zuccollo	1914 (Switzerland) +1966 (Italy)
31	Fr. Leone Barattoni	1911 (Italy) +1976 (Italy)

<b>August</b>		
1	Br. Giovanni De Reggi	1914 (Italy) +1992 (Italy)
9	Fr. Giuseppe Savina	1936 (Italy) +1999 (Papua New Guinea)
11	Fr. Giuseppe Costamagna	1866 (Italy) +1941 (Chile)
21	Fr. Paolo Zolin	1879 (Italy) +1963 (Australia)
31	Bp. Louis Morrow	1892 (USA) +1987 (India)
31	Fr. Iginò Ricaldone	1903 (Italy) +1963 (Italy)
<b>September</b>		
5	Fr. Emilio Baggio	1914 (Italy) +2002 (Italy)
8	Br. Mario Rossi	1913 (Italy) +1994 (Philippines)
11	Fr. Alfredo Cogliandro	1911 (Italy) +1992 (Philippines)
14	Br. Silvano Rettore	1926 (Italy) +1988 (Italy)
17	Cl. Giuliano Venturini	1944 (Italy) +1970 (Italy)
20	Fr. Giovanni Rizzato	1911 (Italy) +1991 (Philippines)
25	Fr. Mario Acquistapace	1906 (Italy) +2002 (Hong Kong)
27	Abp. Guglielmo Piani	1875 (Italy) +1956 (Mexico)
<b>October</b>		
1	Br. Hubert Bernales	1964 (Philippines) +2003 (Philippines)
5	Fr. Patrick Corcoran	1928 (Ireland) +1971 (Hong Kong)
10	Fr. Francis De Meulenaere	1936 (Belgium) +2002 (Vietnam)
13	Fr. Jose Bosch	1921 (Spain) +1995 (Philippines)
17	Fr. Umberto Marocchino	1909 (Italy) +1991 (Philippines)
27	Fr. Giovanni Righetti	1915 (Italy) +1990 (Italy)
<b>November</b>		
3	Br. Salvatore Massi	1913 (Italy) +1998 (Italy)
5	Cl. Sebastian Masaji Maki	1912 (Japan) +1948 (Japan)
13	Br. Nicolino Tambascia	1916 (Italy) +1979 (Philippines)
14	Fr. Vincenzo Ricaldone	1897 (Italy) +1975 (Italy)
23	Fr. Patrick Ryan	1918 (Ireland) +1988 (Philippines)
23	Fr. Luigi Ferrari	1908 (Italy) +1990 (Italy)
27	Fr. Pawel Prokopowicz	1910 (Poland) +1983 (Poland)
27	Fr. Francesco Saveri Fels	1919 (Italy) +1990 (Italy)
29	Br. Carlo Nardin	1911 (Italy) +1994 (Italy)
29	Fr. Johannes Rauh	1918 (Germany) +1995 (Germany)
<b>December</b>		
1	Fr. Guglielmo Balocco	1911 (Italy) +1999 (Philippines)
2	Fr. John Rutkowski	1907 (USA) +1973 (Australia)
8	Fr. Godfrey Roozen	1912 (Netherlands) +1997 (Philippines)
24	Br. Bernabé Marcos	1906 (Spain) +1984 (Spain)
27	Fr. Giuseppe Fergnani	1874 (Italy) +1932 (Palestine)
30	Fr. Attilio Boscarol	1915 (Italy) +1976 (Italy)

## APPENDIX (FOUR)

### THE NOVITIATE GROUPS FROM 1956 TO 1964<sup>4</sup>

#### (1) Novitiate 1956-1957

GATMAITAN Juan cl. (San Miguel, Tarlac), GUZMAN Enrico cl. (San Miguel, Tarlac), LE HUONG Isidro cl. (Vietnamese) (Huong Dau/Ninh Binh), MANALILI Alfredo cl. (Tarlac, Tarlac), MIRANDA Augusto cl. (Baliwag, Bulacan), NAVARRO Jose cl. (Tarlac, Tarlac), PEROY Ronaldo cl. (Bago, Negros Occidental), UNG Francis Xavier cl. (Chinese/Macau)<sup>5</sup>.

#### (2) Novitiate 1957-1958

AGANA Rodolfo cl. (Tarlac, Tarlac), BATI Remo cl. (Manila/Mandaluyong), CRUZ Diomede cl., DORONILLA Arturo cl., DRONA Leo cl. (Pangil, Laguna), ESPLICCO Cornelio cl. (La Carlota, Negros Occidental), MONTANO Ariston cl., MUYCO Ilarione cl. (Victorias, Negros Occidental), TAN Nicola cl., VERTIDO Raimondo cl.<sup>6</sup>

#### (3) Novitiate 1958-1959

ALABA Pietro cl., CHAVEZ Norberto cl., FONTANILLA Bernardo cl. (Santa Monica, Dumalag/Capiz) (born 22 May 1930), LEONARDO Delfin cl. (Polo, Bulacan), PRUDENTE Marcelino cl. (Mandaluyong, Rizal), SERRANO Antonio cl., TAPAY Leandro cl. (Balilihan, Bohol), TARROSA Mariano cl. (Victorias, Negros Occidental), TAYAG Jesus cl. (San Miguel, Tarlac)<sup>7</sup>.

