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# A History of the Chilean Vicariate of the Precious Blood Fathers, 1947-1972

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A HISTORY OF THE CHILEAN VICARIATE  
OF THE PRECIOUS BLOOD FATHERS  
1947-1972

by

ROBERT L. CONWAY, C.P.P.S.

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## VITA

The author, Robert Louis Conway, is the son of Harold Francis Conway and Marie (Oberle) Conway. He was born on 19 September 1925 at Detroit, Michigan.

He obtained his elementary education in parochial schools in Detroit and Roseville, Michigan, and began his secondary education in Roseville and Mt. Clemens, Michigan. He continued his high school studies at Brunnerdale Seminary, Canton, Ohio, and St. Joseph Academy, Rensselaer, Indiana, institutions conducted by the Society of the Precious Blood. After two years at St. Joseph College, Rensselaer, in September 1947 he entered St. Charles Seminary, Carthagena, Ohio, for two years of philosophy and four years of theology. His Bachelor of Arts degrees in philosophy and theology were conferred by St. Joseph College. As a member of the Society of the Precious Blood, he was ordained to the Catholic priesthood on 19 December 1953.

From 1954 to 1961 he was engaged in the parish apostolate in Ft. Wayne, Indiana, and Dayton, Ohio. Upon completion of studies at the Center for Intercultural Formation at Cuernavaca, Mexico, in late 1961 he joined the Chilean missions of the Society of the Precious Blood.



Upon retiring from the mission field in 1974, he entered Loyola Marymount University at Los Angeles, and in May 1975, he received the degree Master of Arts in Latin American History. In September 1975, he was granted a teaching assistantship in history at Loyola University of Chicago.

At present he is assistant professor of Hispanic Studies at Calumet College, Hammond, Indiana.

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## INTRODUCTION

Some ten years ago an observer of the North American Catholic missionary effort in Latin America remarked that "only sociologists and cultural anthropologists possess competency to appraise the distinctive influence of a small group of widely scattered North American missionaries." Granted the truth of that statement, it is the role of the historian to record what actually happened and to try to interpret that experience in the light of the South American world of those times. If future social scientists merely isolate data, their understanding of the results could be erroneous.

The twenty-five year history of the American province of the Society of the Precious Blood in Chile offers a unique opportunity to study the evolution of a missionary effort. Moreover, the period under question, 1947 to 1972, embraces several significant eras in the history of Chile and of the United States. The early postwar world with the North American fear of communism, coupled with the Church's grave concern over the threat to Christian life, renewed Protestant interest in the Catholic continent, the Kennedy administration with its Alliance for Progress and Peace Corps, Castroism, the call of Pope John XXIII for ten per-

cent of North American religious personnel to be sent to Latin America, the impact of Vatican II and Medellín, and the changing Chilean political scene, all contributed to the growth and even confusion of Catholic missionaries in Chile.

By analyzing one, relatively small group of North American missionaries (maximum number, twenty-seven), it may be possible to answer a number of questions. Thus, the apparently successful experience of the North American church was to organize parish life around the church building, school, convent, and rectory. Carried to Chile, did this transplant prove viable? By his stateside training, previous priestly experience, and personal inclination, the missionary was geared to a sacramental ministry. Faced with the reality of a people in need of evangelization, how did the missionary cope with this clash of goals? The charge has been leveled that missionaries from the United States tended to confuse their priestly role with that of the super patriot. Did an appreciable number of missionaries advocate the economic, political, and cultural aims of their home country for the host country? By letters from the field and by personal appeals at home, the missionary was expected to raise funds for the needs of his apostolate. Was this money used wisely? Was it invested in people or in things?

The response to these and other questions will not

be found in graphs or charts. The answers, if they are forthcoming, must be gleaned from the Society's archives in the United States, Italy, and Chile, and from various Chilean diocesan archives; from correspondence, diaries, parish records, Society publications, and interviews with missionaries past and present. In addition to these archival materials the author brings to the project more than ten years residence in Chile, spanning the years from 1961 to 1974.

Since the history of the Chilean vicariate of the Society of the Precious Blood is not a sociological survey, but the story of flesh and blood men, much attention will be given to the missionaries as priests living in a foreign country, trying to fulfill their mission and striving not to become lost between two cultures. But a word of caution is in order. How successful they eventually were in their mission is a judgment that cannot be based on the usual criteria which demonstrate achievement.

## CHAPTER I

### WHY CHILE WAS CHOSEN

On 12 July 1886 Father Gaetano Caporali, the fifth moderator general of the Society of the Precious Blood, penned a letter to the only Irish member of his congregation, Father Patrick Hennebery. Founder of a college in California that he was forced to close in 1876 because of a lack of funds, Hennebery had first gone to the West Coast in 1866 to preach parish missions. Now temporarily residing in New York City, he received interesting news in that letter from Rome.

Caporali stated that the Society had been offered an opportunity for apostolic work and the establishment of a mission house in Santiago, Chile. He continued: "If you knew the Spanish language I would have no difficulty to invite you to make that establishment, which I would like very much. All the religious corporations that went to Chili [sic] prospered marvellously [sic]."<sup>1</sup>

Twelve days later Hennebery wrote an enthusiastic acceptance of the invitation. Indeed, fifteen years ear-

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<sup>1</sup>Rome, Italy, Archives of the Society of the Precious Blood, File PI 1886; hereafter, ASPB-R.



lier he had learned Spanish in southern California and in Mexico, but since he had not used the language in recent years, he was eager to hire a Spaniard in New York for conversational practice. But Hennebery was not destined for Chile. On 12 August the moderator general replied that Italian priests would be asked because they could more quickly acquire the use of Spanish. However, neither the Italian nor the North American members of the Society entered Chile at that time.

Another attempt to work among the Spanish speaking of the New World began in 1912.<sup>2</sup> Already in 1898 some Italian members had taken possession of a mission house in Cárceres, Spain. By 1911 there was danger that the Spanish authorities would pass strict laws against religious congregations, especially those run by foreigners. Thus arose the idea of finding a haven in some Latin American diocese. In all, four Italian and one Spanish member of the Society were assigned to the archdioceses of Mexico City and Monterrey, Mexico. In 1914, when an anti-clerical and anti-foreigner hysteria spread through the revolutionary leadership, the five priests were forced to flee in disguise and seek refuge in the United States. The Precious Blood Fathers never again took up the Mexican apostolate.

Nevertheless, the desire of the Society to assume missionary activity was a legacy from its founder, Gaspar

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<sup>2</sup>ASPB-R, "C.P.P.S. in Mexico 1912-1914."

del Bufalo.<sup>3</sup> He had envisioned his congregation as a group of diocesan priests without vows bound by the bond of charity. The primary aim of the Society was to be the sanctification of its members through the common life, and the sanctification of the laity through the giving of parish missions and retreats, all under the aegis of the Blood of Christ. It was only with the coming of the Society to the United States in 1844 that the care of parishes was taken on. But as early as 1826, Gaspar was interested in more than just the Papal States. In that year "he sent one of his missionaries to the Ionian Island of Zante, to take care of the Catholic minority there and to missionize."<sup>4</sup> Although Gaspar had been asked to send a missionary to Goa in India and others to St. Louis, Missouri, nothing came of these initiatives.<sup>5</sup>

The Rule or Constitution of the Society of the Precious Blood had been approved by Pope Gregory XVI in 1841. Forty years later, the third moderator general, Father John Merlini, prepared a new printing of the Rule along with the so-called General Practices of the Society. Article 33 stated: "If anyone feels called to bring the

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<sup>3</sup>Born in Rome in 1786, he died there in 1837. Pius XII canonized him in 1954. See Giorgio Papasogli, Vita e Tempi di San Gaspare Del Buffalo (Rome: Piero Gribaudo, 1977).

<sup>4</sup>ASPB-R, "Merlini, Centenary Year, 1973."

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

light of the true religion to heretics and mission peoples [haereticis atque ethnicis], moved by the grace of God let him inform the Moderator General, who after deliberation with his council, finding all things to be in order, will approve the undertaking."<sup>6</sup>

A revision of the Rule that appeared in 1942 repeated Article 33 and added the following: "As to accepting and conducting missions in foreign lands, let that be observed which the Moderator General together with his Curia shall have determined, depending upon the Holy See."<sup>7</sup> A further change was introduced: the member was not to consult the moderator general but his own provincial superior about his call to the missions. A new version of the Rule, now called the Constitutions, appeared in 1946. The Third Title, Chapter VI, "Missions Among Infidels," repeated the 1942 text, but the English translation referred to "missions in foreign lands," and said nothing about missions to heretics. A new paragraph was now added: "Members shall be sent to foreign missions only if they consent to it, since this service is arduous and requires a special fitness for its fruitful performance."<sup>8</sup>

The tenth general chapter of the Society was held in Rome in 1969 to update the Rule according to the mind of II Vatican Council. The totally new Normative Texts that

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<sup>6</sup>ASPB-R, G II 1.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid. <sup>8</sup>Ibid.

appeared stated the foreign missionary apostolate of the Society in these words: "Since Christ shed His Blood for all men, redeeming them 'out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,' (Apoc. 4:9), in order to form of the entire human race the unique people of God, our Society is impelled by its proper end and spirit to further this plan of salvation by means of a foreign mission apostolate."<sup>9</sup>

Thus, the subsequent revisions of Gaspar's Rule continued to be faithful to his wish that certain members devote themselves to foreign mission work. However, it should be borne in mind that according to Canon Law, only those lands that were under the jurisdiction of the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith were considered to be true mission territory.<sup>10</sup> If a region was sufficiently developed to be made into a diocese, it was no longer under the Propagation of the Faith, but rather under its own ordinary or bishop. Only a very small proportion of the Chilean population of 1947 did not live in dioceses but in prelatures under Roman jurisdiction. Canonically speaking, when the Society of the Precious Blood entered Chile in 1947, it was not engaged in foreign mission activity as such because the areas it was first to work in were estab-

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

<sup>10</sup>After Vatican II this department of the Roman Curia was renamed the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples.

lished dioceses under resident bishops.<sup>11</sup>

That the American province of the Society would sooner or later take up apostolic work outside of the United States became evident in the late 1920s.<sup>12</sup> Bishop Amando Agostino Bahlmann of Santarem, Brazil, came to the American motherhouse at Carthagen, Ohio, in 1927 to offer the Society the eastern portion of his diocese along the Xingu River. The provincial board declined the invitation, but suggested that the bishop contact the provincial of the German province.<sup>13</sup> The following year the provincial board had another offer to consider: a letter from Rome asked that the American province send priests to the Philippines. This invitation had been prepared by Father Louis Morrow, then attached to the Apostolic Delegation at Manila. A general chapter of the Society was held in Rome in the summer of 1928; the Philippine offer was considered, but nothing came of it.<sup>14</sup>

Four months prior to the outbreak of World War II, May, 1939, Father Joseph M. Marling, the American provincial, was in Rome to discuss Community matters with the

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<sup>11</sup>Santiago became a diocese in 1561 and an archdiocese in 1840; Valdivia, a diocese in 1944; and Osorno, in 1955.

<sup>12</sup>In 1965 the American province was divided into three provinces: Cincinnati, Kansas City, and Pacific.

<sup>13</sup>Bishop Joseph M. Marling, C.P.P.S., to writer, December, 1974.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

Apostolic Visitor of the Society. Father Marling also called upon Cardinal Pietro Fumasoni Biondi, head of the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith. During his some ten years as Apostolic Delegate in Washington, his Eminence frequently had met Precious Blood priests studying at the Catholic University; he was also acquainted with the Society's superiors in Rome. Now he used his official position to encourage Father Marling to send priests to the missions. The provincial replied by pointing out that the American province administered many poor parishes in the United States calling these missions.<sup>15</sup> The cardinal was not to be put off; he countered by stating that in the eyes of the Church these were not missions.

The American province convened an electoral chapter on 24 June 1941. That last peaceful summer before Pearl Harbor had seen the growth of a conscripted United States army, a Military Ordinariate had been established, and chaplains were being sought for the armed forces. After electing a provincial board, the chapter turned to business matters. At this time Father Marling made a very brief reference to the foreign mission field. This prompted one of the delegates, Father Ulrich Mueller, to make a spontaneous plea for South America, the first time that the southern continent had been mentioned in a public meeting.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>Ibid. <sup>16</sup>Ibid.

Yet with the entry of the United States into the global conflict, any thought of a foreign mission undertaking had to be abandoned. Not only would travel be perilous, but the American province had no available manpower, as it was to send forty-eight priests as chaplains to the armed forces. Still the idea of a foreign mission persisted. The provincial board meeting of 4 January 1944 decided that the question of missionary work in South America be placed on the agenda of the business chapter to be held in the spring.<sup>17</sup> The subsequent minutes of that chapter state:

The assembly went on record, without a dissenting voice, as favoring the undertaking of missionary labors in South America. A motion was made that the provincial and his Board appoint a committee to visit South America, look over the field and report on the work available. This was amended to read Latin America instead of South America.<sup>18</sup> The motion and the amendment carried unanimously.

It is not surprising that the delegates voted so enthusiastically to commit the American province to foreign mission work. In his circular letter of 26 April 1944 proposing topics to be discussed at the May meeting, Father Marling pointed out the reasons for such a course of action: once the war was over, some forty chaplains would return to the Society; moreover, another forty priests on

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Dayton, Ohio, Archives of the Society of the Precious Blood, "Community, Chapter-Business, May, 1944;" hereafter, ASPB-D.

loan to diocesan parishes would also return. Regarding labor in Latin America, the provincial observed: "The Church desires that all Religious Congregations undertake work in the foreign mission field . . . This work is like a tonic to the spirit of any Community. There are few Religious Congregations in the U.S. as large and powerful as our own, which do not have foreign mission enterprises."<sup>19</sup> The provincial's letter further indicated that the apostolic delegate at Washington let it be known that it was the wish of the Holy See that such work be undertaken and that "even our government has tried to interest American congregations in the mission field of the Southern hemisphere."<sup>20</sup>

That the United States government in those war years was eager to be of assistance to missionary endeavor in South America is a matter of record. As early as 7 August 1943, Bishop James E. Walsh, superior general of the Maryknoll Fathers, cautioned Father Marling:

It occurs to me to mention that if I were you I would not seek any special help from the Coordinator's Office or any governmental agency to facilitate a trip to South America. I believe that it is possible to interest the Government in these trips at the present time and perhaps to obtain some priority or other favorable consideration, but for my part, I would not accept it. The one and only fear in the minds of Latin Americans in regard to the coming of North American priests is

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid. In September 1943 the American province had some 350 priests and 100 brothers.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid.



the suspicion that they might be linked up in some manner with governmental or political policy, and for that reason I believe it is wise to do nothing that would give color to such notions.<sup>21</sup>

The initiative did come from Washington. On 11 February 1944 Walter T. Prendergast, Special Assistant to the Co-ordinator of Inter American Affairs, wrote to Father Marling that Father Erico Mario Krauetler, vicar general of the Prelature Nullius of the Xingu, had been to the U.S. office in Rio de Janeiro.<sup>22</sup> The apostolic nuncio in the Brazilian capital had urged Father Krautler to seek additional personnel from his own congregation in the United States. Walter Prendergast offered Father Marling his advice:

In confidence, I should inform you that, while our Brazilian Division is keenly and sympathetically aware of the need of these priests to have healthy young missionaries to assist them, the Division points out that the project strikes them as being somewhat dubious in view of the great climatic difficulties and the utter lack of resources of the Prelature . . . I might also point out the possibility of other difficulties arising from the fact that the Prelature<sup>23</sup> is controlled by one Austrian and four German priests.

Before Father Krauetler had contacted the United States embassy at Rio de Janeiro, he had tried to reach Father Marling. On 17 January he wrote: "Protestantism is daily

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<sup>21</sup>ASPB-D, "Before 1947-Preliminary Correspondence."

<sup>22</sup>A member of the German province of the Society of the Precious Blood, Father Krauetler was attached to the Xingu mission. In 1971 he became bishop of the Xingu prelature.

<sup>23</sup>ASPB-D, Ibid.

growing stronger in the Amazon, and especially in the Xingu. The actual situation here makes it impossible for us to cope with this Protestant peril."<sup>24</sup>

On 16 February 1944 Father Marling replied to Prendergast's letter: "Frankly, the American Province of the Society of the Precious Blood is not the least interested in missionary work in the Xingu territory."<sup>25</sup> However, pressure from the Rio office did not cease. In early March Bishop John Gannon of Erie, Pennsylvania, wrote to Father Marling urging him to listen to the appeal of Bishop Hugo Bressane of Guaxupe, Minas Gerais. Bishop Gannon enclosed a translated letter from the Brazilian bishop to Jefferson Caffrey, the United States ambassador at Rio, asking the diplomat to communicate with the bishop of Erie, that he might then seek the assistance of Father Marling. The American provincial replied to Bishop Gannon that a choice of Latin American countries would be made that summer.<sup>26</sup>

But the Guaxupe business was not yet over. On 26 May Walter Prendergast wrote to Father Marling that the Rio office had been in communication with Bishop Bressane, who wanted North American priests to take charge of a home for poor boys. He enclosed a translated copy of the bishop's letter to Frederick Hall of the U.S. Rio office, in which the prelate expressed his gratitude to the American ambas-

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<sup>24</sup>Ibid. <sup>25</sup>Ibid. <sup>26</sup>Ibid.

sador. The bishop concluded: "For my part I shall do everything I can so that the faith which we have received in Holy Baptism may also be a bond of charity and love between our two great countries."<sup>27</sup> In an earlier letter to Hall, the bishop had written: "You can count on my firm collaboration to establish the closest friendship with North America."<sup>28</sup>

Other Latin American prelates continued to ask for help. One of the most persistent was Bishop Ramón Munita Eyzaguirre of Puerto Montt, Chile, who sent an appeal to the American provincial as early as 7 March 1942. This was followed by a letter in 1943, two in 1944, and a letter in early 1947, in which Bishop Munita offered the Society the parish at Maullín. However, the Precious Blood priests never did take up work in the Puerto Montt diocese.

Pressure on the American provincial to staff certain projects in Latin America continued to be exerted. On 4 March 1943 the Most Reverend Edwin W. O'Hara, bishop of Kansas City, Missouri, founded the Inter-American Institute for the purpose of bringing together the peoples of the Americas on the basis of their common Christian heritage. About a year later, 18 February 1944, the director of the Institute, the Reverend Joseph B. Code wrote to Father Marling about the Peruvian government's desire that four American priests take over the normal school at Huancayo.

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<sup>27</sup>Ibid. <sup>28</sup>Ibid.

Father Code pleaded: "Unless American priests are secured the school will be given to American Protestants . . . It is unthinkable that the Protestants should get control of this school and consequently of all Central Peru."<sup>29</sup>

Ten days later Father Marling received another letter from the director of the Institute, which made further reference to the situation at Huancayo:

I know this is not necessary for me to explain why the Church in Latin America finds itself in this predicament. The persecution of so-called liberal governments, the opposition of Freemasonry and other anti-Catholic forces, the long dependence on Europe for vocations, and lastly, the unceasing activity of American Protestant missionaries more than give an answer to any question which might be raised concerning the present situation.

It is unthinkable that the Protestants should get control of the Huancayo training school.<sup>30</sup>

The appeals continued to come to the provincial office. In March 1944 the Most Reverend A. J. Wellinger, bishop of Ponce, Puerto Rico, added his voice. Father Marling replied that once the war was over, with the chaplains returned and the priests on loan to various dioceses back with the Society, he would be interested in Puerto Rico.<sup>31</sup> In May of the same year there was a new plea from the Inter-American Institute, this time asking for help in

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid. In 1962 the Society took up parish work in the diocese of Huancayo.

<sup>31</sup> ASPB-D, Ibid.

staffing one or more seminaries in Peru. Part of the need was based on the fact that

. . . in practically every instance the bishops report that the American Protestant missionaries are pouring in . . . But if each of our American communities could only see their way to furnish three or four priests, I believe that the problem would be solved, at least until the bishops of Latin America have at hand a sufficient number of their own men to save the Faith.<sup>32</sup>

In June Father Marling was able to answer that the recent chapter of the American province had acted favorably upon the idea of undertaking missionary work in South America.

Besides Bishop O'Hara of Kansas City, another American prelate was extremely interested in the Latin American church. This was Bishop Joseph Schlarman of Peoria, Illinois. In July 1945 he was a principal speaker at a Catholic Rural Life meeting held at St. Joseph College, Rensselaer, Indiana, an institution conducted by the Society of the Precious Blood. There he devoted much of his leisure time in conversation with Father Marling about the missionary needs of the diocese of Cali, Colombia. Later Bishop Schlarman came to St. Charles Seminary, the theologate of the Society, at Carthagena, Ohio, to plead further the cause of the Colombian church. The upshot was that from Carthagena he wrote to Bishop Luis Adriano Díaz of Cali, stating that he had engaged the Precious Blood

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<sup>32</sup>Ibid.

Fathers for that diocese.<sup>33</sup> Later Father Marling met with a priest from Cali, who was studying in Washington, who agreed to inform his bishop that the Precious Blood Fathers would be interested in anything that the bishop had to offer. Again, though, the coming of priests to Cali would have to await the end of the war.

Still another Latin American plea for help appeared in 1945. From Georgetown University a Chilean Jesuit, Father Alberto Hurtado, wrote to Father Marling of his desire to establish an agricultural school for boys in Chile. At the suggestion of Bishop Schlarman, he was appealing to the Precious Blood Fathers. The answer of the American provincial is most interesting in the light of subsequent happenings:

I fear that it would be quite impossible for us to consider labor in Chile. We have already pledged ourselves to send a number of priests to another country in South America . . . To promise interest in the undertaking<sup>34</sup> of Chile, I fear, would be a species of deception.

In the first month of 1946 Bishop Walsh of Maryknoll passed on to Father Marling a plea that he had received from the archbishop of Cuzco, Peru. Could the Precious Blood Fathers staff a seminary there? The provincial replied that after attending to matters of the Society

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<sup>33</sup>Bishop Marling to writer, December, 1974.

<sup>34</sup>ASPB-D, Ibid. In August 1977, the process for the beatification of Father Hurtado was begun at Santiago.

in Rome, he would be free to go to South America to study the situation at close range. He added:

We have made no final pledge to anybody, but we do have Colombia in mind. Bishop Schlarman has given us encouragement in this regard. Perhaps it would be correct to say that he suggested Colombia originally. He has written to the Ordinary of Barranquilla and Cali of our availability, and we have received<sup>35</sup> urgent pleas from these prelates to come to their aid.

Letters from prelates in the Spanish speaking world continued to cross the desk of the provincial. On 1 May 1946 Archbishop Ricardo Pittini of Santo Domingo (then, Ciudad Trujillo) and Primate of the West Indies made his request for missionaries. It so happened that three Precious Blood priests were conducting a parish mission at Forest Hills, New York, where the pastor was a friend of the blind archbishop. Through this contact an appeal for assistance was made. In responding, Father Marling explained that the Society's coming to Santo Domingo was entirely in the hands of Cardinal Fumasoni Biondi, Prefect of the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith.

The matter did not end there. Early in September of the same year, John C. White, a non-Catholic with some thirty years experience in Latin America and author of Our Good Neighbor Hurdle appeared at Carthagena, Ohio. He came as the spokesman for Archbishop Pittini, an acquaintance of his for many years. He was to voice that prelate's plea for Precious Blood priests to establish missions along the

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

border with Haiti. In a talk to the faculty and student body at the seminary, White emphasized the need of American priests in Latin America to combat communism, to effect social adjustments, and to create favorable sentiment toward the United States.<sup>36</sup> Three months later the archbishop sent another letter inviting Father Marling to visit Santo Domingo. The aged prelate observed: "Protestantism is making inroads in the vicinity in recent years."<sup>37</sup>

From February until the middle of June, 1946, Father Marling was in Rome, where he worked on the revised Constitutions of the Society. While there, the provincial frequently saw Cardinal Fumasoni Biondi, who came to the Chicago House to talk with the rector of the North American College. Taking advantage of Father Marling's presence in the same residence, the cardinal often spoke of the Society, the American province, and his wish that it would enter the foreign mission field, preferably Africa.<sup>38</sup> In a later provincial board meeting, 3 July 1946, this information was duly noted.

By now, though, the American province was committed to undertake missions in South America. At a business chapter held in the autumn of 1946, the delegates reaffirmed the resolution passed by the assembly held two years

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<sup>36</sup>Gasparian 9 (September 1946): 4.

<sup>37</sup>ASPB-D, Ibid.

<sup>38</sup>Bishop Marling to writer, December 1974.



earlier:

A motion (V. Wagner-T. Kramer) at the end of the discussion to the effect that this Chapter go on record as making a petition to the proper authorities for the establishment<sup>39</sup> of a vicariate in Latin America was passed 34-1.

In a circular letter sent out before the chapter convened, the provincial had informed the members about the proposed issue of a mission in Latin America. He spoke of his conversations that year with Cardinal Fumasoni Biondi, who pointed out that the Society should not regard an establishment in the southern continent as a foreign mission, but rather as a vicariate which in time would become an independent province. Father Marling added his own thought: "The Fathers who go must do so with the idea of becoming from the start a part of the South American picture, embracing local customs and ways, though seeking to instill the spirit and zeal of North America."<sup>40</sup>

The provincial proposed that the delegates to the chapter consider an establishment in South America by the autumn of 1947, sending ten priests at that time. After the chapter, a superior to preside over the vicariate should be appointed, an inspection tour should be made, and by the following spring additional personnel should be decided upon. Father Marling acknowledged that, although

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<sup>39</sup> ASPB-D, "Community, Chapter-Business, October 1946."

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

the 1944 chapter had authorized the undertaking of missionary labors in South America, he wanted a provincial chapter and not merely the provincial council to petition the Society's leadership in Rome to establish the new vicariate. The subsequent vote of 34-1 was positive affirmation of the American province's desire to make a foundation in Latin America.

In the October Gasparian, the official news publication of the American province, Father Marling informed the members of the need to name a superior for the venture immediately, "in order to give voice from the start to the one who must ultimately guide the new establishment."<sup>41</sup> The choice of the provincial board had fallen on Father John Wilson. Of him the provincial wrote: "I know that many will think, as we have thought, that Father Wilson was saved from peril and brought almost miraculously through trial and sorrow for a great purpose."<sup>42</sup>

Indeed, Father Wilson was known to all the members of the American province. Ordained in 1930, he spent the first ten years of his priesthood in parish work. On 1 September 1940 he entered the United States Army Reserve as Catholic chaplain with the rank of first lieutenant, and within a year he was in the Philippines. Father Wilson

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<sup>41</sup>Gasparian 9 (October 1946): 1.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid.

survived the tragic Bataan "death march," and harsh treatment at Camp O'Donnell and at Cabanatuan. After nearly three years in these Philippine detention camps, he was transferred to Japan by way of Formosa (Taiwan). VJ Day finally brought freedom and return to the United States.

With the appointment of a superior for the proposed vicariate, the next move was to visit South America in search of a mission field. On Friday, 13 December 1946, Father Marling, along with Father Wilson and Father George Spaeth, began the exploratory trip. Father Spaeth had worked with people of Mexican descent in western Kansas and spoke Spanish.<sup>43</sup>

When the provincial left the United States, he carried letters which vouched for the American province, its sincerity in wishing to enter Latin America, and its ability to support a worthwhile enterprise. Letters from the Apostolic Delegate in Washington were addressed to various nuncios, one or the other letter from Cardinal Stritch of Chicago to certain cardinals that he knew, and seven letters from Bishop O'Hara of Kansas City to bishops, priests, and some prominent lay leaders whom he had met. A lengthy description of the Society, written by Archbishop McNicholas of Cincinnati, was available to anyone desirous

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<sup>43</sup>Later, the cardinal of Sao Paulo would converse with Father Marling only in Latin; the cardinal of Rio de Janeiro, only in German.

of such information.

The three priests flew from Miami to Barranquilla, Colombia. Here the vicar general of that hot and humid diocese proved himself to be a genial host, making every effort to impress upon the fathers the need and advantage of undertaking work in his area. Thus began a crowded five weeks that took the trio to other Colombian cities - Medellín, Bogotá, and Cali; then on to Lima, Peru; Santiago, Chile; Buenos Aires, Argentina. There were stops at Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, before reaching Belem, the gateway to the Amazon and the Xingu regions. In the Xingu Precious Blood Fathers from the German province were engaged in missionary work.

Twelve days had been set aside for Cali, since it was "one of the most attractive places to which we have been invited."<sup>44</sup> For two years Cali had been spoken of as the possible cradle of the Society in South America. It will be recalled that the original suggestion had come from Bishop Schlarman, "but we had made his enthusiasm our own."<sup>45</sup> On 20 December Father Marling was to write: "I certainly did not know that I was on my way to one of the

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<sup>44</sup>Gasparian 9 (December 1946):

<sup>45</sup>Santiago, Chile, Archives of the Society of the Precious Blood, "Historia del Vicariato;" hereafter, ASPB-S. During his trip the provincial sent a number of lengthy letters describing his experiences to the secretary of the province, Father Herbert Kramer. The originals are at Dayton; copies at Santiago.

most disappointing interviews of my life."<sup>46</sup>

Bishop Díaz of Cali came right to the point: he did not need the Precious Blood Fathers. Growing tired of the two-year wait for assistance, he had welcomed four Belgian priests to his diocese and had the assurance of getting four more. The North American priests were welcome to celebrate Mass in his diocese, presuming of course that they had brought their cassocks along. When Father Spaeth suggested that the three priests might help with the confessions of English speaking people over the Christmas season, the bishop retorted that Americans did not go to confession, that instead they ate and drank to excess, that such was the American idea of Christmas, Catholic as well as Protestant.<sup>47</sup> The interview was over in fifteen minutes. In the letter written that night Father Marling noted:

As to myself - despite the jolt of the afternoon, I feel that there is a great work to be done down here. But no picnic awaits our Fathers in South America. They will have to work as did the pioneers in our province. And if the right motives do not guide us, and if we do not pray our heads off, the tree we plant will die, or at least present a sickly sight.<sup>48</sup>

After spending Christmas day with the Marianist Brothers at Lima, Peru, and later conversing with the lone Maryknoll missionary in the city, the three priests met the cardinal of Lima. His welcome was so warm that the provin-

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid., letter of that date.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

cial began tentative negotiations for the establishment of the Society in Peru. However, since he was eager to get on to Buenos Aires, his party left Lima by plane on Christmas night. The next stop-over was Santiago, a city which never figured much in their plans, but had been placed on their itinerary because it was on the direct air route from Lima to Buenos Aires. Once in Santiago, the travelers confirmed their reservations, made at Lima, to leave for the Argentinian capital the following day.

Father Marling used part of the afternoon in a courtesy call upon Bishop Salinas, an auxiliary of Santiago, of whom he had learned from Bishop O'Hara. After conversing with the prelate in the chancery office, the North Americans were stopped in the corridor by a tall, elderly, friendly priest who was delighted to speak to them in his broken English.<sup>49</sup> In spite of their protests, the three were hastily brought into the office of the Chilean cardinal and archbishop of Santiago, José María Caro. The eighty-one year old churchman, taking a break from a meeting of the Chilean hierarchy then in session, was attending to business in his office. The provincial described the scene that followed:

. . . Our guide introduced us to as kind, gracious and lovable a character as I ever hope to meet. We

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<sup>49</sup>This priest was Monseñor Joaquín Fuenzalida Morandé, ordained in 1910, the cardinal's inseparable companion and counsellor. In later years he delighted in telling the Precious Blood missionaries that he brought the Society to Chile.

were given seats, a rapid fire conversation in Spanish followed between His Eminence and our sponsor, and before I knew what was going on the Cardinal had a map out, and was offering us territory on the Pacific, west of Santiago, where there are many new developments in an area that is becoming quite industrial despite its character as a seaside resort. I rubbed my eyes to see if I was dreaming - for I was sleepy enough - and I believe that both Fr. Wilson and Fr. Spaeth were doing the same thing.<sup>50</sup>

Later Cardinal Caro insisted that the three priests be considered his guests, that his automobile be used to drive them about the city, and that they dine with him that evening. All of this was done, including more conversation with His Eminence and other bishops about the possibility of the Precious Blood Fathers coming to Chile. In his letter to Father Kramer, the provincial became specific:

In about a week (after much thought, therefore) I think that I shall make the Cardinal some such offer, then study his reaction and reply:

What we could contribute:

20 priests in two years (12 in 1947, 8 in 1948)

3 or 4 for the dioceses of Puerto Montt, Ancud, and Talca.

(All of these bishops have pleaded; they are excellent men, fairly young etc.)

3 or 4 for the diocese of San Antonio (Carthagena area in archdiocese of Santiago, referred to above.)<sup>51</sup>

What we would expect:

Permission to establish a house in Santiago, in connection with a worthwhile parish.

All parishes granted canonically after certain preliminaries acceptable to both sides.

All places would be visited, of course, before establishment, and all contracts properly executed. Let me add my reason for favoring Chile at this moment:

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<sup>50</sup> ASPB-S, Ibid., Letter 27 December 1946.

<sup>51</sup> San Antonio was never a diocese, but a part of the archdiocese of Santiago.

1. Contrary to what we have heard, the country is stable and seems to have a future.
2. The climate is ideal. On this point I could write a lyric.
3. Santiago is a first class city. It reminds one of Washington in many respects, in others of Rome or Paris. Rimmed by very high mountains, it is picturesque in the extreme. (Earthquakes, of course, are not unknown hereabouts.)
4. Peru offers possibilities that are very worthwhile considering (and Peru is by no means out of the running) but the hard grind of missionary labors in Peru are [sic] not just duplicated in Chile.
5. The color line is not a problem in Chile, for there seem to be no blacks. I do not mean to say that is a great problem in Colombia or Peru - certainly nothing like in the United States - but it cannot be dismissed as a nonentity.<sup>52</sup>

Although the foregoing lines would indicate that Chile would very likely be chosen as the site of the Society's mission, Father Marling and his party left that country for the east coast of South America, determined to investigate its possibilities. They visited Buenos Aires and Rosario in Argentina and Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro in Brazil. In each place there was a cardinal with whom they spent a reasonable amount of time; each prelate received them cordially, heard their plans, and extended an invitation to work in his jurisdiction. Finally, the three priests reached Belem, entrance to the Amazon region. Although unable to get to Altamira on the Xingu, the prelate nullius of the German Precious Blood Fathers, they were able to meet three of these men at Belem.

Upon his return to the United States, the provin-

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<sup>52</sup> ASPB-S, Ibid.



cial wrote an official report to the members of the American province. He indicated that in spite of visiting five countries and traveling 16,000 miles by air in five weeks, the mission was a success because he was able to speak with all six South American cardinals, with two nuncios, and with other archbishops and bishops. Moreover, these prelates were able to speak authoritatively about the remote regions of the individual countries.

In his communication to the American province, Father Marling with great insight revealed the difficulties attendant upon missionary effort in South America. He emphasized the poverty of the continent, the temperament of the people, and the attitude of the hierarchy. He commented not only on the scarcity of priests, but also on the clerical system that confined their activities to sanctuary and sacristy. Even where the church was said to be flourishing, there was very little evidence of real parochial activity.

The provincial then turned to two other areas of concern:

On this field, so matted and tangled, two enemies have come to sow tares - the Communists and the Protestants. The Bishops view the latter with alarm, and in too many instances regard the coming of priests from the United States as intended for this end - to outmaneuver the Protestants by means of techniques perfected by the Catholic clergy in the States. The presence of the Protestants has great nuisance value, and it is remarkably successful in causing the people of S. America to view our country with fear and suspicion. Protestant missionaries, however, despite their almost fanatic approach, will never win S. America in large

numbers. Communism is trying to keep in the background, but all appearances indicate that it is thriving on the miserable social and economic conditions which<sup>53</sup> characterize the great bulk of S. American life.

Father Marling cautioned his readers that although there was a growing admiration for the energy and bustle of North Americans, the people of South America have their own pace and no group of foreigners would ever change it. "The missionary who would overlook this would quickly come to grief."<sup>54</sup> He also wondered if certain Latin American prelates regarded various practices of the North American church with suspicion. Obviously the provincial had not forgotten Bishop Díaz of Cali.

The report emphasized that all the South American bishops interviewed had received the same answer: the purpose of the trip was to make a survey, gather data, form impressions. Yet one could detect that Chile seemed to hold the advantage in all future deliberations, as the following words indicated:

The most cordial invitation came to us from the very kind and gentle Cardinal of Santiago, and from six of his young and energetic suffragan bishops . . . . Only one bishop failed to receive us cordially, but this solitary exception set the kindness and interest of the others in bold relief.

. . . But if we received a dart at Cali, I must repeat, the grand old Cardinal of Santiago and all his suffragans surely withdrew it, and poured balm in generous

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<sup>53</sup>Gasparian 10 (January 1947): 3-5.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid.

measure into the wound.<sup>55</sup>

However, at this time the American province did not know that the whole Chilean venture was in jeopardy. The very night before Father Marling was to leave for South America, Archbishop John T. McNicholas of Cincinnati, chairman of the National Catholic Welfare Conference and close friend of the Society, gave the provincial some disconcerting news. Believing that post-war Japan was ripe for conversion, Pope Pius XII had made a personal appeal to American bishops and religious to regard Japan as their special concern and to be generous in sending missionaries to that country.<sup>56</sup>

On 24 January 1947 the provincial wrote to Cardinal Fumasoni Biondi of the Propagation of the Faith and asked his advice in taking either a mission in South America or in Japan. Answering from Vatican City seven days later, His Eminence replied that since the church in Latin America was also in need of priests at this time, the American province should accept one of the proposed offers. Referring to Japan, the cardinal observed: "You would not have

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> A copy of the papal message is in ASPB-D, "Before 1947-Preliminary Correspondence." In part it reads: "The future of the Japanese cannot be left in the hands of the Protestants, who have already begun a widespread and varied work of propaganda, nor in the hands of the communists, who will profit by the sad state of economic affairs to spread their pernicious theories."

such a great obstacle in language in South America in beginning your work there."<sup>57</sup> For some reason the cardinal's favorable reply came by surface mail and thus delayed the final decision making. Although the provincial and his board met at St. Joseph College in late January, nothing could be done until an answer came from Rome, and this did not arrive until the middle of March.

It was not surprising that some of the Chilean hierarchy were getting concerned over their prospects of North American assistance. Writing from Santiago on 13 February, Monseñor Fuenzalida Morandé gave Father Marling some specific offers: Bishop Ramón Munita of Puerto Montt, the parish of Maullín; Bishop Arturo Mery of Valdivia, the parish of Rio Negro; Cardinal Caro, the establishment of a new parish at San Antonio.

With the reply finally received from Rome, Father Marling on 7 April was able to answer the Chilean letter. Yes, the American province would undertake mission work in Chile, with the intention of increasing its personnel each succeeding year.

I, myself, am confident that within a period of five years we shall have forty priests in South America. I also hope that we can begin very shortly to care for vocations for just this type of apostolic endeavor, so that a steady flow of priests to Latin America can

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<sup>57</sup> ASPB-D, Ibid.

be guaranteed.<sup>58</sup>

Obviously if this projection proved true, in time the man power in Chile would be large enough to form a Chilean province. The provincial also informed Monseñor Fuenzalida that Father Wilson and a companion were to arrive in Santiago in June and would live in a rented house, while they dealt directly with those bishops desirous of the Society's assistance. In any event, Father Marling could envision by the first of the year four Precious Blood priests each at Santiago, San Antonio, and Maullín.

At once came back a long reply from Bishop Munita of Puerto Montt, who taking for granted the Society's coming to his diocese, set down a number of regulations that the new missionaries would be expected to observe. For his part, Father Marling was adamant that his priests in Chile have a certain freedom of action in their apostolic mission. Writing in Spanish to Monseñor Fuenzalida on 21 April, the provincial referred to the bishop of Puerto Montt's insistence that priests in his diocese wear the cassock, the clerical hat, and tonsure. "The fact that our fathers will be their own carpenters, constructors, and

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid. An undated, unsigned paper in the Dayton archives reveals similar ideas: "Start a novitiate as soon as possible. Perhaps send some of the men back here for theology. Also the possibility of sending some theologians down the [sic] for the last few years of their course."

foremen, that is, active men, the frequent use of the cassock will be burdensome, and in the case of those activities that demand freedom of movement, it would be desirable on such occasions to permit them the use of civil garb."<sup>59</sup>

Concerned about this development and the need to know more about organizing the Chilean undertaking, Father Marling and Father Wilson visited Maryknoll, New York. Father Thomas Walsh, vicar general of that missionary society and a former superior in Chile proved most helpful to the two priests during their week-long stay. It was then that the firm decision was taken that no selection of specific places would be made from the United States; rather, upon his arrival in Chile, Father Wilson would be able to see and study whatever was offered. Until they got settled, the Precious Blood Fathers were invited to live in the various Maryknoll houses in Chile.

In late June Father Marling sent Monseñor Fuenzalida a letter that was actually meant for the cardinal of Santiago and for the bishops of Puerto Montt and Valdivia. The most startling news was that the letter writer was no longer superior of the American province because he was to serve as auxiliary bishop of Kansas City, Missouri. Bishop-designate Marling wasted no time in getting to the issue of clerical garb in Chile. He had consulted with Cardinal

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<sup>59</sup>ASPB-D, Ibid.

Fumasoni Biondi, the Maryknoll superior, and various bishops in the United States, and all agreed that the use of the clerical hat and tonsure was not essential. However, in deference to Chilean custom, the Precious Blood priests would wear the cassock on the street. In his reply, Cardinal Caro's secretary indicated that outside of Chile their clergy adapt themselves to the local customs of the host country. He continued:

In the same way the priests who come here from so many different parts of the world try very carefully to be as the Chilean priests, to conform to Canon 136, and especially not to appear as Protestant ministers and to avoid being taken for them. This reason is extremely important here for Chile. For these reasons . . . all of our priests both native and foreign use the cassock, the clerical hat and the tonsure.<sup>60</sup>

But the problem of clerical garb soon receded before the more pressing need of recruiting priests for Chile. All along Father John Wilson, the Chilean vicar provincial, had been in possession of Father Marling's firm promise that no one would be considered too important to be freed for the mission. Ten or twelve priests, soon to be released from the list of forty-five volunteers, would be sent to Chile as soon as Father Wilson called for them. His first two volunteers were Fathers John Kostik and Paul Buehler.