#### (4) Novitiate year 1959-1960

ANGELES Vicente cl. (Luisiana, Laguna), ESPIRITU Edgardo cl. (Bacolod, Negros Occidental), EVANGELISTA Marciano cl. (Guagua, Pampanga), HOPIDA Tony cl. (Manapla, Negros Occidental), TENA Lamberto cl. (Infanta, Quezon)<sup>8</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> The sources of this listing are the general lists of confreres of the Salesian Society as found in the *Elenchi Generali* and the manuscript edited by Fr. Philip Lazatin, *Salesian Novices in the Philippines: 1956-1997* (unpublished). Sacred Heart Novitiate, Lawa-an, Cebu, 1997.

<sup>5</sup> All the novices of this first group professed; however, only the two foreigners remained as Salesians. The first formation team consisted of the following confreres: (novice-master) Fr. Vincenzo Ricaldone, (socius/confessor) Fr. Ferdinando Rossotto, (professed) Coad. Barnabé Marcos and Coad. Nicolino Tambascia.

<sup>6</sup> Of the ten novices, eight professed. Of these, two are still Salesians: the Bishop Leo Drona of San Pablo, Laguna and Fr. Remo Bati. Both were from Don Bosco Mandaluyong.

<sup>7</sup> Of these, five professed. Fr. Luis Iriarte, socius of the novice master for this year, was a newly ordained Salesian when he was socius in Muntinglupa.

<sup>8</sup> All these novices made their first profession on 18 May 1960. They left for Hong Kong for Philosophy on 11 September 1960. Cf SAFIN Novitiate Chronicles (1959-1960) 93, 103. There were no novices for the years 1960-1961. A Novitiate team existed; but it was however "unemployed".



**(5) Novitiate Year 1961-1962**

BARRIENTOS Pablo coad. (Villasis, Pangasinan), CARMONA Demetrio cl. (Sumag, Negros Occidental), CUMLA Noe coad. (La Carlota, Negros Occidental), CURA Antonio cl. (Tarlac, Tarlac), FERNANDEZ Rolando cl. (Binmaley, Pangasinan), INTAL Felipe cl. (Sta. Maria, Minalin, Pampanga), MANANSALA Just. Myron cl., ONG Ermanno cl. (Iloilo), PALACIO Joaquin coad. (San Juan, Rizal), PANIZALES Victor cl. (Isabela, Negros Occidental), SUBALDO Arturo coad. (Himamaylan, Negros Occidental)<sup>9</sup>.

**(6) Novitiate 1962-1963**

CHANG Paul coad. (Iloilo City), DEVEREAUX Eduino coad., DRONA Lamberto cl., FERRER Jose coad. (San Juan, Rizal), GEGANTONI Genaro cl. (Ilog, Negros Occidental), LINGAD Celestino Jr. cl. (Manila), PADILLA Jose cl., SEVILLA Federico cl., SUA-AN (SUWAN) Juan cl., TORRES Felipe cl. (Mandaluyong, Rizal)<sup>10</sup>.

**(7) Novitiate Year 1963-1964**

ANOCHE Leopoldo cl. (Bacolod, Negros Occidental), ARANETA Fidel cl. (Cebu City), DINGLASAN Francisco cl. (Manila), OCA Abelardo cl. (Victoria, Laguna), PALOMO Aguedo cl. (Passi, Iloilo), SOLIS Angel cl. (Malolos, Bulacan), SUBALDO Romeo cl. (Himamaylan, Negros Occidental)<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup> This group was practically the last group to do their Novitiate in the house of Muntinglupa before this house was finally suppressed. Besides, these Salesians made up the last group that went to Hong Kong for their studies of Philosophy. Moreover, this was also the last group that Fr. Vincenzo Ricaldone handled and formed. He would leave for Italy for a much needed rest. He would be later replaced by Fr. Jose Luis Carreño. Of these novices, ten made their first profession (four coadjutors Barrientos, Cumla, Palacio, Subaldo; six clerics Carmona, Cura, Fernandez, Intal, Ong, Panizales). But of these, only two have remained (Carmona and Fernandez).

<sup>10</sup> This Novitiate group, however, had two loci: the first in Muntinglupa, and the second in San Fernando, Pampanga. It was here that the novices made their first profession. After, they went to the new post-Novitiate house in Canlubang as newly professed. Together with them, the new novices started their Novitiate in this new locus. This group was the first to make their studies of Philosophy in Canlubang. At the same time, this newly professed began their college studies. Fr. Carreño had dared to start the college so that these newly professed should stay in the Philippines and no longer go to Hong Kong for their Philosophy.