The vicar provincial was fortunate in obtaining Father Kostik. Born in Tavana, Hungary, in 1894, ordained

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

in 1921, Father John had been pastor of St. John's parish, Whiting, Indiana. At the June 1938 provincial chapter, he was chosen second consultor and re-elected to this office three years later. In May 1940 he was sent to Rome as the representative of the province for consultation on the Rule of the Society. At the time of his appointment to Chile, he was rector of the province's major seminary at Carthage, Ohio. According to Bishop Marling, Father Kostik was the first to offer to serve in South America, stressing only one condition - that he never be made superior.<sup>61</sup> Father Paul Buehler (age 28), ordained in 1944, had less than three years of stateside parish experience before he left for Chile.<sup>62</sup>

At first, transportation problems delayed the opening of the mission enterprise. Meanwhile, by July three more priests had been selected: Fathers John Hoorman (31), Alphonse Jungwirth (28), and George Fey (28). All of them were kept busy either in Garden City, Kansas, or Whiting, Indiana, in the study of Spanish. Finally in August the transportation difficulty was settled: Fathers Wilson and Kostik were to fly to Chile in early September; Father Buehler and two newly appointed volunteers, Fathers Ambrose Lengerich (31) and Carl Reikowsky (27), would sail

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<sup>61</sup>Bishop Marling to writer, December, 1974.

<sup>62</sup>In time he became the third vicar provincial in Chile, and in 1962 the founder and first superior of the Peruvian mission of the Society.



from New York on the Grace ship Santa Luisa on 24 October; Fathers Hoorman, Jungwirth, and Fey would leave from the same port on the Santa Maria one week later.

On Sunday, 31 August 1947, the departure ceremony for Father John Wilson and Father John Kostik took place at St. Charles seminary, Carthagena, Ohio. That morning a solemn Mass was celebrated by the new provincial, Father Seraphin W. Oberhauser. Later in the day, after benediction in the chapel, all marched in procession to the Lourdes grotto. Now the provincial spoke words of farewell and intoned the Church's prayers for travelers. Then on 2 September, amid cheers from the assembled student body, the two priests left the seminary for the journey to Miami. Ten days later they boarded a plane for the trip to Chile.

## CHAPTER II

### ORGANIZING THE VICARIATE

#### Two Missionaries in Search of a Mission

After making stops at Panama and Guayaquil, Ecuador, Father Wilson and Father Kostik were pleased to be able to stretch their legs and see the sights of Lima, Peru, on their four-day stopover. Chile was first touched on 16 September, when the four-motor Panagra airplane set down at the northern city of Antofagasta. At eight thirty that evening the weary passengers landed at Los Cerrillos International airport, Santiago. Their first night in Chile was spent at the Hotel Carrera in downtown Santiago across the street from the Moneda, the presidential palace.

The next morning, having checked out of the hotel and celebrated Mass at a nearby church, the priests took a cab to the Maryknoll center house on El Bosque avenue in a well-to-do section of the city. Here Father Henry Dirckx, Maryknoll superior in Chile, greeted them warmly and made arrangements for them to see Cardinal José María Caro, the prelate who had so impressed Father Marling.

On 19 September, the second day of Chile's annual two-day fiesta honoring its national independence, Fathers Wilson, Kostik, and Dirckx had lunch and a meeting with the cardinal at his residence. Despite his four score years,

the archbishop appeared alert and exceedingly well-preserved in mind and body as he conversed in English.

At the conclusion of the luncheon, the prelate got down to business by proposing that the Society begin its work in the Santiago area, then take on missions in the southern dioceses of Puerto Montt and Valdivia. For a beginning, the cardinal offered two parishes, one in San Antonio (actually Barrancas on the coast) and San José, a poor parish in Santiago. Obviously nothing was decided then and there, but several days later Father Wilson went out to look over the parish of San José. Within a week all who had attended the luncheon drove in the cardinal's Ford some one hundred kilometers to the Pacific Ocean and the proffered parish of Barrancas.

While waiting for that trip, the two priests had several hours of Spanish instruction from Father Dirckx. They were also taken downtown to be registered and fingerprinted by a section of the Chilean ministry of foreign affairs. All of this was done with the hope of getting their carnet or Chilean identification card within a reasonable time. Everyone, whether native born or foreign, carried such a card.

On the second day after the trip to the coast, Father Wilson decided to talk to the cardinal's secretary, Monsiñor Fuenzalida, who had been present at the previous meetings. However, the cardinal himself was delighted to

see the priests and gave them an hour and a half of his time. Father Wilson was forthright in saying that he and Father Kostik wished to do anything that the cardinal desired, that they were willing to take the poorest parish. His Eminence smiled when he learned that they had already seen the parish of San José. But along with a poor parish, Father Wilson asked for another parish in a more prosperous part of the city. To this the cardinal proposed two possibilities, one out in the El Bosque section of the city, the other in the suburbs. Father Wilson, having been encouraged by Father Dirckx, countered by asking for the parish of Santa Elena. At that the cardinal smiled again and replied that he would take up the matter with his council.

The following day the old churchman conducted the priests on a tour into the countryside north of Santiago and showed them the area in which he wanted to begin a new parish for some four hundred poor farm families. On their return to the capital, auxiliary bishop Salinas teased Father Kostik about the priests' desire for Santa Elena parish. That night Father Kostik confided to his diary that "this will be a waiting game."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Juan Kostik, C.P.P.S., The Diary of a Missionary: Relating Simply and Beautifully the Foundation of the Chilean Vicariate of the Society of the Precious Blood, typed and compiled by Sister Julie Brinkman, C.P.P.S. and Fr. Paul Aumen, C.P.P.S. (Valdivia, Chile, 1973). p. 17. This booklet, with its numbered pages, was used to facilitate footnoting whenever reference is made to Father Kostik's diary. The material from pp. 35-45 is drawn from this diary.

The two priests were getting to know another facet of Chilean life: any kind of negotiation or business tends to become enormously complicated. The simple, almost biblical yes or no is seldom encountered. The people involved here are good men on both sides, yet it will take months before things begin to take shape. These dilatory practices on all levels of Chilean society will continue to be a cross for the more direct and perhaps more blunt North Americans.

While Fathers Wilson and Kostik were gingerly exploring the various offers and getting acclimatized to their surroundings, they were not forgotten by their friends in the United States. A particularly interesting letter arrived from Bishop Joseph M. Marling.

Before describing the contents of that letter, it would be well to recall that on 6 August 1947 the former provincial, who had promoted the Society's entry into Chile, was consecrated auxiliary bishop of Kansas City. While he continued to pray for the Chilean enterprise and encourage the missionaries with words and financial assistance, he had no jurisdiction over the project.<sup>2</sup>

His successor as provincial of the American province was Father Seraphin W. Oberhauser. Ordained twenty-

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<sup>2</sup>During his nine years in Kansas City, Bishop Marling aided the Chilean missions to the extent of \$25,000. As bishop of Jefferson City after the 1960 Chilean earthquake, he raised \$8,000.

one year, a veteran of the parish mission band, he was considered a dark horse in the election. In office for only a matter of weeks, he had not only to adjust to the demands of his new position, but he had to lead the Society into the completely new field of foreign missions. In his first official letter to the province the new superior wrote:

Early this fall our Fathers will begin their mission work in South America. Prayerful support of this venture is the duty of everyone of us. Although work of this nature seems to carry with it the automatic blessing of God, yet we dare not remain remiss in the begging prayerfully for the personal protection, spiritually and physically, of the men who volunteer for this work, and who are now about to enter the field of their desire.<sup>3</sup>

That late September letter of Bishop Marling glowed with enthusiasm for the new undertaking:

No more glorious opportunity has ever presented itself to the Society that that which lies before it at this moment. There is no reason (save it be lethargy or fear to undertake what is difficult) why we should not start with plans immediately that will guarantee fifteen C.P.P.S. priests to South America each year. We have the men, the funds - everything that is necessary, if only the will to undertake something big for the Church be present. We could easily double the number of vocations we have at present. Without too much effort we could set up a theological seminary for those destined for South America. It can be done if only the Society had the courage to undertake it.<sup>4</sup>

The former provincial then asked a question and

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<sup>3</sup>Gasparian 10 (August 1947): 2.

<sup>4</sup>ASPB-S, "Provincial Letters, 1947-1949-1950, Fr. John Wilson."

planted an idea:

Is there an agricultural neighborhood near Barrancas or San Antonio? Is there possibility of going out into the country some way for a future seminary at la Mercer County? Such a thought should be kept in mind.<sup>5</sup>

Toward the end of September Father Kostik, accompanied by a Claretian priest, traveled out to the fundo santa Rita, near the town of Buin, south of Santiago. There he had his first baptism in Chile. A school teacher served as the interpreter for the baptismal information and also read the parts of the Mass that followed.

The search for suitable parishes with which to begin the Chilean vicariate went on. One day Fathers Wilson and Kostik went out alone once more to San Antonio. Somehow, this time the place appeared better to them. Another day the two of them boldly took a bus over to San José parish, where Father Kostik found the surroundings better than he had expected. The plaza across from the church was encircled with a cement walk, the area was clean and inviting, and the church itself had been recently scrubbed. They found the rectory to be a one-story structure, its seven rooms poorly furnished. The people they met were friendly, as they expressed the hope that the fathers would accept the parish. At this time it was served by a single Chilean priest, Father José A. Valen-

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid. The American province's major seminary was located in rural Mercer County, Ohio.

zuela.

Later, when the two priests saw the cardinal, he informed them that the pastor of Santa Elena had no desire to give up his parish. But perhaps to encourage the North Americans, his Eminence took them out to the site of a proposed new parish in an affluent section of Santiago along Las Condes avenue. When the trip took the priests along a shanty town, they had their eyes opened. For about a half mile stretch they saw unpainted, box-like shacks huddled between a river bank and a city dump. The cardinal observed that communism was ripe among the people. Later Father Kostik wrote in his diary that he did not have the heart to blame them for it.

That night Father Wilson, suffering from a cold and somewhat discouraged at the slow development of their plans, asked Father Kostik to draw up an outline of their own proposals for the cardinal. In it Father Wilson revealed his sense of responsibility:

While it is true that our motives are the highest, I, the Superior of the group that is being sent here, must consider in the first place the welfare of the men under my charge. They have been trained in American methods. They are not accustomed to luxuries or fine foods. They are willing to make sacrifices otherwise they would not have volunteered for this work. But there are certain conditions and circumstances which I feel constrained to mention and make very clear from the beginning that our work may prosper in this part of the Lord's vineyard.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>ASPB-S, "Historia del Vicariato."



One of the conditions was simply a reiteration of what Father Marling had proposed one year earlier, namely, permission to establish a center house in Santiago in connection with a self-supporting parish. Other conditions expressed by Father Wilson included the renovation of the rectory at San José and the purchase of land adequate for the construction of a school. The priest continued:

. . . Please do not think that we are being dictatorial in any way. That is far from our intention. It is merely the American way of doing business and the only way we know. If we have offended, please forgive us, for certainly it is not an error of the heart.

In the presence of the two priests, the cardinal read the English-language letter and replied that he would put it away for calm consideration with his council.

Elsewhere important things were happening to the Society of the Precious Blood. On 6 October an electoral chapter opened in Rome, the first such assembly since before World War II. Rumor had it that for the first time a North American would be elected moderator general. A day later a cable from Rome to Santiago confirmed the rumor: Father Herbert Kramer, former provincial secretary, had been chosen, with two other Americans on his curia. The Precious Blood priests in Santiago sent a cablegram offering their congratulations and expressing the hope that now they could look for great things in Chile.

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

Several days later, in the company of a Maryknoll missionary, the two priests took the five and a half hour train ride to the town of Molina, south of Santiago. Here the bishop of Talca had entrusted to the Maryknoll Fathers an agricultural school founded to instruct Chilean boys from the poor class. In the informality of country life Father Kostik doffed his cossack, practiced Spanish, watched the first soccer game of his life, read and wrote letters. For his part, Father Wilson managed to get in a game of golf with the other American priests.

There were stops at Maryknoll parishes in Talca itself, in Chillán, and Temuco. In this latter southern city the fathers saw Araucanian Indians for the first time.<sup>8</sup> The women were especially conspicuous by their colorful head dress and huge metal necklaces. On a trip south of Temuco the two priests were introduced to German Capuchins, who indicated that they lacked the personnel to continue to staff two parishes. Both places were complete with church, house, school, and land; moreover, there were religious sisters from Germany who taught in the school.

A day later the two Americans continued their journey south, traveling the five hours by train from Temuco to Valdivia. Here they were met by more German Capuchins, who after taking their visitors on a tour of this river-wrapped town, introduced them to the bishop of

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<sup>8</sup>Invariably known in Chile as Mapuches.

the diocese, Arturo Mery.

After being in Chile for more than a month, Fathers Wilson and Kostik were growing more anxious than ever over the slowness of negotiating for parishes. The previous year Father Marling had been won over by the simplicity of Cardinal Caro. No doubt the Precious Blood provincial was convinced that once in Chile, the Society would have no placement problems; yet now it was the cardinal himself who seemed to be dragging his feet. Perhaps his simplicity was truly biblical: wise as a serpent and simple as a dove.

The more direct dealing North Americans were delighted to meet Bishop Mery. By Father Kostik's estimate, he was the first man among the Chilean hierarchy to give them straight answers.<sup>9</sup> The bishop promised the Society a parish in the city of Osorno, another in the town of Rio Negro, and two more in the surrounding territory. Although the offer along with several being made by the Capuchins looked good, Father Wilson intimated that he would like to settle his priests in an area in which they would wield the greatest influence. Father Kostik interpreted this as work in large urban areas.<sup>10</sup>

The Precious Blood priests resumed their exploratory trip, this time to the Capuchin mission at Quilicahuín. For Father Kostik the journey from Trumao to the mission

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<sup>9</sup>Kostik, Diary, p. 30.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 31.

was the most scenic of his life. He reveled in the beauty of the river, the green hills and meadows, the clear sky, and the snow-covered mountains to the east. The following morning they set out on horseback for the five hour trip to the Capuchins' other mission, San Juan de la Costa. Here the pastor told them that the population was mostly Indian, that the yearly total of baptisms was some three hundred. Father Alcuin, the superior of San Juan, was eager to know if the Society would accept Quillicahuín and his parish.<sup>11</sup>

As the two travelers continued south, they found Osorno to be the most modern city of any that they had seen. Since they could not catch the train for Rio Negro, Father Wilson and Father Kostik stayed with the Divine Word priests, a group of German missionaries who conducted a high school for boys in Osorno.

At the depot in Rio Negro the two priests were met by the pastor, Father Leon Meyer, S.V.D. He requested that since the usual Franciscan priest could not help at the town of Purrangué, a mission attached to Rio Negro, would the two North Americans cover this for him. It was the last Sunday in October, when the two priests, after checking into the little hotel in Purrangué, hurried over to the church.<sup>12</sup>

There they found thirty-eight youngsters waiting to

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 33.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

make their first communion. In Chile less than two months, knowing but a smattering of Spanish, the two priests plunged in. After reading over a little catechism that the children used, Father Kostik breathed a prayer for help and began to hear the confessions of the youngsters and a few adults. In the meantime, Father Wilson baptized a six-month old child. Later Father Kostik admitted in his diary that as each priest celebrated Mass, it took courage to read the gospel in Spanish.<sup>13</sup>

Their work did not end with the Masses. Father Kostik was asked to bring communion to an elderly sick woman living more than a mile out of town. Returning from that walk and eager for his breakfast, he first had to baptize a two-year old youngster. However, he ate alone, as Father Wislon was out somewhere baptizing a sick child. With breakfast out of the way, the owner of a fairly new Ford drove them back to Rio Negro, and then on a good gravel road out to the neighboring parish of Riachuelo. There they met the priest in charge, a German secular who had recently come but was already disenchanted with the deplorable condition of both church and rectory.<sup>14</sup> Although only some fourteen kilometers from Rio Negro, the parish's western limits extended some eighty or more kilometers to the Pacific Ocean.

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 34.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 35.

The southern trip was drawing to a close and nothing definite had been decided upon, yet Father Wilson was interested in Rio Negro, since this was the only place that could offer the priests a somewhat decent house.<sup>15</sup> Then, too, the grounds were attractive in the spring sun. On the other hand, Father Kostik was drawn to Purranque because of "the lovable character of the people."<sup>16</sup> Purranque would be his first choice, although he would settle for San Juan de la Costa.

Back again in Santiago, the priests made ready to move to their own quarters. Since an English businessman and his family were to be out of the country from the first of November until the first of February, they rented their house on Avenida Tomás Guevara 2985 to the Society.<sup>17</sup> Once settled in their new dwelling, the priests continued to take occasional meals at the Maryknoll house.

At this time, too, they were being initiated further into another facet of Chilean life: tramite or red tape. Before going south, the fathers had made application for their carnets or identification cards; now they went downtown to pick them up. Seeking to get a reduction in its cost, they were sent to another office some two miles away. There they were told that such a reduction was meant

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<sup>15</sup>Ibid. <sup>16</sup>Ibid.

<sup>17</sup>Unlike the stateside practice, the street number follows the name of the street.

only for those priests and religious who received no remuneration whatsoever; obviously, pastors were not in this category.<sup>18</sup> The following day the priests returned to the first office, only to be told that they could not obtain their ID cards until each had bought a government stamp for 240 pesos; but these stamps were sold only at eight-thirty in the morning and two-thirty in the afternoon. Thus another day was wasted. Father Wilson would be the first of a long line of American priests to do a "slow burn" over such a stultified bureaucratic system. The next day he brought a Chilean priest along with him, who knew the intricacies and would ease the pain of it all. Because they had to wait in line with everybody else, this tactic failed too. In fact, since Father Kostik had to be re-fingerprinted, the process took longer than usual. The climax came when they were told that the stamp did not cost 240 pesos but 462. After all this trouble, they were then informed to return in a week for their carnets.<sup>19</sup>

This rather lengthy description of the Chilean bureaucracy has its point. The process of getting a resident card valid for a one-year stay, or a permanent paper authorizing an indefinite stay, or a driver's license, or of getting goods through customs, or asking for another

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<sup>18</sup> Twenty-five years later all but one of the seventeen missionaries still would receive no salary from their parishes.

<sup>19</sup> Kostik, Diary, p. 38.

state-issued paper, all become nightmares for the North American whose ideas of promptness, of efficiency, of ordinary common sense can be quickly outraged. He will have to learn that the system will not change; rather he must change. If he can not do that, then at least he must learn to be patient, to accept the inevitable. Despite it all, the system does work: nine days later Father Wilson and Father Kostik had their carnets.<sup>20</sup>

Another aspect of local life that the fathers learned during their stay on Guevara street was the imperative use of lock and key. Father Kostik thought it a complicated business handling keys to get to the outside gate, to the house, to the basement, closets, wood shed, chicken coop, and so on. Yet, through the coming years many a missionary would find clothes, clocks, bicycles, typewriters, money, desk articles all stolen. Vehicles would be burglarized and even driven away. Although watch dogs would be in evidence at all the rectories, these tended only to deter the entrance of good people.

During these weeks the fathers were still receiving pleas in writing or in person to come to the aid of this or that bishop. The parish of Collipulli, famed for having the highest railroad bridge in Chile, was offered by the bishop of Temuco. A representative from the San Felipe diocese north of Santiago, invited the two priests for a

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<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 40.



look, while the bishop of Puerto Montt still had hopes of getting help from the Society.<sup>21</sup> Bishop Manuel Larraín of Talca, already renowned for his promotion of social justice, presented his case personally.<sup>22</sup> For his part, the cardinal escorted the priests over to Plaza Garín and its parish of San José. Once more Father Wilson stipulated his conditions: a rectory with four bedrooms, two baths with hot and cold water, repairs to the church, and land for a school.<sup>23</sup>

With the electoral chapter concluded in Rome, the American provincial was once more back at his Ohio headquarters. Less than a week before the arrival by ship of three more missionaries, Father Wilson received a rather foreboding letter from Father Seraphin Oberhauser. In part he wrote:

I do not see how in the wide world I am going to scare up three or rather four more men for South America by February . . . Right now we are in the midst of the most critical stage of man power - not a single man available if anything should happen to anyone . . . May I assure you that I will do my best to keep the commitment for February, 1948.<sup>24</sup>

A bit later, an undated letter from the moderator general, Father Herbert Kramer, addressed to "Father John

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<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 48.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 38.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 37.

<sup>24</sup>ASPB-S, "Provincial Letters, 1947-1949-1950, Fr. John Wilson."

and John," developed the same theme:

An impossible situation has arisen which makes it impossible to send as many priests as you would like, and as we would like. It merely means that we must delay, not give up the work that we planned. How often a similar readjustment was necessary right here in our province . . . I only hope that you will not consider this as a lack of interest or unwillingness to make the South American venture a success, and to aid it to grow as rapidly as possible. . . . I thought I detected in Fr. Provincial a suspicion that you were dissatisfied in his interest in the South American venture. A word of reassurance, I believe, would go far to make him feel happier over the matter, and as a result more determined to find a way to help.<sup>25</sup>

Father Wilson and Father Kostik were in Chile less than two months, the first group of three additional missionaries was yet to arrive, the Chilean mission was still to be raised to the canonical status of a vicariate. But the problem of lack of personnel, at times genuine, at times more emotional than real, that was to cause misunderstanding and tension for the next twenty years had already surfaced.

At least in the early years of the vicariate, there were numerous volunteers.<sup>26</sup> While it is true that some priests never came because of health problems or aged parents, nevertheless, a volunteer's being sent to Chile or not was usually a question of priorities. It was the pro-

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid. "Correspondence of Moderator General."

<sup>26</sup> ASPB-D, "Before 1947-Preliminary Correspondence." After the first eight priests reached Chile, there were still thirty-eight names on the original list of volunteers; many, though, were over forty years of age.

vincial and his board, never the Chilean vicar provincial and his advisors, who decided what stateside positions had to be maintained. Was the parish mission band to be augmented, did St. Joseph College need new professors, were the seminaries looking for additional teachers, did prudence dictate keeping Society members as assistants to diocesan pastors? Where was the available man power to be used?

A number of missionaries in Chile would never accept the personnel shortage as a question of priorities. For them it was obvious that Chile was to be the number one concern of the American province. Did not the man most responsible for the Society's entry into Chile write that "there is no reason (save it be lethargy or fear to undertake the difficult) why we should not start with plans immediately that will guarantee fifteen C.P.P.S. priests to South America each year?"

It was natural enough that Father Wilson felt disheartened by the provincial letter, but he could not waste time worrying about the priests that he would probably not get in February. With the first band of missionaries about to arrive, he still had to buy beds and make other arrangements in the house on Guevara Street.

What will the new men find in Chile? What of its people, what of the country itself? A brief orientation will set the scene.

### Background on Chile

The mid-twentieth century North American Catholic had a pretty good idea of what his priest should be and do. He might be gentle or brusque, eloquent or boring, but he was available; Masses, confessions, and devotions were begun on time. Raising money to maintain a parish school was often the chief occupation of the pastor. The priest was respected, often loved, as a celibate man of God, another Christ. The Precious Blood missionary arriving in Chile was true to this heritage. He himself was usually from a laboring class or rural background, always white, and a product of his own environment, training, and experience of the priesthood in the United States. That experience, both as a boy and later as a priest, taught him that the parish church and school with the adjacent rectory and convent could product a Catholic interested in attending Mass, receiving the sacraments, and being faithful in a marriage that occasionally produced a religious vocation. Once in Chile, he was to learn that Catholic life was different.

Some years before the coming of the Society to Chile, Father Alberto Hurtado, S.J., in his study, ¿Es Chile Un País Católico?, reached the conclusion that Chile was a country with a coating of Catholic culture.<sup>27</sup> Thus

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<sup>27</sup> Alberto Hurtado Cruchaga, S.J., ¿Es Chile Un País Católico? (Santiago de Chile: n.p., 1941).

frequently it was social pressure, not faith, that dictated the presence of a priest at a baptism, wedding, or funeral.<sup>28</sup>

Ranging from San Francisco, California, to southern Chile, the Spanish conquistador sired a new race, leaving it his culture, language, and religion. His progeny increased and multiplied, all to be baptized but very few to have any idea of what being a Christian was all about. Centuries ago St. Paul gave the reason: ". . . they will not believe in him unless they have heard of him, and they will not hear of him unless they get a preacher, and they will not have a preacher unless one is sent."<sup>29</sup> With most of the Latin American countries, Chile suffers a lack of native priests. The reasons for this deficiency of vocations to the priesthood are complex, but it is possible to get some idea of the situation.

Prior to Chile's break with the mother country, the church in Spain, which meant the Spanish crown, held that only those born in the Peninsula were worthy of being raised to the hierarchy. Moreover, since a strictly native clergy, that is Indian, was not desirable, this meant that

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<sup>28</sup>This phenomenon is shared by all the Latin American countries. See Leonard Gross, The Last Best Hope: Eduardo Frei and Chilean Democracy (New York: Random House, 1967), pp. 68-71; Eric R. Wolf and Edward C. Hansen, The Human Condition in Latin America (New York: Oxford University Press, 1972), pp. 108-117; K.H. Silvert, Chile, Yesterday and Today (New York: Holt, 1965), pp. 168-171.

<sup>29</sup>Romans 10:14-15 (JB).

nearly all bishops were Spanish-born, and that the lower clergy born in the New World had Spanish blood. When the early nineteenth century wars of independence sent the bishops scurrying back to Spain, years were needed to fill the gap left by the flight of the prelates and some of the lower clergy.

The vast majority of Chileans (1947) belonged to the lower, working classes. There was a time not too long ago, when of one hundred children who entered the first grade, only one managed to reach the twelfth grade. Even if the stirrings of a vocation were felt by a lad of twelve or thirteen, his educational background hardly prepared him to enter upon seminary training. In Chile the middle class is quite small, while at the same time it strives to imitate the values of the upper class. Nevertheless, it is from these classes that nearly all priestly vocations emerge.

Right down to the present time a goodly number of the Chilean clergy belonged to the long-established religious congregations. Here the members found a stability of life in a prayerful and learned environment. On the other hand, many of the diocesan priests were teachers in paid schools or chaplains in such institutions or served in old urban parishes. All things being equal, these men needed

some kind of financial security.<sup>30</sup>

By and large, the laboring class, especially those people recently arrived from the countryside, huddled in mushrooming areas on the outskirts of the cities and had neither priests nor churches. In the south of Chile the clerical situation was equally bleak. Often one lone priest took care of several small towns and a huge rural area. Usually a foreigner and a member of a religious congregation, he was subsidized by his institute. The native Chilean priest often could not survive economically in the country areas.<sup>31</sup>

After World War II the Maryknoll and Columban Fathers entered Chile, where soon these English-speaking missionaries made an impression upon the local church. Now a similar group of men, the Society of the Precious Blood, was looking for a field of missionary activity. It was logical that they too would be welcomed in Chile.

The Society was to find itself working among Chileans of every class. In San José parish it would be with the overwhelming numbers of poor, day laborers. On the other side of Santiago, the parish of Santo Domingo would include some very wealthy and influential people, while the

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<sup>30</sup>As recently as 1966 Bishop Bernardino Piñera of Temuco received a monthly salary of \$50; Bishop Manuel Larrain of Talca, \$40. See Gross, Last Best Hope, p. 17.

<sup>31</sup>In the early 1960s the diocese of Osorno had one diocesan priest.

Hospital del Salvador presented the many faces of the Chilean people.

The original southern parishes of Rio Negro, Riachuelo, the new parish of Purrangué, and the later-acquired parish of Pitrufrquén proved to be alike in many ways. A clique of self-perpetuating politicians composed the leading figures in town; often, though, they did not live there but on their country estates or fundos. These gentlemen, along with the senior police officer and the Catholic pastor, were known collectively as the autoridades.

The parishes of Rio Negro, Riachuelo, and Purrangué were all in the province of Osorno. This province, along with Llanquihue to the south and Valdivia to the north, was unique in its German heritage. In the middle of the last century, the Chilean government encouraged the immigration of Germans to settle this frontier. Perhaps in all fifteen thousand came, but their influence proved to be out of proportion to their number.<sup>32</sup> Their descendants, with such un-Spanish names as Neumann, Schilling, and Billike, were to help the Society in building schools and chapels.

In the countryside or campo were the renters or share croppers (inquilinos), who often lived in rude, wooden structures of two or three rooms. For such people, private transportation meant using one's horse or one's feet, while hauling was done with a two-wheeled cart pulled

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<sup>32</sup>Silvert, Chile, p. 19.



by a yoke of oxen. The patrón or proprietor frequently lived as a medieval lord in his comfortable home; at the same time, his workers, living in squalor, received little in cash payment. The inquilinos were allowed to cultivate a few acres, and raise some chickens and pigs. From these they fed their large families. To leave the fundo for a trip to town to make purchases or to arrange for a baptism, required the permission of the patrón. For many workers this was granted but once a month.<sup>33</sup>

That the parish of Pitrufrquén proved to be somewhat different was due to the fact that many of the people were small, independent farmers with a certain willingness to think for themselves. Later on these characteristics made possible the formation of Christian communities based on already existing natural groupings. Unlike the other southern parishes of the Society, Pitrufrquén also had a large Mapuche population.

Turning now to the broader aspects of Chile, we see it to be a geographically isolated country, bound on the north by the world's driest desert, the Atacama; on the east by the Andes Mountains, commonly known as the Cordillera; on the south beyond Cape Horn by Antartica; and on the west by the Pacific Ocean. Although Chile proper

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<sup>33</sup>For further aspects of rural life in Chile see Silvert, Chile, pp. 20-22; Fredrick B. Pike, Chile and the United States, 1880-1962: The Emergence of Chile's Social Crisis and the Challenge to United States Diplomacy (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1963), pp. 280-283.

stretches for some 2,600 miles, no part of the country is more than 250 miles from the ocean, while at its narrowest point it is only 54 miles wide. Obviously such a long stretch of land running north and south produces a variety of climates; thus, the desert north, the temperate central zone, and the wet and cold south.

The central valley is the heart of Chile; it is also the area of the original European settlement. On the small hill of Santa Lucía in present-day, downtown Santiago Pedro de Valdivia founded and named the city in 1541. The central region also includes the country's principal port, Valparaiso, as well as extensive agricultural areas. About one half of the population of the country lives in this zone. The lake region, south of the central valley, is a scenic area that contains forests, tracts for pasture and farming, rivers (some navigable), snow-covered mostly extinct volcanoes, and some famous lakes. With it all are the Andes tapering down in height as they stretch southward.

Since the soil in the central valley is fertile but the rainfall feeble, the need for irrigation was already felt by the indigenous peoples. Twentieth century farmers continue to irrigate the soil. Because Chile has the Andes to the east and a much lower coastal range parallel to the ocean, its flat lands equal only one-fifth of the total land mass. Even with the scarcity of arable hectares, many

of these have not been fully utilized.

Between Chile's dry north and its drenched south, a happy mean emerges to provide one of the most agreeable of climates, with the weather cool and moist in the winter, hot and dry in the summer. The climate of Santiago is comparable to that of Santa Barbara in southern California, while that of the lake region is similar to that of the coastal region of Oregon and Washington. However, the comparison ends there; since Chile has few paved roads, traveling in the dust and mud became a constant challenge to the new missionaries. Because Chile is considerably south of the equator, its seasons are reversed: stateside winter is the Chilean summer, Chilean spring is the stateside autumn. About the coldest ever either in the central valley or in the lake region (out of the mountains) is several degrees below freezing. Nevertheless, because there is no central heating, most North Americans experience greater discomfort from the moderate cold of Chile than from the winter cold of Ohio.

Chile has no dangerous wild animals, snakes, or insects. However, it does have the lowly pulga, an insect that is part of the living experience of any working class Chilean, an experience shared by all the missionaries. About the size of a comma, the pulga prefers being carried in the tight-fitting parts of clothing or staying in the warmth of a bed. This minuscule creature, celebrated in

song and cursed in conversation, is a flea. All the priests in Chile were to have first-hand knowledge of the insect, yet it would hardly be something to write to the folks back home.

Another facet of Chilean life that was experienced by the new missionaries was the ever-present possibility of earthquakes. For this reason, great colonial churches are seldom found in Chile; other buildings of historical significance have likewise disappeared. In May 1647 the city of Santiago suffered its first great quake; in 1751 the southern cities of Chillán and Concepción were destroyed. Chillán was struck again in 1835 and then totally leveled in the earthquake of 1939.

A look at the people of Chile reveals that the basic component of its population is Spanish, with an addition of Basque and Catalan. With the passing of centuries the injection of these elements and others destroyed in great part the racial and cultural uniqueness of the Indians. Today the only significant number of Mapuches is found near Temuco. Although there are no longer blacks in Chile, a dark-complexioned baby may be considered as feo or ugly; later on such a one may be referred to as the negrito or little black person. On the other hand, a fair-skinned, light-haired baby will be known as the rubio or blond one, and the object of special attention. Blue and even hazel eyes are said to add much to one's good looks.

While race might not separate Chileans, class surely does.<sup>34</sup> The distinction between persons on the bottom of the social structure and those in the middle or on top is very strong. Every Chilean is highly sensitive to his occupational position and its social meaning. Even though some skilled workers earn more money than white collar employees, the former feel their status and opportunities to be lower both for themselves and their children than is the case with office workers.

All employed Chileans (and unemployed) have identification cards which label them as being either obrero, worker, or empleado, white collar employee. They pay social security allotments into different funds, see different doctors in the government health service when they are ill, and live in different parts of the city. With the exception of Santo Domingo parish, the Society will be working with obreros and their families.

The Precious Blood Fathers were to enter Chile some two years after World War II, a war from which the United States emerged as the pre-eminent world power. Missionaries from that country would surely be known as efficient men. Though many Chilean intellectuals considered most North Americans as rather uncultured, but usually well-meaning, the poor would simply accept the American priests

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<sup>34</sup>Pike, Chile and the United States, pp. 284-293 passim.

as men who got the job done.

Since the Precious Blood missionaries would be North Americans working in Chile, they would bring with them their native ideas of democracy and capitalism. In turn, they were to find Chile a democracy with an historically stable government and an economic system based on capitalism. But experience would soon make them agree with this assessment of the real situation:

So far as Chile's lower classes and reform leaders are concerned, capitalism has been synonymous with social injustice. When United States spokesmen continue to announce in Chile that all problems can be solved through free-enterprise capitalism, without making it clear that the form of capitalism in mind is not necessarily that practiced in Chile, they convince reformers that the United States stands in opposition to basic social readjustment.

To heap praise upon Chileans for their democratic procedures is to err in a similar manner. Chilean democracy is obviously quite different from the United States concept of what the word means. If there were genuine democracy in Chile, then the lower classes would have the means of protecting their interests . . . Chilean capitalism and Chilean democracy have gone hand in hand toward producing outrageous social injustice.<sup>35</sup>

### Six More Missionaries

In late September 1947 Father John Wilson wrote: "We shall be in Valparaiso to meet the boys. The harvest is great, the laborers are few. We need many good red-blooded American priests."<sup>36</sup> The "boys" to whom he referred were Fathers Paul Buehler, Ambrose Lengerich, and

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid., p. 295.

<sup>36</sup> Gasparian 10 (October 1947): 5.

Carl Reikowsky. After an ocean voyage of eighteen days aboard the Grace Lines cargo-passenger ship Santa Luisa, the vessel reached the Chilean port on 11 November.

On the previous day Father Wilson, accompanied by Father Francis Mulligan, the Maryknoll pastor of the parish in Buzeta near Los Cerrillos airport, went to Valparaiso to await the arrival of the new men. The amount of baggage was enormous, for it included not only the luggage of the three newest missionaries and that of the two Fathers John, but also seventeen large wooden boxes. Yet there was surprisingly little difficulty in getting all of this cleared through Chilean customs. Perhaps a pointed reference to Father Wilson's wartime experiences helped to ease the way.<sup>37</sup>

In short order the baggage was placed on a truck which reached the house on Guevara street the next noon. The priests themselves boarded the train for Santiago, arriving at their new home about midnight. The following day the men rested, wrote letters, later enjoyed a meal cooked by Father Kostik, washed dishes, listened to an instruction given by Father Wilson, and then had evening prayers in the tiny makeshift chapel. So began community life in Chile.

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<sup>37</sup> ASPB-S, "Historia del Vicariato." At least one of the two newspaper accounts that appeared the next day devoted a third of the article to Father Wilson's three year captivity under the Japanese.

While awaiting the arrival of the next group of missionaries due to dock on 18 November, Father Wilson had further interviews with the cardinal. His Eminence explained that the new rectory in Barrancas on the coast was under construction. To this Father Wilson replied that, because the house was built too far from the center of population and was actually placed on sand dunes, the location was unsatisfactory.<sup>38</sup> The following day all five Precious Blood priests had lunch with the cardinal. After small talk, Father Wilson informed Cardinal Caro that the Society would take Barrancas and also San José parish at Plaza Garín. At the same time he stressed the need of a third parish that would serve as a source of income to balance the financial drain of poor places. The cardinal was delighted to hear of the acceptance and promised to push the work at San José, in order that the priests might move in by the end of November.<sup>39</sup>

Once more Father Wilson and Father Mulligan went to Valparaiso to meet the three newest additions to the growing band of Precious Blood priests in Chile. Although the Santa Maria reached port on 18 November, the priests spent the night at a hotel, since their baggage would not clear customs until the next day. The latest arrivals were Fathers John Hoorman, Alphonse Jungwirth, and George Fey.

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<sup>38</sup>Kostik, Diary, p. 40.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid.



To relieve the housing shortage and to give Fathers Lengerich, Buehler, and Reikowsky a chance to learn Spanish while becoming better acquainted with Chile, they were sent to live at various Maryknoll parishes in the south.<sup>40</sup> In the meantime, Father Wilson was having another meeting with the cardinal and his council. A new offer was made, namely a small parish north of Las Condes. About the same time, Father Kostik took Father Fey out to Barrancas to see how advanced construction was on the new rectory. Despite its small size, it was far from finished. When told that the job would be done in five days, Father Kostik reflected that it would need five weeks.<sup>41</sup>

Several days later Father Fey was sent to the diocesan parish at Llo Lleo to spend a month or two with the Chilean pastor learning Spanish and keeping an eye on the progress of the new rectory at nearby Barrancas. Later Father George summed up the experience:

The house at Llo Lleo was just about the ultimate in inconvenience and discomfort. The pastor had two sisters living with him, one single and one married. Of course, her husband and three or four of the kids lived there too. The meals were abominable. I lost thirty pounds those five weeks and when Fr. Wilson saw me at Christmas he was worried about my loss of weight and told me to return to Santiago after New Years.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> A financial statement covering this period reveals that the vicariate paid the Maryknoll Fathers 10,500 pesos or \$210 for food and lodging for two months; see ASPB-S, "Vicariate Financial Reports."

<sup>41</sup> Kostik, Diary, p. 42.

<sup>42</sup> ASPB-S, "A Few Historical Notes About the Chilean Vicariate (specifically notes of Fr. Paul Buehler)."

About a week after his arrival in Chile, Father John Hoorman was sent to the parish of Rio Negro to live with the pastor, Father Leon Meyer, S.V.D. No doubt it was a shock for him to leave the shipshape Santa Maria or even the relatively comfortable house on Guevara and to find himself in an unkempt rectory. There was no one to clean the house, and since there was no cook, meals were brought in from next door in battered lunch buckets. The dirty table cloth piled high with junk left little room to eat. After a month of this initiation, Father Hoorman received permission to return to Santiago.<sup>43</sup>

From all indications the Precious Blood Fathers living with the various Maryknollers were doing quite well. Fathers Buehler, Lengerich, and Reikowsky were enjoying a more or less American diet, they were taking tentative steps in using Spanish for confessions and even managed a few words from the pulpit. Father Alphonse Jungwirth, still in Santiago, was soon to go to the Maryknoll parish at Curepto.

In the last week of November the provincial, Father Oberhauser, authorized Father Wilson to accept the parishes of Riachuelo and Rio Negro with its attached mission of Purranque. He added: "It may be a little too hasty to ask for them canonically; that can be done perhaps during the

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

ten year period."<sup>44</sup> He continued:

The reason for accepting Rio Negro is because of your description of it, namely that it is in excellent shape. This may seem rather worldly and earthly but I believe that it is highly important for the efficiency of the Fathers that there be at least one place that is fairly comfortable and likewise a place to go for rest or relaxation.<sup>45</sup>

Since the autumn of 1946 Father Wilson had known that he was to be the vicar provincial of the Chilean vicariate, which, however, had yet to be canonically constituted. The provincial now stated that the moderator general and his curia would draw up a document for the formal erection of the vicariate. Once this had been done, Father Oberhauser indicated the next step:

. . . I will appoint a Secretary, Treasurer and a Consultor who are to assist you in governing the Vicariate. It would please me, however, if you suggest names for the above positions.<sup>46</sup>

Anticipating the establishment of the new foundation, already on 30 August 1947 the provincial board had approved the "Norms Governing the Fathers Forming the New Vicariate in South America." Although the norms underwent considerable revision in subsequent years, they indicate the guidelines sent out from the United States:

1. The Vicar Provincial is authorized to supervise the observance of the Constitutions as well as the circumstances will permit.
2. The Vicar Provincial shall be assisted by a Secretary, Treasurer and one Consultor. These officials are

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<sup>44</sup> ASPB-S, "Provincial Letters, 1947-1949-1950, Fr. John Wilson."

<sup>45</sup> Ibid. <sup>46</sup> Ibid.

to be appointed by the North American Provincial until such a time when the Vicariate shall become a Province.

3. At the end of six year's foreign service each missionary is to be given one year's vacation, subject to some kind of occupation in the States. The expense of the trip is to be borne by the Community. The missionary is to be given 30 days each year away from his post of duty, and 60 days every three years. At the end of the six years he is to be given his choice to remain in South America or return to the United States.

Note: The above one year's vacation, and the 30 or 60 days away from one's post of duty, is [sic] not to be interpreted as a complete release from all priestly work during those periods of time.

4. Members of the Community serving in South America are to remain members of the North American Province until such a time when the respective superiors judge that the Vicariate is to become a separate Province. At that time they are to be given their choice of countries in which to serve. In case of death burial is to take place in South America; the ordinary suffragia are to be said by all members of the North American Province and the South American Vicariate.

5. The authority of the Vicar Provincial shall be the same as that of the Provincial, subject of course to the will of the Provincial and the Moderator General. No major move is to be decided upon without the explicit permission of the Provincial and his board.

6. The financial status of each member, his allowance, etc., shall be the same as that of the North American Province.<sup>47</sup>

The provincial and his board approved the vicariate's taking not only the parishes in Rio Negro and Riachuelo, but also in Purranque, Plaza Garín (San José), Las Condes, and Barrancas. In view of this decision, Father Wilson informed the Capuchins that it would be impossible

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<sup>47</sup> Gasparian 12 (March 1949): 2. Of course, copies had been distributed previously throughout the vicariate.

to accept Quilicahuín and San Juan de la Costa until 1949 or 1950.

When Father Wilson and Father Kostik again went to see Cardinal Caro, he offered them another parish, Santo Domingo de Guzmán, located near the edge of the city on Pedro de Valdivia avenue. The following day the trio took the now familiar tour of inspection of the premises. The church, a pleasant surprise, was large, of rather recent construction, and well-furnished. Although the offer looked promising, there was a stipulation: taking Santo Domingo would also mean taking over the chaplaincy of the huge Hospital del Salvador.<sup>48</sup>

The next few days were busy ones. Several trips were made to the hospital, a sprawling structure spread out into wards that accommodated some seventeen hundred patients including those in the large maternity section. Both the hospital and Santo Domingo parish were staffed at the time by priest members of the Hospitalers of St. Camillus, who because of a shortage of personnel wanted to leave Chile.<sup>49</sup> Further visits were made to the church and rectory of Santo Domingo. There was no debt on the place, and the many repairs needed on the rectory could be easily handled. The vicar provincial decided to accept the parish

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<sup>48</sup>Kostik, Diary, p. 45.

<sup>49</sup>AARs, folder #63. On 19 December 1947 Santo Domingo parishioners sent to the chancery fourteen sheets of names petitioning the Spanish Hospitalers to remain.

along with the hospital.<sup>50</sup>

Since November corresponds to the northern hemisphere's May, from 8 November to 8 December the Precious Blood priests were witnessing their first Mes de María or Month of Mary. In the Santiago area the winter rains cease, there is a new outburst of growing things. Along with the seasonal renewal there is a kind of spiritual rebirth, as every parish and mission station hold nightly devotions in honor of the mother of God. Under various titles Mary has come to occupy the chief place of veneration in many Chilean lives. Under the title of Our Lady of Carmen she is patroness of Chile and an honorary general of the army. At the same time she is a source of confusion: in the north of the country she is called Our Lady of Andocollo; near Valparaiso Our Lady of Lo Vásquez, etc. Many Chileans believe, therefore, that there are many Virgin Marys.<sup>51</sup>

Father Kostik was introduced to the Mes de María in the Buzeta parish. He was encouraged by what he saw because in the afternoon some two hundred youngsters attended catechism, while in the evening a Chilean Redemptorist preached to a packed church on the glories of Mary. Later Father Kostik was moved to write: "These people have the

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<sup>50</sup>Kostik, Diary, p. 48.

<sup>51</sup>At San José parish in 1971 the writer used a local catechism that explicitly taught that the Blessed Virgin, despite her many titles, is one and not many.

faith, one can see it.<sup>52</sup>

On 3 December, the Feast of St. Francis Xavier, he celebrated a Mass attended by only three or four old ladies; yet that evening hundreds of people participated in the huge procession around the plaza. Hymns, prayers, vivas or shouts in honor of the Virgin and Chile filled the air, while the mostly youthful marchers had a rollicking good time. Usually the Mes de María ended with the procession held on 8 December, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, the day on which children frequently made their first communion. Although their parents and other relatives assisted at the Mass, the adults, especially the men, rarely received communion.

Another phenomenon that was to disturb the fathers in the coming years was the spread of Protestantism, often of the fundamentalist type and often subsidized by American missionary societies. In one of his first letters back to the United States Father Kostik observed: "Protestant activity is gradually gaining hold of these innocent people and it must be stopped."<sup>53</sup> Once while assisting at Buzeta, he stepped outside to watch some fifty Protestants marching across the plaza and singing hymns on the way to their church. As he put it, "It made my heart contract, helpless

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<sup>52</sup>Kostik, Diary, p. 39.

<sup>53</sup>Gasparian 10 (October 1947): 5.

as I am especially being tongue tied."<sup>54</sup> His still weak Spanish prevented him from evangelizing the Protestants then and there.

In the late nineteenth century Juan Bautista Canut de Bon, a former Jesuit lay brother from Spain who had left the Catholic Church, became an indefatigable preacher of Protestantism in Chile.<sup>55</sup> Because of the name of Canut, Chilean Protestants today are crudely and popularly referred to as Canutos, rather than the acceptable evangélicos. Since the Spanish word for gospel is evangelio, those who associate themselves with these writings are evangélicos. Their ministers are pastores or shepherds.

That first December was more than the Mes de María for the new missionaries; it was proving to be a decisive month. On the eighth the provincial wrote:

I suggest that you accept the parish of Santo Domingo offered by the Cardinal. In giving you this advice I am relying solely on the Providence of God to supply you with the man or men to send in January or February. At this writing I have not the slightest idea of how or when to get the men. But I am figuring purely on religious reasons this time. We are shorter in manpower right now than at the time I wrote my last letter to you.<sup>56</sup>

As a preparation for the soon-to-be acquired south-

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<sup>54</sup>Kostik, Diary, p. 45.

<sup>55</sup>Ignacio Vergara, El Protestantismo en Chile, (Santiago de Chile: Editorial del Pacífico, 1962), p. 51.

<sup>56</sup>ASPB-S, "Provincial Letters, 1947-1949-1950, Fr. John Wilson."



ern parishes, Father Paul Buehler was sent from his Maryknoll learning post down to Rio Negro. To avoid the unpleasant living conditions there, he managed to spend much of his time in Purrangué. In the meantime, Father Hoorman had returned to Santiago. When the moderator general, then in the States and writing for the absent provincial, sent approval for accepting the chaplaincy of the Hospital del Salvador, Father Hoorman took up residency there on New Year's Eve as the first Precious Blood chaplain. He was also the first man to receive a definite appointment.

In December Father Wilson had some visitors. Knowing that the Society had decided to take Santo Domingo parish, the diocesan moderator of Catholic Action along with the local president of that group begged Father Wilson to start a high school within the parish. They were told that no men were available for such an undertaking.<sup>57</sup> Two months later Father Wilson wrote the provincial that "these people will do almost anything to send their children to a school taught by N. American Catholics."<sup>58</sup>

Christmas day can be lonely for any priest and especially so for a stranger in a new land, but at least the North American priests in the Santiago area did not feel neglected. All of them, Maryknoll, Holy Cross, and Precious Blood priests, were invited to Villa María school

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<sup>57</sup>Kostik, Diary, p. 50.

<sup>58</sup>ASPB-D, "1947-1949-Chile Vicar."

for a Christmas dinner and a movie. This grade and high school, founded and conducted by the Immaculate Heart of Mary Sisters from Philadelphia, instructed an all-girl student body that came from the upper class. In later years the Precious Blood missionaries served as confessors to the I.H.M. community.

Blessed Gaspar Day, 29 December, was celebrated on Guevara street by Fathers Wilson, Hoorman, Kostik, and Lengerich, the latter home from the south for a few days. Three High Masses were sung in the diminutive chapel; later a special meal was highlighted with good Chilean wine and French pastry; a Te Deum concluded the occasion. That night Father Kostik wrote: "Blessed Gaspar, please obtain for us the grace of making this a real religious foundation."<sup>59</sup>

During their stay at the house on Guevara Street the fathers often prepared their own meals. Usually the burden fell to Father Kostik, but eventually Carmela Álvarez, the maid of the absent English family, was invited to clean in the afternoons and at times to prepare the evening meal. When the priests moved into the Santo Domingo rectory, she continued to cook until her retirement in 1971.

One evening during the first week of the new year, Father Wilson and Father Kostik along with seven other

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<sup>59</sup>Kostik, Diary, p. 51.

priests were invited to the United States embassy for a farewell dinner in honor of Father Gustave Weigel, S.J., a North American who had been associated with the Catholic University of Chile. Father Kostik found the ambassador, Claude G. Bowers, to be a learned, genial host.<sup>60</sup>

On 2 January Father Oberhauser wrote to Father Wilson that the official document for the erection of the Chilean vicariate had been sent by the moderator general. The provincial also accepted the men whom Father Wilson had indicated as his choice for a board: Father Kostik, consultant; Father Jungwirth, treasurer; Father Lengerich, secretary. Since Father Lengerich was soon to be sent to Purrangué, Father Hoorman was designated as secretary. In the same letter the provincial stated that "my advice is that you go very slow in buying ground for a minor seminary. Naturally such a project must be in the very distant future."<sup>61</sup> Already in October, as has been noted, Bishop Marling had written about the possibility of a seminary in a rural area.

The first days of January saw a new development. Because the Maryknoll Fathers were giving up their parish of San Juan de Dios in Buzeta, auxiliary bishops Salinas and Farina offered the Society this poor parish, provided

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid., p. 52.

<sup>61</sup> ASPB-S, "Provincial Letters, 1947-1949-1950, Fr. John Wilson."

that the Precious Blood priests still take San José. The proposal was accepted; Father Jungwirth would become pastor on 15 February. Moreover, with the acceptance of Santo Domingo the vicariate had no further interest in Las Condes and Barrancas.

By now all the Santiago area fathers were getting ready for the move to Santo Domingo. Some bargaining was done with the departing Camillus Fathers in an effort to buy their rectory furnishings at a fair price. On Sunday, 1 February 1948, Bishop Farina, vicar general of the archdiocese, installed Father Wilson as pastor. After the Mass the Precious Blood priests went to the garden behind the rectory, where the people of the parish gathered informally to welcome the fathers. The organist had already expressed his welcome, when at the communion of the Mass, he had slowly but distinctly played the "Star Spangled Banner." The following day the priests carried their few belongings over to their new home. It was the first community house of the American province in Chile.

Much of the month was spent in getting the rectory up to a semblance of North American living standards. Father Wilson, Father Kostik, and anyone else who was free pitched into the cleanup program. The church was not forgotten, as the altars were cleaned and the sacristy swept. Father Fey installed a stove in the dining room. All of this manual labor, if seen by passing neighbors,

would not have been understood. In Chile an educated man does not dirty his hands.

Nor was the spiritual side of the parish neglected. The first Friday confessions and communions were relatively heavy, as out of a parish of 17,000 people some 150 came to church that day.<sup>62</sup> In time the fathers were to learn that this could be considered a very good turnout.

Four days before Father Jungwirth was to take over Buzeta, the Maryknoll superior cabled from the States that his society had reconsidered and decided to retain the parish.<sup>63</sup> Since the Precious Blood Fathers were not going to object and the Santiago chancery did not, the arrangement was cancelled.

During the last week of February all eight fathers met at Santo Domingo rectory in preparation for the day of dispersal. Father Paul Buehler was appointed pastor of Rio Negro; Father George Fey, Riachuelo; Father Ambrose Lengerich, nominal assistant at Rio Negro, was to be in charge of Purranque. The people of this latter town had been told that their mission would become a parish once the rectory under construction was finished. Father Kostik was appointed pastor of San José, but since that rectory also was not ready to receive the missionaries, he was to help the fathers get settled in the south. Fathers Jungwirth and

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<sup>62</sup>Kostik, Diary, p. 57.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid., p. 58.

Reikowsky would remain as assistants to Father Wilson at Santo Domingo de Guzmán. Of course, two months before Father Hoorman had been appointed chaplain at the hospital.

The day before the train trip south, the missionaries enjoyed a departure meal at Santo Domingo. With the assistance of Fathers Buehler and Reikowsky, Father Fey prepared a roast lamb. In spite of the banter of the table talk, there was a feeling that something important was about to take place. Later a visit was made to the Blessed Sacrament, some pictures were taken, and the men began to disperse.<sup>64</sup>

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4. <sup>64</sup>Ibid., p. 61; also Gasparian 11 (March 1948): p.

## CHAPTER III

### MISSIONARY WORK, PHYSICAL AND SPIRITUAL

#### Beginning the Apostolate

Father Kostik journeyed south with Fathers Buehler, Fey, and Lengerich, but as they continued on to Rio Negro, he went to Valdivia for an interview with that city's bishop, Arturo Mery. A number of important points were settled: Rio Negro, Riacheulo, and Purrangu were accepted by the Society for ten years; Purrangu would become a parish once the rectory was completed; each pastor was made an assistant to the other parishes, and each assistant was made an assistant to all pastors; and the privilege to trinate with dispensation from the eucharistic fast was granted.<sup>1</sup>

While the fathers were buoyed up with their beginnings both in Santiago and in the south, they were still not at ease with their new language. Some weeks before Father Kostik (who was to acquire great facility with Spanish) revealed in a letter:

Thus far the greatest discouragement we encountered is the acquisition of the language. However, day by day we are improving. Personally I think it is a blessing. Many times we would not be able to refrain

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<sup>1</sup>Kostik, Diary, p. 62.

from telling these people just what we think of them. By the time we know how to tell them, we are used to them. In fact, we are really beginning to like them.<sup>2</sup>

Although the fathers were thousands of miles away from home and perhaps several hundred words away from being comfortable in Spanish, they were in the thoughts and prayers of many people in the United States. Not only were they receiving mail regularly from friends and Society members, but also each week a student from St. Charles seminary was assigned to write a letter to the men in Chile. This idea was initiated by the rector, Father Lionel Pire, always an enthusiastic promoter of the missions.

Before the departure of Fathers Wilson and Kostik from the States, Father Norbert Sweeterman had been appointed mission procurator. Under his leadership a team of major seminarians prepared several dozen packing boxes filled with every possible item thought to be of use on the missions. The boxes not only contained the personal effects of the men, but also vestments, missals, first communion dresses, holy cards, tools, shot guns, nails, tobacco, and scores of other things. The preparing and shipping of boxes continued for the next fifteen years.

The boxes themselves were wooden, well-made, and measured 3 by 1-3/4 feet with a depth of fifteen inches.

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<sup>2</sup>Gasparian 11, (February 1948); 6.



The beauty of the boxes was in their complete utility. Transporting goods to Chile was only the beginning of their usefulness. From Riachuelo Father Fey wrote:

Those packing boxes are really a godsend. I use them to make closets. The screws and steel strips I used to repair the sagging windows and frames. The waterproof cloth in the boxes is now hanging on display in my attic to keep the rain from coming through the walls. And I used the dark wrapping paper to cover the statues during Passion Time.<sup>3</sup>

Elsewhere other boxes were to be used as book cases, storage trunks, and even dog houses.

In addition to receiving boxes from the United States, the missionaries were also the recipients of many donations, more often than not obtained through the efforts of many Precious Blood pastors and assistants. This money was placed in the South American vicariate account at the St. Henry, Ohio, bank; a special stipend account was carried in a bank at Celina, Ohio. Whenever the vicariate needed money, a stateside dollar check was exchanged in Santiago for Chilean pesos.

The Chilean missionaries were also the recipients of a great deal of favorable publicity. From the start of the Chilean enterprise, the Gasparian devoted at least one full page and often more to the happenings of the fathers. Much of this same material also appeared in the Precious Blood Messenger, a monthly magazine mailed to some twenty thousand Catholic homes. In time the mission section be-

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<sup>3</sup>Gasparian 11, (June 1948): 3.

came the favorite of the readers. Then too the announcement of a new missionary's appointment to Chile was carried in the appropriate Catholic weekly; this was later followed by a write-up of the departure ceremony.

In February Father Wilson received a letter from the provincial stating that Msgr. Clement Geiger, a missionary from the German province and a veteran of the Brazilian Xingu missions, had been nominated bishop of a new prelateure nullius formed in that area. The provincial added the encouraging news that he was doing his best to gather up men for the vicariate. When in March the bishop-elect had agreed to be consecrated in Cincinnati, Father Oberhauser invited Father Wilson to be present at the ceremony. That same letter conveyed the welcome news that he had four priests for Chile; Fathers William Frantz, Kenneth Seberger, Bernard Mores, and Leonard Fullenkamp.

Before his installation as pastor of Rio Negro on Sunday 29 February, Father Paul Buehler had written:

In this section of Chile there are quite a few German immigrants. On the street and in the train it is not uncommon to hear German spoken. Rio Negro is an old town with a population of about 4,000. However, the rural population of the parish is about 7,000. Over this area there are fourteen schools that should be visited at least weekly. With a jeep this might be possible. The roads or paths are always muddy and full of holes. This parish was established in 1900. The church is in fairly good repair, but the house<sup>4</sup> needs attention immediately before it is washed away.

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<sup>4</sup>Gasparian 11 (March 1948): 2.

Father Paul then described the other two Precious Blood posts:

Purranque is just south of Rio Negro. There are about 4,000 people in the town and the rural population is about 6,000. In town there is a parochial school taught by the senoritas, and it has a number of schools in the country like Rio Negro. The church is in terrible shape, and the school is ready to fall apart. However, a new rectory is being built . . . Riachuelo is the oldest of the parishes, the smallest in numbers but the largest in area. The town has about 600 people and the rural districts about 5,000. The parish extends over the mountains to the ocean. The church is beautiful, the house is in fine shape but very small. However, there is no means of transportation near, and the roads are of the worse kind.<sup>5</sup>

Even though the former pastor of Rio Negro had been relieved of his duties there, he found it difficult to leave that place for his new position at Fresia. Nevertheless, the Precious Blood Fathers started right in to clean the rectory and make it livable. They heated buckets of water on the broken-down stove and began shoveling out the accumulated dirt and scrubbing the floors. The office was moved to the opposite end of the house, some walls were changed around, and the bathroom was relocated. Father Buehler along with Father Fey from Riachuelo were carpenters, plumbers, electricians, and finally painters. Their sense of achievement was complete when they finally succeeded in getting Father Leon Meyer to vacate the premises.

It is difficult to reconcile the descriptions of

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

the rectories at Rio Negro and Riachuelo before the priests moved in, and their later urgent need to do so much to renovate them. Father Wilson had been rather pleased with the house at Rio Negro and Father Buehler had observed that the rectory in Riachuelo was in good repair. Yet when Father Fey moved into that house he wrote:

If someone told you my place is in good shape, he was comparing it with the shack across the road. Actually it will be suitable after it has a lot of repairs and is completely furnished. I don't say refurnished for there is nothing here at all.<sup>6</sup>

It was planned that Father Kostik remain in Rio Negro until July; at that time he would become pastor of San José in Santiago. In the meanwhile, he joined the other priests in whatever task was at hand. Although Father John was beyond middle age, he was quite robust.

After my high mass at 8, I said my breviary and read a little from the N. Testament, then began sweeping, cutting a few branches, etc. In the afternoon Fr. Paul had to go into the campo, horseback, on a sick call, while "Rupe" and I scrubbed at the dining room floor. When Pablo returned a sick child was brought for baptism, so I baptized Maria Berta, then went back to sweeping up some more. It is now 7:20. What will come up before we go to bed?<sup>7</sup>

By this time both Santo Domingo parish in Santiago and Sagrada Familia in Rio Negro had hired mozos. A mozo was a house boy, often a lad in his late teens or even a grown man. He would be expected to run errands for the

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<sup>6</sup>Gasparian 11 (June 1948): 3.

<sup>7</sup>Kostik, Diary, p. 66.

cook, help in keeping the house and grounds neat and clean, and generally be more of a help than a hinderance to the priests. Earlier Father Kostik had observed that Manuel, the house boy at Santo Domingo, had no chance one afternoon to nap in the bathtub because Father Reikowsky kept him on the job. Some of the mozos developed into quite good cooks; several were outstanding for their years of service and loyalty to the fathers. For many years Julio, who helped the priests in Rio Negro, and Santiago, with his badly crossed eyes, became the proverbial pillar of the soon-to-be-acquired parish of Pitrufquén.

While Father Buehler along with Father Kostik were putting some order into Rio Negro, and while Father Fey was both helping them and also looking after the needs of Riachuelo, Father Ambrose Lengerich was getting adjusted to Purranque. He wrote:

It is a little settlement of Arabs and Syrians interspersed with Chileans. And oh, my school is so crowded that we are forced to keep the pigs outside. In the kindergarten there are twenty children for six double benches. In the first grade I have seventy children sitting triple in benches made for two. In the sixth grade we have only eight . . . Anyway, I found out that most of them don't go to church on Sunday. From now on I am going to find out why.<sup>8</sup>

Father Ambrose made reference to the Arabs. Arabes (or Turcos) was the local term for anybody who came from the Middle East. There were first and second generations

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<sup>8</sup>Gasparian 11 (May 1948): p. 6.

from Syria, old Palestine, and Lebanon. It was not uncommon to find such family names as Nasser, Nahum, and Hasbún.

Priestly care of the sick and dying was also the concern of Father Lengerich.

I found a case that needed attention immediately. It too was a case of TB, only much worse than the first. And this lad who was about fifteen years old had never made his First Communion. With the help of the Holy Spirit I gave him a short instruction, administered the last sacraments and he died in peace. The trouble is that people<sup>9</sup> are very slow to inform the priests that they are sick.

Experience will teach the priests that nine times out of ten the missionary will be called only when the patient is unconscious. Relatives do this to avoid frightening the sick person; the presence of the priest at a sick bed, according to popular belief, is a sure sign of death. On the other hand, when the comatose patient has lingered too long, the priest is now called to hasten the death of a loved one. Thus, one time the priest is summoned because it is the customary thing to do, another time he is called to speed along, by his presence, the dying process. In later years more than one missionary was to question his role in this less than Christian drama.

While the priests in the south were savoring their first adventures, Father John Hoorman wrote from the Hospital del Salvador:

Although we have 1,700 beds in this hospital,

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

now in the summer we have only 1,500 patients. The hospital consists of two long corridors nearly a half mile in length, the wings branching off . . . But the twenty-five French nuns are a wonderful help. However, I am learning castellano fast . . . The other day I baptized eight babies and married two couples.<sup>10</sup>

Several miles east of the hospital, at the parish of Santo Domingo, Father Carl Reikowsky described his view of life in Chile:

We have four Masses on Sundays which would be enough except that Chileans like to sleep late. There is one problem that will have to be licked eventually and that is the care of the poor people in the parish. There aren't too many of them at Mass, and I feel sure one of the reasons is dress. Walking down the main streets of Santiago certainly impresses one thing on your mind. The Chilean delights in and insists on dressing as formally as possible at all times. You hardly ever see a man without a suit and tie. Workmen go to and from that work that way - change into work clothes on the job.<sup>11</sup>

Easter Sunday was early, 28 March. In the south the traditional Emaus celebration of the Precious Blood Fathers was not forgotten. The priests continued the stateside custom by which Community members gathered at the different rectories for several hours of conversation, card playing, and a post-Lenten dinner. After days of manual labor, then the efforts of the Holy Week liturgy, this Easter Monday, Father Kostik noted, was peaceful and enjoyable.

The following week Father Wilson unexpectedly put

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<sup>10</sup>Gasparian 11 (February 1948): p. 7.

<sup>11</sup>Gasparian 11 (April 1948): p. 7.

in an appearance at Rio Negro. He and Father Kostik went walking, picked apples, hunted for the small green parrot of the region and got nothing, sawed wood, and did some fishing. He also spent several days in Purranque encouraging the building committee to get off dead center. He was told that work on the house was halted because there were no nails. On 17 April he began the trip back to Santiago.<sup>12</sup> It was to be many months and many miles before Father Wilson returned to southern Chile.

The feast of St. George was 23 April. On that day Father George Fey came to Rio Negro to attend a meal in his honor. With this celebration the missionaries showed that they were quick to appreciate a good Chilean custom. In Chile one's namesday, the feast of his patron saint, is more important than one's birthday. Although the honored may not receive many gifts, he will receive many a warm abrazo from his friends.

On that same 23 April Father Wilson sent a telegram to Father Kostik telling him to be in Santiago on the twenty-eighth. He arrived at the capital by train. Contrary to a news item in the Gasparian that he was to be the superior during Father Wilson's absence, Father Alphonse Jungwirth was so designated. The following day the vicar provincial flew out of Santiago for the United States and Bishop-elect Geiger's consecration. The new temporary

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<sup>12</sup>Kostik, Diary, p. 74.



superior spent that afternoon trying to repair the hot water system in the Santo Domingo bathroom; he failed. In Chile the superior did his share of manual labor.

About the middle of May Father Wilson wrote from the United States that he was able to purchase two jeeps. The vehicles were to come down with the new group of missionaries arriving in early August; the jeeps, however, would be tied up in Chilean customs until 30 September. In the meantime, besides using public transportation, the fathers at Santo Domingo rode an English bicycle purchased earlier by Father Wilson. Adaptable as he was in most things, Father Kostik never took to the two-wheeler. Down south horses were the mode of transportation. Father Fey made arrangements with a fundo at the edge of Riachuelo to have his horse in reserve at all times. Over in Rio Negro Father Buehler bought a horse that was to serve him, and then for thirteen years various pastors at Riachuelo.

The first board meeting of the South American vicariate was held in the rectory at Santo Domingo on 19 May. (Coincidentally the day of Bishop Geiger's consecration.) Father Alphonse Jungwirth as acting superior chaired the meeting. In attendance also were Father Kostik, first consultor; Father John Hoorman, secretary; and Father Carl Reikowsky, invited by the absent Father Wilson, who knew that Father Carl would otherwise have been the only Santiago priest not present.

It was a letter from the vicar provincial that set the meeting in motion. He wanted to ascertain the feelings of the fathers regarding a threefold program: buying property adjacent to Santo Domingo church in preparation for a parish school; buying property in San José parish for the same purpose; and starting a new parish in the southern city of Osorno. The motion for buying property at Santo Domingo carried unanimously. Regarding the property at San José, all the priests agreed that the land should be bought in the name of the archdiocese of Santiago, but with the Society paying part of the costs. Lastly the fathers expressed enthusiasm for starting a parish in Osorno.<sup>13</sup>

The discussion over San José proved interesting. All the priests were in accord that the place had definite possibilities because of the nearly homogeneous character of the area; most of the people were poor. It was suggested that perhaps the vicariate's future seminary could be located in Resbalón, a mission with a somewhat tumble-down adobe church, situated out in the western truck-farm area of the parish.<sup>14</sup>

Later that month Fathers Jungwirth and Kostik had a chance to talk with Bishop Mery of Valdivia, then in Santiago, who proved very willing to give the Society a parish in Osorno. The fathers later got a price for the school

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<sup>13</sup> ASPB-S, "Minutes, Book I, 19 May 1948."

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

property they were interested in at San José. On the other side of town, the property next to the Santo Domingo church was owned by Beta Laboratories. Fathers Jungwirth and Kostik talked the matter over and agreed that buying the Beta site would put all their mission money into one place. Father Kostik then wrote to Father Wilson that their thinking had changed; it was simply too much money invested in educational purposes; moreover, there were no men available to run a school.<sup>15</sup>

With June more than half over, Father Kostik went out to inspect the progress on the renovated rectory at San José. The building improvements were finished, but nothing had been done about heating. There was no chimney, no installation for bottled gas, nothing. As soon as possible, Father John hurried down to the chancery to complain, only to be assured that everything would be put into working order. Moreover, he was told that on 1 August he was to be installed as the new pastor of San José.<sup>16</sup> For the next several weeks he was preoccupied in buying beds, springs and mattresses, a cook stove, dishes, and engaging a local carpenter to make desks and clothes closets.

The third departure ceremony in the history of the American province took place at St. Charles seminary on Sunday 11 July. Father Bernard Mores and Father William

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<sup>15</sup>Kostik, Diary, p. 79.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 80.

Frantz sailed on 16 July, with Father Leonard Fullenkamp and Father Kenneth Seberger following a week later.

The fathers in Chile were now experiencing their first winter. Occasionally the temperature both in the Santiago region and in the south did drop below freezing, but once the sun broke through the outdoors was quite pleasant. In fact, because there was no central heating, it was often colder indoors than outdoors. However, the southern rectories had a certain amount of warmth from the fireplace in the living room and the cook stove fueled by wood. From Purranque Father Lengerich wrote:

Every day I am learning to dress warmer. Now I bring an extra pair of socks and my boots when I go to church. The next thing I will be looking for is rubber trousers. . . . And someone should invent fenders to keep our cassocks clean.<sup>17</sup>

The use of the cassock caused personal and practical problems. Many a missionary felt uncomfortable wearing the garb out on the street. But at this time it was still the custom, as it was in other Catholic countries, to wear publicly not only the cassock but also the so-called Roman hat and the clerical tonsure. This combination of huge black hat and poorly fitted cassock conjured up an unflattering image of the priest. There were those in the population who would refer to the priest behind his back as buitre or vulture.

As indicated earlier, the Precious Blood mission-

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<sup>17</sup>Gasparian 11 (September 1948): p. 6.

aries did wear the cassock but never the Roman hat or tonsure. The cassock continued to be worn publicly until the early days of the Second Vatican Council, but there were exceptions. The fathers in the south when hunting or fishing wore work clothes. By synodal decree the clergy in Chile were not to attend motion pictures or other theatrical events. To get to see an occasional movie the Precious Blood Fathers would doff the cassock and don some type of civilian garb, such as ordinary trousers with sport shirt and jacket or sweater. Because everybody else in the theatre would be well-dressed with shirt, tie, and coat, the priests were just about as conspicuous had they gone in cassocks.

Already in these first months filled with many baptisms, marriages, and sick calls, the missionaries were learning that the Catholic faith although present was weak. Father Fey wrote:

Ordinarily they would miss Mass anyhow but I knew if I said the word I could have the church packed for Mass . . . I finally told them to bring the body for Mass in the morning . . . There were about 150 present for this Mass, and on the ordinary Sunday my crowd consists of five or ten men.<sup>18</sup>

From his vantage point in the capital Father Reikowsky observed:

I have been told frankly . . . by some fine, Catholic educated young people that they have lost their faith. One wanted terribly to go to confession and communion

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<sup>18</sup>Gasparian 11 (June 1948): 3.

on the anniversary of her father's death, even while she told me she believed nothing. Perhaps we can lay it on the extreme externalism of their religion.<sup>19</sup>

At the Hospital del Salvador Father John Hoorman noted:

There are many who do not receive the sacraments and there are some who have not yet made their First Communion. Much instruction is necessary - not only for the children.<sup>20</sup>

In his first month as pastor of San José parish, Father Kostik expressed his concern for the ignorance of his Catholic congregation:

The disquieting thing around here is the fact that one meets so many without any instruction whatever. I am baffled up to know in just what manner I can go ahead with this. How can I reach them?<sup>21</sup>

Again writing from Riachuelo, Father Fey mentioned the problem he faced in the mission at Crucero:

I almost fainted the first time I found out how little the children know. They have not seen a priest for two years and could not answer a single question about God, Christ or the angels. The only answer I got was concerning the angels. One girl<sup>22</sup> ventured that an angel was a baby like her brother.

Besides getting accustomed to a different approach in practicing the Catholic faith, the missionaries had to get acquainted with a new kind of movement, horizontal and

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<sup>19</sup>Gasparian 11 (September 1948): 8.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid.

<sup>21</sup>Kostik, Diary, p. 94.

<sup>22</sup>Gasparian 11 (October 1948): 8.

violent. Already in December Father Kostik experienced his first earth tremor; it occurred at 2:30 in the afternoon, siesta time. He recalled: "I was pretty well shaken - in my bed."<sup>23</sup> On the Feast of the Precious Blood, 1 July, Father Ambrose Lengerich in Purrarque had his initiation: "As I was eating my evening meal the earth decided to shiver and it continued for about seven seconds. It's just one of those things we have to get used to."<sup>24</sup>

### A Parish Among the Poor

On Monday 26 July, several days before his installation, Father John Kostik took up residence at San José parish, Plaza Garín. The out-going Chilean pastor, Padre José Valenzuela, was to share the house with him until the afternoon of 1 August. In addition to the last minute repair jobs on the house, Father John was busy with the sick:

The pastor was out again. This time I had two sick calls. The first was a man - in his last agony surrounded by santitos [holy cards], a crucifix on his breast, but the children around him were totally indifferent, none of the boys, the oldest about 14, having made their First Communion. The neighbors called me. While I was going out another couple called me, so I hoofed it back - the same route. No reflection! This man too was in last stages, surrounded by his family, who could hardly answer the Dios te salve [Hail Mary].<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup>Kostik, Diary, p. 48.

<sup>24</sup>Gasparian 11 (October 1948): 7.

<sup>25</sup>Kostik, Diary, p. 84.

On Sunday, 1 August 1948, at the eleven o'clock Mass Father Kostik was installed as the first Precious Blood pastor of San José parish. He described part of the ceremony:

At the time appointed the tiny bells of our turret proclaimed the advent of his Excellency, Bishop Farina, the same who installed Fr. Wilson at Santo Domingo. The church was packed. Of course, that was not difficult, since at best it cannot accommodate more than 400. What is that for a parish of forty thousand souls? But I was glad that so many were present . . .

Soon after all the Fathers left and I was alone, feeling rather lonesome among absolute strangers. One gets the feeling of being alone now and then among people whose language is different, whose education and standard of living is [sic] different. The truth that these people are human, that they have souls, crowds out all other considerations. My first week here I had 21 sick calls, 16 baptisms and one death-bed marriage.<sup>26</sup>

Father Kostik mentioned that San José parish embraced some forty thousand people. Without a doubt most of them were baptized and considered themselves Catholic. But it would be wrong to equate their practice of the external forms of the Christian life, such as going to confession, receiving communion, and assisting at Sunday Mass, with those observed by North American Catholics in 1948. Yet paradoxically the priests at San José would be fatigued with the administration of two sacraments: baptism and the anointing of the sick.

San José, Plaza Garín, was indeed a parish of the

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<sup>26</sup>Gasparian 11 (October 1948): 6.



poor. Another description of a sick call bears this out. Again Father Kostik:

Today I anointed a man who lay in a bit of a shack bearly [sic] big enough to accommodate a bed and a narrow working bench. There was no mattress on the bed, and the woven wire spring was broken through at the foot of the bed. The man lay stretched on that bed with only a filthy coat for a covering and an unspeakably dirty rag under his head.<sup>27</sup>

Nevertheless, it would be wrong to infer that there were only hovels within the parish limits. Some families had rather crude but modestly comfortable brick structures of four and five rooms. There were still some large, fundo-like homes scattered throughout the area; this was especially true in the countryside around the Resbalon mission.

On 2 August Father William Frantz (age, 33) and Father Bernard Mores (33) reached Chile via the Grace Lines' Santa Isabel. Several days later Father Kostik's much-desired assistant came in the person of Father Mores, who was to serve the people of San Jose for six and a half years. After getting adjusted to his new post, Father Bernard wrote:

After twenty years my former pastor, Fr. Kostik, and I are together taking care of the same parish. When I was just a little boy of twelve it was Fr. Kostik at Whiting, Indiana, who inspired me to study for the priesthood. Now at San Jose, 7,000 miles away from the original place, we are again together. But this is nothing like Whiting. . . . three or four sick calls each day. And they are on foot. You should see

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<sup>27</sup>Kostik, Diary, p. 86.

the condition of our sidewalks, if I<sup>28</sup> may call them such. Sometimes it is just a mud path.

It was Monday 2 August when Father Kenneth Seberger (28) and Father Leonard Fullenkamp (35) aboard the Santa Barbara docked at Valparaiso. From the United States Father Wilson had sent instructions to appoint the four new missionaries. A subsequent board meeting, after a great deal of discussion, decided that Father Mores would continue at San José; Father Fullenkamp was to help Father Hoorman at the hospital; Father Frantz would be fitted into the south; and Father Seberger was to be the other assistant at Santo Domingo. The matter of placing the jeeps was also settled: once released from customs, one was to go to the south, the other to San José.

When Father William Frantz reached Rio Negro on 28 August, his main task was the acquisition of Spanish. In the meantime, he was serving as an assistant to three pastors. Every other week he went to Riachuelo to take care of that parish, while Father Fey traveled to an outlying mission.

The pastor of Riachuelo made these mission trips on horseback, lugging his mass kit and other supplies in saddle bags. The journey of some fifteen to twenty miles could take hours depending on the weather. One such trip might be to the area known as La Costa del Rio Blanco,

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<sup>28</sup>Gasparian 11 (November 1948): 5,6.

where he would celebrate Mass, have marriages and baptisms. Then he might continue on to Crucero, more miles away, to offer a second Mass and sacramental ministrations.

Over in Rio Negro Father Paul Buehler, not waiting for the expected jeep, continued to use his horse. He related:

I was summoned on a sick call about twelve kilometers from the church. It was a beautiful day for a ride in the country - rain, rain. I put on my high-top shoes, two pairs of trousers, a heavy jacket, and a Chilean Manta [poncho]. Remember, it is winter here. It took me just an hour and a quarter to get to the place. When I arrived the lady was unconscious and had been for three days. After I finished anointing her, the family asked that I bless the funeral shroud.<sup>29</sup>

In Santiago it was also winter, but the August rains there were not as frequent nor as lasting as those in the south. Still the rectory at Plaza Garín was cold, the streets were muddy, and the sick calls many. Locally it is said that if the old folks survive August, they will live to see another year. At San José Father Kostik knew of the cold, the mud, and the sick calls, but having Father Bernard Mores with him made it all more bearable.

He changed the very atmosphere of the entire house. . . . The new Fathers shiver a bit from the cold here at this time, and without adequate heating facilities it does get rather chilly. We light a few charcoals in a brasier and remain up as long as the heat lasts. Generally we retire early praying that there is no sick call during the night. The mud is deep and sticky in this section of town, but I am

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<sup>29</sup>Gasparian, 11 (September 1948): 7.

getting good use out of Father Wilson's boots.<sup>30</sup>

On the eighteenth and nineteenth of September Chile celebrates its national independence with festivities known as the Dieciocho. The priests at San José were determined to make the independence days a family-church oriented affair; in previous years most of the activity centered around one of the taverns. A month before the Dieciocho some men of the parish formed a committee to make plans.

On 18 September, after the eight o'clock Mass, the Chilean flag was blessed and raised aloft on a pole erected on church property. At eleven o'clock Father Kostik celebrated a field Mass, while Father Mores directed a choir of men and women. The altar had been placed in the plaza itself with a huge Virgin del Carmen dominating the scene. After the Mass the mayor and other dignitaries gathered in the rectory for a cocktail in honor of the priests new to the parish. Then came twenty-three baptisms.

During the afternoon games and races went on in the plaza. In the evening the public school children and young people presented a program on an improvised stage in front of the rectory; there were dances, songs, poems, and skits. In future years, once the various parochial schools began to function, the pupils would be expected to march in local parades. What took place at San José in 1948 was to be repeated in similar style there and in other parishes in

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<sup>30</sup>Gasparian 11 (October 1948): 6.

the coming years.

On 30 September the jeeps were finally released from customs in Valparaiso; the import duty on each vehicle was four hundred and fifty dollars. Much has been written about the North American's love affair with the automobile. The American missionary carried this romance with him to Chile. However, for him an automobile was not a status symbol, but a necessary means of achieving his goals as a priest. With a jeep or truck, the missionary could cover twenty times as much territory as with a horse. He was able to help people in urgent need of transportation, and enjoy more frequent visits with fellow priests. Nevertheless, in Chile a motor vehicle puts the owner in a privileged category, since the average Chilean neither owns a car nor has any hope of ever purchasing one in his lifetime.

At San José the jeep was a welcome addition. The very next Sunday Father Mores drove out to his mission at Resbalón making the trip in about ten minutes. Since operating a vehicle meant getting a Chilean driver's license, Fathers Kostik and Mores appeared at the city hall to obtain their licenses. They were there from nine-thirty in the morning until closing time at one in the afternoon.

In addition to the jeep other things had been lacking at San José; one was a consistent catechical program for the children. Since the handful of local volunteer

catechists often failed to appear for class, Father Kostik reluctantly appealed for help from the Immaculate Heart of Mary sisters. As a result, four of the teachers from Villa María Academy along with a number of their older students began to assist in the work. The first Saturday there were 145 youngsters in attendance, the second 223, and by the third week almost 400.

Across town at Santo Domingo parish Father Kenneth Seberger (known in Chile as Padre Pepe to avoid using the baptismal name of Canuto with its Protestant connotation) was learning that the hearing of confessions in Chile was different from his stateside experience:

As long as the penitent knows how to confess and is able to do this, I can get along. But when they have not received the sacraments in years and claim to have broken every commandment of God and the Church, and demand that I help them, it is too much.<sup>31</sup>

As the last weeks of 1948 were drawing to a close the two chaplains at Hospital del Salvador, Fathers Hoorman and Fullenkamp, stopped for a moment and totaled up some of their priestly activity: monthly more than seven hundred patients were brought communion; daily at least four gravely ill patients were anointed. Father Hoorman, assisted in the last few weeks by Father Fullenkamp, revalidated fifty marriages, assisted thirty-five adults in making their first communion, encouraged another fifteen to return to

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<sup>31</sup>Gasparian 11 (November 1948): 6.

the church, and baptized about three hundred infants.<sup>32</sup>

It will be recalled that the vicariate board meeting had given its approval to accept Bishop Mery's invitation to establish a parish in Osorno. With this in mind Father Jungwirth journeyed south to meet Father Paul Buehler, where the two then went to Osorno to look over possible parish sites. However, nothing ever came of the offer to settle in that southern city.

By December Father John Wilson had returned to Chile after an absence of some seven months.<sup>33</sup> On 11 January 1949 he attended his first board meeting. Since earlier in the month Father Alphonse Jungwirth had been assigned as assistant in Purrarque, Father Leonard Fullenkamp replaced him on the board as treasurer. A number of other appointments were forthcoming. Father John Hoorman was to leave the hospital and to become pastor of Santo Domingo. His assistants would be Father Seberger and Father Wilson, the latter now being more free to visit the men in the south and to conduct the business of the vicariate. Father Carl Reikowsky moved from Santo Domingo to San

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<sup>32</sup>Gasparian 12 (February 1949): 6.

<sup>33</sup>While in Kansas City Father Wilson met Bishop Marling, who spoke to him about the possibility of introducing diocesan priests from the States into the Chilean program. When Father Wilson proved very agreeable to the idea, Bishop Marling, with Bishop O'Hara's promise to release two men, sent the priests to Berlitz School at his own expense. But when the men became somewhat proficient in Spanish, Bishop O'Hara withdrew his consent.

José, where he was to serve as the assistant responsible for the Resbalón section.<sup>34</sup> All of these moves, after one year on the job, indicated a trend that was to be characteristic of this mission field.

Toward the end of January the provincial sent the good news of additional personnel. In writing to Father Wilson, Father Oberhauser submitted the names of five priests who earlier had indicated an interest in working in Chile. Father Wilson was free to pick out three names or merely state that all five were acceptable.<sup>35</sup> In another matter, Father Oberhauser was now in accord with his vicar provincial: the parishes in the south were to be accepted canonically and not just for a set number of years.<sup>36</sup>

### Progress in the South

Father John Wilson traveled to the southern missions in his first visit to the area in some eight months. To give himself the chance to see what was being accomplished spiritually, he took a Sunday ride with the pastor of Rio Negro.