<sup>11</sup> Again, the Novitiate was transferred, and this time to Canlubang, Calamba, Laguna. This group of novices was the first to undergo their Novitiate and to make their first profession in the new house in Canlubang, on the initiative and the insistence of Fr. Carreño. Of these novices, seven made their first profession (Anoche, Araneta, Dinglasan, Oca, Palomo, Solis and Subaldo). Of these, only one has remained (Palomo). The formation equip of this first Novitiate group in its new seat consisted of (rector/novice master) Fr. Jose Carreño, (prefect) Fr. John Monchiero, (councillor) Fr. John Benna, (confessor) Fr. John Buchta (from St. Dominic Savio, Rizal Institute), (professed) Coad. Paul Chang It., Coad. Jose Ferrer It.

**APPENDIX (FIVE)****CEBU BOYS TOWN - EXPENSE: MONTHLY<sup>12</sup>****PERSONNEL:**

25 Boys  
 3 Salesian Fathers  
 1 Cook  
 1 Possible additional

**FOOD:**

Fish: Php 60 monthly  
 Meat: Php 45 monthly  
 Milk: Php 30 monthly  
 Fruit: Php 45 monthly  
 Salt: Php 3 monthly  
 Sugar, 15 kilos monthly: Php 4.50 monthly  
 Eggs, 8 dozens: Php 10 monthly  
 Bread: Php 50 monthly  
 Corn, 5 sacks: Php 50 monthly  
 Manteca: Php 15 monthly  
 Oil: Php 15 monthly  
 Vinegar: Php 6 monthly  
 Soy Sauce: Php 10 monthly  
 Payment for the Cook: Php 40 to 50 monthly  
 Lavandera (Laundry Woman): Php 25 to 30 monthly  
 Water consumed, Flat Rate: Php 25 monthly  
 Light: Php 25 monthly  
 Fuel: Php 30 monthly  
 Hair Cut (Barber): Php 8 monthly  
 Soap: Php 30 monthly

**CLOTHING:**

For each boy for every half-year's expenses –  
 2 pairs Trousers: Php 12  
 2 pairs Shirts: Php 8  
 3 pairs Rubber Shoes: Php 10  
 Miscellaneous: Php 20  
 (Total) Php 50 or Php 8.24 monthly

(Total monthly) Php 549.84

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<sup>12</sup> SAFIN Cebu: Monthly expense in food and clothing of Cebu Boys Town prepared by Fr. Attilio (Guerrino) Boscarriol SDB, Cebu City, 9 July 1954.

## APPENDIX (SIX)

### CANONICAL ERECTION OF DON BOSCO TECHNICAL INSTITUTE MAKATI BY RUFINO J. SANTOS, ARCHBISHOP OF MANILA<sup>13</sup>

ARZOBISPADO DE MANILA

281 General Solano, Manila

CANONICAL ERECTION

of the

DON BOSCO TECHNICAL INSTITUTE

of the

SALESIAN FATHERS OF ST. JOHN BOSCO

Parish of St. Ildephonso

Culi-Culi, Makati, Rizal

Acting on the request of Very Rev. Fr. Luis Ferrari, S.D.B.,

Provincial Delegate of the Salesian Fathers of St. John Bosco, asking

Permission for the canonical erection of the DON BOSCO TECHNICAL

INSTITUTE in the parish of St. Ildephonso, Culi-Culi, Makati, Rizal, We

Hereby decree the following:

a) After mature consideration, We believe that the aforesaid Institution will be really useful in our Archdiocese for the purpose stated by its founder;

b) It is our conviction that the necessary endowment to realize this purpose is sufficient, or at least there will be sufficient means obtainable in the future;

c) We approve the charter of the foundation, sent to us by the Provincial Delegate with his request;

Therefore, with the present act, We establish the school under the name of DON BOSCO TECHNICAL INSTITUTE as an ecclesiastical moral person according to cc. 99-103, with rights to possess and administer the properties in conformity with the Code, Diocesan Statutes and customs.

We reserve to ourself and our successors the right of visiting this institution, to make the necessary changes in its charter and to supervise it in spiritual matters as well as to supervise the finances of this institution.

ARZOBISPADO DE MANILA, September 15, 1955.

RUFINO J. SANTOS, D.D.

Archbishop of Manila

ARTEMIO G. CASAS

Chancellor

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We declare this copy conform to the original.

Hong Kong, 26<sup>th</sup> September, 1955

In faith

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(Rev. Fr. Clement Benato, S.D.B.)

Secretary

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<sup>13</sup> Cf. ASC F548 San Fernando Fi (Don Bosco Makati): "...scritto in proposito a Don Braga, poiché D. Benato era in viaggio che la Congregazione non accetta la clausola apposta dal Vescovo Mgr. Santos, Manila Makati, di poter controllare in materia spirituale e finanziaria nella più larga maniera. Se ne tratterà con l'Ispettore quando venga." 19/02/56. "...non rispose sino ad oggi 23.2.'56... già erette casa e noviziato il 15-5-56." To note that it is the Rector Major of the Salesian Society who normally canonically erects a Salesian house.



**CRONISTORIA - A SALESIAN CHRONOLOGY OF SOME SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN THE PHILIPPINES ([1911] 1949 – 1964)**

1911 January 28	Fr. Versiglia and Fr. Olive leaves Hong Kong for Manila <sup>1</sup> .
1911 February 11	Agreement between Fr. Versiglia and Abp. Harty of Manila <sup>2</sup> .
1911 April 11	Turin agrees to send Salesians to Manila <sup>3</sup> .
1911 December 14	Arrival of Fr. Costamagna and Fr. Fergnani in Manila.
1912 March [ ]	“Unceremonious” departure of Fr. Costamagna and Fr. Fergnani from Manila <sup>4</sup> .
1947 June 20	Fr. James Wilson begins St. John Bosco Academy, Tarlac <sup>5</sup> .
1949 November 18	Fr. Ricaldone asks Fr. Braga to see the offers of Manila <sup>6</sup> .
1950 February 27	“First official visit” of Fr. Braga to the Philippines <sup>7</sup> .
1950 June 7	Fr. Braga reports directly to the General Council of Turin regarding his Philippine Visit <sup>8</sup>
1951 February 20	“Second official visit” of Fr. Braga to the Philippines <sup>9</sup> .
1951 May	Fr. Wilson provides Fr. Braga contract for the cession of Saint John Bosco Academy to the Salesians <sup>10</sup> .
1951 May 30	Approval of Tarlac and Cebu by the General Council of Turin <sup>11</sup> .
1951 July / Sept. [ ]	Fr. Anthony Di Falco takes over the school in Tarlac.
1951 Oct. / Nov. [ ]	Fr. Guido D’Amore supervises the construction of the school in Victorias.
1952 June 27	Fr. Braga and McMicking meet to discuss the offer of a land in Makati <sup>12</sup> .

<sup>1</sup> ASC A351 Corrispondenza (Versiglia ad Albero, Hong Kong, 21 gennaio 1911).

<sup>2</sup> ASC F984 Manila Proposta (Contratto legale con l’Arcivescovo G. Harty 1912). (Compromesso dato da G. Harty Arcivescovo di Manila).

<sup>3</sup> ASC D870 Minuti (11 aprile 1911).

<sup>4</sup> ASC F984 (Costamagna a Gusmano, Manila, 28 marzo 1912).

<sup>5</sup> SAFIN Tarlac, Ad Lumen (Don Bosco Academy Yearbook, 1952) 2.

<sup>6</sup> SAHK Filippine (Ricaldone a Braga, Torino, 18 novembre 1949).

<sup>7</sup> SAHK Filippine (Braga a Bellido, Hong Kong, 6 febbraio 1950).

<sup>8</sup> ASC F164 Filippine (Braga al Concilio Superiore, [maggio 1950]).

<sup>9</sup> ASC F157 Cina: Corrispondenza (Ziggiotti a Braga, Torino, 11 gennaio 1951).

<sup>10</sup> ASC F570 Filippine-Tarlac: Corrispondenza (Wilson to Braga, Tarlac, 4 May 1951).

<sup>11</sup> ASC F158 Cina: Corrispondenza (Ziggiotti a Braga, Torino, 30 maggio 1951).

<sup>12</sup> SAFIN Makati (McMicking to Braga, Manila, 29 July 1952).

1952 July 3	Br. Orsolin, Br. Carlo Nardin and Br. Karl Schmidt arrive in Manila <sup>13</sup> .
1952 July 9	Fr. Braga and Fr. Ferrari leave for Manila <sup>14</sup> .
1952 September 17	Br. Viel, Br. De Reggi, Br. Orsolin, Br. Schmidt, Cl. Corcoran and Cl. Geoghogan leave Hong Kong for Victorias. Fr. Boscariol arrives from Italy <sup>15</sup> .
1952 October 7	Fr. Acquistapace is new Provincial of China Province <sup>16</sup> .
1953 March 19	Mandaluyong officially starts as Don Bosco Technical Institute <sup>17</sup> .
1953 September 15	Canonical erection of Don Bosco Mandaluyong <sup>18</sup> .
1954 March 15	Fr. Boscariol and Cl. Agustín Lopez officially begin the work in Cebu Boys Town.
1954 May 2	New festive Oratory in Makati starts <sup>19</sup> .
1954 June 29	Fr. George Schwarz is principal and Fr. Lino Repetto is catechist in Victorias <sup>20</sup> .
1954 September 26	Fr. Luigi Ferrari, as Provincial Delegate in the Philippines, visits Cebu Boys Town <sup>21</sup> .
1954 September 29	Cebu is canonically erected by Fr. Fedrigotti <sup>22</sup> .
1955 January 15	Approbation of the Novitiate in Don Bosco Mandaluyong <sup>23</sup> .
1955 March 7	ADMA in Cebu is aggregated to Turin by Fr. Ziggotti <sup>24</sup> .