This particular day found Fr. Paul [Buehler] and myself on the road at six a.m. to one of the many obscure little school houses that dot the southern part of Chile. . . . The little school was too small to

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<sup>34</sup> ASPB-S, "Minutes, Book I, 11 January 1949."

<sup>35</sup> ASPB-S, "Provincial Letters, 1947-1949-1950, Fr. John Wilson."

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.



accommodate the large crowd that came to attend Mass. Besides, there is a law in Chile which forbids that Holy Mass be conducted in a school. And this is a supposedly Catholic country. The señoras helped me in setting up the altar in the quiet little meadow next to the school. And Mass began.

In southern Chile it is very difficult to predict what the weather will be the next half hour and sure enough as I approached the consecration, it began to sprinkle . . . This was the first time that I ever gave out Communion under an umbrella. After the Mass there was the usual number of baptisms and marriages. Fr. Paul took care of these while I breakfasted with the First Communicants and the others.<sup>37</sup>

This letter of Father Wilson conveys quite well the missionary trips of the southern fathers to their outlying districts. Later on a number of chapels were to be constructed, but Mass would continue to be celebrated often in barns, school yards, and private homes. The locales changed, the people attending varied, and missionaries came and went, but the basic pattern described by Father Wilson continued.

The parish church at Purranque is dedicated to the martyr, St. Sebastian, one of the most popular saints in Chile. With much pomp and some ceremony his feast day is observed at various shrines throughout the nation. Humble Purranque comes to prominence every year on 20 January. Father Lengerich had this to say about his first such day:

What the feast of St. Sebastian brings to Purranque is unbelievable. Because I have seen I believe. As a matter of formality I made a request for two extra

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<sup>37</sup>Gasparian 12 (March 1949): 7.

trains, besides the one that passes every day, to bring the people to Purranque for the great feast of St. Sebastian. On the nine days preceeding the feast I had a combined mission and novena which was attended by about 250 adults and 100 children each evening.

But on the big day itself there were almost six or seven thousand here. For a while my church looked like the Notre Dame stadium after an exciting game. Honestly, the church was so packed that only one could move at a time. They were like cattle in a box car. More thrilling was the stream of people who without fear and on their knees pushed their way forward with eight or ten burning candles in their hands. How they did this without catching fire to the clothes of those ahead is a miracle.<sup>38</sup>

One of the features of the feast of St. Sebastian (or St. Rose or Our Lady of Lo Vásquez, etc.) is the fulfillment of mandas. To a Chilean a manda is a private vow to do something pleasing to God, if one has received what he asked for. This procedure is the opposite of the North American's way of doing things. The stateside Catholic will often pray that God grant him a special favor; he will make sacrifices showing his sincerity. On the other hand, the Chilean will make an agreement with God: if you grant me this, then I will do that.

"That" can mean many things. One manda might be to carry burning candles in both hands and crawl the length of the church in Purranque to the statue of St. Sebastian. Or a mother might make a manda promising to dress a child in the religious habit of a saint.

In March the Chilean vicariate board met to discuss

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<sup>38</sup>Gasparian 12 (April 1949): 6.

money matters. It was decided to keep five thousand dollars in pesos in the bank in the south for the use of the priests working there. Another item came up for review: the official allowance. It will be recalled that the 1947 norms for the vicariate indicated that the "financial status of each member, his allowance, etc., shall be the same as that of the North American province."

Beginning with February 1949 the annual allowance for each priest of the American province was set at \$360. In Chile at this time the exchange rate was about fifty-five pesos to the dollar. The vicariate board now voted to fix the monthly allowance for 1949 at 1,650 pesos.<sup>39</sup> Translated into dollars this sum was exactly thirty dollars a month or three hundred and sixty a year. But there was a catch to all this: the continuous Chilean inflation meant that the set sum of 1,650 pesos would not have the same value in the coming months as it did that day in March.

In early April Father Wilson was notified of the three new men who were to sail for Chile on 29 July. From the original list of five names only one now appeared, Father Samuel Homsey; his traveling companions were Fathers Joseph Herod and Arthur Grevenkamp. Another bit of encouraging news was the enthusiasm for the Chilean missions shown by the class ordained to the priesthood the previous

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<sup>39</sup>ASPB, "Minutes, Book I, 19 March, 1949."

month. Out of a group of eighteen, thirteen had volunteered for the vicariate; of this number five would come to Chile.<sup>40</sup>

March and April are the opening months of the school year. Down in Purrangué Father Lengerich had not only assumed the responsibility of the parish, but also of the parochial school founded by the Divine Word priests, who had previously cared for the area. The small school was staffed by five lay teachers. Normally a free school of this type received a partial government subsidy to cover teachers' salaries. However, since reels of red tape often tangled the process of payment, the missionary, this time Father Ambrose, had to look to mission donations to keep afloat. Moreover, his expenses mounted as he added two more classrooms to the existing structure.

In Santiago Father John Kostik was getting into the school business from the ground up. On 23 May workmen began clearing ground for the construction of a parochial school for San José parish. The work was halted briefly while Father Kostik and the architect reworked their plans to build a structure strong enough to hold a second story. Obviously Father John had obtained his much-desired piece of land. It was not easy, because the owner, a somewhat eccentric lady and a member of the Garín family, would not

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<sup>40</sup>They were Fathers Leonard Burghart, Emil Schuwey, Eugene Stiker, Paul Aumen, and Thomas Sweeterman.

deal with the cardinal or his lawyer but only with Father Kostik. In a rather involved transaction the Society paid some six thousand dollars for the property; in turn the archdiocese was to repay the Precious Blood Fathers in pesos within a two-year limit.

At this time the Chilean vicariate had on deposit in an Ohio bank \$25,000 that had been given by the American province. In addition there was another donation of \$10,000. The provincial granted permission to use part of this latter sum, but "not a penny from the \$25,000 of the General Treasury."<sup>41</sup> Father Oberhauser continued:

I have given the above permission reluctantly. But my reluctance is not based on any lack of zeal in behalf of the salvation of souls. Letters are a poor means of communication, but I felt that in Father Kostik's letter there were reflections cast upon my sincerity for mission work, or the fundamental work of saving souls . . . I have never looked upon the South American venture as a "fly by night" affair. But the expenditure of community funds is an important concern of mine now. The Chilean venture is a blessed one, but we have other projects for the salvation of souls . . . The day may come when I will<sup>42</sup> be justified in my hesitancy in this particular case.

In early June of 1949 Fathers Wilson and Kostik made another exploratory trip south. In their absence Father Leonard Fullenkamp, the vicariate treasurer, was instructed to write to the provincial about the need for money to continue the San José building program. His words

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<sup>41</sup> ASPB-S, "Provincial Letters, 1947-1949-1950, Fr. John Wilson.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

revealed the thinking of his fellow missionaries regarding Catholic education:

This foothold we have with the starting of this school is going to mean a lot to the parish of San José and to the attitude of the Chileans in general with regard to parochial schools as we have them in the States. We all agree that the parochial school system can be a lifesaver for the Church in Chile. A very few of the Chilean clergy are already converted to the idea of the parochial school, but the rest are coming over very slowly or not at all. They have to see the system in operation in order to be sold - and I think that we can give it a wonderful impetus at San José.<sup>43</sup>

One could infer from Father Fullenkamp's letter that the San José school was a pioneer effort on the part of the Precious Blood priests to promote parochial education. Such a conclusion would be false. We have already seen that when the Society came to Purranque, such a school was already in existence. Moreover by 1949, among just the North American religious congregations, the Maryknoll Fathers and Sisters had established twenty-one schools; the Holy Cross Fathers, three; the Sisters of St. John the Baptist, six; and the Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, two.<sup>44</sup>

The June trip of Father Wilson and Father Kostik took them to the Araucanía, the territory lying between Temuco to the north and Valdivia to the south. Ecclesias-

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Catholic Relief Services, "United States Contribution to Education in Chile Through Catholic Congregations," Santiago, 1963. (Mimeographed.) A copy is in the files of the writer.

tically known as the Apostolic Vicariate of the Araucanía, the region had been entrusted to Capuchins from Bavaria, under German-born Bishop Guido Beck de Ramberga, a man of about sixty, tall, bearded, with a booming voice and a hospitable manner. As first bishop of the Araucanía, he had founded a seminary and established a group of lay teachers to staff the free schools within his vicariate.

Four months before the trip, Father Wilson had written to the Capuchin superior in Valdivia, Father Guillermo Hartl, informing him that the Precious Blood Fathers would not take the parishes of Quilicahuín and San Juan de la Costa. The Capuchin was not to be put off in his attempt to free his Order from at least one parish. He got in touch with Bishop Beck, who in turn sent Father Wilson a telegram asking him not to accept anything until he had visited the parish at Pitrufrquén. The vicar provincial then wrote to Fathers Buehler and Fey asking them to travel up to Pitrufrquén, look the place over, and advise Father Wilson if they thought that the place would be worth a visit by the superior.

Father Buehler was enthusiastic with what he saw:

Pitrufrquén is about 200 miles north of Rio Negro; 450 miles south of Santiago. We liked what we saw. The house and church were in good repair; there was a large double house across the street with a large property which would serve well as a school. The good Catholic lady who owned the house said she would hold the house for a few months if we were interested and

would sell it to us reasonably.<sup>45</sup>

Father Kostik gave a more detailed description of Pitrufrquén:

This city is really a neat little burgh situated on the flattest piece of terrain in this section, but not far enough away to spoil a beautiful view of the sun capped mountains to the east. The Parish buildings here are all in one block, occupying the whole block . . . We first came to the school, a white building of concrete, two stories high. Next to it is the church, which is of wood, covered with tin. Its tower is a very bulky, square structure with a decided list.<sup>46</sup>

Next to the church stood the rectory, a large two-floor wooden house, typically Capuchin in its barren, unpainted interior walls and sparse in its furnishings. However the house did boast of running water and electricity.

The school that Father Kostik mentioned was that run by Spanish Dominican sisters. About sixty girls attended their free school and about two hundred and fifty their paid school. Since there was a high school in town under Protestant auspices and meant only for boys, the Capuchins hoped that the Society would not only take the parish but also begin a school for boys.

Pitrufrquén was on the main railroad line between Santiago and Puerto Montt in the south. Moreover, there was a branch line that went from Pitrufrquén eastward to

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<sup>45</sup>Buehler, "Historical Notes."

<sup>46</sup>Kostik, Diary, p. 106.



Villarrica, where Bishop Beck lived. Here Fathers Wilson and Kostik had an interview with the bishop, who offered the Society the parish of Pitrufrquén canonically and free of any undue restrictions. On 24 June Father Oberhauser communicated his approval of the Pitrufrquén project to Father Wilson:

Now, I want you to look upon this letter as the definite official approval of your acceptance of Pitrufrquén. To me it is ideally situated forming a closer bond between the members in the north and in the south. To me this is important; isolation can be so harmful especially in work which you Fathers engaged.<sup>47</sup>

Anticipating the approval, Father Wilson had written to the bishop of Valdivia telling him that Father George Fey was to be transferred out of the diocese and that Father William Frantz was to succeed him as pastor of Riachuelo. Father Fey became the first Precious Blood pastor at Pitrufrquén.

Additional missionaries to help the growing apostolate would soon be on their way. On Sunday 24 July departure ceremonies were held at St. Charles seminary for the three newest priests assigned to Chile: Father Samuel Homsey (age, 39), Father Joseph Herod (41), and Father Arthur Grevenkamp (29). Five days later they sailed for Chile. With these three missionaries a total of fifteen priests had gone to the vicariate in little less than two

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<sup>47</sup> ASPB-S, "Provincial Letters, 1947-1949-1950, Fr. John Wilson"

years.

The winter months of June, July, and August are busy ones in Santiago. The air is brisk, the people have a bounce in their walk. In this fall-like atmosphere the North American missionaries were showing their bounce. From Santo Domingo parish Father John Hoorman described some of the activity:

Father Seberger and I have started our parish visitation. I purchased some large colored holy cards to give to each family. The first day Fr. Seberger came back tired and disgusted. He found few people at home and not one invited him into the house, talking to him through the gate. But we decided to carry on and talk to the poor. What a difference it was visiting them! They received us with open arms . . . Even those who had slipped from the narrow path, some married civilly, some without the blessing of either State or Church, some with three<sup>48</sup> or four unbaptized children - all treated me fine.

The pastor of Santo Domingo made reference to "some married civilly." It was under the presidency of Domingo Santa María (1881-1886) that Chile made the marriage ceremony by civil authorities mandatory. Many Chileans, especially of the class that by and large makes up the parishes of the Society, believe that their civil marriage is contract enough. For many the church ceremony is merely a blessing, not a marriage contract.

Across town at Plaza Garín Father Bernard Mores gave some of his impressions:

Although the church is built to seat only 300, on

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<sup>48</sup>Gasparian 12 (May 1949): 7.

a certain Sunday there were about a thousand people in attendance at Mass. There were crying babies, barking dogs, fainting people, and so many cabritos [small boys, "kids"] hanging on to the communion rail that the people could hardly get through to receive . . . One reason, I think, that the attendance has picked up is that we have gone through the parish passing out hand-bills to each of the thousands of houses and shacks.<sup>49</sup>

While Father Mores was promoting the apostolate, the pastor at Plaza Garín was pushing the construction of his parish school. In late July, when the architect brought the final plans for the building, workmen were already pouring concrete and working on the iron reinforcements. The contractor for all this was René Tempio, tall for a Chilean and Falstaffian in proportions; in the coming years he and his crew built just about everything that the Society constructed in the Santiago area. Father John Kostik entertained the hope of having the cornerstone blessing on 15 August.

The fathers in southern Chile were also on the move. From Purrangué Father Ambrose Lengerich wrote of his assistant:

Since the arrival of Father Alphonse Jungwirth things have never been the same. I mean that he is always busy repairing or building. He was here just a short while and he had the house wired for electricity. But we still sit down by candle light because the officials are not like Father Alphonse. They have plenty of time and too much to say. Here the regulations for installing electric<sup>50</sup> lights are somewhat different than in the States.

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<sup>49</sup>Gasparian 12 (June 1949): 7.

<sup>50</sup>Gasparian 12 (September 1949): 8.

Some two hundred miles north of Purrangué, Father George Fey was getting acquainted with his new parish of pitrufquén. Even before Father George assumed the pastorate on 4 August, the provincial had authorized the purchase of a large house and lot across the street from the rectory. After considerable renovation, the double house was to serve as a school.

In his letter approving the school project, Father Oberhauser preferred that the bishop contribute something and that the property be put in the name of the Society and not that of the local ordinary. He then had a question: "The thought has come to my mind regarding Father Kostik's school, and also the school you contemplate at Pitrufquén - who is going to teach in these schools?"<sup>51</sup>

Several months previously Father Wilson had written to the mother general of the Precious Blood Sisters at Dayton, Ohio. He was eager to obtain the assistance of this religious group that had already shared so much of the Society's early history in the United States. On 28 May Mother Mary Nathalia gave a reply that was not wholly unexpected. She explained that every member of her council voiced the desire to send sisters to Chile, but that all recommended waiting until the day when the province had sufficient personnel.

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<sup>51</sup> ASPB-S, "Provincial Letters, 1947-1949-1950, Fr. John Wilson."

On 17 August via the Grace Lines Fathers Samuel Homsey, Arthur Grevenkamp, and Joseph Herod reached Chile. Five days later, meeting to appoint the new men, the vicariate board decided to send Father Homsey to Rio Negro, Father Grevenkamp to assist Father Fey at Pitrufoquén, and Father Herod to help Father Fullenkamp at the hospital.

Father William Frantz, the successor of Father Fey at Riachuelo, described the conditions that he encountered:

I have been received very cordially. As usual, there are many bad marriages, many adults who have received no sacrament other than baptism, and families living in dire poverty. The faith is here, but ignorance and human weakness have almost obliterated it. Consequently, at every home considerable instruction is needed . . .<sup>52</sup>

In the middle of the twentieth century, the town of Riachuelo presented to the North American missionary a touch of old Tombstone or Deadwood. It was a small pueblo with three streets, dusty or muddy, running east and west and three more going north and south. Perhaps five hundred people lived here in some sixty dwellings. The main business of the town was to slacken the thirst of the surrounding countryside. Riachuelo counted some fifteen cantinas that served wine and chicha or hard cider. Although an occasional vehicle would pass through town, this was an exception. Men on horseback and men in ox-drawn, two-wheel carts found refuge and relaxation in Riachuelo. While the riders took care of their thirst, hitching posts took care

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<sup>52</sup>Gasparian 12 (November 1949): 5.

of the horses.

The newest man on the southern scene was Father Arthur Grevenkamp, who wrote from Pitrufuén:

I am still very new here, so new that the people do not as yet understand my particular brand of Spanish . . .

A few weeks ago we bought a property which we hope to have equipped with a school by the first of March. It will be a school for boys because the Sisters already have two schools for girls in town. The boys have a choice of going to a public school or to one taught by the Seventh Day Adventists from the States. So we must open a school for them or most of the young men in the parish will be lost to the Faith.<sup>53</sup>

On 31 August Father Samuel Homsey followed Father Grevenkamp south. He took the ordinario or slow train as far as Osorno, where Father Lengerich met him. Together the two continued on to Rio Negro. After three weeks in the old rectory, the newest missionary grew accustomed to the late winter chill.

The third member of the group that arrived in Chile on 17 August was Father Joseph Herod. Almost at once he began assisting Father Fullenkemp at the Hospital del Salvador. One evening within a three-hour period he anointed twelve persons. Since in those pre-Vatican II days all the sacraments and the liturgy were celebrated in Latin, a newcomer could feel useful as he celebrated Mass, baptized, and anointed the sick.

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<sup>53</sup>Gasparian 12 (December 1949): 7.

Across town the big topic of conversation and concern was the construction of Father Kostik's school. In spite of well-intentioned plans for financing the project, money was in short supply. However, progress did continue on the school, as Father Kostik noted:

Yesterday my heart beat with joy. The workmen raised the first rafter on top the walls of our school. Chilean-style they nailed a staff to the gable and proudly displayed the national flag. By Saturday all the rafters will be up, then the fiesta de los tija-ales, the feast of the rafters. Unfortunately the owner, in this case the pastor, pays the expenses. Two young goats, a couple of demijohns of wine, a quantity of onions and bread will set the feast.<sup>54</sup>

Down south there were further stirrings. On 25 September with the bishop of Valdivia presiding, Purrangué was formally erected as a parish, the first that the Society had begun in Chile. It will be recalled that being raised to the rank of a parish had been contingent upon the completion of the rectory to house the priests. After a delay of almost a year and a half, the dwelling was finally considered to be livable.

Father Ambrose Lengerich, the first pastor of Purrangué, also cared for the nearby little town of Corte Alto.

Here there is no chapel but I offer Mass in an old frame house at 9:30. I have to take the little Mass bell and walk down the street to let the people know that there is going to be a Mass. By 10:00 there are some thirty children there to assist at Mass, but the parents are absent. Can it be that they think a little

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<sup>54</sup>Gasparian 13 (January 1950):

bell calls only little people.<sup>55</sup>

In Chile the Feast of all Saints is observed as a national holiday. Since there is no work on this day but resumes the following day, the Commemoration of All Souls, people of all ages visit the cemeteries on the first day of November. While very few will be moved to attend Mass in their parish church, nearly all will pay graveside homage to their departed ones.

From Purranque Father Ambrose gave his impressions of this new experience:

All Saints Day was like a country fair. Crowds of people poured into the cemetery all day. Where they came from leaves some doubt. It might have been the beginning of the Last Day. Everything was set for the occasion: refreshment stands with orange crush, cider, limonade and sandwiches kept the weary and hungry spirits rejuvenated between the chanted Aves [Hail Marys] and silent vigils marked and timed by a burned-out candle. I can't imagine the last day as being anything like this. We took advantage of the occasion and had a Mass in the open for the Suffering Souls. It was well attended and I am sure an inspiration for all.<sup>56</sup>

The year 1949 was drawing to a close. Statistics of the Society reveal that at that time the American province had 373 priests; of this number fifteen were in the Chilean missions.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>55</sup>Gasparian 12 (September 1949): 8.

<sup>56</sup>Gasparian 12 (December 1949): 8.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid., p. 6.



The End of the Beginning

Periodically major religious superiors have the duty of interviewing personally their entire membership. With this in mind, Father Seraphin Oberhauser announced that the year 1950 was to be a visitation year for the American province, with the visitation beginning in Chile. On 10 January the provincial landed at Santiago; he remained in Chile for nearly a month. Seeing all that the fathers had accomplished in little more than two years impressed him deeply. Writing from Santiago on 4 February, he addressed himself to the priests of the vicariate, stating his impressions and recommendations.<sup>58</sup>

The Chilean vicariate held its first annual retreat during the week of 12 February in Pitrufrquén. Already the anticipated advantage of having a parish somewhat halfway between Santiago and the south was being put to use. For a number of years the parish buildings of San Juan Evangelista were to serve for this yearly community gathering. During the course of the retreat, Father Wilson read to the assembled priests the lengthy report that Father Oberhauser had composed before leaving Chile.

An opening statement was followed by an introduction and then by ten different areas that the stateside superior thought merited attention. The provincial's introductory sentence showed his sentiments: "The American

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<sup>58</sup>Gasparian 13 (March 1950): 2.

province has every reason to be proud of every man in the Chilean Vicariate."<sup>59</sup> He then pointed out that the missionaries had chosen to work among the poorest of the poor, thereby following the advice of recent popes and also the counsel of the newly approved Customary of the American province. The provincial paper then elaborated further on poverty and the poor and personal property.

Further paragraphs treated the disposition of mission donations, religious life and its observance, neatness, and charity. The shortest paragraph referred to the health of the priests. In view of what was to happen within the next three months, it was to take on much greater importance.

The assistant at Pitrufoquén was Father Arthur Grevenkamp, a huge man some six and a half feet tall. While still in the seminary he had suffered from a serious leg infection that brought on high and puzzling temperatures. Now at Pitrufoquén the ailment reappeared. Sent to the hospital at Valdivia he quickly recovered, but the doctor suggested the drier climate of Santiago.

At times one appointment starts a domino effect; this was one of those times. In February Father Wilson became pastor again of Santo Domingo; Father Hoorman, pastor, Rio Negro; Father Buehler, assistant, Pitrufoquén; Father Grevenkamp, assistant, Santo Domingo. In March

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<sup>59</sup>Ibid.

another set of appointments appeared: Father Reikowsky was named assistant at Rio Negro; Father Homsey, assistant at San José parish. This constant shifting of personnel became an early characteristic of the vicariate. Nearly always the moves were made in the summer months of January and February to avoid disruptions in the school year.

That Chilean summer witnessed an enormous amount of physical work done by the fathers. From San José, Plaza Garín, Father Bernard Mores wrote:

Father Kostik is ready to admit that the pressure gets a little heavy at times. At present Padre Juan is trying to make things work out with the new school. It is almost under roof, but there are desks to buy, plumbing to put in, books<sup>60</sup> to get, professors to engage - a hundred and one things.

After Father Kostik had spent a year in Chile, he made application to have his one-year Chilean residency card changed over to one of permanent residency. The endless red tape proved extremely irritating.

Had to get another form filled out as to my income! If it were not for the seriousness of our work here, I would be tempted to throw in the sponge. The difficulties we have to go through<sup>61</sup> to get a simple paper of permanencia are incredible.

In spite of this and other problems Father Kostik succeeded in opening his school in March 1950. In a twelve page newsletter distributed to the parishioners of San José parish at the end of the year, this summary of the school

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid., p. 10.

<sup>61</sup> Kostik, Diary, p. 140.

dedication appeared:

One year and a half after the arrival of the Fathers of the Precious Blood to the Parish of San José, on Sunday, March 26, 1950, the parish school of San José was blessed and dedicated by his Eminence José María Cardinal Caro, in the presence of church authorities, other personalities, and a large crowd. Teaching in the parish school was entrusted to Franciscan religious, the Daughters of Mercy, and lay teachers. In this first year there were six hundred students distributed among the first three years of the primary grades.<sup>62</sup>

The parish publication included a photograph of the dedication crowd with a full view of the two-story, concrete structure. The building contained eight class rooms and a first aid clinic. The sisters who staffed the school were members of a Yugoslavian congregation. At San José the superior was a Yugoslav, but the majority of the religious were Chilean. Since there was no convent, the sisters lived in a rented house on Cauquenes street across from the church.

The schools that the vicariate was in the process of establishing were free schools. This meant that each school, after filling out reams of governmental forms, was eligible to receive a state subsidy. In theory this money would be sufficient to cover the payment of teachers' salaries. Moreover, if the subsidy arrived on time and if the majority of teachers were religious sisters receiving a reduced salary, then it was possible to make a certain

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<sup>62</sup>From a copy retained by a parishioner of San José parish and translated by writer.

profit from the schools. In turn, this income was used to enlarge or build other schools.

To the uninitiated the government's school subsidy was a godsend; to the experienced it often proved a keen disappointment. First of all, the Society was responsible for the teachers' salaries each month; this meant having cash on hand. However, with luck the subsidy for the entire year came at the end of the school term or even at the beginning of the next. Obviously the pastors of each parish that had a school were quite concerned about paying salaries every month.

Even before the turn of the century Chile had been gravely troubled with inflation. The problem increased. This is why the allowance of the vicariate missionaries had to be constantly raised in terms of local money. Thus, in 1948 each priest was entitled to an allowance of 1,650 pesos; one year later this was increased to 2,500 pesos. Little imagination is needed to appreciate the injustice of having paid out, for example, 300,000 pesos in yearly salaries and then getting that sum back a year later after inflation had eroded about thirty per cent of the original value.

The government subsidy of free schools was intended to pay teachers' wages only. But there were other expenses: the maintenance of the building itself; light, water, and at times, telephone bills; replacement of broken win-

dows and desks, office supplies. Some of these expenses were covered by fund raising events or by small quotas given by the pupils at the time of registration. Yet without the continuing help of stateside benefactors, the construction and maintenance of vicariate schools would have been impossible.

Because of the need of the subsidy, the school at San José had to be recognized by the government. Since the country already had two schools with the name of San José, some functionary insisted that the school at Plaza Garín use a different title. This prompted Father Kostik to write: "We have decided on Beato Gaspar. The fame of our Saintly Founder will be perpetuated in Chile."<sup>63</sup> The upshot was that the school was called San José and given an official number.

During the summer months of January and February, Father Alphonse Jungwirth was absent from Purrangué. He had gone to Pitrufrúen to help Father Fey convert his recently acquired house into a school. Father George wrote to the provincial:

Tomorrow we open the doors of "Colegio Beato Gaspar." We are right on time in accordance with our announced date but we did not get finished until late last night. It has turned out to be the best boys' school in town. We already have 100 boys enrolled and the prospects for 200 are good.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>63</sup>Gasparian 13 (April 1950): 10.

<sup>64</sup>Gasparian 13 (March 1950): 9.

Holy Week 1950 was approaching; Palm Sunday was 2 April. At Santo Domingo parish Father Arthur Grevenkamp offered the first two Masses of the day; later he attended the three celebrated by the pastor, Father Wilson. After the last Mass Father Arthur remarked that he was not feeling well. He ate a little lunch and after some urging went to bed. Getting up on Monday morning, he admitted that he was not well enough to teach class in a neighboring school. When Father Wilson encouraged him to go either back to bed or to the hospital, Father Grevenkamp checked into the Hospital del Salvador. There he occupied the spare bedroom in the quarters of Father Leonard Fullenkamp.

The following morning Father Arthur told the chaplain that he could not walk and that he had a pain at the base of his spine. Alarmed, Father Fullenkamp summoned a neurologist, who immediately diagnosed the cause as poliomyelitis. The presence of an iron lung did not impede the progress of the disease. While praying with three other priests, Father Grevenkamp peacefully died in the afternoon of Wednesday 5 April.

Since in Chile bodies of the deceased are rarely embalmed, burial takes place within a day or two. The laws of liturgy prohibited a requiem Mass, but a funeral service was held on Good Friday morning in the church of Santo Domingo. Many priests attended, the North American colony was present, and Ambassador Bowers absent in the United

states sent his representative. Later that day the body was placed in a burial niche in the Catholic cemetery of Santiago. One week after Father Arthur's death, Father Wilson celebrated a funeral Mass at Santo Domingo in the presence of Cardinal Caro, who preached the sermon and gave the final absolution.

The death of Father Grevenkamp was a blow to all the Precious Blood missionaries, but especially so to his last pastor and superior, Father John Wilson. The provincial sent several letters in rapid succession to Father Wilson in an effort to encourage him in his time of trial:

I am reminding you again to take it easy. You stated that you are nearly dead. I realize full that Fr. Art's death was a very great ordeal, but it has to be taken with full resignation to the will of God. Do not take on too much work either.<sup>65</sup> Relax, John, by taking complete recreation regularly.

But Father Wilson's anguish was not to diminish. About one month later, 16 May, he was forced to write to the provincial:

I hardly know how to begin this letter, but it looks like Almighty God is really giving us a trial by fire. Yesterday morning the doctor here gave us the verdict that Father Kenneth Seberger has tuberculosis.<sup>66</sup>

Father Oberhauser directed the vicar provincial to arrange for the immediate return of Father Seberger to the

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<sup>65</sup> ASPB-S, "Provincial Letters, 1947-1949-1950, Fr. John Wilson."

<sup>66</sup> ASPB-D, "1950-1954 - Chile Vicar."



United States. Within a month he was operated on for the successful removal of a diseased but non-tubercular lung.

In early 1950 the Precious Blood Fathers in Chile hoped to begin a work that would affect the existence of the Society in the missions: a novitiate for brother candidates. Upon his return to the United States after his Chilean visitation, Father Oberhauser found a letter from the moderator general, Father Herbert Kramer:

The idea of accepting brothers meets with my hearty approval. The Novitiate would have to be conducted in the best possible manner, but if there be one or two novices, there can not be much common life, except that lived with the priests. I surely second your own suggestion, that one must proceed with added caution in a new country where characters might be quite different.

The vicariate board met on 18 April to discuss the placement of the two brother postulants. All agreed that one of them, Rupertino Ojeda, should live with Father Frantz at Riachuelo; the other, Juanito Zapatos, would join Father Lengerich at Purrangué. By the end of May Father Oberhauser had approved the various norms regarding the prospective candidates.

But the program never got off the drawing boards. By 5 June Father Wilson was writing to the provincial:

The brother situation is not working out so well. It seems from all reports that these young men had no conception at all what religious life is like . . . So probably we can just write both off the books; but the

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<sup>67</sup> ASPB-S, "Provincial Letters, 1947-1949-1950, Fr. John Wilson." This is quoted in a letter from the provincial.

men in the south seem to think there will be others.  
There must be.<sup>68</sup>

At about the same time that the brother experiment was being launched, another project was in the works: the acquisition of a site for a seminary. The first vicariate board meeting, 19 May 1948, had discussed the possibility of locating a future ~~seminary~~ in Resbalón, then still out in the country and several miles west of Plaza Garín. Now on a Sunday in April of 1950 Father Wilson met with the Guzmán family, owners of a fundo adjacent to the village of Resbalón. By the first week of June the vicar provincial was growing optimistic over the Guzmán's donation of forty acres to the Society; but there was a condition: construction would have to begin at once. With this, the search for a seminary site was dropped for several years.

Within a six-week period the parish of Santo Domingo had lost its two assistants, one by death, the other by an illness that forced his leaving Chile. The American provincial, aware of the man power problem, wrote to Father Wilson:

For some time now I have been working on the program of selecting new candidates for the Vicariate, but I will confess also that the progress is slow. Any day I expect to get rapped on the knuckles by some bishop. I am not afraid of that, however, because we are fulfilling<sup>69</sup> a wish of the Holy See by coming into South America.

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<sup>68</sup> ASPB-D, "1950-1954 - Chile Vicar."

<sup>69</sup> ASPB-S, "Provincial Letters, 1947-1949-1950, Fr. John Wilson.

Less than two weeks later the vicar provincial received the good news that Father Walter Junk (41) and Father Leonard Burghart (30) had been assigned to the vicariate. Even though additional priests were to be available within several months, the provincial was still concerned about the men already in Chile. Writing to Father Wilson, he cautioned him to keep an eye on the health of his priests, noting that he himself was somewhat worried about the pace that Father Bernard Mores maintained. Father Wilson replied that ordering Father Bernard to slow down was like asking water to run up hill.<sup>70</sup>

In this same letter to the provincial Father Wilson expressed his own concern with the health of the missionaries. He indicated that while his policy was to promote health, his principle was that a busy priest was a good priest. Especially busy were the Santiago area men; with more work than ever, the six of them celebrated a total of fourteen Sunday Masses regularly. The vicar provincial also mentioned that just being full-time pastor of Santo Domingo was job enough, not to mention his other duties. Father Wilson concluded by appealing to the provincial for some suggestions.

Father Oberhauser responded quickly to the call for help. He ordered the Santiago missionaries to drop immedi-

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<sup>70</sup>In 1979 Father Bernard Mores was still active in Chile.

ately all teaching in the schools and all Sunday assistance in diocesan parishes. There was a third point:

With all kindness I am asking you likewise to be much easier on the men. Your policy of a busy priest being a good priest is all right, but be careful of how you interpret that word busy. He can be busy if he is sitting in his own room, or the living room, and doing some reading. Really, in three years I do not think the priests (ours) in Chile have had a vacation. Let them relax whenever they can.

Well, John . . . do not let the enormity of the work <sup>71</sup> in Chile stun you; you can do just so much and no more.

In his May letter to the provincial informing him of the illness of Father Seberger, Father Wilson also mentioned that on 16 September his three-year term as superior would expire. "While I am perfectly contented here or any other place you want me, I thought I would repeat once more, my perfect willingness to step aside in favor of another if you see fit."<sup>72</sup> With this letter in mind and knowing the strain that Father Wilson had been under for a number of months, on 10 August Father Oberhauser notified his vicar provincial that he was to be relieved of office.

Writing six days later, Father Wilson replied:

As you know also, this job was the toughest thing I ever tackled in my life . . . And I would like to say, just for the records and I believe I know better than any other man, that Father Kostik has been the real

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<sup>71</sup>ASPB-S, "Provincial Letters, 1947-1949-1950, Fr. John Wilson."

<sup>72</sup>ASPB-D, "1950-1954 - Chile Vicar."

moving spirit in the Vicariate. In spite of his years and bad health, in my opinion, he has done far more than any other man, for the Vicariate. He always has been and still is intensely interested in, <sup>73</sup> spite of and in the face of terrific adverse criticism.

The vicar provincial also indicated that he considered Father Leonard Fullenkamp as best qualified to succeed him in office. He based his opinion upon a number of factors: Father Leonard was in an older age bracket, his judgment was sound, he was conscientious, a spiritual man, gifted with a pleasing personality, had a host of friends, and being six feet four inches tall, he made a fine appearance.

Obviously the provincial was impressed with the qualities of Father Fullenkamp. On 1 September 1950 he received his appointment as vicar provincial of the Chilean missions effective on the twenty-sixth of the month. The Precious Blood Fathers in Santiago insisted that Father Leonard enter his first day in office with a special dinner at Santo Domingo rectory. The priests did not take to heart the provincial's plea to relax: they had that meal, but they also used the occasion to anticipate the October day of retreat and to hold a board meeting.

The work went on.

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<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

## CHAPTER IV

### MORE BRICK AND MORTAR

#### Expansion of Parish Facilities

The first vicariate board meeting of the new vicar provincial approved the motion to proceed with the construction of a new church in Purrangué. Although it was hoped to begin work in October, this was not to be. At the end of January, 1951, Father Fullenkamp explained to the provincial that the architect's twenty-thousand dollar estimate was simply too much money. His reasoning casts some light upon Catholic observance in the area: "Considering the poor attendance to church services in Purrangué and uncertain future possibilities in that particular location, we want to hold as closely as possible to the price of around ten thousand dollars."<sup>1</sup> However, some ten months later, in November, with a simplified structure in mind, Bishop Mery of Valdivia blessed the first stone, the Chilean equivalent of cornerstone laying.

Father Fullenkamp had been in office less than a month, when he received the help of two new missionaries:

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<sup>1</sup>ASPB-S, "Provincial Letters, Sept. 1950-Sept. 1956, Fr. Leonard Fullenkamp."

Father Walter Junk (41) and Father Leonard Burghart (30). Both had taken a two-month Spanish course at Collegeville, Indiana.

The new men were to learn quickly that the Catholicity of Chile was not that of the United States. One of the veterans in the field, Father John Hoorman, wrote from Rio Negro:

People come to the house repeatedly to obtain a pase [permit] to bury someone and tell me they never knew that they must call the Priest [before death]. The other day I asked one man: "Why don't you come to Mass on Sundays so that you can learn these things?" His answer was: "Yes, that is a good idea. Next Sunday I will send the children." He probably thinks that he is hopeless and because of this attitude we concentrate on the children.<sup>2</sup>

From Hospital del Salvador in Santiago Father Joseph Herod observed:

You would be surprised, even as I was, to find Catholics who think that there is only one person in God, namely Christ Jesus. Some of these same people think that the<sub>3</sub>Blessed Virgin Mary is as great as God or even greater.

Since February of 1950 Father Samuel Homsey had been an assistant at San José, Plaza Garín. From his vantage point in that working class parish he noted:

From what we see and hear only about ten per cent of the people practice their traditional religion. I think that five per cent comes closer to the number that are regulars. . . . In the majority of lower class parishes priests have gotten so tired of the battle that they no longer ask whether the parents are married or not. We are still fresh on the job, and as

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<sup>2</sup>Gasparian 13 (November 1950): 5.

<sup>3</sup>Gasparian 14 (January 1951): 6.

a result people are amazed when we make an issue of the sacramental side of matrimony. But it is paying off here at San José. In this Holy Year we will rectify about 250 marriages . . .

Down south the pastor of Riachuelo, Father William Frantz, described some strange happenings in the Popoén area. One of the poor farmers had found a statue of the Virgin in his field, and when he placed the image in his house, it at once moved from one corner of the room to the other. Neighbors from far and near gathered to see this miracle and to burn candles at an improvised shrine. Yet "the world must move before they will go to Confession and Holy Communion."<sup>5</sup>

The thinking of the vicariate members at this time was that much religious ignorance could be eradicated through the introduction of more parochial schools. Father Homsey, convinced that such a school at the San José mission of Resbalón would effect real change, received provincial permission to begin building. Previously the vicariate board had approved the project only if he could see the construction through on his own stateside donations and local Chilean assistance. The provincial was adamant that no money would be forthcoming from the Society's treasury.

Several classrooms were built in time to admit the first group of 130 children and their two lay teachers by

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<sup>4</sup>Gasparian 13 (December 1950): 4.

<sup>5</sup>Gasparian 14 (April 1951): 4.



April 1951. Three years later an Italian congregation of teaching sisters from Argentina staffed the school with four religious. With additional classrooms added in 1956, the Resbalón venture had expanded into a full six-year primary school.

In addition to the Resbalón project, another one was afoot on the other side of Santiago. Before he had left the pastorate of Santo Domingo for that of Rio Negro, Father John Hoorman had encouraged some of the women of the parish in their plan to establish a polyclinic. With Father John Wilson again pastor there, the idea for such a clinic was carried through. He was aided in great part by the donations of Helen Wessel, a non-Catholic, long-time North American resident of Santiago, noted for her various charitable works. The polyclinic to help the sick poor of affluent Santo Domingo parish was dedicated by Cardinal Caro on Sunday, 9 October 1952.

What Father Wilson wrote about the actual building of his clinic could have been written about any other of the many construction projects of the vicariate:

Building in Chile is quite different than in any other place I have ever been. There are no contracts made or signed. Instead of contracts, they are called estimates and of course are subject to all kinds of changes. If the material goes up, if the workers fail to show all day Monday because of a Sunday hang-over, if the new equipment does not function immediately after it is installed, the loss must be borne by the person who is paying for the building. Those are just

a few of the headaches.<sup>6</sup>

If he had so wished, Father Wilson could have added a few more thoughts about Chilean building practices. He did mention workers not showing up on Monday. This is so common a practice that the people themselves refer to the impromptu holiday as la fiesta de San Lunes, the feast of st. Monday. With regard to the actual construction there is another quirk: electrical and plumbing installations. Once concrete has been poured and hardened, areas of the walls and ceilings are then laboriously chipped out to install electrical conduits, while cement floors are broken into to place plumbing fixtures. Needless to say, the missionary undertaking a building project had to devote most of his time to overseeing the construction.

At the end of the January 1951 retreat in Pitrufuquén, the assembled missionaries discussed the possibility of starting a seminary. Apparently no one referred to the questioning letter that the provincial had sent to Father Wilson in June, 1949:

The idea of a seminary . . . is a different question. I find it hard to reconcile that idea with what you told me last summer, namely, that other religious communities find it extremely difficult to obtain native vocations because of the peculiar class condition that exists in Chile.

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<sup>6</sup>Gasparian 15 (May 1952): 6.

<sup>7</sup>ASPB-S, "Provincial Letters, 1947-1949-1950, Fr. John Wilson."

At any rate, the consensus of the fathers at Pit-rufquén was that the vicariate had to have a seminary, if it was ever to be freed from dependence upon the American province for man power. Mention was made of the recent entry of the Italian Pallotine Fathers into Chile and their success in launching a seminary. What the vicariate members had in mind was a minor or preparatory seminary patterned somewhat after Brunnerdale, the province's educational institution near Canton, Ohio. When informed of the idea, the provincial's reply was somewhat ambiguous: "I also see the need for a central house, and something like Brunnderdale, for the Vicariate in Chile."<sup>8</sup>

However, writing to his vicar provincial in July 1951, Father Oberhauser was forthright in pointing out that no land had yet been purchased for the proposed seminary. In part his response was prompted by the urging of the Father Herbert Kramer, moderator general of the Society. The men in Chile proved amenable; after all, it was their idea.

As a result, in the stateside spring of 1952 the vicariate bought a small farm or chacra near the city of San Bernardo, about five miles south of Santiago, on Chile's main highway and railway. Approximately six acres of land were acquired for thirteen thousand dollars. With

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., "Sept. 1950-Sept. 1956, Fr. Leonard Fullenkamp."

the purchase came an old, rambling house made of substantial adobe and equipped with running water, electricity, and a telephone. The plot itself was irrigated for the cultivation of grapes, almonds, and walnuts. But six years were to pass before the property was used as a seminary. In the meantime, various farm families lived there working and maintaining the place.