<sup>13</sup> SAHK Corrispondenza (Benato a Kreutzer, Hong Kong, 3 luglio 1952).

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.* (Benato a Kreutzer, Hong Kong, 12 luglio 1952).

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.* (Benato a Munari, Hong Kong, 17 settembre 1952).

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.* (Benato a Kreutzer, Hong Kong, 17 ottobre 1952).

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.* (Benato a Munari, Hong Kong, 7 aprile 1953).

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.* (Acquistapace a Puddu, Hong Kong, 15 novembre 1954).

<sup>19</sup> SAHK Filippine (Benato to Doldi, Hong Kong 29 May 1954).

<sup>20</sup> SAFIN Victorias, Document of obedience.

<sup>21</sup> SAFIN Cebu Chronicle (26 September 1954).

<sup>22</sup> SAFIN Cebu (Decretum canonicae erectionis Domus, #7082, 29 Septembris 1954)

<sup>23</sup> ASC F548 San Fernando – FI (Decretum, 15 Januarii 1955, Fedrigotti).

<sup>24</sup> SAFIN Cebu (Decree of aggregation).

1955 April 5-13	Visit of the Rector Major Fr. Renato Ziggiotti to the Philippines <sup>25</sup> .
1955 April 6	Fr. Ziggiotti visits Cebu and blesses the new building of Boys Town <sup>26</sup> .
1955 July 1955	Fr. Guido D'Amore is assistant procurator at New Rochelle <sup>27</sup> .
1955 August 10	Fr. Clifford is appointed rector of Boys Town Cebu <sup>28</sup> .
1955 August 29	Fr. Clifford arrives in Boys Town Cebu as superior <sup>29</sup> .
1956 April 19	Fr. Braga is appointed Provincial Delegate in the Philippines <sup>30</sup> .
1956 May	Beginning of the Novitiate in the Philippines, with Fr. Vincenzo Ricaldone, formerly in charge of Makati, as first novice master. Fr. Braga is superior in Makati; Fr. Kreutzer is rector of Victorias <sup>31</sup> .
1956 May 15	Canonical erection of Muntinglupa – Novitiate.
1956 July 7	Canonical erection of the house of Makati <sup>32</sup> .
1957 May 31	First profession of first eight Filipino clerics <sup>33</sup> .
1958 March 22	Ordination of Cl. Luis Iriarte and Cl. Agustín Lopez in the Chapel of Don Bosco Mandaluyong.
1958 August 9	Fr. Braga appointed as Visitatore of the Philippine Visitatoria by Fr. Ziggiotti <sup>34</sup> .
1959 Jan. 13–12 Feb.	Extraordinary visitation by Fr. Albino Fedrigotti.
1960 February 9	Fr. Braga informs Fr. Ziggiotti that the technical school had begun in Cebu so that the “nomadi alumni” did not need to go elsewhere for school <sup>35</sup> .

<sup>25</sup> ASC B116 Chronicle of the visit of the Rector Major (Fr. Renato Ziggiotti) to the Philippines (April 6-13).

<sup>26</sup> SAFIN Cebu Chronicle (6 April 1955).

<sup>27</sup> SAFIN Correspondence (Joseph Louis to Attilio Boscaroli, New Rochelle, 29 July 1955).

<sup>28</sup> SAFIN Cebu (Electio Directoris #2531 [upto Aug. 1958] / #3759 [upto 15 Augusti 1961]).

<sup>29</sup> SAFIN Cebu Chronicle (29 August 1955).

<sup>30</sup> ASC F482 Mandaluyong Corrispondenza (Braga a Fedrigotti, Mandaluyong, 1 maggio 1956).

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> F477 Filippine Manila-Makati (Decretum canonicae erectionis, Fedrigotti, Torino, 7 Julii 1956).

<sup>33</sup> Bolettino Salesiano 81 (Agosto 1957) 298. On the same date, the second batch began their novitiate.

<sup>34</sup> SAFIN Cebu (Minuti - Puddu, comunicazione dell'elezione Visitatore #393).

<sup>35</sup> ASC F163 Filippine: Corrispondenza (Braga a Ziggiotti, Tarlac, 9 febbraio 1960).

1960 September 21	Canonical erection of Saint Dominic Savio Canlubang <sup>36</sup> .
1961 September 8	Canonical erection of the San Fernando - Don Bosco Academy <sup>37</sup> .
1962 June 23	Canonical erection of San Fernando – Novitiate <sup>38</sup> .
1962 July 6	Return of Villa Amparo (Novitiate-Muntinglupa) to its owners <sup>39</sup> .
1962 July 21	Transfer of Novitiate to San Fernando. Offer of a school by Aguinaldo Development at Maco (Mati), Gulf of Davao <sup>40</sup> .
1962 September 23	Investiture of novices in San Fernando by the Apostolic Nuncio <sup>41</sup> .
1963 July 11	Fr. Alfredo Cogliandro appointed as first Provincial of the new Salesian Province of the Philippines by Fr. Ziggotti <sup>42</sup> .
1963 July 25	First batch to make the Novitiate in Canlubang <sup>43</sup> .
1963 August 12	Erection of the Philippine Visitoria into Province <sup>44</sup> .
1963 August 31	Unexpected death of Fr. Igino Ricaldone.
1963 October 2	Fr. Cogliandro arrives in the Philippines.
1964 April 7	Approbation of the studentate of Philosophy-Canlubang <sup>45</sup> .

<sup>36</sup> ASC F652 Canlubang San Domenico Savio (Decretum canonicae erectionis, 21 Septembris 1960).

<sup>37</sup> ASC F548 San Fernando-FI (Decretum canonicae erectionis, 8 Septembris 1961). Aspirantate was seven years in Victorias. Cf. SAFIN Victorias Correspondence (Braga a Baggio, Makati, 13 settembre 1962). Later, the aspirants and novices moved to San Fernando at the end of June 1962

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.* (Decretum canonicae erectionis, 23 Junii 1962).

<sup>39</sup> SAFIN Victorias Correspondence (Braga a Baggio, Makati, 6 luglio 1962). Cf. also F164 Filippine Relazione Annuale 1959-1960, 1.

<sup>40</sup> SAFIN Victorias Correspondence (Braga a Baggio, Makati, 18 luglio 1962).

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.* (Braga a Baggio, Makati, 19 settembre 1962).

<sup>42</sup> SAHK Filippine: Corrispondence (Braga to Massimino, Manila 13 luglio 1963); SAFIN Cebu (Comunicazione dell'elezione #461).

<sup>43</sup> ASC F163 Filippine Corrispondenza (Cogliandro a Fedrigotti, Makati 4 ottobre 1963). The construction of the studentate of Canlubang began the year before. Cf. SAFIN Victorias Correspondence (Braga a Baggio, Makati, 18 luglio 1962).

<sup>44</sup> ASC F163 Filippine (Decretum canonicae erectionis, 12 Augusti 1963).

<sup>45</sup> ASC F163 Filippine Relazione Annuale 1963-1964, 21.