With all the activity created by the building of the Resbalón school, the polyclinic at Santo Domingo, and the acquisition of a seminary site, one would think that this would be enough activity for the Santiago priests. It was not. The vicariate board members proposed to build a new rectory for the men at San José parish and to remodel the old one to serve as a convent for the teaching sisters. By August 1952 Father Fullenkamp informed the provincial that the rectory was completed at a cost of some sixteen thousand dollars, a sum not much in excess of the original estimate.<sup>9</sup>

The building boom extended down to Pitrufoquén, where the provincial gave permission to begin a liceo. The Chilean liceo or colegio embraced grades seven through twelve. The first three years of this grouping were known as the first cycle, the last three years the second cycle; all six years were called the humanities or humanidades. Father George Fey, pastor at Pitrufoquén, was hopeful that

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

he could begin the first three years of the humanities.

According to Father Fullenkamp, the need for such a school was obvious:

The only Liceo in town for boys is being run by the Seventh Day Adventists, a very bigoted bunch. The boys after graduation from our parish school have no choice but to go there, if they wish to continue school. We all understand the need of a Catholic Liceo there clearly enough because [sic] the boys soon lose their Faith in the Protestant Liceo - and you know what kind of faith these South American men usually end up with anyway.<sup>10</sup>

The priests at Pitrufrquén and the vicar provincial were convinced that a junior high school was necessary to further the Catholic education of their grade school graduates. However, after an initially high enrollment the number of students fell considerably. The vicariate board believed that the liceo needed a better equipped school to compete. Then near the end of the 1952 school year, the board had to face the hard fact that the government subsidy to the Pitrufrquén parochial schools was already a year in arrears.

On 18 April 1951 Father Herbert Kramer, moderator general of the Society of the Precious Blood with residence in Rome, arrived in Chile for an official visit of some three weeks. During his stay he inspected all the foundations of the Society, met the bishops in whose dioceses the fathers were working, and dined with the faculty of the Pontifical Seminary. When the vicariate board indicated to

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

Father Kramer that any further growth in Chile depended upon more personnel sent from the United States, he replied that he would try to persuade the American provincial and his board to look favorably upon the aspirations of the vicariate.

At the conclusion of his visitation to the Xingu prelatore, the Chilean vicariate, and the American province, Father Kramer prepared a report on his findings. The respective superiors of the various jurisdictions were asked to submit at the end of 1952 their report of what steps had been taken to implement his recommendations. With regard to Chile, the moderator general suggested:

That efforts be made to promote and extend the efforts of the Province in behalf of the Vicariate in Chile, by sending additional missionaries and taking steps to establish a juniorate for the training of native boys for the priesthood. That<sup>11</sup> a definite budget be provided from Society funds . . .<sup>11</sup>

In his report to Rome made in January of 1953, Father Oberhauser stated that the American province was doing its best to send additional priests to Chile despite intense pressure from American bishops to aid their dioceses, and that the purchase of the San Bernardo property meant the establishment of a seminary. Finally, a definite budget promising financial assistance to Chile was no longer necessary, because the Society had promised to subsidize any essential needs of the vicariate. It was

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<sup>11</sup>ASPB-R, G III 3B 1843-1959.

further pointed out that with the priests returning home on stateside leaves, most of them had been generously received, that Father John Kostik alone was given more than ten thousand dollars during his short stay in the States.

The constant flow of mission donations from stateside benefactors was necessary to maintain the building program. By now the priests at Rio Negro were absorbed in constructing three simple wooden chapels to serve the country people of Chahuilco, Quisquelefún, and Nancuán. The estimated cost of construction was \$250 for each building, but the real cost proved to be almost double that figure.<sup>12</sup> When the chapels were completed in 1952, Bishop Mery of Valdivia was present for the dedication ceremony and to confer the sacrament of confirmation.

Now the concern of the missionaries in the deep south turned to the spiritual needs of the people not reached by the wayside chapels. Knowing that they could never build enough chapels to cover the countryside, the priests learned a lesson from the Protestant missionaries around Pitrufrquén. Those enterprising people used a trailer chapel, drawing big crowds with music and movies powered by a portable generator. The priests in the Purranque-Rio Negro-Riachuelo area believed that a similar vehicle would give them the mobility to reach the maximum number of

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<sup>12</sup> ASPB-D, "1950-1954 - Chile Vicar; letter of 19 August 1952."

people with the minimum expense. According to the vicariate board, with a trailer the missionaries "could go into the campo for a week at a time to counteract the activity of the 'Canutos' who are over-running their territory."<sup>13</sup> The priests themselves doing the work hoped to build the trailer for about two thousand dollars.

When completed the vehicle had two bunks and general living quarters. Such an arrangement was needed, when on the occasion of a mission, to avoid seeking lodging from the fundo owner. Father Carl Reikowsky explained:

Even if we could obtain lodging there, the laborers, 90 percent of whom are illiterate with a very strong strain of Indian blood, would look askance at us if we descended upon them from the owner's house, and would wonder if we were taking his part. This I know for a fact, since I have experienced it several times. The people will not come for the mission, and if they do, they will walk away without letting it take effect.<sup>14</sup>

Construction costs in Chile in the early 1950s may not have been as high as they were in the United States, but building was not cheap. Money to continue constructing schools, churches, chapels, or to renovate existing structures was often the object of fund raising ideas. One of these had been attempted in 1949, when the then treasurer, Father Fullenkamp, received provincial permission to exchange dollars for pesos according to a special, favorable governmental program. Before that particular transaction

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<sup>13</sup> ASPB-S, "Minutes, Book I, 16 September 1952."

<sup>14</sup> Gasparian 16 (January 1953): 6.



could be concluded, the money market closed temporarily.

In late 1951 the free market exchange rate for the dollar was running between eighty and ninety pesos. However, once again it became possible for a private entity, such as the vicariate, to deal through the importers' exchange, receiving anywhere from five to fifty pesos more on each dollar. Of course the sum to be exchanged had to be large enough to attract the attention of the importers and to receive the approval of various governmental agencies. Once the government got involved, the usual enormous amount of red tape followed.

This time Father Fullenkamp, now vicar provincial, was determined to take advantage of the new opportunity before Chilean law shut down the importers' exchange. Months before he had been authorized to exchange \$23,000; now he thought that he had received provincial permission to borrow \$20,000 from the American province. The entire \$43,000 was then converted into pesos at an exchange rate between 135 and 140 pesos per dollar. But back in the States the provincial was stunned when his treasurer notified him that a check for \$22,000 had been written on the province's general account. Father Oberhauser was under the impression that the entire sum for the brokers' exchange would not be demanded at once. But the provincial proved most sympathetic:

It is all over the dam now. And for your own private information I did not bring it up to the Board . . . I

I prefer if you do not figure on paying the Community back for the amount that we sent down; i.e., the \$22,000<sup>15</sup> Eventually you would have needed that amount anyway.

While he was still laying the groundwork for the transaction, Father Fullenkamp had written to the provincial:

Naturally it was hard for me to decide what kind of an amount I should ask for . . . The business in the cablegram about building a school in Rio Negro etc., was something rather imaginary. I simply had to put something down that would look good to the [governmental] Boards - houses such as rectories and convents would be turned down. Schools,<sup>16</sup> polyclinics and social centers are the favorite items.

This exchange episode introduced a theme that in later years was to reverberate with some hollow notes: the falsification of official documents. Here the item dealt with \$23,000 exchanged to build a fictitious school in Rio Negro and another \$10,000 for the Resbalón school, a sum that could not bear up under close scrutiny. But a pattern had been set. In future years vehicles would be introduced into the country duty free, because each was assigned to a particular school. Yet rarely did these vehicles get near to the school in question. It was a case of "everybody does it." Then, too, many times tax exemption documents needed before one could leave the country contained false addresses. This was done not to deceive anyone but to

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<sup>15</sup> ASPB-S, "Provincial Letters, Sept. 1950-Sept. 1956, Fr. Leonard Fullenkamp."

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

facilitate the work of the travel agent.

Some of these practices, especially those dealing with vehicles, troubled the consciences of a number of the priests. Yet one must suffer first hand the enormous weight of the Chilean bureaucracy to know what a monster it can be. This condition existed in other Latin countries as well. It has been said that if an Italian businessman tried to obey all the tax laws of his country, he would be bankrupt. In Chile more than one of the missionaries considered any possible loophole in the legislation, or even the signing of documents that were not completely true, as a form of occult compensation. This same stifling bureaucracy could choke off the payment of school subsidies for one or two years. This was unjust. For many of the priests, any method that could beat the system was simply compensation for losses suffered under that system.

#### New Missionaries and New Schools

The various bulding programs should not obscure the fact that the priests were dedicated to the sacramental ministry. In the States many couples prefer to get married in May and June; in Chile, during the end-of-the-year holidays. As 1951 wound down, the pace of San José parish picked up. On Christmas Eve there were thirty-nine baptisms, on Christmas twenty-four, and on New Year's fifty-

six. During this same period thirty-six marriages were solemnized.<sup>17</sup>

After the annual retreat at Pitrufquén in January 1952, the vicariate board approved a number of appointments. In the switch of personnel eight men, more than half of the vicariate, changed residences. This tendency to shift both pastors and assistants with great frequency occasionally produced adverse results. Without doubt the moves were made for the good of the priests involved but to the detriment of the continuity of the apostolate.

In part, some of the moves were made in anticipation of the stateside rotation of the missionaries. It will be recalled that after a six-year period in Chile, each missionary was to spend a year in the United States. However, to avoid the confusion of so many men leaving at the same time, Father Kostik with four years and five months in Chile began his home visit; he was out of the vicariate for only seven months. In June 1952, Father John Wilson, slated to help the Propagation of the Faith Society of the Toledo, Ohio, diocese, left Chile to spend a year in fund raising activities.

To offset somewhat the departure of Father Kostik, the provincial now assigned to Chile Father Thomas Sweeterman (29), a brother of the mission procurator, Father

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<sup>17</sup>Gasparian 15 (February 1952): 6.

Norbert. When Father Thomas reached Chile, he was the first new missionary to come in seventeen months. Regarding this appointment, the provincial wrote to Father Fullenkamp:

Believe me, Father, I nearly went through hell just to release one priest for South America. If I were allowed to reveal the circumstances involved in making these appointments so that Fr. Sweeterman would be free, you would hesitate in believing me.<sup>18</sup>

At this time it was the policy of the American province to lend some of its younger priests to various dioceses, especially in the midwest. Once a certain bishop had the service of a Precious Blood priest, he was reluctant to release him. This resulted in the provincial's constant effort to placate the pleas for help coming from Chile and from sectors of the American hierarchy.

In spite of episcopal pressure, within a year Father Oberhauser was able to send two more missionaries to Chile: Father William Higgins (37) and Father Emil Schuwey (31). However, after less than two years in Chile, because of possible hearing loss, Father Higgins returned to the United States. Before then, though, he had been assigned to the Hospital del Salvador, while Father Schuwey was sent to Purrangué. Father Fullenkamp explained to the provincial why no new man was stationed at San José:

Before we did send a new man there each time, but time has shown that the pressure is too much there for a

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<sup>18</sup>Ibid.

beginner and he cannot study the language with the relaxation which is necessary during the first few months.<sup>19</sup>

The coming of Fathers Higgins and Schuwey did not increase the overall number of missionaries in Chile. They were sent to replace two of the original volunteers, Father Alphonse Jungwirth and Father Carl Reikowsky, who after more than five years returned permanently to the United States. In a letter to the provincial, Father Fullenkamp repeated a conversation that he had earlier with Father Jungwirth regarding his views on the vicariate.

He replied that certainly all the men were working hard and doing a good job but that it all seemed rather purposeless. I think that this opinion of his would shock the rest of our men if they knew of it, because everyone of them is working so hard and all feel that we have made great strides.<sup>20</sup>

Even though Father Fullenkamp admitted that he did not know what Father Jungwirth really meant, later vicariate experience makes an explanation possible. Future missionaries would question the worth of a strictly sacramental ministry. That is, what lasting value could be attributed to the mere dispensing of baptism, first communion, and marriage to people who would seldom return to church? No doubt Father Jungwirth looked upon much of the vicariate work as a ministry having little of permanent value.

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<sup>19</sup> ASPB-D, "1950-1954 - Chile Vicar."

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

One of the new men who had come to Chile to replace the departing missionaries was now settling down in Purranque. After several months in that southern town, Father Emil Schuwey was able to observe:

The economic condition of the country is such that those who have wealth can invest it and profit greatly; while those who have little, find even that little taken away from them. With such conditions, it is hardly any wonder that so many turn to drink and other unlawful pleasures to escape from their sorry lot.

The religious apathy among so many of the people is very discouraging, to say the least.<sup>21</sup> I find it everything that the other priests reported.

Some fifteen miles from Purranque, the pastor of Sagrada Familia parish of Rio Negro reported the best news he had received since his arrival in Chile. Father John Hoorman entertained the realistic hope of getting a community of teaching sisters to staff his proposed school. Ever since the fathers had taken over the southern parishes, their dream was to have parochial schools taught by religious women. Previously Fathers Wilson and Buehler had sent letters to many religious superiors in the United States and elsewhere looking for help.<sup>22</sup> They never got it. When Father Hoorman became pastor at Rio Negro four years earlier, he decided to play a waiting game: he would not bother any teaching communities; he would let them find

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<sup>21</sup>Gasparian 16 (May 1953): 6.

<sup>22</sup>ASPB-S, "Historia del Vicariato." See letter of Mother M. Nathalia, C.P.P.S., 28 May 1949.

him.

To find him in southern Chile, in a town so lacking in importance as Rio Negro, took some doing. But in March of 1953 two religious from Spain, members of the congregation of the Sisters of Charity of the Sacred Heart (*Hermanas de la Caridad del Sagrado Corazón*) came to Osorno looking for a site to establish a motherhouse and a novitiate. Not finding what they were after in Osorno and hearing that Rio Negro, some twenty-five miles away, was cared for by religious men, the sisters came to investigate. Father Hoorman was delighted to show them the location of the school that he was eager to build.

They seemed to like us and the location. We did not want to deceive them, so we showed them the carpenter shop where we told them we often work in overalls. In this country that means we do not follow the rigid code that is in force among the native and European clergy . . . The Sisters were delighted, especially when they saw the new trailer chapel in the back yard. Since their visit, I have found out that they share the idea of establishing religious<sup>23</sup> schools, contrary to the general practice down here.

Authorization for the foundation in Rio Negro came from the superiors in Spain and the project was approved by the vicariate. At first the Spanish sisters demanded the entire school subsidy that would be paid by the Chilean government. Father Hoorman presented a counter offer: a fifty-fifty split until the school was entirely built and paid for; then a ninety-ten split with the latter sum going

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<sup>23</sup>Gasparian 17 (January 1954): 9.



to the priest director of the school. This compromise proved acceptable to both parties.

With some reluctance the provincial granted permission to proceed with the building. His hesitancy was due to Father Fullenkamp's previous information that vicariate help would be needed to cover costs. However, Father Hoorman and Father Burghart, his assistant, were able to raise the necessary money with donations from relatives and friends. It was estimated, perhaps conservatively, that total construction costs would be around four thousand dollars. By the time the school was solemnly blessed on 1 May 1955, the pastor was no longer Father Hoorman. Classes were held only on the first floor; the second was given over to the living quarters of the sisters, who had not yet built their convent. Only first graders were accepted, as an additional grade was to be added each year.

Up in Santiago another school was about to be undertaken by the vicariate. Lying several miles southwest of Plaza Garín and the church of San José was a housing project called Población Roosevelt. The American theme was further carried out by the use of such street names as Estados Unidos (United States), Henry Wallace, Harry Truman, and Tomás Edison. In 1953 Father William Frantz, then assistant at San José, turned his zeal to this area of the parish.

In 1953 the población had no urbanization, that is,

no light, no home water taps, not even recognizable streets. Father Frantz rented two adobe rooms that served as a school during the week and as a chapel on Sundays. He began his project without qualified teachers and without government subsidy, bringing the rudiments of education to 135 children in the first grade. However, by the end of the first year the four Italian sisters, who had been contracted to teach in the Resbalón school, had arrived and taken up rented quarters in that village. This meant that in 1954 the lay teachers replaced by the sisters in Resbalón were free to move over to the Roosevelt school. The indomitable Chilean teacher, María Aguilera, then formally established this institution and saw to it that the government subsidy was forthcoming.

In 1955, when an agency of the Chilean government bought the whole housing project from the original developer, San José parish was given an entire block to develop for religious and educational purposes.<sup>24</sup> Not wishing to commit itself entirely to the challenge, the vicariate board in September authorized the construction of a two-classroom building that could double as a chapel. The box-like wooden building, while lacking all artistic pretensions, fitted perfectly into the generally crude architecture of the area. Not only did the building serve as a

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<sup>24</sup>ASPB-D, "1955-1959 Chile Vicar, letter of 6 January 1959."

school and a chapel, but on weekends commercial motion pictures were shown as parish and fund raising events. Even though the structure looked more and more disreputable with each passing year, it served as the scene of Saturday baptisms and weddings and Sunday masses until finally torn down in 1972. Built for only \$1,300, the wooden building at Roosevelt was without a doubt the best investment ever made by the vicariate.

In 1953 the vicariate again took up the question of establishing a school within the limits of Santo Domingo parish. At the very first vicariate board meeting, 19 May 1948, the members approved Father Wilson's plan to buy property adjacent to the Santo Domingo church for the construction of a school. The land in question contained some partially finished cement structures owned by the Beta Laboratories. Although the real estate deal fell through, the priests at Santo Domingo never lost interest in acquiring that property. Their idea was never to build a parochial school as such, because there were a number of girls schools in the area. Rather, Father Leonard Fullenkamp was interested in promoting a grade and high school for boys.

Meeting on 15 May, the vicariate board reasoned that "with the future idea of a Seminary in mind, the usefulness of a boys school as a source of vocations is undeniable. Therefore, Fr. Fullenkamp intends to continue

working on this problem."<sup>25</sup>

Less than a month later in writing to Father Oberhauser, the vicar provincial explained that it was necessary to build not a preparatory seminary but a day school for boys of the fast-growing middle class. It was not the intention of the vicariate to duplicate the American province's minor seminary at Brunnerdale, Ohio, but rather to develop an institution whereby "two priests supervising mostly a lay faculty could run a school for about four hundred boys."<sup>26</sup>

In August Father Fullenkamp told the provincial that the present objective of the vicariate was the founding of a school to secure native vocations to the priesthood.<sup>27</sup> On 12 September Father Leonard continued his campaign to convince his stateside superior of the merit of the school issue. His arguments were many: the middle class do not send their children to public schools, only to private; all the religious congregations conduct such revenue-producing schools; the eventual enrollment would accommodate some eight hundred boys.<sup>28</sup>

But his main argument continued to be the need of such a school to foster vocations. "Now we have to do

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<sup>25</sup>ASPB-S, "Minutes, Book I, 15 May 1953."

<sup>26</sup>ASPB-D, "1950-1954 - Chile Vicar."

<sup>27</sup>Ibid.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid.

something . . . to put us on a solid basis for the future, both spiritually and materially."<sup>29</sup> He further stated his belief that running such a school did not mean deserting the poor, that the Santo Domingo area had very few poor, and these were indeed cared for by the priests.

How successful was Father Fullenkamp's sales pitch to the provincial? On 17 November he was expressing his gratitude to the stateside board for approving the school project and he added: "I hope that in time we can show you the goodness and wisdom of your decision."<sup>30</sup> He went on to say that within ten days his lawyers would have everything in order for the transfer of the Beta property to the vicariate, that he and his treasurer had watched the fluctuating peso market closely and had just cashed \$14,000, and that the vicariate was about to spend \$22,300 for the purchase of the property and the payment of legal fees and taxes.

In the meantime, the vicar provincial was going ahead with the plan to begin with a first grade of about eighty youngsters in March. So as not to lose a whole year waiting for construction, teaching would take place in various meeting rooms built near the polyclinic.

In December, the carefully planned effort to buy the Beta property came to a halt; there was to be no sale.

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

At the last minute the Beta people added a number of unacceptable items to the overall cost, principally that the vicariate pay the entire expense of transfer, taxes, fees, etc. As the price went up and up, Father Fullenkamp held his ground: no sale.<sup>31</sup>

Almost as soon as the Beta transaction collapsed, the vicar provincial set his eyes on another piece of property also on Pedro de Valdivia Avenue and about one block south of the church. A government social security agency, Servicio de Seguro Social, owned this good-size tract of land; however, the property was not urbanized, nor had streets been laid out. The wife of the Chilean President, Señora Graciela Letelier de Ibañez, a member of Santo Domingo parish, promised to use her influence to get the Seguro Social to sell the vicariate 10,000 square meters at a reasonable price.<sup>32</sup>

Apparently her contacts proved helpful, because when property in the area was selling for 2,000 pesos per square meter, the vicariate was to pay only 600 pesos.<sup>33</sup> However, negotiations came to a halt, because squatters living on the property refused to be evicted. With the help of some clever lawyers, these people proved that they had been paying taxes on the property for some years and

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<sup>31</sup>Buehler, "Historical Notes."

<sup>32</sup>Ibid.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid.

thus held a certain title to the land. When Father Fullenkamp agreed to move back from Pedro de Valdivia and take 10,000 meters behind the line of disputed properties, the municipal government stepped into the affair. It decreed that the S.S.S. could not sell property that was not urbanized, nor was the city interested in running the proposed streets through at that time.<sup>34</sup>

Father Fullenkamp's problems were not confined to Chile. Now, after hiring carpenters and plumbers to prepare classrooms in the parish hall, with school already underway for a group of first graders, with the First Lady herself helping to buy terrain, Father Oberhauser informed his vicar provincial that the entire project was terminated. Writing on 18 April 1954, the provincial explained that his board was trying to implement a decision of the American province to de-emphasize educational commitments:

In other words educational work is not the primary purpose of our Society, and by going into it more extensively than we are, would be really against our Constitutions. Also considered was the financial angle, and the unusual amount of grief that is<sup>35</sup> connected with running an educational institution.

The provincial board had another reason for its decision: the apparent impossibility of operating two major projects at one and the same time, that is, a colegio

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<sup>34</sup>Ibid.

<sup>35</sup>ASPB-S, "Provincial Letters, Sept. 1950-Sept. 1956, Fr. Leonard Fullenkamp."

for boys and a seminary. "It seemed more logical to us to start a Minor Seminary and in that way have a central house, and also a place for any possible vocations."<sup>36</sup>

But Father Fullenkamp was not to be denied. Not too many days had passed, before he received a letter from the provincial informing him that he was to represent the Chilean vicariate at the forthcoming canonization of Gaspar del Bufalo, founder of the Society of the Precious Blood. Perhaps it was the euphoria created by the canonization or maybe it was just the persuasive appeal made in person by Father Leonard, but he brought back from Rome a document authorizing the construction of his school.<sup>37</sup> Somehow he had managed to sidestep the previous arguments that the Society was not to become more involved in education and that conducting schools entailed an unusual amount of grief.

It was June 1954 when Father Fullenkamp received permission to buy property and build his colegio. As the months passed the provincial's letters and the vicariate board minutes record a record of endless red tape. On 7 February 1955 Father Oberhauser observed:

From your letter I concluded that you have not yet succeeded in getting the property for the school in Santiago. It seems to confirm my personal opinion that opposition to things Catholic is quite violent down there. Several times I have read recently that Chile

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<sup>36</sup>Ibid.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid. The document is dated 26 June 1954.



is next on the list for some dirty activities on the part of the Commies. Add to this the under-current of Masonic activities and we might have a good explanation for the long delay that you are experiencing in getting the property.<sup>38</sup>

For months to come the board minutes made reference to hopes that were never quite realized. Thus, "On March 25th the final papers for the purchase of the property for St. Gaspar College were signed."<sup>39</sup> However, on 13 August the minutes state: "The occupation of the property for St. Gaspar College is held up temporarily pending a court process which the Seguro Social has instituted against false claimants."<sup>40</sup> Had the priests known that they would have to endure about two more years of this, they might have looked elsewhere for a building site.

The prospect of another building program loomed on the vicariate's southern horizon. When Father John Wilson was appointed pastor of Purranque in February of 1954, he was determined to build a new grade school. It may be recalled that when the Society took over the parish, it had already a school functioning in a very rundown building. Although Father Lengerich managed to add several classrooms, everyone agreed that such patchwork was merely putting new cloth on an old garment.

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> ASPB-S, "Minutes, Book I."

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

According to vicariate policy a missionary had to propose any new building program to the vicariate board. If these men approved the program, it was then sent to the states to be reviewed by the American board. Here the project would be accepted or rejected. Once a decision was made, the provincial and his board did not necessarily cling to it. If the project was still strongly favored in Chile, an appeal for reconsideration often proved effective. Originally both the school at Rio Negro and the school for Santo Domingo were not accepted in the United States.

At the Chilean board meeting of 1 October 1954, it was agreed to ask the provincial for permission to build the Purranque school. In reply Father Oberhauser wanted time to consult with his board. He added that no harm would be done, however, in drawing up the plans, as he shrewdly noted: "I have a hunch that has been done already."<sup>41</sup> He also knew that Father Wilson had asked Bishop Marling for financial support. The bishop was most generous: he could give about \$6,000, but this sum was to be spread over several years. By the middle of November the provincial board granted the desired permission to build, provided that money for the project was available.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup>ASPB-S, "Provincial Letters, Fr. Leonard Fullenkamp."

<sup>42</sup>Ibid.

On Sunday, 15 April 1956, Father Wilson held the dedication ceremony for his new school building. In the first six grades he had 375 pupils enrolled; in the seventh and eighth grades, 62 students.<sup>43</sup> That Father Wilson had accepted students for the first two years of humanities, indicated that he was already thinking about building a separate school to house the upper grades.

Towards the end of 1953 two new volunteers for the vicariate reached Chile: Father Raymond Zupkie (33) and Father Eugene Stiker (30). The new men began an intensive course in Spanish under the direction of the elderly Señorita Ana Favard, who in future years helped other missionaries break the language barrier. The overall number of Precious Blood priests in Chile did not increase noticeably because some priest was always due to begin his stateside leave.

Eventually Father Zupkie was sent to the south to reside at Rio Negro, while he cared for the Riachuelo territory. Returning by jeep to Rio Negro one day, his brakes gave out completely, but he managed to reach the rectory safely. A little later, deciding to take the vehicle to a garage in town, he tried to go by way of the steepest hill, one with a curve and a single lane wooden bridge at the bottom. By the time Father Zupkie had

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<sup>43</sup> ASPB-D, "1955-1959 - Chile Vicar."

reached the bridge, he saw a horse and rider coming toward him. Trying to miss the horse, he crashed over the side of the bridge, falling some fifteen feet into the shallow river. Although the jeep was badly damaged, the priest escaped serious injury. Shaken, he eventually went to bed with a heavy cold that he could not fight off. After consultation, Father Fullenkamp judged that for reasons of health and temperament, Father Zupkie should return to the United States. This he did in February 1955.

The almost constant concern with buying land, or building something, or renovating something else, tends to obscure the fact that the missionaries were extremely busy with people, with priestly efforts. In Santiago, for example, Father Bernard Mores revised and added to a text containing questions and answers about the Catholic religion. Entitled Respuestas Populares, the rather large book sold for thirty pesos, the equivalent of 15 cents.

The parish of Pitrufuén, whose countryside was dotted with the dwellings of Mapuche Indians, was now under the care of Father John Kostik. Called to instruct and baptize an aged woman, he noted:

My visits to the Indians' "rucas" [grass huts] are many. This particular "ruca", however, was the poorest of them all. There was no bed, no table, no chair, and no windows, only the cold ground and the cold wind. Diana lived in these surroundings a hundred years. A missionary simply cannot complain about his living conditions.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>44</sup>Gasparian 16 (November 1953): 2.

Further south Father Emil Schuwey, assigned to Purrangué, set out in the mission trailer to hold a week of spiritual renewal for the people around Concordia. His experiences in that last month of 1953 pretty well depicted the country missions that were given in the southern parishes over the next ten years.

The mission at Concordia contained all the elements that any missionary could expect: the breakdown of a vehicle, the muddy, impassable road, the slowness of the people to assemble, the friendly drunk, the five-day preparation of children to make their first communion, the concluding Mass beginning forty-five minutes late, and the baptismal group that came late necessitating a repetition of the whole lengthy ceremony.

To provide Father Zupkie with a jeep, Father Schuwey with a mission trailer, Father Kostik with room and board entailed money. The Chilean vicariate and the American province often went around and around over this issue. One aspect that recurred was that of the common fund. Both the moderator general and the provincial, supported by his board, "advised that your Vicariate Council should decide what project is most urgent in its needs for funds, and that all the Fathers have to be kept informed that all donations GO INTO THE COMMON FUND."<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>45</sup>ASPB-S, "Provincial Letters, Fr. Leonard Fullenkamp."

Replying on 29 November 1953, Father Leonard Fullenkamp gave the provincial the vicariate's point of view:

We admit that your proposal would be the ideal, but it would set a precedent that future members of the Vicariate might not agree to since we do not have the religious vow. We have given up our country, home, etc. to be here in Chile, and we should at least be allowed to govern that which is still ours according to the Customary . . .

This donation business, so far as the men soliciting them is concerned, is pretty much a personal matter, and if a superior here tries to pressure them in this matter, they come back pretty quickly, "OK, we will depend on the Common Fund exclusively, and then you try to get donations that we are getting from our relatives and friends."<sup>46</sup>

Father Oberhauser thanked his vicar provincial for his explanation of the problem and concluded that the situation was comparable to many that he had in the States: things just hung in mid air. The issue of the common fund was suspended for a time, but it was to return.

#### More Visitations, More Man Power

On 16 June 1953 Father Seraphin W. Oberhauser was re-elected provincial of the American province for another six years. On the following day a business chapter was held at St. Charles seminary, Carthagena, Ohio. Regarding this meeting, Father Oberhauser in August wrote to his vicar provincial:

You may have received some dark news about the elections and especially the Business Chapter. Father Wilson, at the Business Chapter, ruffled my temper

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<sup>46</sup> ASPB-D, "1950-1954 - Chile Vicar."

somewhat, and I lost it. Just what you may have heard, I do not know. It was not my intention to cast any reflections on the Vicariate . . . I did mention publicly that I thought there was more unjustifiable talk against the Chilean Vicariate since certain men have come back for the sabbatical year than ever before.<sup>47</sup>

In the printed minutes of the chapter, the Chilean vicariate appears as the eighth item on the agenda. That the vicariate came up at all was due to the suggestion of priests of the Toledo district. Fathers John Wilson and Carl Reikowsky, already in the United States, had not been chosen delegates by the vicariate membership but rather by the provincial.

At the meeting Father Wilson remonstrated that without renewed concern on the part of the American province, interest in the Chilean vicariate would lag and suffer seriously. For his part, the provincial responded "that the many rumors going about that the Provincial Council has not kept alive its interest in the Chilean mission are unjustified."<sup>48</sup> Father Oberhauser insisted further that none of the complaints referred to or implied were ever made known to him or to his board.

In the afternoon session a stateside delegate observed that the source of the feeling about the South American mission was not one of antagonism or lack of

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<sup>47</sup>ASPB-S, "Provincial Letters, Fr. Leonard Fullenkamp."

<sup>48</sup>ASPB-D, "Community, Chapter-Business, June, 1953."

interest, but rather an inability to understand the problems faced by the men in Chile. An unspecified delegate from the vicariate then reported that mission work had stagnated due to the insufficiency of priests. Moreover, working among the poor who lived in such circumstances that it was next to impossible to find youths trained to lead the life required of a celibate, implied that it would be quite difficult to recruit native vocations. One solution was to receive more help from the American province, and then to assume more middle class parishes in Chile. The provincial concluded the remarks on the missions by adding simply: "The whole discussion simmers down to this that Chile needs more priests."<sup>49</sup>

In his letter of 20 August, the provincial informed Father Fullenkamp that he was making definite plans to visit the vicariate in January. Misunderstandings could better be removed by personal contact rather than by correspondence. In his reply the vicar provincial admitted that it was only natural to seek more help, but that the vicariate members fully supported their stateside superior.

It was not in January but in March that Father Oberhauser began his second visitation of the Chilean vicariate. More than four years had passed since his first visit in January of 1950. Although his stay in the country was less than a month, again he made the rounds of the

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<sup>49</sup>Ibid.



various houses and met several times with the vicariate board.

Back in the United States, the provincial submitted a report to the members of the vicariate. Printed in full in the April Gasparian, the article noted that the initial zeal of 1947 still persisted, that humble and near-primitive living conditions were accepted with cheerfulness, and that no one could question the progress made by the men in the vicariate. Father Oberhauser did point out that if perhaps the regularity of common meditation and community prayers had waned a bit, every effort should be made to revive these community exercises.

The provincial made reference to the man power situation, promising that the problem was to be given serious consideration by his council in the near future. Aware of the vicariate's tendency to get involved in building and then seek permission later, Father Oberhauser encouraged obedience to the norm that every major endeavor should have proper approval before being undertaken.

The provincial report concluded:

During the past seven years our work in Chile has taken on a definite form: it is no longer a liquid maneuver seeking its proper level. Ours<sup>50</sup> is an apostolate for the souls of the neglected poor.

When Father Oberhauser arrived in Chile that March day, two of the Santiago area priests were not at the air-

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<sup>50</sup>Gasparian 17 (April 1954): 2.

port to welcome him. Father Bernard Mores and Father William Frantz were in Buenos Aires attending a continental-wide congress for religious. In preparation for the sessions in Argentina, every South American country held its own preliminary meetings. In Chile Father Fullenkamp managed to attend most of the sessions, which he found to be quite frustrating. He revealed his feelings to the provincial:

Furthermore, the big Orders down here like the Franciscans, Salesians, Jesuits and Dominicans are reading the act strictly a la Spanish and Italian. We "gringos" could do little more than listen. The opinions that I express here are those of all the North American groups down here as well as those of the Irish Columbans . . . A couple of lads from some of the big outfits, kind of seeing our suggestions and viewpoints, brought up the suggestion about the wearing of suits. They were almost thrown out of the place by the chiefs - and dare I say fat ones - of the big outfits, Spanish and Italian, every last one of them. They worry and worry, and go on and on about the clergy losing contact with the people, and the invasion of Protestantism; they read papers and more papers, but nothing much comes of it. In the meantime we are establishing that contact with the people that they so much desire. What happens? They don't seem to want to see it, and keep saying that we are too liberal.<sup>51</sup>

A certain insight into the thinking of Italian churchmen of the era can be deduced from a sermon preached on the occasion of the canonization of Gaspar del Bufalo. On Sunday, 13 June, the day after the solemn outdoor ceremonies at St. Peter's basilica, Rome, celebrations were held in some of the vicariate parishes. At Santo Domingo

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<sup>51</sup>ASPB-D, "1950-1954 - Chile Vicar."

the apostolic nuncio, Bishop Sebastian Baggio, pontificated and preached a stirring tribute to Gaspar, "the hammer of the masons."<sup>52</sup>

On that same day at Pitrufrquén, in the presence of Bishop Guido Beck who preached, Father John Kostik celebrated a Solemn High Mass. Still further to the south, at Purrangué Father John Wilson offered a Mass of thanksgiving in his new church. Among the priests present were four North Americans, two Germans, one Dutchman, one Spaniard, and one Chilean (whose parents had come from Germany).

With all the excitement of the canonization, the Gasparian had room only for a picture and a paragraph about the latest volunteer for Chile, Father Augustine Hanchak (29). Since the study of Spanish had been an early hobby, the newcomer had no language problem. By the end of July he was appointed assistant chaplain at Hospital del Salvador. With his arrival the number of Precious Blood priests in Chile reached sixteen.

It was often difficult, however, to determine the exact number of missionaries overseas in a given year. Just as the Gasparian was reaching its readers in June, Father John Hoorman returned permanently to the United States: one man added, one man subtracted.

Towards the end of October two appointments were made in the American province that directly affected the

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<sup>52</sup> ASPB-S, "Minutes", Book I."

chilean vicariate. Even before Fathers Wilson and Kostik left for the missions in 1947, Father Norbert Sweeterman had been working as mission procurator. Now, after seven years of service to the priests in Chile, he was appointed to the newly established position of vocation director. His successor was the former Chilean missionary, Father John Hoorman.

The public complaint made at the previous year's business chapter, that the Chilean vicariate was not receiving sufficient personnel, had been acted upon. Chile got four missionaries: one returning veteran and three new men. On Sunday, 31 October, a departure ceremony for Father Paul Buehler and the new missionaries, Fathers Emil Dinkel (29), William Schenk (30), and Leo Herber (28) was held at St. Charles seminary.

The increase in man power held only until December. At that time Fathers Bernard Mores and William Frantz, after six years and four months in Chile, flew back to the United States to begin their leave. Then when Father Herber was assigned to Pitrufrquén, for the first time that parish had three priests. The additional man power did not result in new apostolic endeavors, but rather strengthened the original vicariate commitments.

On 26 July, a little more than a month after the solemn Mass honoring Gaspar, the church in Purranque had a different kind of experience: a strong earth tremor. Fa-

ther John Wilson, pastor for only four months, was heart-sick that the structure, less than a year old, was so badly damaged. Although the main part of the church stood the quake quite well, it was the facade and bell tower that had to be rebuilt. Nearly all the houses and buildings in Purrangué were made of wood and suffered no damage. Ironically the church, the newest and finest structure in town, was the only building affected by the tremor. Father Wilson was determined to build it up again.

The priests in Chile knew that by and large whatever they built or renovated had to be paid for by donations from the United States. At the annual retreat at Pitrufrquén in January, 1955, the subject of donations came up again. Father Fullenkamp strongly urged all present to cut down appeals to their relatives and friends back home, or at least limit them to things essential to mission work. The discussion on money originated with the provincial, who shortly before Christmas had received a form letter from one of the missionaries that ended with the note that donations could be sent to his parents' home in the States. It was presumed that the money was to be banked in the missionary's own account.

Father Oberhauser and his board were quite disturbed by the issue. He wrote to his vicar provincial:

This letter I took to the Provincial Council meeting yesterday, and I must say that the Board members were unanimously steamed up about it . . . The Provincial Council did not take the attitude that these moneys coming to individuals should be stymied or stopped.

Rather we were in harmony that they should be taken care of through the central office of the Mission Procurator . . . Any other way smacks of mistrust of the Mission Procurator and the entire Society.<sup>53</sup>

The provincial informed Father Fullenkamp that if he feared taking corrective measures, then the provincial council would. The priests in Chile were expected to comply or else return to the States. Nor did the council look too favorably upon the mimeographed letters that were being distributed. Two reasons were given for this displeasure: the Society "has enjoyed a long tradition of not being a begging Society, and we have been complimented for that many times."<sup>54</sup> And an esthetic reason was offered: the mimeographed sheets were not too attractive.

Hardly had the priests from San José parish returned home from retreat, when during the night of 7 February, thieves broke into the church. In addition to taking the personal chalices of the five missionaries stationed there, they took from the tabernacle two ciboria containing some 300 consecrated hosts. Because of the sacrilege perpetrated that night, the chancery office of the archdiocese sent Bishop Eladio del Villar to make an investigation according to church law. His report revealed that the tabernacle door had resisted all efforts of a

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<sup>53</sup> ASPB-S, "Provincial Letters, Fr. Leonard Fullenkamp."

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

forcible entry. However, once the thieves found the tabernacle key in the sacristy, they had no problem in reaching the sacred vessels.<sup>55</sup>

The changing of vicariate personnel usually occurred during the summer or at least before the opening of the new school year. Thus after five months at Santo Domingo parish, Father Emil Dinkel was sent in April to Rio Negro to serve as Father Leonard Burghart's assistant. A year before Father Dinkel was to reach Rio Negro, the provincial had written to Father Fullenkamp about a problem that the new priest to that southern parish was about to face. In his letter the stateside superior noted: "Personally, I feel that as long as Fr. Burghart does not sell to the laity, or to the public at large, there might not be any prohibition against his carpentry."<sup>56</sup>

The business of the carpenter shop began in March, 1953, when Father Fullenkamp advised his board that \$300 had been sent to the south to buy lumber for future vicariate use. Father Burghart started out simply enough, then added a band saw, next he built a good-sized shed, and soon found himself with a growing operation. When he hired a shop manager to take care of the business, the man proved more competent in taking care of himself. When not even

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<sup>55</sup>AARs, folder #59.

<sup>56</sup>ASPB-S, "Provincial Letters, Fr. Leonard Fullenkamp."

Father Burghart knew how many outstanding debts he had, Father Dinkel was sent to take a complete inventory of the carpenter shop.<sup>57</sup>

In justice it can be stated that Father Leonard had a good idea: build up a business that would offer a steady income for the parishes and Society in the south. Possibly with the right management, he could have succeeded. It must also be added that it was during this time that the grade school in Rio Negro was under construction. Because most of the wood for the building was worked in the shop, and because all the doors and window frames and desks and chairs were made there, it was difficult to estimate the exact financial loss. By September the vicariate board decided to take over the carpenter shop as a Community effort. But the project was soon shut down and the carpentry shop stood idle. What was left of it tumbled down in the earthquake of 1960.<sup>58</sup>

Things were stirring elsewhere in southern Chile. On 29 July a slight earthquake, followed by the eruption of one of the volcanoes, helped to break the monotony of another rainy winter. The pastor of Purrangué wrote that ashes covered everything with a thin coating. Two hundred miles to the north at Pitrufrquén, Father Leo Herber observed that the eruption did no damage there except to give

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<sup>57</sup>Buehler, "Historical Notes."

<sup>58</sup>Ibid.



everyone a headache and a sore throat from the ash-charged air that was breathed for a week.

Up in Santiago, at Los Cerrillos international airport, the Precious Blood Fathers had a busy September meeting new arrivals. On the first of the month, Father Herbert Kramer, the Rome-based moderator general, came to begin his second visitation of the vicariate. On 9 September two more missionaries flew into Chile: Father Joseph Herod, returning after his leave in the States, and Father James Bender (age, 28), a newcomer. Only five days before, these two assisted at the now traditional departure ceremony at St. Charles seminary. Besides Fathers Herod and Bender, two other newly appointed missionaries took part in the ceremony. These were Father Paul Aumen (33) and Father William Donohoe (33): however, they were not to leave for Chile for another month. The first consultor of the province, Father John Byrne, represented the provincial and conducted the religious service. When Fathers Aumen and Donohoe reached Chile on 14 October 1955, they were to be the last new men to arrive for almost three years.<sup>59</sup>

Once back in Chile, Father Herod was again appointed chief chaplain at the Hospital del Salvador, while Father Bender was assigned as an assistant at the parish of Santo Domingo. On 10 September, the pastor of the parish, Father Fullenkamp, and one of the hospital chaplains,

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<sup>59</sup>See Appendix A, p. 405.

Father Ambrose Lengerich, left by plane for the United States and their home leave. To fill the temporary vacancy created by the departure of Father Fullenkamp, Father Paul Buehler became acting vicar provincial and pastor of Santo Domingo. All of these moves had prior provincial approval.

The visit of the moderator general was short, less than three weeks. Possibly with the arrival of new and returning missionaries, the departure of the vicar provincial and another missionary, Father Kramer might have felt a little left out of things. However, the report he prepared the following month shows that he took his task seriously.

The report consisted of four brief categories under the headings of progress, personnel, spirit of members and miscellaneous. It is indicative of the ecclesiastical thinking of that era that the impressive progress made since his 1951 visit consisted of the schools, church, and rectory that had been built. While it was true that the church and school at Purranque, the schools at Pitrufrquén, San José, Rio Negro, and Santo Domingo, and the San José rectory, were all constructed to help people, still the visible presence of brick and mortar was quite satisfying.

Under "Personnel" Father Kramer indicated that the vicariate needed to begin a preparatory school to train priesthood students. Already the Precious Blood Fathers had sent four young men to the Capuchins and one to a dio-

cesan seminary. Such candidates could just as easily have been sent to an institution of the Society.

Regarding the "Spirit of members" the general commented:

All are devoted to their work, and express determination to carry on; however a spirit of discouragement not unlike that in 1951 is still in evidence, based on the judgment that the Provincial officials have little enthusiasm or sympathy for the project in Chile.<sup>60</sup>

He went on to explain why the priests in Chile thought that their stateside superiors were indifferent to the work of the vicariate. The best evidence was the failure to increase the number of priests to the total originally planned. Other reasons cited were the need to seek provincial permission for every expenditure no matter how trivial, the severe regulations imposed on having personal bank accounts, and the threat to recall members who disagreed with financial policy.

Under "Miscellaneous," Father Kramer referred to the question that had been raised as to why vicariate members had to take a lower allowance than stateside members. Finally some recommended a shorter term of service in Chile, with a correspondingly shorter home leave.

The moderator general's visit coincided with Chile's celebration of its independence days. Part of the observance in Riachuelo was an annual shooting match, which

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<sup>60</sup> ASPB-D, "1955-1959 - Chile Vicar."

attracted the attendance of the five priests in southern Chile. Father John Wilson seemed to take special delight in recounting the outcome of the day's activities:

After the sumptuous repast we strolled out to the range where fifty men were exhibiting their prowess in the heavy carbine class. Fathers Fey and Schuwey decided to try their hands at the Austrian Army rifles left over from World War I. When all was over Father Fey had second prize, while Father Schuwey, third. Then came the contest for pistols. Out of thirty contestants Father Dinkel took first prize, I took second, and Father Schuwey third. So, out of a possible six prizes offered the Padres walked off with five. That should make those Commies think twice if they have any ideas of getting rough with the Padres.<sup>61</sup>

One thing that was "getting rough" was the pressure being applied on the American province to send missionaries to Brazil to assist the German priests of the Society working in the Xingu region. According to the provincial letter sent to the acting Chilean superior, Father Paul Buehler, the moderator general had suggested the sending of four men to Brazil by the fall of 1956. In reply to Father Oberhauser's asking his opinion in the matter, Father Buehler explained that his board was against the proposal if it meant lessening the number of men in Chile. He added that in any event, North American priests should not be expected to live with or under the Germans.<sup>62</sup> The upshot was that by February 1956 the American provincial board

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<sup>61</sup>Gasparian 18 (November 1955): 70.

<sup>62</sup>ASPB-D, "1955-1959 - Chile Vicar," letter of 2 December 1955.

declined the invitation to enter the Xingu.<sup>63</sup> But the proposal was not to remain still.

About two years later, when Father Buehler was vicar provincial in his own right, the issue surfaced again. On 21 July 1958, Father Oberhauser voiced his concern:

About one week ago I received a very emphatic letter from Fr. General (not a command) to send four priests to the Xingu by June of 1959, and two men every year thereafter until 1961. This is contrary to my opinions<sup>64</sup> of mixing members of Provinces in any venture.

Disturbed by this news, Father Buehler gave his view of the matter to the provincial. That he agreed with his superior in not mixing members of the provinces is evident:

Really it's bad enough taking in native vocations as we are doing at the present moment but that seems to be the only way to get a province started. But when it comes to taking professed or ordained members of distinct nationalities, with distinct backgrounds and customs, etc. then the situation becomes impossible.<sup>65</sup>

The vicar provincial then cited examples of Irish, North American, Italian, and Dutch religious communities, whose members, unwilling or unable to live with Chilean confreres, were determined to establish separate houses. While the provincial later expressed his appreciation of

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<sup>63</sup> ASPB-S, "Provincial Letters, 1955-1959, Fr. Paul Buehler."

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> ASPB-D, "1955-1959 - Chile Vicar."

Father Buehler's frankness, it did not settle the Xingu issue. In fact in September 1958, Father Oberhauser made a special trip to Rome with the set purpose of keeping the American province out of Brazil. His mission was successful, although under a later moderator general a more subtle kind of pressure would be exerted.

While Father Buehler was guiding vicariate affairs in Chile, Father Leonard Fullenkamp was making use of his stay in the United States. In October 1955, he had a lengthy conversation with Mother Aquinas Stadherr, superior of the American Sisters of the Precious Blood, with headquarters at Dayton, Ohio. She informed him that everything looked favorable for the entry into Chile of some sisters in time for the 1957 March school year.<sup>66</sup> Father William Frantz, who served as an assistant at Ft. Wayne, Indiana, during his stateside leave, also encouraged Mother Aquinas in her decision.

In December of 1956, a ceremony was held in the chapel of the motherhouse of the Precious Blood Sisters for the four sisters destined for Chile. These four were Sister Mary John (superior), Sister Mary Ignatius, Sister Mary Amalia, and Sister Mary Geneva. All were to teach at the new St. Gaspar school, which still had no property. Accompanied by Mother Aquinas and Sister Mary Joseph, they

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<sup>66</sup> ASPB-S, "Provincial Letters, 1955-1959, Fr. Paul Buehler," letter of 21 November 1955 from Fr. Fullenkamp.

sailed for South America on 26 December.<sup>67</sup>

By 16 January the sisters were in Chile, where they spent part of their first months in learning Spanish. However, they were to teach a number of their classes in English at St. Gaspar school. In the meantime, Father ~~Buehler~~ escorted Mother Aquinas and her companion down to Purrarque, where they were to send two additional sisters the following year to teach.<sup>68</sup>

Almost at once the Precious Blood Sisters were eager to buy property for a future convent and novitiate. In fact, they were interested in the Beta property, with its half-finished buildings, that the vicariate had been on the point of buying several years before. It soon became apparent that the sisters were definitely going to purchase the site, conveniently located next to the church of Santo Domingo.<sup>69</sup> By May the sisters had moved out of their first dwelling and signed a three-year lease on another house nearby, where they lived until their Chilean motherhouse reached the final stages of completion.

Father Fullenkamp, who had successfully promoted the coming of the Precious Blood Sisters to Chile, faced another challenge during his home visit. By way of introduction, it should be noted that on 16 June 1953, when

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<sup>67</sup>Precious Blood Messenger 63 (May 1957): 145.

<sup>68</sup>ASPB-D, "1955-1959 - Chile Vicar."

<sup>69</sup>Ibid.

Father Seraphin Oberhauser was elected to a second six-year provincial term, his board now consisted of the following: Father John Byrne, first consultor; Father Herbert Linenberger, second consultor; Father Francis Hehn, treasurer; and Father Harold Diller, secretary. Father Hehn, professor of accounting at St. Joseph College, Rensselaer, Indiana, brought a new note of professionalism to his position.

Writing to Father Buehler, the vicar provincial referred to a conversation that he had had with Father Hehn. Father Fullenkamp felt that the treasurer did not grasp the Chilean situation:

I suggested that he could clear this d-x! [sic] question up once and for all by going down to the scene and talking to all the men in the Vicariate - clear up for good the sense of wariness the Board seems to entertain about our financial suggestions - to also clear up for certain men down there what their obligations to the Treasury should be.<sup>70</sup>

A week later, 5 November, Father Fullenkamp informed his acting vicar provincial that his recommendation had been received favorably: during the Christmas holidays Father Hehn was to visit Chile. The purpose of his coming "was goodwill, a better understanding of the problems of the vicariate and the hope of a clarification of some misunderstandings of the past."<sup>71</sup>

Probably because of the need to get back to St.

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<sup>70</sup> ASPB-S, "Provincial Letters, Fr. Paul Buehler."

<sup>71</sup> ASPB-D, "1955-1959 - Chile Vicar." The citation is from Fr. Hehn's report of his trip.



Joseph College for the beginning of the second semester, Father Hehn spent less than two weeks in Chile. The missionaries in the south were especially disappointed in the brevity of his visit there. They felt that for him to understand fully their problems, he should have seen all the parishes, chapels, and schools.<sup>72</sup>

Accompanied by Father Buehler, Father Hehn met with Cardinal Caro of Santiago and also with the Papal Nuncio. Previously the provincial treasurer had indicated to Father Buehler the concern of the American province over pressure to enter the Brazilian mission field. The acting vicar provincial now raised the question with the Nuncio. His response was heartening:

He stated that there should not be any danger of us being obliged to take up other mission work . . . Chile wants more priests to care for the faithful of Chile; that we have to save the faith of these Latin American people, before going out to convert pagans . . . He made it pretty clear to Fr. Paul that the Holy See considered Chile true mission territory altho [*sic*] not under the Propaganda, except for the small area around Pitrufrquén.<sup>73</sup>

One of the points that Father Hehn pushed during his whirlwind visit was the pooling and sharing of mission donations, the old idea of the common fund. Writing to the provincial, Father Buehler expressed his belief that the treasurer's ideas were heartily approved by all the mem-

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<sup>72</sup>ASP-B-D, "1955-1959 - Chile Vicar," letter of 16 January 1956.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid., found in the Hehn report.

bers.<sup>74</sup> But it's an old Chilean custom to show signs of outward enthusiasm, and then continue on as before. Perhaps the greatest contribution of the entire trip was Father Hehn's opportunity to give the provincial council reasons to avoid going to the Xingu missions.

Shortly after Father Hehn returned to the United States, Father Samuel Homsey, pastor of San José' parish, began his stateside leave. Near the end of that same January, 1956, Father Leonard Burghart, pastor of Rio Negro, received word that his mother was gravely ill. Since the time for his home visit was not too far off, he was given permission to fly to the States immediately. Neither Father Burghard nor Father Homsey returned to the Chilean missions.

A priest who did return was the vicar provincial, Father Leonard Fullenkamp. After slightly more than five months of meetings, interviews, mission and vocation talks, and minor surgery, he landed at Santiago on 24 February. The very next day he met with his board members: Fathers Kostik, Junk, Herod, and Buehler.

He informed them of the new leave-of-absence policy that had been approved by the American board. In the future, vicariate members were to spend five years in the missions, then return to the United States for a six-month

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<sup>74</sup>ASPB-D, "1955-1959 - Chile Vicar," letter of 16 January 1956.

period. The first and sixth months would be the personal time of the missionary, the remaining four months would be open to assignment by the provincial.<sup>75</sup>

Another item that was to have meaning for a number of years was to send a retreat master from the United States to conduct annual spiritual exercises for all English speaking missionaries. Father Fullenkamp, who had conversed with other North American superiors in Chile, found them to be enthusiastic over the plan. The result was that before Christmas, Father Edwin Murphy of the American province came to Chile to preach four retreats for priests and two for sisters. In succeeding years Maryknoll, Holy Cross, and Columban Fathers provided retreat masters.

When Father Fullenkamp was still on his stateside leave, the southern diocese of Valdivia received a new bishop. The Holy See transferred the incumbent, Bishop Arturo Mery, to Concepción, and named as his successor the thirty-nine year old José Manuel Santos Ascarza. Within a year the extensive diocese was divided, with the southern portion forming the new diocese of Osorno. On 16 September 1956 the Capuchin, Francisco Valdés Subercaseaux, was

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<sup>75</sup>ASPB-S, "Minutes, Book I, 25 February 1956."

ordained bishop of the new ecclesiastical jurisdiction.<sup>76</sup> Having worked for over twenty-one years as a missionary in the Araucanía, he was known to the priests at Pitrufrquén.

With 1956 drawing to a close, the number of Precious Blood missionaries in Chile stood at nineteen. In view of future personnel distribution, ~~the~~ placement of these priests at this time becomes noteworthy: San Jose, 4 priests; Hospital del Salvador, 2; Santo Domingo, 3; Pitrufrquén, 4 (but only for several months); Rio Negro, 2; Purrarque, 3; and Riachuelo, 1.

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<sup>76</sup>Born in Santiago, Francisco Valdés received a doctorate in philosophy from the Gregorian University in Rome. Later he entered the Capuchin Order, becoming a member of the Bavarian province, in order to work with the Mapuche Indians. A brother of the bishop served in President Frei's cabinet.

## CHAPTER V

### A TIME OF GOOD WILL

#### That Special Year

In many ways the new year of 1957 was outstanding in the brief history of the vicariate. It began with a provincial visit and the appointment of a new vicar provincial. Noting the tenth anniversary of the Society in Chile, Bishop Joseph M. Marling returned to the scene of his greatest satisfaction a decade earlier. The Precious Blood Sisters, as indicated previously, took up their Chilean apostolate. Finally after years of frustraton, St. Gaspar school obtained land upon which to build, and the vicariate began in earnest to establish a preparatory seminary.

All of these visible changes should not hide the glow of a new interior change. The current year was to introduce an era of understanding towards the Chilean vicariate. A number of reasons might explain this attitude on the part of the American province and the men in Chile. Perhaps the most obvious was a new feeling of security both on the side of the Chilean superior and the American provincial.

In Chile the vicariate could now boast of missionaries with almost ten years of experience. These men felt more at ease with the language, the customs, the pace of living. Although many new building projects were to be undertaken, perhaps the urgency to do it all at once was not so intense as formerly.

For his part, the provincial was well into his second term of office. His council was made up of capable, dedicated, and loyal men. Moreover, these priests had the advantage of being full-time at their positions and of living together in a newly purchased provincial house. In his first term in office, Father Oberhauser typed scores of letters of appointment, he oversaw much of his correspondence, he was frequently on the road, he was often tired and overworked. Now his council members assumed a more active role in coming to his assistance.

Another important factor that contributed greatly to a better understanding between the Society in Chile and in the United States was the presence of Father Harold Diller and Father John Byrne on the provincial board. Father Diller, in his role of secretary, carried on not only an official correspondence with the vicar provincial, but also a personal one. Judging from the letters exchanged, it is difficult to say what was personal and what was official, but this very fact revealed a concern and understanding of vicariate work.

The first consultor at this time was Father John Byrne. Occasionally he wrote to the vicar provincial on behalf of Father Oberhauser. Gifted with a felicity of expression, Father Byrne early revealed his fascination with the Chilean scene. Within several years he was to play the most prominent part in the development of the Chilean vicariate.

The annual retreat at Pitrufoquén that ran from 21 to 25 January was conducted by Father Edwin Murphy, a member of the home mission band. Unique as this was, it was overshadowed by the presence of Father Seraphin Oberhauser and the two announcements that he made to the missionaries. In Chile for his third official visit, the provincial addressed the assembled priests:

There was never any thought in the minds of the respective Community authorities but that the Chilean venture should be something permanent, and eventually become a separate Province. Our prayers and our prayerful living should obtain from God the realization of this objective.

It is almost ten years now that we have established ourselves in Chile . . .

The time seems to be ripe to think seriously about a Seminary for native vocations in Chile. Before leaving the States, the Provincial Council instructed me to make the decision, while here, about starting or not starting a C.P.P.S. Seminary in Chile. I have made that decision. I am very happy to announce at this moment that I officially direct the authorities of the Chilean Vicariate to proceed in the establishment of a Seminary for boys who wish to enter our Society as priests; this Seminary should also serve as a training center for boys who wish to become Brothers in our

Society.<sup>1</sup>

Far more revealing than the announcement that appeared in the Gasparian was the aide-memoire used by the provincial:

There are a few items on which I have some definite convictions: 1. this seminary should be started in a very modest manner; nothing elaborate whatsoever. 2. candidates should be screened very closely and thoroughly: Do they show real signs of a vocation, or are they led to us merely by their a) admiration of North American priests; b) longing for the American way of life, which is much superior to theirs, c) desire to benefit from the support of American dollars in the future.

Those we take should be thoroughly indoctrinated immediately with C.P.P.S. history, rules, customs, etc. In a sense with this Seminary venture we are facing a very difficult question: CAN WE MOULD CERTAIN CHILEAN CHARACTERISTICS, TRAITS AND TENDENCIES INTO OUR OWN WAY OF LIFE? We will never know unless we try, and in the attempt we have the blessing of God.<sup>2</sup>

The second announcement took place in the rectory of San Juan Evangelista parish at Pitrufrquén, where the provincial met with the vicariate board members. As the minutes expressed it, "This meeting was of historical importance."<sup>3</sup> Father Oberhauser informed Fathers Fullenkamp, Kostik, Buehler, Herod, and Junk that effective 1 February Father Paul Buehler was to be the vicar provincial.

The provincial then introduced a partial reform of

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<sup>1</sup>Gasparian 20 (May 1957): 19.

<sup>2</sup>ASPB-D, "1955-1959 - Chile Vicar."

<sup>3</sup>ASPB-S, "Minutes, Book I, 24 January 1957."



the "Norms for Members of the Chilean Mission," one that gave more freedom and responsibility. Hereafter, four board members were to be elected every two years; from the men elected the vicar provincial was free to choose his secretary and treasurer. In practice, the vicariate secretary never dealt with official correspondence; he merely recorded the minutes of vicariate board meetings. But for the first time the missionaries were free to select their own board members, independently of the provincial and vicar provincial.<sup>4</sup>

Back in Santiago and using stationary with the Santo Domingo parish letterhead, Father Oberhauser typed a formal letter of appointment addressed to his new vicar. "Your main duty is to ensure the observance of the Constitutions, Customary, and established traditions of our Society."<sup>5</sup> The provincial then included a number of items that Father Buehler, as vicariate superior was to observe. These entailed giving due consideration to the opinions of his own board members and, whenever possible, making decisions with them; being vigilant in the saying of Community prayers; ensuring the privacy of the members in the various rectories; visiting the places in the south at least twice a year; establishing an organized Spanish course for new

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>ASPB-S, "Provincial Letters, 1955-1959, Fr. Paul Buehler."

volunteers; and keeping the provincial and his council reasonably well informed about vicariate business by prompt and fairly regular correspondence.<sup>6</sup>

With commendable North American efficiency, Father Buehler met with his board on his first day in office. This was not as easy as it may seem, for since the previous February Father Paul was also pastor of the vicariate's largest parish, San José. Eager to begin the proposed seminary "on a humble and experimental basis in San Bernardo in March 1958,"<sup>7</sup> the board unanimously appointed Father Ambrose Lengerich rector of the school. However, he was to serve as assistant at San José, until such time as his presence would be needed at the institution.

The board also discussed briefly the composition of the student body. As a general rule, it was decided to accept no boy who had not completed the first year of humanities, that is, the seventh grade. The students would be asked to pay a moderate fee for board and tuition. Finally, arrangements were to be worked out whereby the seminary boys would be able to attend classes at the school of the Dutch Sacred Heart Fathers in San Bernardo.

Searching for a name for the new institution, the vicariate did not wish to overuse the title, "San Gaspar." However, the name chosen, "Seminario de la Preciosa San-

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>ASPB-D, "1955-1959 - Chile Vicar."

gre," was not acceptable to the Santiago chancery. In Chile, the word seminario was used to designate only a school of theology. The name that eventually emerged was "Escuela Apostólica de la Preciosa Sangre," that is, Precious Blood Apostolic School."

It will be recalled that in 1952 the vicariate had purchased for thirteen thousand dollars a six-acre tract of land with a rambling, twenty-room house on the property. This was the Quinta San José, situated on the eastern outskirts of San Bernardo and some five miles south of Santiago. Once the decision was taken to begin the seminary, the need to renovate the old dwelling became imperative. Both the Chilean and American boards were soon involved in plans for installing plumbing, a conveniently located kitchen, and so on. By May the provincial board had authorized the expenditure of twelve thousand dollars for improvements and furnishings.<sup>8</sup>

Most of the boys for the projected seminary were to come from parishes conducted by the vicariate. However, since Maryknoll was a strictly foreign mission society and did not establish its own seminaries overseas, its priests in Chile often referred promising priesthood candidates to the Precious Blood Fathers. By the middle of December, Father Lengerich was able to inform the vicar provincial

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<sup>8</sup> ASPB-S, "Provincial Letters, 1955-1959, Fr. Paul Buehler."

that he had eight boys more or less signed up for entry in March, 1958.<sup>9</sup> Several other lads were well-recommended, but had finished just the sixth grade. The policy of the vicariate board to admit only candidates who had completed the first year of humanities was soon to be set aside.

That first board meeting of Father Buehler, held 1 February 1957, had business other than the seminary to discuss. The old building bug had bitten again; in fact its presence was to be felt rather often during this year. Father John Wilson, whose grade school at Purranque had been dedicated the past year, now requested permission to build a combination liceo (7,8,9 grades) and sisters' quarters at a cost of approximately \$10,000. The cost of construction was to be covered by \$5,000 obtained from current donations and the other \$5,000 by a loan from the vicariate. In a letter to the States, Father Buehler explained that, "The main reason for hurry in this matter is that the people are clamoring for a Secondary School and if we do not build soon the State [Chilean] may put up something and any future endeavor on our part would meet with all kinds of problems and difficulties."<sup>10</sup> On 12 May Father Wilson blessed the first stone for his liceo.

In March both the Chilean and American boards approved another building program. For several years the

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

Italian sisters, who staffed the Resbalón school, had been living in a rented house. The thinking of the San José priests was to remodel and add a number of rooms to the old adobe mission chapel. When Father William Schenk consulted with some of the nearby fundo owners, they recommended building a completely new convent. Moreover, one of them promised to contribute about \$2,100 to the effort, another would give all the building bricks, and a third agreed to draw up the plans free of cost. Permission to spend not more than \$3,000 was soon forthcoming from the United States.

For eighteen days during February and March, Bishop Joseph M. Marling, former American provincial and recently installed ordinary of Jefferson City, Missouri, visited the Chilean vicariate. He was delighted to see all the fathers, to fish on the Toltén River at Pitrufoquén, to spend several evenings at pinochle, to enjoy the open hospitality of the missionaries. Especially pleasant was renewing his acquaintance with Cardinal Caro of Santiago, and listening "to unstinted praise for the Fathers and their work."<sup>11</sup>

There were developments elsewhere. Bishop Guido Beck of the Araucanian Prelature received a coadjutor with the right of succession. The new prelate was a fellow Bavarian Capuchin and veteran Chilean missionary, Guillermo Hartl, who was elevated to the episcopacy on 7 March, 1957.

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<sup>11</sup>Bishop Marling to writer, December, 1974.

because Pitrufrquén was a suffragan parish, the vicariate sent the new bishop a gift of thirty thousand pesos. About one year later Bishop Beck died.

With all the activity created by the building of schools, the beginning of the seminary, the search for construction sites, one tends to forget that all this was just a means to an end: to help Chilean people find Christ. One missionary who used an imaginative approach to his apostolate was the senior chaplain at Hospital del Salvador, Father Joseph Herod. To evangelize the patients in the huge wards, he recorded catechetical programs and purchased religious film strips. Several young men were paid to come in the evenings to show the films and to run the tapes. To offer a program that would attract some of the more hesitant males, Father Joseph frequently showed Spanish language films obtained from the United States Information Agency at Santiago.

It bears repeating that with so much time spent with budgets and buildings, the missionaries might have appeared to be more contractor than Christian. Not so. Another example of priestly zeal was the formation in June, 1957, of a Legion of Mary Praesidium in Santo Domingo parish. This organized apostolate uses home visits to encourage Catholics to return to the sacraments, to have marriages solemnized, and to have children instructed. The founding of the Legion of Mary in Chile itself was due to

the encouragement of the fathers at San José parish. In 1951 a certain young lady, who had founded the Legion in Mexico, came to Santiago determined to do the same for Chile. Her first contact was with the priests at San José, who were happy to go with her to present her plans to Cardinal Caro.

Engaged in the works of the ministry and for the most part living among Chile's poor, the priests were never far from the social problems of the country. Each missionary could see for himself the consequences of inadequate housing, unemployment, poor health care, insufficient diet, excessive drinking, and illicit sex. Political parties of the left attacked the indifference shown to social justice and often used specific issues to promote their cause.

When in April, 1957, the city of Santiago raised bus fare from 10 to 15 pesos, the capital was hit by a violent wave of unrest. Barricades were set up to disrupt traffic, vehicles were burned, and gangs roamed the streets. When the rioting spread to Plaza Garín, the priests removed all the chalices and vestments from the San José church.

Standing at an upstairs window of the rectory, Father Paul Aumen wondered what would happen. He quickly found out:

Soon the gang of rioters opened fire on the soldiers in the plaza, and of course the soldiers answered back. From the upstairs window Father Bill Schenk and I could see the bullets tearing through the trees growing along the street in front of the rectory.

Suddenly a bullet ricocheted from the cement street and shattered a tile on the porch roof outside the window where we were standing. As yet Fr. Bill and I do not know which one of us hit the floor first . . .

[The rioting] has made us realize that our mission work here in Chile is not only against ignorance and religious slothfulness. It is also against a secret and godless communism, which threatens to take over the minds of these poor people unless the Catholic faith is strengthened and made to hold first place in their lives.<sup>12</sup>

One of the long-range programs of the priests to strengthen the Catholic faith of the Chileans, albeit of the middle class, was to conduct a twelve-year school. On 27 June, Father Paul Buehler finally ended years of delay and red tape in buying land for the projected San Gaspar school. Back in 1954 Father Leonard Fullenkamp had his eye on some property that fronted Pedro de Valdivia street. With the litigation resolved and some adjustments made in the boundaries of the terrain, the Chilean social security department sold the vicariate 15,000 square meters for a little under \$14,000.<sup>13</sup>

A year later Father Fullenkamp, pastor of Santo Domingo parish and prime mover of the school venture, presented for vicariate and provincial approval plans to build six classrooms at an estimated cost of \$35,000. Since he had about \$10,000 on hand, he petitioned the

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<sup>12</sup>Precious Blood Messenger 63 (August 1957): 244.

<sup>13</sup>ASPB-D, "1955-1959 - Chile Vicar," letter of 3 July 1957.



vicariate board for the additional \$25,000. Final approval came from the provincial, who stated: "After all, you priests are down there on the scene, knowing all the circumstances and you should have a free hand in building AFTER all the considerations that the Vicariate Council has given to the program."<sup>14</sup> No doubt this more liberal attitude on the part of Father Oberhauser in authorizing expenditures was the result of numerous complaints made during various official visits.

On Sunday, 24 August 1958, ninety-two year old Cardinal Caro blessed the first stone of the future San Gaspar school. Other dignitaries present included Señora Graciela Letelier, the wife of President Ibáñez; the Chilean Minister of Education; and the American ambassador and his wife. Thus the vicariate's only tuition-charging school finally got off the drawing boards.

If the year 1957 brought a measure of satisfaction to Father Buehler, it also carried a cup of sorrow: the death of his mother. In writing to the vicar provincial, Father John Byrne, the first consultor of the American province, referred to the death as a "severe blow to you and the pain must have been all the more acute since you could not be here for the funeral."<sup>15</sup> At this time it was the policy of the American province that no missionary

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<sup>14</sup>ASPB-S, "Provincial Letters, Fr. Paul Buehler."

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

return home on the death of a parent.

A year earlier, when the mother of Father Burghart was gravely ill, he was allowed to begin his stateside leave at once, since his original departure time was close. Shortly after this, Father Oberhauser wrote to his acting vicar provincial: "It is not a privilege extended to him which will mean that everyone in the Vicariate will be allowed to return home in the event of a death."<sup>16</sup> However, in 1961, under a new provincial administration the policy was changed to allow the missionary to be absent from Chile for two weeks.

Before the current year ended, Father Buehler was to learn that being superior meant getting involved with the problems of his priests. One such problem concerned his assistant at San José, Father Augustine Hanchak. When a little girl was killed on the street in front of a nearby school, the victim's mother identified Father Hanchak's motor scooter as being the hit-and-run vehicle. However, since the priest could prove that he was in the rectory at the time of the accident, and other witnesses stated that the scooter was red and not blue-gray, the case eventually petered out.

Writing to the provincial, Father Buehler gave his reasons for the mother's accusation:

In the first place the mother is one of the fanatical-

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

street-corner-protestants of this section. Secondly we are northamericans [sic] and consequently are rich (as far as the people are concerned) and when a rich person is accused of something like this he will frequently pay off rather than go through all the bother of making or buying a defense.

Through the years the missionaries were involved in various traffic mishaps that usually involved pedestrians and not vehicles. According to Chilean law, the accused is presumed guilty until proved innocent. Although the priests were able to avoid jail, their licenses were withheld until their innocence was established. During this indefinite period, a driving permit, to be renewed every ten days, was issued. Experience taught that the quickest way to get the license back and to have the legal process stopped, was to buy the victim a new suit of clothes or make a small cash settlement. He then signed a kind of a release, the case (never really heard) was dropped, and the missionary got his license returned. It should be emphasized that the priest could have been completely free of any wrongdoing, but usually nothing was done to extricate him until the healing balm of cold cash was applied.

Since any kind of collision or personal injury insurance was prohibitively high, no vehicle of the Society was ever insured in Chile. In the case of a collision, each party usually wound up paying for the repairs to his own vehicle. If a missionary waiting for a signal light to

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<sup>17</sup> ASPB-D, "1955-1959 - Chile Vicar."

change had his truck rammed, he paid for the damage done to his vehicle.

Ever since the vicariate had imported from the United States its first jeeps in late 1948, it was reluctant to spend so much money on Chilean import duties. Yet the need for vehicles outweighed the costs involved. However, by 1957 the National Catholic Welfare Conference of the United States and Caritas, an international Catholic relief organization, made it possible for mission organizations to import vehicles into Chile free of duty. By December the Precious Blood Fathers were enjoying the use of two new Ford pick-up trucks.

#### The Apostolate at San José Parish

The annual retreat at Pitrufoquén parish was preached by a Maryknoll Father from Bolivia. With the spiritual exercises concluded, the vicariate members prepared for the first time to elect their own board. During the previous year (1957) there was much discussion among the priests about a better representation of board members from the south. With Father Kostik in the United States, the nineteen men who voted did not change a thing. The incumbents, Fathers Junk, Herod, Kostik, and Lengerich all returned to office.

In the past August Father Oberhauser informed Father Buehler that in the future a member of the provin-

cial council would visit the Chilean vicariate every year. The purpose was to give each official in the States the opportunity to know at first-hand the situation in the missions. Thus it was that on 14 February, Father John Byrne, first consultor of the American province, landed at Los Cerrillos airport to begin a four-week visit.

Upon his return home, Father Byrne wrote a lengthy article for the Gasparian, in which he gave his impressions of the Precious Blood Fathers and their work. Going through Chilean customs, he was struck by the linguistic facility of the priests, who guided him through the intricacies of Latin bureaucracy.

Actually I had a preconceived notion that their brand of Castellano would be halting, belabored and slow, but that notion was quickly shattered after I heard them speak. It was hard to realize that these were our confreres from "back home" as I listened to them preaching eloquent sermons, instructing children, driving hard bargains with shop keepers, cajoling maestros - and apparently saying it all the more effectively in Spanish than they could possibly have said it in English.<sup>18</sup>

These were words of high praise, and for some of the missionaries, who were eloquent in preaching and gifted in conversation, well deserved. Yet very few of the priests ever became completely bilingual or lost entirely their American accent. Perhaps the chief reason for this language deficiency was the habit of speaking English at all times within the private areas of the individual rec-

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<sup>18</sup>Gasparian 21 (May 1958): 33.

tories.

Father Byrne's article went on to describe in detail the priests and the places that they staffed. Like all visitors to San José parish, he found the pace overwhelming. A stream of people flowed into the rectory every night for consultation, ~~spiritual and material~~ help, marriages and baptisms. On Saturday evenings, after an early dinner, the priests would go to their respective posts: baptistry, confessional, sanctuary (for weddings), and rectory office. On one Saturday night during his stay, Father Byrne could have witnessed thirteen weddings and thirty-seven baptisms. He took special delight in pointing out that in 1956, 2,040 children were baptized and 245 couples were married at San José. Such statistics tempted one to ask: was this a parish or a diocese?

During his Chilean visit, Father Byrne made it his goal to see not only every house and institution of the vicariate, but to reach every mission chapel or station, no matter how remote. Picturesque as some of the places might have been, what really impressed the first consultor in both Santiago and in the south was the vicariate's school system.

Anxious to transplant the U.S. notion of the parochial school in their Chilean parishes, [our Fathers] designed and built schools which are a credit to their ingenuity and an unshakable foundation to their missionary achievements . . . Unlike the pattern in the States, where the pastor builds and provides the support but lets the administration of the school to the good Sisters, our Fathers in Chile take active charge of each school. THEY are the principals, THEY file

reports, THEY hire the teachers, THEY decide on admissions - THEY run the schools.<sup>19</sup>

During Father Byrne's stay in Chile, another visitor arrived, Father Herbert Kramer, moderator general of the Society. Since 1958 was the silver jubilee of his ordination, Father Kramer celebrated special Masses at the parishes of Purranque and San José, as well as at the new seminary at San Bernardo. This was the third and last visit of Father Kramer as moderator general to the Chilean vicariate. The Gasparian devoted one sentence to the visit, the minutes of the vicariate board, two sentences. Perhaps the presence of Father Byrne at the same time somewhat overshadowed the guest from Rome.

March meant the beginning of another school year. This year the month took on added meaning: the opening of the Escuela Apostólica de la Preciosa Sangre. On 11 March the preparatory seminary admitted ten boys and young men. Among the students was Joe Ricardo Navarrete Hauri, who previously had been sent by his pastor, Father John Kostik of Pitrufquén, to the seminary at Concepción. A day later the Escuela Apostólica was blessed in a private ceremony conducted by the vicar provincial and assisted by Father Byrne.

Shortly afterwards, in writing to the provincial secretary, Father Buehler gave his impression of the stu-

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 36.

dent body:

All of these boys seem happy and contented - in my humble opinion, we have a pretty nice group of boys. One of those who came from Temuco (the Maryknoll Fathers sent him to us) was somewhat at a loss as to what a knife and fork were for when he got to the dining room the first day but he's learning. The other one from Temuco (a very clean-cut promising lad) asked Fr. Lengerich the other day if it would be alright if he would come to Chapel on Sunday without socks because he felt that he ought to wash his (after two weeks).<sup>20</sup>

If March meant a new school year, it also meant the annual transfer of personnel. When Father Buehler thought that all new appointments had been made for the year, unexpectedly he had to make another one. In the last week of March, Father John Wilson, pastor of Purrangué, wrote to the vicar provincial:

School has started, we have 450 in the grades and 108 in the Hi School. So far we are still in one piece, but sometimes I don't know if we are going or coming. Never in my life have I had such a job. And seriously, I am telling you now in plenty of time, that it simply cannot go on this way. Something will have to be done.<sup>21</sup>

Father Buehler wasted no time in coming to the aid of the veteran missionary. Although Father Wilson was due to begin his home leave on 1 June, his departure was pushed ahead. To fill the vacancy for several months, the vicar provincial called upon another veteran, Father John Kostik, who was serving as spiritual director at the Escuela Apostólica. It was on 11 May, when the first vicar provincial

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<sup>20</sup>ASPB-D, "1955-1959 - Chile Vicar."

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., quoted in a letter to Father Oberhauser.



and co-founder of the vicariate left Chile. Father John Wilson never returned to South America.

The neighboring parish of Purranque was that of Rio Negro, now the pastorate of Father Bernard Mores. For over a year he had been receiving shipments of surplus U.S. government foodstuffs through the agency of Caritas and the Catholic Relief Service. He sent out a committee to check on the families most in need, and then, usually after Sunday Mass, distributed beans, rice, corn meal, powdered milk, and cheese. In all some eighty families received relief supplies on a regular basis.

At first glance the idea of dispensing food free to the needy seemed a good idea. But in time the word Caritas conjured up the picture of shoving, grasping, dissatisfied people. The bigger the parish, the bigger grew the project. Moreover, what certain persons began to receive as a gift, grew to be considered as a right. The priest and his assistants were often criticized for giving this one too much and that one too little. For their part, some of the missionaries tried to use the free distribution to promote various projects, such as better attendance at Mass or a financial contribution to a new church. After a number of frustrating years in which the program probably did as much mischief as good, Caritas was mercifully phased out.

In his letter of 2 April, Father Oberhauser wrote to the vicar provincial of a change on the mission home-

front. Father Caspar Bonifas had been appointed to the post of mission procurator. Thus, Father John Hoorman, after six years in Chile and some three years of efficient and usually unsung work as procurator, finally broke his ties with the vicariate.

Some of the money channeled to the missions by the procurators was to be spent to acquire more property. Seeking to enlarge the seminary site at San Bernardo, the vicariate board spent about \$21,000 to buy twelve acres of land adjacent to the Escuela Apostólica. The several buildings on the property were not considered to be much, nor was the price a bargain, but the board members thought it was a fair one. In the light of later developments, a certain preoccupation on the part of the board bears repeating. Father Buehler explained to the provincial:

The only objection brought up was that at some future time someone might decide that San Bernardo is not the best possible site for our Seminary and then maybe we wouldn't want the property at all in San Bernardo. But even the man who offered this objection admits<sup>22</sup> that it is something which only the future can decide.

The missionaries soon realized that to begin the seminary even on a "humble and experimental basis" required a great deal of money. The original purchase of the building and six acres cost \$13,000; improvements to the structure, \$12,000, and now for an additional twelve acres, \$21,000. In addition there was the daily expense of room,

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<sup>22</sup> ASPB-D, "1955-1959 - Chile Vicar."

board, and education for the ten students. The amount of money each boy contributed was negligible.

With the visits of Father Byrne and Father Kramer out of the way and with the seminary functioning, Father Buehler felt that he could take on another task. As pastor of San José parish, he was determined to build a new church because the old church had benches that seated only 260 people. Since it was impossible to add more Masses to the Sunday schedule, a larger church was needed to accommodate parishioners. It was decided to use an existing gymnasium as a temporary church. Both the provincial council and the Santiago chancery approved the demolition of the old church and the use of the gymnasium for religious services.

Father Buehler estimated that the cost of the new structure would be about \$50,000. With approximately \$10,000 on hand from a gift designated years ago for a new church at San José, the vicar provincial hoped to get three or four thousand dollars from the chancery and some help from the parishioners. Obviously the bulk of the money had to come from stateside benefactors. Writing to the provincial on 21 July, Father Buehler gave an honest appraisal of the situation:

I don't know where I'm going to get all the money to build the Church but positing approval of the plans I would like permission to use up the money we have and then to keep going as money becomes available. That's the way everybody builds churches in Chile. Somehow, sometime we'll get it finished and in the meantime we

are well set up in the gym.<sup>23</sup>

In explaining the building plans to the provincial, Father Buehler pointed out a fact of Chilean life:

We wanted the confessionals in the walls but since the men down here use every corner in a wall for a certain purpose which I will not mention here, the outside wall must be an absolutely straight line. We will therefore build the walls on the outside of the supporting pillars, put the confessionals between some of them and leave the rest there as niches in the walls.<sup>24</sup>

However, all of the pastor's plans to prevent the men from using his church walls "for a certain purpose" proved futile. Through the years the straight wall along Cauquenes street has served as a public urinal for a portion of the male population of San José parish.

If Father Buehler was frustrated in the matter of the church walls, he was all the more so in bringing the building project to a conclusion. He was able to finish the basement meeting rooms and the baptistry and sisters' chapel, but once part of the outer walls was raised, all construction stopped for lack of funds. It was to be years before a wooden roof was put on, making it possible to use the still half-finished shell. It was only in 1964, when this raw structure was dedicated by the cardinal of Santiago, that San José had a church of sorts again.

Preoccupied not only with San José parish, Father Buehler was also concerned with vicariate problems. Chief

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<sup>23</sup>Ibid. <sup>24</sup>Ibid.

among these was the need of additional personnel. The last two new volunteers had come to Chile in October, 1955, almost three years previously. It was not that the provincial did not try to send more priests; nearly every month his letters revealed his concern and his attempts to remedy the situation. However, in the last several years more than a dozen priests had died, most of them active to the end; others were sick and incapacitated. When Father Oberhauser had a volunteer lined up, the medical report would advise not sending him to Chile. But in September, 1958, two new missionaries, Father Donald Thieman (31) and Father Milton Ballor (28), were added to the Chilean vicariate.

With the building of his church and the coming of more priests, the vicar provincial turned his attention to another project. Several years before, the vicariate had printed and distributed for use in its various parishes a little, inexpensive prayer book or Devocionario. The idea now was to revise it and then print it on better paper with better binding. This second edition contained 128 pages, with 32 of them devoted to Precious Blood prayers. The vicariate spent about \$1,600 to print 20,000 copies of the attractive, pocket-size booklet.<sup>25</sup> Thousands of the prayer book were distributed at Hospital del Salvador. When the

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<sup>25</sup> ASPB-D, "1955-1959 - Chile Vicar," letter of 11 August 1958.

supply was exhausted sometime in the early 1960s, no other edition came out.

Beyond the rather limited world of the vicariate, things were stirring. When Pope Pius XII died on 9 October 1958 and was succeeded by Pope John XXIII, Cardinal José María Caro Rodríguez attended the consistory. Two months later, on 4 December, back home in Chile, Cardinal Caro died; he was ninety-two years old. The administration of the archdiocese was entrusted to the auxiliary bishop, Emilio Tagle. In an apparently unrelated move, on 29 November 1959, Raul Silva Henríquez was ordained bishop for the diocese of Valparaiso. However, the thinking of the Holy See became apparent on 26 May 1961, when Bishop Silva was nominated to head the archdiocese of Santiago. On 19 March 1962, John XXIII elevated him to the College of Cardinals. And there are those who say that the Church moves slowly!

The priests at San José parish were soon to get to know Bishop Tagle personally. Along with the rector of the major seminary in Santiago, a good number of seminarians, and many lay people, he was to take part in a precedent-making mission at San José. The gigantic undertaking, that ran from February 1 to 11, 1959, was probably the biggest mission Chile had ever seen; surely it was the best pre-

pared.<sup>26</sup>

Already in July organizational meetings were held with the seminary rector and other leaders. In September, a group of seminarians took a sample census of some 1,000 families in various parts of the parish to determine its sociological and religious composition. All the evidence indicated that the traditional method of preaching two or three times a day in the parish church would be completely inadequate. As a result, detailed studies of new mission methods used in Europe were made, and then adapted to the situation in Chile. In late December, seventy young men and ninety young women, all members of the Juventud Obrera Cristiana (Young Christian Workers), assembled at the Jocist summer camps for a week of intensive instructions concerning the mission.