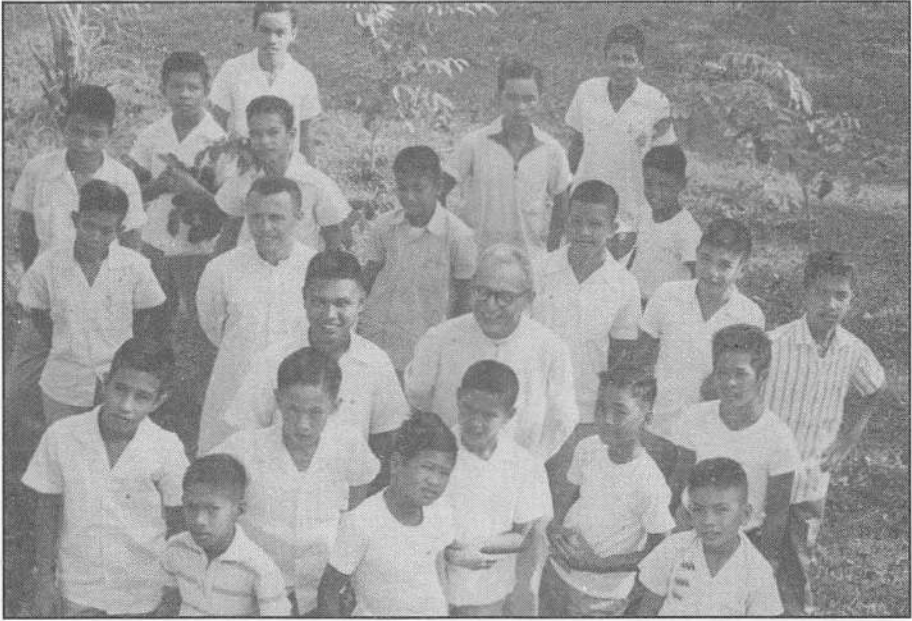




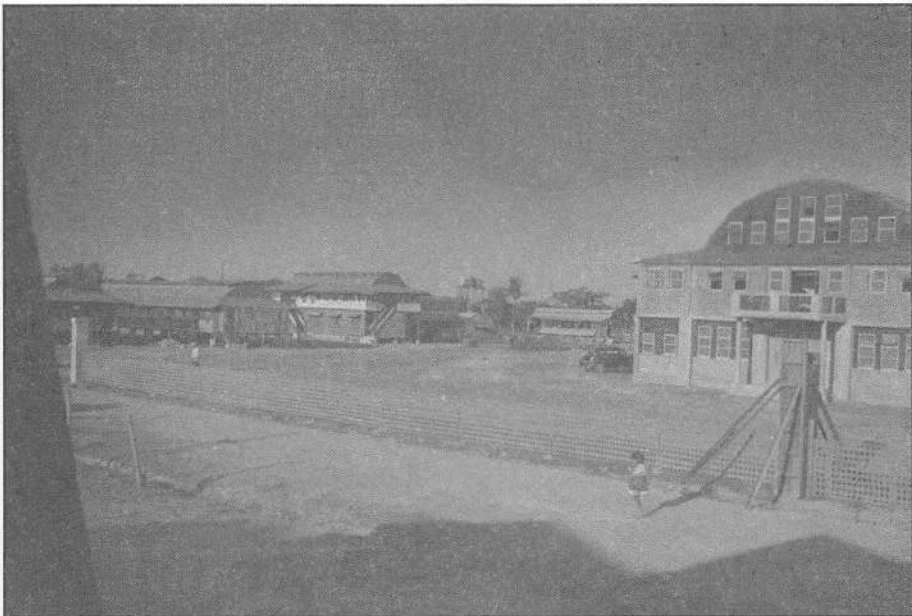
An aerial view of the on-going construction of the school of Don Bosco Victorias (1952), owned by Don Miguel Ossorio and the Victorias Milling Corporation.



Fr. Albino Fedrigotti (+1986), Prefect General of the Salesian Society, in the midst of the boys during his extraordinary visit of Don Bosco Victorias (January 1959).



Fr. Mario Acquistapace, Provincial [center], with the Aspirants of Don Bosco Victorias (1957) and then assistant, Cl. Luis Iriarte.



St. John Bosco Academy Tarlac, during the construction of the perimeter wall surrounding the school (1955).



The Sodality of the Knights of the Altar of St. John Bosco Academy in procession from the San Sebastian Parish of Tarlac, Tarlac (31 January 1959).



The office of the SYCAP (Salesian Youth of Catholic Action of the Philippines) with the director, Fr. Luigi Ferrari (1908-1990), in Don Bosco Mandaluyong (1953).



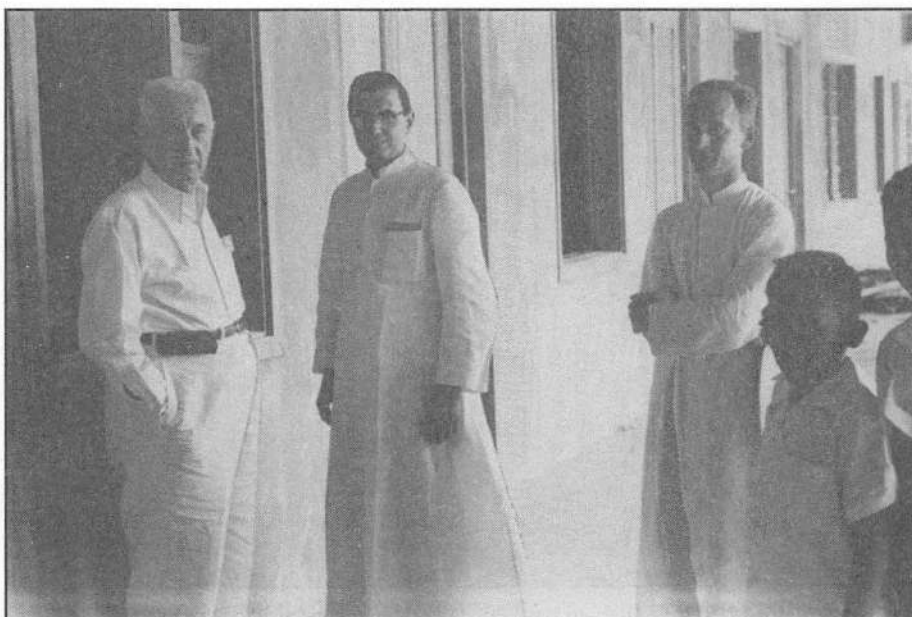
Archbishop Egidio Vagnozzi, Apostolic Delegate/Nuncio to the Philippines (1949-1951/1951-1958), and Professor Francesco Monti (+1958), renowned sculptor: Salesian benefactors, in front of the statue of St. John Bosco in Don Bosco Mandaluyong (1954).



A first year high school student in a technical demo to President Carlos P. Garcia and his wife during their visit to Don Bosco Mandaluyong. Looking on is Fr. Pierangelo Quaranta, rector of the school (7 April 1955).



Celebration of the feast of St. Dominic Savio (canonized on 12 June 1954) in the Church of San Beda (9 March 1955) by the students and staff of Don Bosco Technical Institute, Mandaluyong.