In preparation for the mission, the parish was divided into eight sections, with each section assigned its own conference site and team of missionaries. Although each center had an evening Mass and sermon, the innovation centered around the daily conferences. Almost daily, three to four conferences for different age groups were scheduled in each center.

The Jocists, besides doing a great deal of promotional work, assisted in giving talks to youth in each sec-

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<sup>26</sup>Precious Blood Messenger 65 (June 1959): 176-180; the description of the mission is taken from Father Leo Herber's article.

tion. The Catholic Family Movement of Santiago took charge of the conferences for the married people, giving a total of thirty-two conferences in four days. Sixteen of these were conducted by doctors, eight by lawyers, and eight by married couples.

Another feature of the mission was the study of the bible in many neighborhood groups. In all, some one hundred such meetings were directed by priests and seminarians, who had direct contact with several thousand participants.

What were the concrete results of the mission? To say that all Jocist groups practically doubled their membership and that five new groups were formed, does not mean that all members persevered. To say that ten marriage groups were formed, with the possibility of organizing eight more, needs the same kind of restraint. However, time did not change the fact that the married couples, who attended the Cerro Navia section, began to work on getting a chapel for their district. The priests themselves became convinced that the only way to help the youth was to establish some kind of an industrial school.

Perhaps to later missionaries, some of the programs developed by this massive parish mission might not have seemed too novel. However, at that time the ideas were new and several of them endured. Prior to the mission, the parish had been divided into three natural geographic sec-



tions: the parish proper, Población Roosevelt, and Resbalón. But the mission embraced eight sections, and in time this number increased. The purpose of the new divisions was to decentralize the evangelization of the people and the administration of the sacraments. The idea was to do away with the concept of the parish as a kind of spiritual supermarket.

At the time of the mission, Father Buehler had as his assistants Fathers Schenk, Schuwey, and Dinkel, all extremely capable missionaries. However, for various reasons, by the end of the year each one had received a new appointment. As a result, many of the personal contacts made during the mission were left to wither.

Father William Schenk and Father Emil Dinkel not only promoted the idea of the mission but also that of a technical school. One month after the mission ended, such a school opened for night sessions. The class rooms at San José, along with some additional areas, were used for instruction. In March more than 340 students enrolled, but within two months the total dropped to 240. However, after six months the number remained the same, an excellent record for a night school in Santiago. The various courses included auto mechanics, electricity, mechanical drawing and reading of blue prints, barbering, dress making, making of men's clothes, and hair styling.

The technical school at San José filled a real

need. But as other private and public facilities with better equipment became available, enrollment dropped off. Then too the inevitable conflict between daytime and night-time teachers was not long in coming. Finally, when the government subsidy of teachers' salaries was slow in arriving, another discouraging factor was present. The night school lasted less than a decade.<sup>27</sup>

With the parish mission completed and the technical school underway, Father Buehler was free to return to the United States to attend an electoral chapter of the province, and then later a general chapter in Rome. He traveled in the company of Father Harold Diller, provincial secretary, who had been chosen to represent the board that year in Chile. Like Father Byrne before him, he left no stone unturned to see as much of the vicariate as time allowed. Before leaving Santiago on 11 March, Father Buehler appointed Father Joseph Herod as acting vicar provincial.

The electoral chapter of the American province chose Father John Byrne as provincial; Father Diller was re-elected secretary; and Father Norbert Sweeterman, former mission procurator and brother of Chilean missionary, Father Thomas, was elected treasurer. As all three of these priests had shown unusual interest in the Chilean vicariate, in their new positions this understanding and

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<sup>27</sup>Precious Blood Messenger 65 (October 1959): 303.

interest were to increase.

Between the electoral chapter in March and the general chapter in July, Father Buehler was busy with mission matters. He received permission from the provincial board to purchase 10,000 square meters (2.2 acres) for the development of a school-chapel building in the Cerro Navia sector of San José parish. Located halfway between the parish proper and the mission at Resbalón, Cerro Navia included some 10,000 persons. Although the land was considered rural, it did have water and light coming up to the edge of the property. At a cost of \$2,000 the purchase was a real bargain.<sup>28</sup>

Construction plans called for the building of two class rooms with a movable wall, so as to permit the area to be used for Sunday Mass. The estimated cost of the two completed rooms was about \$7,000. Although the school was to be called San Francisco Xavier, everybody referred to it as simply the school at Cerro Navia.

Writing to his acting vicar provincial on 17 May, Father Buehler was pleased to mention what the provincial board had decided: "They . . . have gone on record as promising one new man (besides replacements for non-returning men) each year until we reach a number between 35 and

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<sup>28</sup> ASPB-D, "1955-1959 - Chile Vicar," letter of 4 May 1959.

40 priests."<sup>29</sup> Moreover, two more volunteers, Father Joseph Herber (30, a cousin of Father Leo) and Father Richard Lovett (29) were to leave for Chile in late July. Since Father Augustine Hanchak, who had begun his stateside leave earlier in the year, did not return to Chile, the vicariate was eager for more assistance.

Before Father Buehler left for the United States, he and his board received permission to spend \$3,000 to replace a leaky roof at the Escuela Apostólica at San Bernardo. In March, seven students returned for their second year of studies, while five new lads took up residence at the seminary. Among the newcomers was Israel de la Fuente, who was to become the second Chilean ordained a Precious Blood priest.

At the eighth general chapter of the Society of the Precious Blood held in Rome in July, Father Herbert Kramer was succeeded in the position of moderator general by another North American, Father Herbert Linenberger. In the balloting to elect one of the curia members, Chilean missionary Father Emil Schuwey received one vote.

With the chapter in Rome concluded, Father Buehler returned to Chile taking with him the two newest members of the vicariate, Fathers Richard Lovett and Joseph Herber. Within a few days, the vicar provincial was once again wrapped up in the building business. With construction

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<sup>29</sup>ASPB-S, "Provincial Letters, Fr. Paul Buehler."

slowed down on the San José church, the vicariate board suggested using the school's subsidy money on a temporary basis to finance the continued building. This plan received provincial approval, "but that in no event may the indebtedness go beyond twenty thousand dollars at any one time."<sup>30</sup>

Two other construction projects concerned the pastor of San José parish. During his absence from Chile, property had been purchased at Cerro Navia with the intention of building a school-chapel structure. On 18 September, Chile's Independence Day, an outdoor Mass and first stone blessing were held. By November, the foundations were laid and the brick walls were going up. Although the building was not quite finished for the opening of the March, 1960, school year, classes did begin. By April, Father Buehler could write: "The school in Cerro Navia is functioning normally with something like 280 pupils."<sup>31</sup> The teaching was done by several lay women.

The other project that interested the pastor was the acquisition of land for a convent to house the sisters, who were to teach at Población Roosevelt. The Italian congregation of teaching sisters (Inmaculada Concepción de Génova), already running the school at Resbalón, had promised the vicariate three teachers in time for the March

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> ASPB-D, "1960-Vicar Provincial."

opening of the school.<sup>32</sup> For about \$2,400 Father Buehler bought land across the street from the Roosevelt school-chapel property. Next in order was the purchase for \$10,000 of a pre-fabricated house that was to serve as the convent. Although construction was not finished in March, the sisters were able to move in shortly thereafter. Later on, weekday Masses and Saturday night weddings were celebrated in the diminutive chapel.

In the list of appointments that appeared in August for the American province, Father Leo Gaulrapp succeeded Father Caspar Bonifas as mission procurator. Thus did Father Leo begin nearly fourteen years of work dedicated to the cause of the Chilean missions. In the coming years the indefatigable procurator "stuck out his neck" many times for the missions and the missionaries.

Writing to his vicar provincial on 1 September 1959, Father John Byrne mentioned the conversation he had had with Father William Schenk, home on leave:

According to Bill it seems that your Mission approach has undergone some modification since my visit two years ago. I share the new approach with emphasis on the JOC and the Christian Family Movement. De-emphasizing the teaching in public schools surprised me but after Bill's explanation I understood. There is no use putting<sup>33</sup> in hours of labor if the production is negligible.

This little item of news tucked away between let-

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<sup>32</sup> ASPB-D, "1955-1959 - Chile Vicar," letter of 14 September 1959.

<sup>33</sup> ASPB-S, "Provincial Letters, Fr. Paul Buehler."

ters that dealt with apparently more important things, in retrospect, proved most prophetic. "There is no use in putting in hours of labor if the production is negligible." Once the missionaries accepted this assessment, it was to have grave consequences on all vicariate programs. In time it would affect nearly everything that had been considered important to the work of the Society in Chile: the awesome number of baptisms and first communions, the parochial school system, the seminary itself. But such an upheaval would not come overnight.

From his vantage point at San José parish, Father Paul Buehler and his associates could see the positive results of their labors: the tangible, physical growth of the church at Plaza Garín, at Resbalón, at Cerro Navia, and at Población Roosevelt. That Father Buehler was encouraged by the amount of good being done in the Chilean church is seen in his reply to the American provincial.

In the first week of February, 1960, the vicar provincial responded to an invitation extended by Father Byrne to read a magazine article about the problems of the Church in Latin America.<sup>34</sup> The author contended that unless a gigantic missionary effort from outside the continent got underway soon, South America would be lost from

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<sup>34</sup>"Is The Church Losing Latin America?" Ave Maria 91 (9 January 1960): 5-10. This is an interview with Roger E. Vekemans, S.J.

the Catholic Church. Father Buehler wrote:

He does not mention the fact that there seems to be a very definite resurgence of Catholicism in Chile. As far as I can see there are more people at Mass and the Sacraments than ever before in Chile. The Protestants are not drawing people out of the Catholic Church but are picking up those who should be Catholic (are baptized) but in reality are nothing.<sup>35</sup>

While Father Buehler may have been convinced that religious fervor among Chileans in general was growing, such was not the case at Riachuelo, a parish conducted by the vicariate. When Father George Fey, one of the original volunteers to Chile and long-time pastor of Riachuelo, returned to the United States permanently early in 1960, Father Eugene Stiker was appointed to succeed him. Regarding this nomination, Father Buehler wrote that the "people are religiously cold, but Fr. Gene has a reputation here for bringing around that sort of people."<sup>36</sup> When Father Stiker accepted the new post, he expressed his determination to the vicar provincial: "I have often wondered if nothing could be done in the town that some people say is impossible."<sup>37</sup>

Again the provincial council sent to Chile one of its members, Father Norbert Sweeterman, treasurer, former mission procurator, and older brother to the pastor of

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<sup>35</sup> ASPB-D, "1960-Vicar Provincial."

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., quoted in Father Buehler's letter to Father Byrne.



purranque. After seeing much of the work of the priests in Santiago and in the south, Father Norbert jotted down his impressions:

Each missionary realizes only too well that devoting as much as twenty-four hours a day to his task would still enable him to reach only a small part of the thousands of souls under his care. As a result, every possible way of obtaining the assistance of the lay apostolate must be employed. At present, much is being accomplished through the Catholic Action Movement (Jocists), the Legion of Mary, and the Catholic Family Movement.<sup>38</sup>

The new school year also meant the return of the seminarians to San Bernardo. Father Ambrose Lengerich, rector of the Escuela Apostólica, described the situation:

We had hoped here at the Seminary to be able to open our third year with a boast of being overcrowded. That way, too, we could have begun to argue about the need of beginning work on a new building. Sixteen boys would fill our present sleeping rooms to capacity. The number we now have stops at eleven . . . We have as many ex-seminarians as we have seminarians.<sup>39</sup>

In spite of the small number in the student body, three of those lads would one day be ordained. In the new group of 1960 was young Oscar Orrego from the parish of San José; the year before Israel de la Fuente had entered; and in the first year of operation, Joe Navarrete of Pitrufquén had come.

### The Day the Earth Shook

According to the personnel policy adopted by the

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<sup>38</sup>Gasparian 23 (May 1960): 28.

<sup>39</sup>Precious Blood Messenger 66 (August 1960): 243.

new provincial council, Chile was to receive a replacement for every missionary who chose to remain in the United States. Accordingly, the same month that Father George Fey left Chile, Father Rocco Cosentino (32) was appointed to take his place. In addition to replacing a non-returning missionary, the council had also committed itself to sending an additional priest to Chile each year until thirty-five to forty missionaries were in the vicariate. But in his letter of 9 March to Father Buehler, the provincial introduced a new note:

When we send the additional priest this summer, I would like to send a Brother. You and I know there is one Brother who is most anxious to go and that is Brother Aloysius Kramek [42] . . . In sending him, it will point out the fact that we are not sending misfits or castoffs but a Brother who heretofore was regarded as indispensable to the Community at Carthagena. I think it will have a good effect on the Community to know that we must give till it hurts for the Missions.<sup>40</sup>

On 10 April the departure ceremony for Father Cosentino was held at St. Charles seminary. According to the Gasparian,

[Father John Byrne] preached a stirring sermon for the occasion, pointing out how the C.P.P.S. will do its part in filling the need for priests in South America. He mentioned, however, that there was an alarmingly small number of eligible priests on the volunteer list for Chile and expressed the hope that many of the seminarians would prepare themselves to answer the call. He then stated that there is no lack of volunteers among the Brothers and that at the next departure ceremony

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<sup>40</sup> ASPB-S, "Provincial Letters, Fr. Paul Buehler."

there would be a Brother in the sanctuary.<sup>41</sup>

True to his word on 17 July Father Byrne conducted the departure ceremony for Brother Aloysius Kramek and for the newest priest to volunteer, Father Anthony Spitzig (35). Once in Chile, the two men spent several months at San José parish in the study of Spanish. Writing to his vicar provincial after the latest departure, Father Byrne was encouraged to say: "If God continues to bless us with Brother vocations, I would like to send at least one a year."<sup>42</sup> But such was not to be. After assignments at San José parish and at the Escuela Apostólica, Brother Aloysius left Chile for his home visit in June, 1963. Once there, he decided not to return to the missions. Nor did the American province ever assign another brother to the Chilean vicariate.

The same vicariate board meeting that had agreed to accept Brother Aloysius "with open arms,"<sup>43</sup> also voted to buy a house trailer, made in the United States, to be used for the campo missions in the south. Fathers Norbert Sweeterman and George Fey investigated several types and settled upon the \$1,522.30 model. Because of the Caritas importation privilege, the vehicle entered Chile duty-free.

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<sup>41</sup>Gasparian 23 (May 1960): 27.

<sup>42</sup>ASPB-S, "Provincial Letters, Fr. Paul Buehler."

<sup>43</sup>ASPB-S, "Minutes, Book II, 18 March 1960."

As if being vicar provincial and pastor of San José parish was not enough for Father Paul Buehler, the Apostolic Administrator of the Santiago archdiocese, Bishop Tagle, appointed him dean of the newly-created Quinta Normal deanery. In a letter to the provincial, Father Paul explained:

This is an exceptional deanery . . . As far as the priests are concerned, here is how the 11 parishes stack up: two parishes have Chilean diocesan men (both without assistants); 1 has a Chilean Jesuit; 1 a Polish refugee; 1 German Palotines; 1, French Assumptionists; 1 recently arrived Spanish Diocesan Priest; 1, Italian Order of the Mother of God; 2 parishes with Dutch Holy Family Fathers; 1, North Am. (that ours); and to round it off a Belgian Jesuit is working in one of the poblaciones. I wonder why one of the other deans keep referring to me as the "Dean of the Foreign Legion."<sup>44</sup>

But Father Buehler, in his role as vicar provincial, was about to feel the full burden of the office. How long is an earthquake? Maybe ten seconds, maybe one minute. How long to repair the damage, to rebuild houses, roads, cemeteries, churches? How long? Maybe years. The priests in southern Chile were about to ask themselves those questions. Sunday, 21 May 1960, was the day the earth shook.

Writing to Father Robert Koch, editor of the Gasparian and the Precious Blood Messenger, on 7 June Father Buehler described the devastation that he saw on his trip to the south:

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<sup>44</sup>ASPB-D, "1960-Vicar Provincial."

On Tuesday, May 31, while waiting for passage on the Chilean Airline I was invited to go along on one of the U.S. Globemasters carrying relief supplies and medical personnel to Puerto Montt. From there I rode on the back of a truck to Purrangué. I arrived at about 8:30 p.m., and as I walked down the street toward the rectory I got the impression that Purrangué had not been too severely hit. I noticed that a few buildings were down but by the light of the following day I saw how mistaken my first impression was. Most of the houses in town were being held upright (more or less) by props on one side or the other. The Rectory was still standing but leaning so badly that there is no hope of straightening it. It will have to be completely demolished. The upper part of the church tower, damaged some years ago by a previous quake, had broken off completely and took along a large portion of the front entrance of the church. The entire front section of the church was so cracked and damaged that it will have to be removed at once . . . The cement stairways and the one end of the grade school were severely damaged but the school as such can be saved with major repairs. Upon arrival I found the Fathers [Father Thomas Sweeterman, pastor; Fathers Donald Thieman and Joseph Herber, assistants] all safe and well, installed in the second story of the High School Building.

The following day we drove over to Rio Negro [Father Bernard Mores, pastor; Father Milton Ballor, assistant]. The old Rectory along with a high percentage of the houses in town were completely down. I sort of choked up as I walked down the old familiar streets of my first assignment in Chile and saw what had happened to the town in the space of a few minutes. Rio Negro is built on the crest of a hill; one entire block of houses and stores had rolled down the hill and formed a great mass of rubble at the bottom. Two new reinforced concrete municipal buildings could not have been more effectively demolished with a bomb. Other houses had slid off their foundations and were perched precariously on the side of the hill, damaged beyond repair. The church tower had not fallen but was in danger of doing so at any minute - it is being removed. The school came out quite well in spite of 109 broken windows and a few sprung joints.

With a certain amount of fear I proceeded to Riachuelo in spite of the fact that I had been told that the damage there was slight. I found Father

[Eugene] Stiker personally supervising the replacement of a few supporting posts under the house. He had lost the chimney of his fireplace but all else seemed to be in order . . . The entire church had moved forward about an inch on its foundation but apparently with no damage . . .

All in all we are grateful that no life was lost among our Fathers; in fact, no one was even scratched. Our material damages have been great. Two rectories will have to be rebuilt; extensive repairs on two churches and minor repairs on another; major repairs on one school and minor ones to two others . . . We need help desperately; a lot of people we could have relied upon down here to help us have lost everything too.<sup>45</sup>

One who experienced the trembling earth that May day was the pastor of Rio Negro, Father Bernard Mores:

Since it was Sunday afternoon many were in the open spaces, and all who could ran out of their homes. As I stood, or better, fell from side to side in front of the parish house, I saw the tower of the church crack and fall to one side. The ten foot grotto made of rock, which was a few yards to my side, seemed to leap and fall backward. As the rumbling and roaring of the earth increased, the parish house crumbled in the middle and fell together.<sup>46</sup>

A similar story came from Pitrufrquén where Father William Frantz lived, with his assistants, Fathers Paul Aumen and William Schenk. The latter wrote:

Before we were able to get a full idea of all that had occurred, however, the earth began to move again. You simply could not stand in one place as the earth swayed to and fro. The ground heaved, then moved from side to side. The sensation was something like riding in a car over a newly plowed field. People fell to the ground, unable to retain their sense of balance. The screams and cries, the groaning and straining of

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<sup>45</sup> Gasparian 23 (June 1960): 29-33.

<sup>46</sup> Gasparian 23 (July 1960): 46.

the buildings, the sounds of crashing objects created an unbelievable atmosphere of panic. It was then I realized<sup>47</sup> why Chileans have such a fear of earthquakes.

It was not until Monday that the priests at Pitrufrquén learned that the greatest damage done in their area was along the Pacific coast. A tidal wave, created by the quake, had roared inland destroying the town of Toltén. Most of the loss of life in the earthquake took place here. With Pitrufrquén only badly shaken but not damaged, the parish buildings became a haven for those rendered homeless elsewhere. For a while, school rooms sheltered some 380 refugees. As Father William Frantz explained, spiritually the victims were also cared for:

Because of the continued trembling of the earth, it was impossible to hold services in church. So from Monday through Ascension Thursday we had Mass in the school yard or central plaza. Hundreds assisted at the Masses with great fervor; the Communion were many indeed. In all, about sixty baptisms were performed for the babies and children of the incoming refugee families.<sup>48</sup>

Father John Byrne wrote to his vicar provincial on 1 and 3 June, expressing his concern:

As I mentioned in my previous letter, we must first of all be grateful to Almighty God that none of our Fathers suffered any harm. Even though the physical picture gives us a sick feeling in the pit of the stomach, no damage is so serious that it cannot be restored. It will take time, courage, heroic efforts and probably more money than you will find in the Vicariate Treasury but it will all work out . . . In the midst of all the tragedy, the sunshine of humor

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<sup>47</sup>Precious Blood Messenger 66 (July 1960): 213.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., 215.

seems always to shine through. We all got a big bang out of Stiker's remark that the church<sup>49</sup> at Riachuelo is straighter now than it ever was before.

In addition, Father Byrne indicated that stateside mission appeals would prove most productive. In a letter to the members of the American province, the superior wrote:

You might be curious to know just how much has been collected this year for our Chilean Vicariate. Since May, 1960, the Mission Procurator's report lists: General donations for Chilean Relief: \$24,915.17; Donations for our Chilean Seminary: \$360.00; Donations specified for projects of individual Missionaries: \$11,034.75. Besides the above, \$9,915.15 resulted from Mission Appeals of the Mission Procurator, Father Leo Gaulrapp and his auxiliaries. The grand total: \$46,225.07.<sup>50</sup>

On the occasion of the monthly day of recollection at the Escuela Apostólica, the vicariate board held a short meeting on 9 June. At this time Father Buehler repeated what he had already advised the priests in the south to do:

They should go ahead with immediate repairs such as clean-up and putting the schools and churches in shape as soon as possible. As far as any permanent rebuilding to be<sub>51</sub> done first an estimate would have to be presented.

The pastor of Purranque, Father Thomas Sweeterman, needed something to serve as classrooms while reconstruction was underway. He came up with an ingenious plan: tents. Previously he had learned that the U.S. military

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<sup>49</sup>ASPB-S, "Provincial Letters, Fr. Paul Buehler."

<sup>50</sup>Gasparian 23 (August 1960): 47.

<sup>51</sup>ASPB-S, "Minutes, Book II, 9 June 1960."



people did not intend to take back to the United States the field hospital tents that the Globemasters had flown into Puerto Montt. Upon request, the officers were delighted to give Father Sweeterman five tents. One of these he used as a church, while the others served as classrooms. Nearly everyone was pleased with the disposal of the equipment: the American military, because they knew that the gear would not be wasted; the school children, because they had the thrill of studying in a tent; and the Precious Blood pastor, because his school year could continue. However, there was one dissatisfied group: the Chilean army. For years afterwards, the local military tried to get the tents on the plea that such equipment was intended for its personnel. But the army was always out-maneuvered by the missionaries. By the first of July the tent school was in use.

Over at Rio Negro the priests, without a house, were living in the school. Adjacent to the church, the government put up emergency barracks for the homeless, who proved to be not only poor but disorderly. The temporary housing remained for some eight years. It finally ended when the municipal government wanted a new access street for the proposed Rio Negro hospital. Since the new thoroughfare would cut off part of the rectory property, an exchange was made: the parish was to get the land upon which the barracks stood. The negotiations took years to

complete.

On 14 December the vicariate board met at the seminary to discuss the plans for the new rectories in Rio Negro and Purranque. Since each house was to cost about \$15,000, Father Buehler was concerned that the provincial would think the estimates too high.

But we want the house to have enough room while we are at it. When the northern Fathers go south they need a place to sleep. Rio Negro will have 4 upstairs bedrooms; Purranque has five. Both houses have quarters upstairs for the housekeepers . . . I insisted that in both cases the housekeepers [sic] quarters be completely cut off from the rest of the upstairs with an independent stairway. Naturally, that shot the price up, but I feel it is almost<sup>52</sup> a necessity even more so in Chile than in the States.

Father Paul's reference to the need of isolating the housekeepers' quarters as being more important in Chile than in the States hinted at more than what he wrote. There have been Chileans, good people, who believed that every man must at times gratify his sexual appetite. Thus, one of the missionaries told of a Legion of Mary meeting at which one of the women mentioned that if she were sick for a length of time, it would be proper and normal for her husband to seek his satisfaction elsewhere. Another woman, a faithful cook for three years at one of the larger vicariate parishes, confided that all men are the same; yet, in loyalty to the priests of the house, she knew that they took some kind of a pill to kill desire.

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<sup>52</sup>ASPB-D, "1960-Vicar Provincial."

The new rectories in Purrangué and Rio Negro were to have been dedicated on 1 November 1961, All Saints Day. However, not unexpectedly the house-warming at Purrangué was held on 10 December, while the house at Rio Negro was not to be occupied for several more months.

More than a year after the earthquake, the bishop of Osorno, Monseñor Valdés, was instrumental in obtaining a government loan for the reconstruction of the two rectories. Although the vicariate had already spent \$36,000 in rebuilding projects, it was eager to accept the loans because of a reasonable certainty that such loans would be condoned by the government. Father Buehler explained the loan situation to the provincial:

Even though the houses are practically finished and paid for, the Bishop wants the Society to have this government money as a repayment to the Society. We are happy to have it but the Council feels that the \$30,000 given to the two places along with the \$6,000 for the school at Purrangué was really money donated for the earthquake reconstruction, and so cannot really be considered a loan to these places. As a result, we recommend that the loan money be turned over to the Vicariate Treasury, but that the two places will have credit with us to that amount for help in their future projects and possibly for repaying these loans eventually.<sup>53</sup>

By the end of September, 1960, with the effects of the earthquake pretty well under control, the provincial sent a thought-provoking letter to Father Buehler. In it Father Byrne introduced an idea that eventually was to have far-reaching consequences not only for his vicar provin-

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

cial, but also for the entire missionary effort of the American province. He wrote:

We had a very interesting meeting of the Mission Sending Societies in Washington two weeks ago . . . The plea of the Holy See to send more missionaries to Latin America is becoming more persistent and emphatic . . . I suspect if the Holy See does not get more of a response from the Religious in the U.S., it will abandon the program of pleading and come out with a direct order to take over this territory or that. It might be good for us to begin thinking about the prospect of selecting another mission territory. What do you think?<sup>54</sup>

On 14 November Father Buehler sent the provincial his thoughts on the Society's mission commitment:

Bishop Comber of Maryknoll was here last week and I had a long talk with him about the mission field point. His first remark was that unless we intend to throw a lot of men in the field we should stick to Chile. He said that there is plenty to be done here and Chile can take all we can give. He warned especially about spreading out too thinly. He seemed certain that as long as any society has a goodly percentage of men in Latin America the Holy See will be happy and will not push taking on new countries . . . He mentioned that if we are to help save Latin America from Communism we must get into the cities where the working class - the masses of people are. He mentioned that both they and we have enough little country parishes.<sup>55</sup>

Father Byrne replied that he thoroughly enjoyed reading of Bishop Comber's ideas on the subject, and added:

It was a relief to learn that he favored our restriction of mission efforts to Chile. Well, we can continue to shop. I don't think we will<sup>56</sup> be ready to take over another territory for some years.

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<sup>54</sup> ASPB-S, "Provincial Letters, Fr. Paul Buehler."

<sup>55</sup> ASPB-D, "1960-Vicar Provincial."

<sup>56</sup> ASPB-S, "Provincial Letters, Fr. Paul Buehler."

However, within the next five months the provincial was to visit Peru and set into motion the possibility of the American province's entry into that country.

Upon learning that Father William Donohoe would not return to Chile, Father Byrne immediately looked for a replacement. Within a month he had his man, Father Gerald Dreiling (33). At the departure ceremony, 11 December, the provincial preached a sermon that prompted the Gasparian to print it in full. Father John began:

Without, in the least, trying to sound alarming, I view this departure ceremony today as awesomely significant. For the first time since our Province has committed itself to the foreign missions, the elements of danger, hostility - yes, even persecution seem to lurk remotely in the area to which we are pledged . . . Today, there hovers over Chile as well as all Latin America the ominous specter of Castroism. It is this 1960 model of Western Communism that offers hope to the poverty stricken masses of Latin America and the threat of doom to Christianity. In the very center of this fierce and critical struggle will be found our very own - the Fathers and Brothers of the Society of the Precious Blood . . .

With my own eyes I saw a Communist demonstration in downtown Santiago in 1957 on the occasion of the funeral of the Secretary of the Communist Party. I shall never forget the thousands in that parade: their taut, fierce, determined expressions; their clenched fists raised to the sky. No one could convince me that Communists in Chile were only a disturbing minority. . .

Last year, Cardinal Mimi appealed to the hierarchies of the United States and Canada to send money and personnel to South America as quickly as possible. Cardinal Valeri reminded Generals of all Religious to tap the resources of their Provinces for South American recruits. . . . The Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of Religious made it very clear in his letter to all Provincial Superiors that Catholicism is quivering in the balance in Latin America - and that if generous help didn't come soon, the whole Catholic continent

would be lost to Communism.<sup>57</sup>

As he had written previously to Father Buehler about the possibility of taking on a new mission territory, so now in his sermon the provincial repeated the idea. He also mentioned that with Father Dreiling's departure, the number of Precious Blood priests in Chile stood at 24. Father Byrne pledged again to send one additional missionary a year until the total in the vicariate reached thirty-five. Before a final word of congratulation to the newest volunteer, the preacher returned to his original theme: "If the social unrest mounts to the point of explosion, if Castroism sweeps through Chile, Father Dreiling and our brethren in Latin America are in for a real struggle with the powers of darkness."<sup>58</sup>

When Father Byrne delivered his sermon, John F. Kennedy had just been elected President; in the following month President Eisenhower was to break diplomatic relations with Cuba; and within four months would come the Bay of Pigs invasion.

On the same plane that carried Father Dreiling to Chile came Bishop Joseph M. Marling and his brother, Brother John Marling, C.P.P.S. In Santiago on Christmas, the bishop graciously assisted the priests of San José

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<sup>57</sup>Gasparian 23 (December 1960): 77-78.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid.

parish in marking another beginning: the blessing of the first stone for the new grade school at Población Roosevelt. Father Leo Herber, the assistant at San José responsible for this sector, described what met the bishop's eye:

A loud speaker dangled precariously from its perch in the branches of a young sapling; and the microphone, wired in the latest do-it-yourself fashion to a broken music stand, didn't exactly serve to enhance the stage presence of the speakers on hand for the occasion. A local-talent painting of the Nativity scene unbecomingly, and not too successfully, hid an unbecoming out-house that<sup>59</sup> happened to be within 10 feet of the ceremony site.

Construction plans called for the immediate building of three classrooms, toilets, and office for an estimated cost of \$14,000.

Father Milton Ballor, also stationed at San José parish, added a few more notes about that Christmas season:

On Christmas Eve we had exactly one less than 100 baptisms. Twenty more were brought in for christening on Christmas day. Then on New Year's Eve precisely 100 more children were ushered into the Church through the waters of baptism. Twelve more came along on New Year's Day to start their lives as new Christians.

This holiday rush brought the total count of our baptisms here at San José up to 2,029 for the year 1960. - Marriages? Total count for '60 was 277.<sup>60</sup>

A summary of the annual report from the Chilean vicariate gave the following totals for 1960: number of souls: 137,533; number of families: 25,021; adult baptisms: 83; children's baptisms: 3,986; confessions (ap-

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<sup>59</sup>Precious Blood Messenger 67 (March 1961): 90.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid., 93.

prox.) 129,903; all holy communions: 230,175; marriages: 563; funerals (with Mass): 206; number of pupils in the parochial schools: 4,053; pupils in the high schools: 519.<sup>61</sup>

When both the authorities in Rome and in the American province wanted statistics, they received them. But it must be stated that with the exception of the definite number of baptisms, first communions, marriages, and pupils in the schools, the remainder of any report had to be simple estimates. No one ever knew the number of persons or even the number of families entrusted to one parish, let alone the entire vicariate. Shrewd guesses were made, the results were printed, and everyone seemed to have been satisfied.

### Changes in the Making

On 22 February 1961, an old friend of Father Buehler made the trip out to San José, Plaza Garín. This was Bishop José Manuel Santos of Valdivia, who came prepared to offer the Society a parish in his see city. As the bishop explained it, he really didn't have a parish, but rather a new emergency housing project of some 20,000 people that the government had set up on the northern edge of the city. The government agency (CORVI) offered to sell the bishop 6,000 square meters at a reasonable price with ten years to

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<sup>61</sup>ASPBS-S, "Vicariate Financial Reports."



pay at four per cent interest. Moreover, the government offered a long-term loan for building a church, rectory, and school. Father Buehler later reported to the provincial that the bishop "would like us to take the parish 'ad perpetuum' with everything in the name of the Society, including the loan from the government; he would simply help us to get the loan and the property at the lowest possible cost."<sup>62</sup>

When both the provincial and vicariate boards accepted the offer to establish a parish in Valdivia, plans were made to acquire the needed land. By September the vicariate board agreed to seek a government loan and to use the Escuela Apostólica property as collateral. However, the Valdivia property transaction was quickly becoming a replay of the St. Gaspar school problem. On 13 November Father Buehler informed the provincial: "We are about as far along as we were two months ago."<sup>63</sup>

However, in spite of the delays, the vicariate was determined to do something for the people in the new población, now swollen to 32,000 persons. The housing project did put people under roof, but it had no market, no police station, no first aid center, no telephone, no fire house, no post office, and, of course, no church.

On 13 November 1961, Father Paul Aumen moved into

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<sup>62</sup>ASPB-D, "1961-Vicar Provincial."

<sup>63</sup>Ibid.

one of the project houses that had been rented a year earlier by the bishop. Then on Thanksgiving Day he and some visiting priests put up one of the U.S. field hospital tents that had served Purrangué so well. The CORVI housing project, Gil del Castro, had a new church. Father Aumen described his feelings:

After living here in this vast housing project, I sense something of what Christ must have felt when He stood with his disciples looking over the wheat fields in Galilee. He didn't see the million heads of wheat at all. He saw the souls of all the people in the village . . .

Every Sunday, at the three Masses I celebrate, there are about 600 persons jammed into the tent. But what is 600 when you can look out your window and see 32,000. They are all bewildered and dejected, like sheep without a shepherd.<sup>64</sup>

Four days before Christmas, Father Buehler expressed his unhappiness to the provincial over the shilly-shally attitude of the bishop:

The two people we are must put out with are the Bishop and the lawyer he suggested to handle this matter for us. We have to push the lawyer for every move he makes and the Bishop seems to have the attitude that since we want the parish, it's up to us to get it and he can forget about the whole affair . . .

We certainly do not intend to sit around for years waiting for this to be settled; six months have gone by already. I told Paul [Father Aumen] to give the Bishop an ultimatum; either he shows <sup>65</sup>some interest and does something or we are pulling out.

The Society did not leave Valdivia. Within eight

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<sup>64</sup>Precious Blood Messenger 68 (August 1962): 242.

<sup>65</sup>ASPB-D, "1961-Vicar Provincial."

months Father Paul Aumen himself became the vicar provincial. He was most sympathetic to the Valdivia undertaking, but it was June, 1963, before he could assure the provincial that the physical plant for the new parish was finally off dead center and moving. The municipality of Valdivia authorized the government agency, CORVI, to rezone the proposed parish site, making possible construction. Furthermore, "CORVI is letting us have the property for the original price."<sup>66</sup> The pastor, Father Rocco Cosentino, then received permission to put up an all-purpose building at a cost of \$9,000, of which \$2,000 came from the bishop and the people.

More than two years later, 22 October 1965, Father Aumen at last had some good news about the CORVI loan for Valdivia:

Recently we received the first part of the government loan long promised since 1961. It will amount to E [escudos] 100,000 (\$18,000). Originally this same amount amounted to more than \$70,000.<sup>67</sup>

In spite of the huge bite that inflation had taken out of the government loan, construction was able to begin on an innovative wooden church. The building project was successfully completed by Father Richard Beischel. However, other than putting up a chapel in the población, the vicariate never built a rectory, convent, or school there.

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid., "1963-Vicar Provincial."

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., "1964-65 - Vicar Provincial."

In that same February of 1961, when the bishop of Valdivia invited the vicariate to enter his diocese, Father James Bender returned from his stateside leave. Appointed temporary pastor at Pitrufoquén, he described the situation:

After my six months in the States, I was struck more than ever by the drab, grinding poverty of Chile. This time the country did not hold for me any kind of "glamour," like meeting new people, facing a distinct culture and a strange language. This time I knew to what I was returning - and believe me, it was not particularly attractive from the natural point of view . . .

We find everywhere a nominal, nearly lifeless religion. This is due to varied causes - to ignorance of the truths of the faith, to lack of conviction, to a lack of esteem (often a hate and opposition) for the clergy, and a dire scarcity of priests . . .

The most efficacious help will be given by the missionaries, both lay and religious missionaries, who sacrifice their native land, their own ease, their own culture and their very selves to identify themselves with the Chilean people, to mingle with them on even terms, to teach them by example and word the Christian principles necessary to develop themselves from within.<sup>68</sup>

One of the assistants at Pitrufoquén was Father William Schenk, who was promoting both the religious and social well-being of his rural parishioners:

Not even a cart pulled by oxen can reach most of the farms for seven months of the year. Of the 800 families (approximately) in my area, only five have electricity. I have seen only eight tractors and less than half a dozen trucks. Almost all the plowing and cultivating is done by oxen.

We feel that our missionary work at Pitrufoquén must take these things into account. As a result we are working hard on a combined Religious-Social-Eco-

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<sup>68</sup>Precious Blood Messenger 67 (May 1961): 149.

conomic program for our parish, with the hope that in this way we can bring the people much closer to God.<sup>69</sup>

With the aid of six paid lay people from the area, Father Schenk organized rural community centers. His lay assistants, called "delegates," led the various centers in Sunday worship when no priest was available for Mass, formed youth groups to discuss some aspect of Christian doctrine, visited homes to assist in any possible way, and prepared first communicants. To groups of women, they taught dress making, gardening, and canning; to groups of men, how to improve chicken raising and truck farming. Occasionally an agronomist or a veterinarian was asked to give a talk.<sup>70</sup>

In March, Father Schenk presented to the vicariate board an outline of his rural project at Pitrufrquén and asked for a vicariate subsidy of some \$2,000. The money would be earmarked for the education of his lay leaders and for the purchase of bibles, mimeograph paper, and catechisms. According to the minutes, the board discussed the plan but the "general conclusion was not to rush into something which we would not be able to continue without the person of Father Schenk."<sup>71</sup> Subsequent minutes did not record any further discussion over Father Schenk's peti-

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<sup>69</sup>Ibid., (April 1961): 114-115.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid.

<sup>71</sup>ASPB-S, "Minutes, Book II, 7 March 1961."

tion. Although he continued to fund his projects with personal mission donations, he never did receive vicariate assistance.

From 1-21 April, Father John Byrne was in Chile, where he visited all the missionaries, even those in the south. ~~Two days before leaving the country, the provincial attended a board meeting, which approved a loan of \$25,000 to St. Gaspar school for further construction.~~<sup>72</sup>

Without doubt the most important phase of Father Byrne's trip to South America took place not in Chile but in Peru. At the invitation of the apostolic nuncio, Archbishop Carboni, the provincial stopped at Lima to meet Bishop Dettman of the Ica diocese. The bishop, concerned about getting priests for the city of Chinchu Alta, was delighted when Father Byrne assured him that he was interested and would present the matter to his council and to the moderator general.

On 13 June, the provincial brought Father Buehler up to date on the matter of entering southern Peru:

The Peruvian project is tentatively suspended. First of all, our Council was a bit doubtful whether or not we would have sufficient personnel to feed Chile, prepare for our<sub>3</sub> minor seminary faculty, and replace our aging members.

By the first week of September, Father Byrne was able to inform his vicar provincial that the American

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<sup>72</sup>Ibid., "Minutes, Book II, 19 April 1961."

<sup>73</sup>ASPB-S, "Provincial Letters, Fr. Paul Buehler."

province could not accept the Chinchu mission until September, 1962. The provincial explained that it had been his intention to send former Chilean missionary, Father Samuel Homsey, and Father John Kostik to begin the undertaking. However, with stateside appointments to be settled, a definite decision had to be made before the week of 6 August. "With Father Homsey hesitating . . . I decided it would be risky to start the Peruvian venture 'on the wrong foot.'"<sup>74</sup>

Three days after writing to Father Buehler, the Gasparian in a banner headline broke the news to the American province that in 1962 Peru was to have the help of the Society. In a lengthy letter addressed to his confreres Father John Byrne wrote:

At the National Congress of Religious (Major superiors - Men and Women) held at Notre Dame University, August 16-19, 1961, Monsignor Agostino Casaroli stunned the delegates with this conclusion to his address: "The Holy See proposed that, over a period of the next ten years, all Religious Institutes of the United States of America prepare to send TEN PER CENT of their personnel to the Church in Latin America." The delegates felt the crushing impact of the announcement because Monsignor Casaroli spoke as the personal representative of Carlo Cardinal Confalonieri, Prefect of the Pontifical Commission for Latin America.<sup>75</sup>

In his second paragraph, the provincial struck the same note that he had hit at a previous departure ceremony:

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<sup>74</sup>Ibid.

<sup>75</sup>Gasparian 24 (September 1961): 45-47. In 1961, Father John Byrne was president of the Conference of Major Religious Superiors (male) in the United States.

"Either we rescue the Latin American Church by sending religious in colossal strength very soon or allow it to fall prey to communism or some other brand of atheistic revolution."<sup>76</sup> The provincial then described his visit to Lima, his meeting with Bishop Dittman of Ica, and the real possibility of the American province going to Chinchá Alta within a year. Father Byrne then addressed himself to the priests of the province:

Your own reading of conditions in Latin America will convince you that the time has come to "give till it hurts." How we will manage is a bit uncertain but God will provide. There is no intention to diminish our commitment to the Chilean Vicariate.<sup>77</sup>

He concluded by making an appeal for prayers and for more volunteers, adding that to attract more missionaries, the provincial council changed the policy of time-of-service from five years to three years. The idea of the missionary spending three years in Chile, then three months back in the States, had been proposed a year earlier by the mission procurator, Father Leo Gaulrapp.<sup>78</sup> It was argued that such rotation would elevate morale, diminish the sacrifice on the part of the missionary's family, and keep alive contacts with benefactors.