Don Ramon Aboitiz, the great and generous benefactor of Don Bosco Boys Town Cebu with Fr. Attilio Boscarriol and Fr. Lino Repetto, in his visit to Boys Town (April 1955).



The first residents of Don Bosco Boys Town together a group of CWL members who were the initiators and one of the first benefactors of this project with the street children of Cebu on the occasion of the first celebration of the feast of St. John Bosco (31 January 1955).



The Rector Major, Fr. Renato Ziggiotti [last row, center], during his visit to Don Bosco Boys Town Cebu (6 April 1955). On his right is Fr. Mario Acquistapace, Provincial; on his left is Fr. Attilio Boscaroli (1915-1976), pioneer of the Salesian work among the street children of Cebu City.



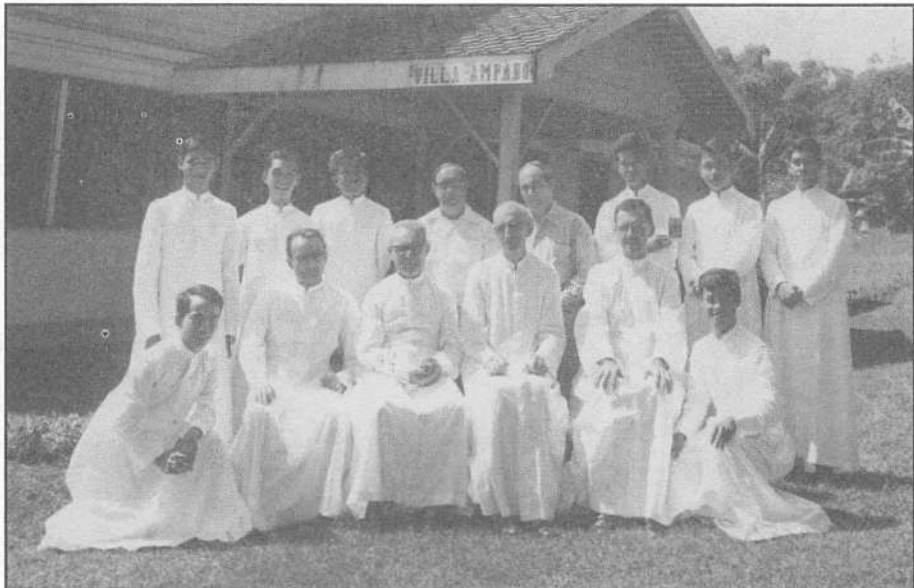
Blessing of the corner stone of Don Bosco Technical Institute, Makati (May 1954) by Fr. Luigi Ferrari (1908-1990), Delegate of Fr. Mario Acquistapace (1906-2002), Provincial of China, in the presence of Mr. John R. McMicking and other benefactors.



His Eminence Cardinal Rufino Santos blesses the locals of the elementary department of Don Bosco Technical Institute, Makati (7 October 1959), in the presence of the rector, Fr. Emilio Baggio [far left].



Salesians in Spiritual Retreat (Don Bosco Victorias, April 1953). From left to right: (first row) Baggio, Clifford, Braga, Acquistapace, Buchta, Pomati, Quaranta; (second row) Bragion, Iriarte, Rossi, Solaroli, Garbero, V. Ricaldone, Rauh; (third row) Massi, De Reggi, Tchio, Schmidt, Orsolin, Viel, Garombo and Tambascia.



The members of the first Novitiate batch (1956-1957). From left to right: [front row] (2<sup>nd</sup>) Fr. Ferdinando Rosotto, (3<sup>rd</sup>) Fr. Mario Acquistapace, (4<sup>th</sup>) Fr. Vincenzo Ricaldone, (5<sup>th</sup>) Fr. Xavier Fels; [back row] (4<sup>th</sup>) Br. Salvatore Massi, (5<sup>th</sup>) Br. Nicolino Tambascia.





The members of the second Novitiate batch (1957-1958) before their investiture with the Novice Master, Fr. Vincenzo Ricaldone and the Provincial, Fr. Mario Acquistapace [back row, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> respectively].



The investiture of the third Novitiate batch (1958-1959) in Don Bosco Mandaluyong (September 1958).



A general view of Don Bosco Canlubang (College, Philosophate and Novitiate). At the center is the new chapel, whose first stone was blessed by the Rector Major, Fr. Luigi Ricceri (7 November 1968).



Don Jose Yulo Sr. (1894-1976), who donated 15 hectares of land to the Salesians to house their Aspirantate, Philosophate, Novitiate and Retreat House, and Fr. Carlo Braga (1889-1971), who was a pioneer and Superior of the Philippine Visitatoria.

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ISTITUTO STORICO SALESIANO - ROMA

STUDI 23

CLEMENTE CIAMMARUCONI

UN CLERO  
PER LA «CITTÀ NUOVA»

*I Salesiani di Littoria a Latina*

Volume I  
1932-1942

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