Surprisingly, the priests in Chile resisted the plan, basing their opposition on several factors: begin-

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<sup>76</sup>Ibid. <sup>77</sup>Ibid.

<sup>78</sup>ASPB-S, "Provincial Letters, Fr. Paul Buehler."



ners in Spanish would interrupt their use of the language at a critical time; stateside benefactors would think that the missionaries traveled more than they worked; appointments would be complicated; and official funds would be used unnecessarily.<sup>79</sup> At the annual retreat (for the first time, now held at the Escuela Apostólica) only two out of twenty priests present definitely favored the three-year plan.<sup>80</sup> However, the provincial council was not to be denied: the new rotation began in December, 1961.

Another first had also been in the making for a number of months. In January, 1960, the provincial had written to Father Buehler about his attending in New York a meeting of the executive committee of the Conference of Male Religious Superiors. At that time, Monsignor Ivan Illich proposed a training program in language and culture for missionaries assigned to areas south of the boarder. When all the priests present received the idea enthusiastically, Father Byrne was eager to give the plan a try. By June of 1961 the provincial was able to send the two newest Chilean volunteers, Father Richard Woytych (32) and Father Robert Conway (36), to the first class of students at the Center for Intercultural Formation at Cuernavaca, Mexico.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>79</sup>ASPB-S, "Minutes, Book II, 13 October 1960."

<sup>80</sup>ASPB-D, "1961-Vicar Provincial."

<sup>81</sup>Later the school became renowned as the Center for Intercultural Documentation (CIDOC).

After four months of intensive language training, the two priests reached Chile on 1 November. That same week Father Joseph Silvester (32) became the third and last Precious Blood priest to attend the school in Mexico. However, because of rising tuition costs at Cuernavaca, the next group of missionaries was sent to the language school near Lima, run by the Society of St. James, founded and funded by Cardinal Cushing of Boston.

The coming of Fathers Woytych and Conway to Chile did not increase the number of missionaries in the vicariate. In May, 1961, former vicar provincial and promoter of St. Gaspar school, Father Leonard Fullenkamp, returned permanently to the United States. In September, he was followed by Father Walter Junk. Then in March, 1962, when Father Joseph Silvester reached Chile, the grand old man of the Chilean vicariate, Father John Kostik, returned to the United States for semi-retirement. Now in his sixty-eighth year, Father John had served his last years at the Escuela Apostólica. He would visit Chile once more, in 1968.

Accompanying Father Silvester on his flight to Chile was Father Kenneth Seberger, who returned to the missions after an enforced absence of twelve years. In the previous November, Sister Mary John Brandewie, superior of the Precious Blood Sisters in Chile, wrote to Father John Byrne about the possibility of getting a priest of the

society to serve as chaplain and instructor to her growing band of Chilean religious candidates. At first the provincial thought that "it seemed totally impossible to fulfill such an ambitious request."<sup>82</sup> However, just at that time Father Seberger, now in the best of health but minus one lung, expressed his desire to Father Byrne to return to Chile. Once again in Chile, Father Seberger was installed in the chaplain's quarters of the Precious Blood Sisters' convent on Pedro de Valdivia street. This was located next door to Santo Domingo church, the place where he had worked a dozen years before.

During the pleasant Chilean months of January and February two priests from the American province came to Chile. Father Seraphin Oberhauser, former provincial and again active on the home mission band, conducted retreats for the English-speaking religious communities in Chile. Then Father Leo Gaulrapp, enthusiastic and efficient mission procurator, arrived to get a first hand view of the work that he had been promoting for the past several years. Because of the presence of the two priests, the provincial council did not send a representative to Chile in 1962.

But this was not to keep Father Byrne from coming to Peru. In January he wrote to Father Buehler of his intention to visit the apostolic nuncio in Lima and Bishop Dettman of Ica in the latter part of March. The purpose of

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<sup>82</sup> ASPB-S, "Provincial Letters, Fr. Paul Buehler."

the trip would be to see first-hand the Chincha mission field that the American province was to assume in September. "I would very much enjoy having you meet me in Lima to accompany me on the inspection tour, to act as my interpreter, and to give me your impressions of the proposed territory . . ." <sup>83</sup>

However, by the end of February Father Byrne sent the vicar provincial some disquieting news. Bishop Joseph M. Marling, former provincial and now ordinary of Jefferson City, Missouri, had just returned from Peru with the information that the bishop of Ica had not waited for the Precious Blood Fathers, but had given Chincha to other religious communities. Moreover, what remained in Chincha was the poorest of the slum areas with only a shack for a church. According to Father Byrne, "It was Bishop Marling's judgment that we should not take this." <sup>84</sup> In spite of his disappointment, the provincial confirmed his intention of meeting Father Buehler the following month in Lima.

The vicar provincial flew up from Santiago to the City of Kings in the company of Father Robert Neumeyer, economist general of the Society, who had been visiting in Chile and who continued on to New York. On Tuesday morn-

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<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid. In June, 1962, the Jefferson City diocese, under the leadership of Bishop Marling, entered the missions of southern Peru. Within three years the diocese had fifteen priests in the field.

ing, 20 March, Panagra's DC-8, El Americano, carrying Father John Byrne, was met at Lima's international airport by Father Buehler and two priests from the apostolic nunciature.

Within a short time the Precious Blood priests had a lengthy interview with the nuncio to Peru, Archbishop Romolo Carboni. The outcome was that on the following day, Father Byrne and Father Buehler made the six-hour train trip to the smelting city of the Cerro de Pasco Corporation at La Oroya, a dreary city set at 12,225 feet above sea level and 116 miles by road east of Lima. Monseñor Mariano Jacinto Valdivia y Ortiz, the bishop of the area, whose see was Huancayo, was waiting for them at the station. Another night and another day passed before the two priests were convinced that Oroya and the surrounding territory would be accepted by the Society. On the other side of Oroya, in the little city of Tarma, situated on the road to the Peruvian jungle, Father Byrne decided that the founder of the new mission was to be Father Paul Buehler.<sup>85</sup>

In a lengthy article printed in the April Gasparian, the provincial outlined in great detail the reasons for taking this particular mission area. He concluded:

I could come home to you with the good news that FOUR missionaries would go to Oroya in October this year and an additional missionary would start the Lima parish shortly thereafter. I had no illusions about the

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<sup>85</sup> ASPB-D, "1962 Vicar Provincial," letter of 5 April 1962.

toughness of the new mission territory. It will be a sensitive, challenging and responsible mission but it will be rewarding and satisfying.<sup>86</sup>

Father Paul Aumen, forty years old, ordained twelve years, a Chilean missionary for more than six years, was chosen by the provincial to succeed Father Buehler. In his letter of appointment, Father Byrne wrote:

Your priestly example, your apostolic zeal, and above all, your acknowledged ability to get along with all the Fathers forecasts [sic] a great success for you as the Superior of the Chilean Vicariate. Your letter . . . indicates that you will not hesitate to employ new and progressive techniques in the effective development of the apostolate. In this I whole-heartedly encourage you.<sup>87</sup>

May was only four days old when the provincial was able to inform Father Buehler that he had five volunteers lined up for language school in June. Of this group, three were designated for Peru and two for Chile. However, the vicariate did not increase its number of priests, as Father Byrne explained:

I feel that two for Chile will replace you and Father Tom Sweeterman. I know that this arrangement does not allow for an additional missionary for Chile (according to our commitment) but as we discussed in Tarma, I believe that the Chilean Vicariate can operate without serious damage to its program with replacements for you and Father Tom Sweeterman.<sup>88</sup>

The pastor of Purranque, Father Sweeterman, had been asked to undertake the construction of a center house

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<sup>86</sup> Gasparian 25 (April 1962): 24.

<sup>87</sup> ASPB-S, "Provincial Letters 1961-19.."

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., "Provincial Letters, Fr. Paul Buehler."

in Lima and to begin the formation of a new parish at the same time. However, since he was not needed immediately, he did not leave Chile until the last day of January, 1963.

The Gasparian of 8 June carried a list of appointments that included the five priests destined to work in South America: for the Chilean vicariate, Father Gerard Ritzel (29) and Father Paul Schaaf (36); for the Peruvian mission, Fathers William Beuth, Joseph Grilliot, and Leo Matusicky.

At his last vicariate board meeting Father Buehler informed the priests in attendance that "official steps toward making the mission in the poblacion called 'Roosevelt' an independent parish" had been taken.<sup>89</sup> The new parish, split off from San José at Plaza Garín, was to be known as Nuestra Señora de la Preciosa Sangre. Father Buehler also told his board that in the future the vicar provincial was to be relieved of all obligations other than that of his office. He was to take up residence at the seminary in San Bernardo.

Then quite suddenly, or so it seemed, all the long-planned appointments became effective. On 8 July 1962, Father Paul Aumen assumed his position as vicar provincial, Father Donald Thieman was installed as the first pastor of Roosevelt parish, and Father Leo Herber

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<sup>89</sup> ASPB-S, "Minutes, Book II, 12 April 1962."

became pastor at San José. In spite of a heavy morning rain that turned the patio at the Roosevelt school-chapel into a quagmire, Cardinal Silva was able to reach the building and conduct the installation of Father Thieman.



## CHAPTER VI

### NEW GOALS AND THE COMING CRISES

#### The Great Mission

From Rome on 14 July the moderator general, Father Herbert Linenberger, sent the new vicar provincial a congratulatory message:

An interesting series of years and developments are ahead of you. Your predecessors in office, each according to his own talent and zeal, made phenomenal strides in beaming the picture of confidence onto the Chilean scene, and from reports that have come to this office, have also succeeded in performing successfully according to the missionary standards that are prevalent in Chile. Again F L O R E A S!<sup>1</sup>

The new vicariate council, made up now of Fathers Aumen, Sweeterman, Mores, Dinkel, and Frantz, met for a two-day session beginning on 21 August. Father Aumen pointed out that the purpose of the meeting "was to consider what was best for the Community, leaving all private considerations aside."<sup>2</sup> In light of this preamble, it seems somewhat strange that the first item of new business dealt with the possible use of the roman collar and black suit in place of the ubiquitous cassock.

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<sup>1</sup>ASPB-S, "Moderator General."

<sup>2</sup>ASPB-S, "Minutes, Book II, 21 August 1962."

Other points discussed were new appointments, including the acceptance of the Catholic University's invitation that Father William Schenk teach there; the promotion of vocations under Father James Bender (who had toured the south, talked in 18 schools, and interviewed 108 boys); the contract with the bishop of Valdivia; the feasibility of sending seminarian Joe Navarrete to the United States for his novitiate; a chapter or general meeting of all vicariate priests; and the possibility that the vicar provincial take up residence in a kind of central house located near the principal train station in Santiago.

Although the provincial proved sympathetic to Father Aumen's desire to live in Santiago, he and his council opposed the idea of founding another house. "As soon as you operate a house - even though the rent be reasonable - the cost would be prohibitive."<sup>3</sup> In reply, Father Aumen stated that he wanted a place where the priests could get away for a day from parish work and "in my opinion it is something so important that it must come."<sup>4</sup>

Even though his first weeks in office were busy ones, the vicar provincial knew the value of a day off for himself. However, after one such day he was forced to spend a week at Hospital del Salvador because of a skiing

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<sup>3</sup> ASPB-S, "Provincial Letters 1961-19.."

<sup>4</sup> ASPB-D, "1962-Vicar Provincial."

accident at Los Farrellones. By 10 September Father Aumen was sufficiently recovered to compose his first circular letter, a means he was to use with frequency throughout his term of office. Although he was to visit the priests in the south regularly, he was convinced that communication by letter was another tool to unite and inform vicariate members.

Even though much of the content of the first circular only repeated the business of the 21 August meeting, Father Aumen introduced the theme of priests visiting:

There is no North American Order here in Chile which has a spirit as wonderful as our Community. To a great extent this has been due to the constant, informal visits which we make to the houses of our fellow priests. For this reason, I feel certain that none of our priests will ever become "loners" or go by the wayside; because they have the constant visits and friendly banter from fellow priests . . . For my part, I will never criticize priestly visiting no matter how frequent it may seem.<sup>5</sup>

About the time that Father Aumen was getting accustomed to his new position, the Catholic world was getting used to hearing the phrase "Vatican Council." John XXIII had been pope for only ninety days, when on 25 January 1959, he made the unexpected announcement of his plan to convoke the Church's twenty-first ecumenical council. After nearly four years of exhaustive preparation, the council opened on 11 October 1962. The repercussions from Vatican II, felt throughout the Christian world, were in

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<sup>5</sup> ASPB-S, "Circular Letters for Fathers in Chile."

time to affect profoundly the Chilean vicariate. The council, pastoral in tone, had to touch priests committed to the pastoral ministry.

One such pastoral priest was the new pastor of San José parish, Father Leo Herber. On a day in October he set out to bless the first 36 houses of a projected 800 in a workers' sub-division of the parish. Because the individual mainly responsible for the construction of the homes was the area's communist congresswoman, Father Herber felt that his presence was imperative. He wrote:

Poblacion Neptuno was an old experience. Here were good, poor, working families looking hopefully to the future. The Church was with them. A spark of faith in their hearts had brought them to seek this blessing of God on their homes. Yet, there hovers above these homes an ominous, heavy, choking shadow - that social gas rising up from poverty, ignorance and injustice. It hovers there, awaiting the match of Communism's fantastic promises and mass excitation to explode it . . .

If we can establish something here in Neptuno and maintain it, Communism will be stymied again. If we cannot we will have another Población Péumo [another sector in the parish] where the Church cannot get a footing because it arrived too late and was able to offer or serve too little.<sup>6</sup>

In southern Chile a different kind of pastoral action was undertaken by Father Eugene Stiker, pastor of Riachuelo. It centered on a group of Mapuche Indians who lived beyond Millantue in the coastal mountain range. Although these people tended to call themselves socialists, it was doubtful if anyone could define socialism. Along

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<sup>6</sup>Precious Blood Messenger 69 (February 1963): 53.

with Father Richard Woytych, the assistant at Rio Negro, Father Stiker set out for a week of evangelization:

Every evening during the mission the two priests showed movies [using a portable generator], prayed the rosary and preached. All but two men made the mission every night. During the daytime the mission Padres went from house to house visiting the people, and Father Woytych had a daily catechism class for the children in the afternoons.

The tangible results of the mission were meager. There were but three baptisms, no confessions at all, not one of the 17 couples they found not formally married was willing to do anything about the matter.<sup>7</sup>

It was about this time also that youthful members of the United States' Peace Corps began to trickle down into southern Chile. Eventually a number of them became acquainted with the priests in Rio Negro, Riachuelo, Purranque, Valdivia, and Pitrufrquén. The Peace Corps people looked forward to coming to the vicariate rectories for a hot bath, a good meal, a chance to play American records. For their part, the priests were often impressed by the enthusiasm and idealism of the young people, especially those who came to Chile in the early 1960s.

Up in Santiago, Father Aumen received a communication from the provincial informing him that Father Buehler thought it somewhat risky to go into Peru with three new men. When Chilean missionary Father Joseph Herber expressed his willingness to serve in either country, he was picked as the seasoned priest that Father Buehler sought.

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., 68 (December 1962): 372.

In his place, Father Joseph Grilliot was assigned to the vicariate. Replying to the provincial on 27 October, Father Aumen said that "we realize that the hardship of the new Peruvian venture warrants this change and most willingly accept it."<sup>8</sup> When Father Joseph Grilliot arrived in Chile, he would have become the fourth Padre José. With Father Joseph Herber in Peru, the vicariate still had Father Joseph Herod and Father Joseph Silvester. To avoid confusion in a land where the missionary was never known by his last name, Father Grilliot became Padre Mario.

In that same October letter to the provincial, Father Aumen expressed his growing disenchantment with paying for the continued construction of St. Gaspar school. The original purpose of the institution was to give a first-class education at a reduced rate to boys of the middle class, especially of Santo Domingo parish. In a follow-up letter, the vicar provincial explained the current situation:

It has turned out to be something different. A first class education at a reduced cost for rich children of which only 4% belong to Sto. Domingo parish. It just doesn't seem right to me that we should break our necks to educate<sup>9</sup> the rich and then pick up the tab for them afterwards.

All the correspondence about St. Gaspar school did not deter the provincial and the vicar provincial from

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<sup>8</sup>ASPB-D, "1962-Vicar Provincial."

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

giving Father Emil Dinkel, director of the school, a loan of 4,000 escudos. The institution already owed the vicariate 27,500 escudos.

Money matters continued to preoccupy Father Aumen. More than a year before, Father Paul Buehler had made application for a government loan in order to continue building the schools at Cerro Navia and Roosevelt. Now, however, with the money in hand, the new pastor, Father Leo Herber, did not wish to apply it to the schools or to the construction of the church. Rather, he wished to build a convent for the fifteen sisters who taught in the parish school. Writing to the provincial, Father Aumen explained further: "The conditions under which the nuns now live are terrible. They are living in the old rectory which the Fathers couldn't live in when they took over 14 years ago."<sup>10</sup> Eventually a convent of very modest proportions was built under the supervision of Father Milton Ballor, the San José assistant responsible for all school-related matters.

With the various personnel changes that had occurred with the opening of the Peruvian mission, new pastors had been appointed at San José, Purránque, Riachuelo, and Población Roosevelt. Now with another Chilean summer at hand, all the missionaries could take a slower pace. Joining them for a few weeks was Father Raphael Gross, the

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

representative of the provincial council sent down for 1963.

At about the time that Father Gross arrived in Chile, a Chilean was heading for the United States. When seminarian Joe Navarrete Hauri had finished his study of philosophy at the Capuchin seminary at San José de Mariquina, the provincial and vicariate boards decided that he was to make his novitiate with a stateside class at Burkettsville, Ohio. Because of the difference in the school year between Chile and the United States, novice Navarrete would have to spend two years abroad. He left Chile on 25 February 1963, made his temporary profession of fidelity to the Society at St. Charles seminary on 15 August 1964, and returned to Chile about a month later.

In Purranque, about the middle of February 1963, an important day had arrived. The Precious Blood Sisters returned to teach in the parish school, both grade and high. A year before the earthquake the two teaching sisters had been recalled to Santiago. Now with the added help of several Chilean members and two North Americans, Sister Carmelita Monnin and Sister Patrice Rogers, the Community was able to take up again its teaching mission. All the sisters lived in the ample quarters on the second floor of the liceo building.

The summer season was hardly over, when on 14 March Cardinal Raul Silva called Father Aumen to his office and



asked for three priests to aid in his diocesan-wide mission. Writing to the vicariate members, the vicar provincial stated that the cardinal "is so convinced that the mission will not only be the salvation of Chile from communism but a reawakening of lay Catholicism that it was impossible to refuse him the full time men he requested."<sup>11</sup> As a result of the cardinal's plea, Fathers William Frantz and Leo Herber were assigned to the two-week mission that was to be given after Easter at San Antonio, a city on the coast. Then from September through February, a series of missions was to be given in the Santiago area. At that time Father Richard Lovett joined the other two Precious Blood Fathers on loan to the archdiocese.

On 10 October 1963, Father Harold Diller, the provincial secretary, informed Father Aumen that "the Catholic Telegraph is very interested in having a complete story of the mission as the Church's battle against Communism in Chile."<sup>12</sup> To explain the origins, development, and implications of the mission (in Chile, known as the Gran Misión), the vicar provincial wrote an article for the Cincinnati diocesan paper, the Telegraph Register. In part, he wrote:

Last year when Cuba fell so smoothly into the hands of the Communists and not only the Catholic hierarchy but hundreds of Catholics in high government

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<sup>11</sup> ASPB-S, "Circular Letters for the Fathers in Chile."

<sup>12</sup> ASPB-S, "Provincial Letters 1961-19.."

posts took it sitting down, Pope John XXIII, of beloved memory, asked for an up-to-date report from the Episcopal Council for Latin America (CELAM), giving the condition of the Catholic Church in all the South American countries. L'Osservatore Romano records the Holy Father as saying, "I am shocked!" . . . In this case he appointed Cardinal Cicognani to contact all the Bishops of Latin America and to order them to set up in every diocese and vicariate an emergency plan for missionizing<sup>13</sup> the people and saving the Church in Latin America.

Father Aumen went on to state that the Chilean bishops, under the guidance of Cardinal Raul Silva, declared that Chile was not a Catholic but rather a mission country, and that in the future the apostolate must be geared to this reality. Even though 88% of the population claimed to be Catholic, only 10% of that number practiced their faith in any manner at all. The plan proposed by the Chilean hierarchy meant that priests were to be more concerned with the unchurched than with the church-goers.

This meant a tremendous change in the attitude and methods of the apostolate. Instead of spending most of his time in administrating the Sacraments and attending the parish office, the priest must now devote most of his efforts in going out to reach the vast 90% who do not come to church.<sup>14</sup>

The Gran Misión was intended to touch those nominal Catholics of good will, who rarely heard the Christian message. The mission consisted of three distinct stages. In the pre-mission, a team of priests sought out and prepared men with leadership qualities to conduct local meet-

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<sup>13</sup> ASPB-S, "P. Aumen, 1955-1973," personal file.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

ings. At this stage, being a leader was more important than being a good Catholic.

In the urban areas of Chile the mission proper lasted two and a half weeks. Private homes served as centers, each under the direction of a lay leader. A novel feature was the use of specially prepared radio talks. Immediately after each half-hour presentation, the leader led a discussion based on what the participants had just listened to. For the first time in their lives, large numbers of baptized persons were given the opportunity to speak out on any subject that disturbed them as Christians. Obviously, coming to church or receiving the sacraments was not emphasized in the Gran Misión.

The post-mission was a continuation of the mission itself. When the missionary team, in large part made up of personnel from outside the parish, moved on, the local priests now had contact with various sectors of their parish. Many of the original lay leaders, seeing that the Church needed them, continued in roles of leadership.

The pre-mission opened at San José parish in October 1963. Selected men and women held meetings in eleven different sectors of the parish to learn of the social and religious environment of each area. By late November, leaders and workers went forth to visit all the houses in each sector and to leave a simple card giving the dates of the mission and a prayer for God's blessing. In December, each home received a special letter from Cardinal Silva, in

which he "stressed the fact that we are not living in a christian environment but rather a de-christianized one."<sup>15</sup> The pre-mission meetings produced 138 men, women, and youths, who served as leaders or discussion guides for the radio talks.

On Sunday, 20 January 1964, missionaries from outside the parish arrived to assist in the program. There were three priests, four religious sisters, and four university students. The four priests of San José, under the pastor, Father Leo Herber, supervised different sectors. All of these persons, along with the lay leaders, soon realized that the discussions following the radio talks did not stem as much from the talks as from the feelings of the listeners. These people wanted to talk about the church and local politics, about the wealth of the church, clerical celibacy, etc.

The mission at San José concluded with a huge bonfire and fiesta attended by some 2,000 people gathered in the school yard. Special recognition was given to the visiting missionaries and the lay leaders. The following night Cardinal Silva met with about 200 of these leaders and "reminded them that their task was not finished but really only beginning."<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>Precious Blood Messenger 70 (September 1964): 269.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 276. Father Leo Herber is the author of this lengthy article on the Gran Misión at San José Parish.

This, then, was the great mission as put into practice at the parish of San José. Down south Father Emil Schuwey, the pastor of Rio Negro, conducted a similar mission, with the parish divided into sections and the laity serving as discussion leaders. One lasting effect of this mission effort was the formation of a group of dedicated men, who in future years served as the chief Christian element in the parish.

In the country areas of Rio Negro, Purrangué, and Riachuelo, the Gran Misión of necessity took a different form. During the day a missionary team, religious or lay, would visit homes in a specified outlying district to invite the residents to the evening mission meetings. Usually the assemblies were held in someone's barn or granary, if no chapel was available. Perhaps the main goal of these missions was to give the people an appreciation of the special Sunday service, the Culto Dominical. Since it was impossible for the people in all these scattered areas to have Mass every Sunday, the service conducted by laymen on Sundays in the absence of the priest took on particular importance.

Some of the visible effects of the Gran Misión were to endure. For instance, the division of San José and other parishes into geographical sectors resulted in a more decentralized and workable apostolic field. Another effect was the bringing to the fore of a number of committed Chris-

tian men. But it must be admitted that the mission did not change the masses. However, the mission did change the thinking of the Precious Blood Fathers in Chile.

Even before the mission was underway at San José parish, Father John Byrne, on a visit to the vicariate, suspected that the thinking of the priests was undergoing change:

I am completely fascinated with the program of the Gran Mision . . . I can only remotely imagine the work involved . . . but in spite of the grinding effort, I sense, you are all in rhythm with the plan and 100% with the hierarchy of Chile. This is a healthy reaction. It indicates your apostolic pliability, your honest readiness to scrap ineffective programs - no matter how you are wedded to them - and with open minds accept something new. I suspect that the Gran Mision might result in a drastic shift of missionary emphasis and set the stage for a reappraisal of the existing formulas.<sup>17</sup>

The Gran Misión was a definite break with the past. It was a parish mission that did not talk about getting marriages blessed or receiving the sacraments; it did not give the participants the opportunity to have their children baptized. The sacramental approach was to come later, after a conversion or change of heart.

The missionaries, North American and others, gradually came to the conclusion that a great deal of their time was given over to the administration of the sacraments to a people who hardly knew Christ. Surely the priests continued

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<sup>17</sup> ASPB-S, "Provincial Visitations: Remarks at the Conclusion of the Visitation in the Chilean Vicariate Jan. 13, 1964."

to perform marriages and to baptize, but the enthusiasm in ministering these sacraments was no longer the thing it had been. Many of the priests felt that they were trapped in a contradiction: the bishops with their Gran Misión insisted that the vast majority of Chileans were not mature Christians; yet, many of these same bishops seemed to say and the people themselves insisted that to have a child baptized or permitted to receive his first communion was a God-given right. The masses of Chilean people, committed to the care of the Precious Blood Fathers, were not to be blamed for their attitude. All of their lives these same people had been told to have their unions blessed by the church, to have their babies baptized, to have their youngsters enrolled for first communion.

Before the Gran Misión many Chileans experienced a cultural and intellectual gap between themselves and the American priest. But at least the priest gave them what they wanted: easy access to the sacraments. Now, as a result of the great mission, most foreign priests and a growing number of native priests felt that some kind of preparation had to be given to the parents before the baptism of their children; that engaged couples must attend pre-marriage talks; that the parents themselves must prepare their youngsters for first communion. Parents, who formerly could enroll their latest baby on a Friday night for a baptism the following day, now learned of the need to

inscribe the child several months in advance. Before the great mission the priest at least had the satisfaction of giving the people what they wanted. In the years that followed the Gran Misión, he was to lose even this. The people often resented this apparent denial of the sacraments. For his part, the priest often felt torn between his conscience admonishing preparation for the sacraments, and his heart wanting to be accepted by his people. However, some of these effects of the Gran Misión would not be evident for several years.

### Two Vicariate Meetings

In a circular letter to his priests on 22 March 1963, Father Aumen referred to the growing monetary crisis of the vicariate schools:

In the past there has been some talk of doing away with our parish schools. One of the principal reasons given was that the Community was putting so much money into the schools and schools in construction that there was little left for other types of apostolic work. Since this complaint is in part justified it is time not to do away with a good thing, but to remedy what is haywire.<sup>18</sup>

The vicar provincial then pointed out that often in the past the school subsidy money received from the government had not been used entirely for educational purposes, but for parish and house support. He now planned to separate completely parish and school accounts. To implement

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<sup>18</sup>ASPB-S, "Circular Letters for Fathers in Chile."



this reform, Father Aumen set up the following program:

a) the entire government subsidy was to be placed in a central fund under the vicariate treasurer; b) the director of the school was to present a list of his salaries to the vicar provincial, who then was to inform the treasurer to send a monthly check; c) the balance of the subsidy was to remain in the central fund; for an approved project, the director could draw upon his balance; if his account lacked sufficient money, he could receive a loan from the central fund.<sup>19</sup>

With his circular letter, Father Aumen acknowledged that the parochial school apostolate of the vicariate was in jeopardy. Building the schools was a great financial burden; maintaining them proved to be equally burdensome. Father Aumen's plan to use the government subsidy money strictly for the schools was not only just, but it was also based on the reasonable hope that the subsidy would be sufficiently large to build up a central reserve fund. In turn, this was predicated on the understanding that the schools would have enough teaching sisters so as to reduce the cost of salaries. As was true then in the United States, so also in Chile lay teachers received a larger salary than the religious. Moreover, in Chile the school had to pay monthly into the social security system some additional fifty per cent of each lay teacher's salary.

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

The new financial program for the vicariate schools was workable as long as there was a sufficient number of teaching sisters. But when the day would come, when there would be few or no sisters, the payment of salaries would become an unacceptable burden for the vicariate.

On 17 April 1963, Father Aumen attended a business chapter of the American province held at St. Charles seminary, Carthagena, Ohio. As vicar provincial, he was an ex officio delegate. In his report to the assembled priests, he indicated that 24 priests and 1 brother were caring for eight parishes, five religious institutions, and fifty-four urban and rural missions. Sixteen priests were engaged in parish work, while the remaining eight worked at the minor seminary, a hospital, St. Gaspar school, Catholic University, and the Precious Blood Sisters' novitiate.<sup>20</sup>

Father Aumen also reported on the progress of the seminary, stating that twenty-two young men were now being educated. With such numbers, "the Chilean Vicariate has started planning and working toward the distant future, independent province in Chile."<sup>21</sup> Making a brief allusion to St. Gaspar school, he remarked that the missionaries considered this undertaking as "a source of sufficient revenue to support our entire Chilean Vicariate."<sup>22</sup>

Prior to the chapter, the provincial had invited

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<sup>20</sup>Gasparian 26 (May 1963): 55.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid. <sup>22</sup>Ibid.

Father Aumen to mention the communist movement in Chile.

He responded in part:

The constant work of North Americans (not only the missionaries who are there but likewise the Peace Corps, many of whom are working with our Fathers in the parishes of southern Chile in educating the people) has been a big step in combatting Communism in Chile. During the last month we had the municipal elections in Chile and the Communists have suffered a defeat in these elections. We hope that this will be a sign for the coming year, that the presidential elections will result in the same way. We still hope that eventually the Church and the Christian Democratic Party will be triumphant and that we will again have peace and democracy in Chile.<sup>23</sup>

In a circular letter to his priests prepared a day after the chapter, Father Aumen expressed his satisfaction in the interest shown to the Chilean missions:

Through the years I thought that Chile was becoming a stale topic and among the priests in the States there was little interest left in the missions. The amount of applause after the Chilean report and the number of questions asked after the meeting proved that I was wrong.<sup>24</sup>

By the middle of June Father Aumen was back in Chile and busy pushing plans for an upcoming vicariate meeting. It was during a general gathering of all vicariate members on retreat in January, 1962, that Father Joseph Herod first suggested such a business chapter. Now, under a new vicar provincial, it was agreed to hold the assembly at the Escuela Apostólica during the Chilean winter vaca-

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> ASPB-S, "Circular Letters for the Fathers in Chile."

tion. The meetings began on Wednesday morning, 17 July, and ended on Friday in sufficient time for the priests from the south to return on the evening Rápido train. With Father Emil Dinkel in the States on his home leave, twenty-three priests in all were present.

According to the lengthy minutes compiled after the sessions ended, the chapter was called to adopt new methods in missionology and to coordinate the apostolate in parishes and other institutions. Papers on pertinent topics had been drawn up by committees of two and read to the entire assembly. Immediately after each presentation, the participants were divided into three discussion groups for the purpose of responding to a list of questions prepared by each committee. After a short recess each discussion group presented a report, and the points of most interest were discussed by the entire assembly.

At the first session on Wednesday morning, Father Kenneth Seberger and Father Paul Aumen presented a paper on the purpose of the Society in Chile. The three discussion groups then distilled the matter down to this conclusion:

As members of the Precious Blood Community our Constitution tells us how to save souls, i.e., through devotion to the Precious Blood of Christ. All our work follows from this. . . . In order to accomplish this fundamental purpose of the Congregation, then, the final goal is the eventual establishment of a Chilean Province. This is the reason why we are members of the

Society here in Chile.<sup>25</sup>

A further thought came out:

Everyone accepted the fact that because of financial need in Chile we cannot become independent for a long time. The role of St. Gaspar College [in Spanish, colegio, or high school], as regards the financial status of the Vicariate, it is hoped, will account for some help.<sup>26</sup>

A final note terminated that first morning's session:

The point was made that up to the present we have been too preoccupied and worried about the problem of living with native members in the Community. To be sure there will be problems but they will not be as great as many thought in the past. After receiving at least ten years of training in the Community (and part of that in the States), the difficulties which some imagine will be insignificant or not present at all.<sup>27</sup>

The afternoon session, conducted by Father William Frantz and Father Leo Herber, dealt with the parish and the pastoral plan. It was pointed out that apostolic groups in the parish that lacked an apostolic spirit indicated a lack of formation. Moreover, since Christ healed both body and soul, social works had to be part of any pastoral plan. However, such "social work must be accompanied by a Christian orientation."<sup>28</sup>

On Thursday morning Father Ambrose Lengerich and Father Bernard Mores developed the theme: the Mass and the

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<sup>25</sup>Ibid., "The First Vicariate Chapter of the Precious Blood Fathers in Chile." The minutes are found in the "Circular Letter" file.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid. <sup>27</sup>Ibid. <sup>28</sup>Ibid.

liturgy. From the discussion groups there emerged such ideas as: since the people did not understand the Mass, they derived little benefit from it; Christ did not begin with the Eucharist, rather, he prepared the way for this mystery. The priests agreed that "our people do not understand the Mass. Hence all the rest of their lives is out-of-kilter and they cannot develop spiritually."<sup>29</sup>

That afternoon Father William Schenk and Father Milton Ballor spoke on the educational program of the vicariate. Many of the priests expressed a desire for a new program of genuine Catholic education in their schools.

Although possibly premature, several statements were made stating that our educational program in the past did not produce Catholic leaders and infuse a conviction of Christian principles in former students . . . The desire was not to do away with the Catholic educational system but to better it.<sup>30</sup>

On the last day of the chapter, Father James Bender and Father Anthony Spitzig gave the assembly some ideas on priestly vocations and the seminary. Later the discussion groups agreed that candidates should come from parents who observed the natural law in such areas as honesty, marital fidelity, and good work habits. On the other hand, "observing the laws of the Church, such as assistance at Mass and the reception of the Sacraments, on the part of the parents should not be required for the possibility of a vocation in the family."<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid.    <sup>30</sup> Ibid.    <sup>31</sup> Ibid.

The last session of the meeting dealt with work in the campo missions, with Father Emil Schuwey and Father Gerald Dreiling making the initial presentation of the theme. The discussion groups came to the conclusion that, since the Mass did not have primary importance in the spiritual formation of the campesino, the obligation of the rural priest to celebrate Masses for a handful of people was thought to be doubtful. However, the missionary did have the obligation to provide some kind of Christian worship or instruction for the people present.<sup>32</sup> Veteran campo missionary Father William Frantz emphasized that the use of the mission trailer could well be the answer as how to set up Sunday worship in the southern countryside.

The first vicariate business meeting was considered a success. Writing to the provincial, Father Aumen was enthusiastic: "I must say that the meeting certainly passed my expectations."<sup>33</sup> But the assembly brought to light some issues that were going to be heard from again. If the schools did not produce Christians, why have them? If many people, both rural and urban, did not understand the Mass and did not attend, then why build chapels and churches? The construction of schools and places of worship, and all that such a building program implied, were fundamental to the apostolate of the vicariate. The ques-

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<sup>32</sup>Ibid.

<sup>33</sup>ASPB-D, "1963-Vicar Provincial."

tioning of such a policy had begun and it was not to stop.

Several months before the vicariate assembly had endorsed the idea that social works should be part of any pastoral plan, steps were underway to secure the services of a North American doctor for Valdivia. Norman Rose, a 36 year-old general practitioner and a friend of a number of Precious Blood priests in the Dayton, Ohio, area, volunteered to work in the Abraham Lincoln hospital [later called the John F. Kennedy] in that southern city. Having received some Spanish language training in Dayton, Doctor Rose, his wife, and five children (whose ages ranged from one to six) reached Valdivia on 16 December 1963. There they lived in a large rented house within the limits of the new parish, now called Preciosa Sangre, but at a distance from the rectory. It had been arranged that the Chilean National Health Service was to give Doctor Rose a two-year contract with a government salary. However, as it later turned out, an enormous amount of bureaucratic nit-picking kept Doctor Rose from receiving any kind of remuneration for his work. Although the vicariate assisted the Rose family as much as possible, it became evident that without a definite income, the seven people could not remain in Chile. In late March, 1965, the Rose family returned to the United States.

Even before the Roses reached Chile, a new volunteer for the missions had preceded them, Father Richard



Beischel (35). After studying Spanish at the language school outside of Lima, Father Beischel arrived in Chile on 16 November.

Less than a week later, 22 November, Chile and the world were stunned by the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. One of the priests, Father Kenneth Seberger, described the reaction in Chile:

Within minutes the tragic news was on the lips of all Santiaguans. Most felt the tragedy almost as intimately as we . . . Business continued, but not as usual. Its pace slowed, as the assassination became the sole topic of conversation. People stood around newsstands, hungrily awaiting further details. The papers' afternoon editions were late. One appeared several hours later that afternoon; the entire front page was a picture of John F. Kennedy. Above it, in large type, were the words: Asesinado Kennedy.<sup>34</sup>

President Jorge Alessandri proclaimed three days of official mourning. Flags flew at half mast and all radio stations were forbidden to broadcast anything other than appropriate music. On the following Monday morning a solemn requiem Mass was offered in the cathedral of Santiago, to which all Chilean government officials, foreign ambassadors, and North American priests and sisters were invited.

Over the years individual priests of the vicariate used to send out mimeographed letters describing their work. Relatives, friends, and benefactors proved to be eager readers. For Christmas of 1963, Father Aumen com-

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<sup>34</sup>Precious Blood Messenger 70 (January 1964): 18.

posed and had printed the first vicariate-wide news sheet, which he entitled Chileter. Each missionary received free as many copies of the publication as he desired. In a letter of explanation to the priests, the vicar provincial suggested: "Take a week or two and write a short note on the bottom of each sheet. As you know, a personal touch will mean a lot to the people who will receive them."<sup>35</sup>

The provincial, Father John Byrne, flew into Santiago on 27 December to begin a three-week official visit of Chile. His days were full and varied. One evening in Santiago, he was the guest of the St. Gaspar school PTA directory. In the south he was present for the dedication of the Corto Alto chapel, near Purrangué. Begun under Father Thomas Sweeterman, the building was completed by Father Paul Schaaf. Also present at the ceremony were Father Paul Buehler from Peru and Bishop Valdés of Osorno.

The yearly retreat at the San Bernardo seminary was held from 13 to 17 January. That first evening Father Byrne concluded his visit by saying in part:

I continue to be impressed with your work, edified by your zeal, and am most pleased with your delightful spirit. Frankly, I had a wonderful time visiting you. I can't remember when I have laughed so much and so genuinely . . . I leave you elevated in spirit and convinced that the C.P.P.S. flag waves proudly, vigorously,<sup>36</sup> and most successfully in the Chilean Vicariate.

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<sup>35</sup> ASPB-S, "Chilean Publications."

<sup>36</sup> ASPB-S, "Provincial Visitations."

He remarked further that he was particularly struck by the good effects of the July meeting of the vicariate and by the influence of the Gran Misión then in progress. He was also pleased with the progress of the Escuela Apostólica: "I conclude this Visitation with the conviction that our seminary program is airborne and fast reaching cruising altitude."<sup>37</sup> The provincial also made reference to the constant appeal for more personnel that was echoed throughout his visit. He wished also to leave "a reminder of the importance of the common observance - Community prayers and common meditation."<sup>38</sup>

As soon as the retreat ended, the priests assembled to elect a new vicariate board. Immediately after the elections, the board members met to make out new assignments and to consider the various proposed building projects of the vicariate. Attention turned to Preciosa Sangre parish at Valdivia, where plans were already being drawn up for a convent and rectory. At this point in the meeting, the minutes reveal the new thinking on the apostolate:

The building of a school was not deemed feasible [sic], as it would result in making it difficult to dedicate our ministry to pastoral work. The Sisters of the Precious Blood would dedicate themselves to social work in the parish . . . It seems to be more in line with the Pastoral Plan to build up a Christian Community; then, if it is feasible [sic], build a chapel. Consequently, to encourage the "poblaciones," it would be

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<sup>37</sup>Ibid.    <sup>38</sup>Ibid.

permitted to spend 500 dollars on the work and let the people<sup>39</sup> themselves with this encouragement continue from there.

Although the provincial later granted approval to build housing for the priests and sisters, the construction never got beyond the planning stage. Both the priests and the sisters (when they arrived in Valdivia) lived in plain, wooden, CORVI-constructed dwellings.

Next the vicariate board dealt with the question of the schools at Río Negro and Purránque. In a later circular letter to his priests, Father Aumen explained that there had been talk about handing over, "lock, stock, and barrel," those southern schools to the religious congregations that staffed them. The vicar provincial's reasons for acting are quoted in full because they reveal again the new direction of the vicariate:

The following are the reasons: a) the "gran mision" and the "plan episcopal" call for the priests to leave the few faithful in their parishes and to throw themselves completely into the masses of the "pagans" . . . In both these places [Purránque and Río Negro] we have a priest who, by force, is almost completely tied up in school work, while at the same time, there are Sisters in the school who could take care of the administration and teaching as well as the priest. They will not, however, as long as he is named the director and relieves them of the responsibility. b) Because we have to employ so many lay-teachers, the schools have not been a paying proposition. Purránque (which has not received the 1962 subvencion [subsidy]) has a debt of \$7,003 with the Vicariate. Río Negro does not have a debt but in a few years when the school will have to be rebuilt it will have to be done completely at Vicariate

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<sup>39</sup> ASPB-S, "Minutes, Book II, 17 January 1964."

expense. c) these schools under the care of the Sisters will contribute as much to parish life as they are now. The property, built almost completely by mission donations, will serve the same purpose. And we will have the advantage of using valuable priest<sup>40</sup> personnel in accordance with the desire of the Bishops.

The vicar provincial went on to say that the Precious Blood Sisters at Purranque accepted the proposed transfer without conditions; however, the Hermanas de la Caridad del Sagrado Corazón at Rio Negro hesitated because they had to consult their superior in Spain. The upshot was that the Precious Blood Sisters continued to help staff the school at Purranque but never took it over; on the other hand, the Spanish Sisters assumed sole control and ownership of the Rio Negro school.

The trend to disengage the vicariate from the educational apostolate continued in the Santiago area. When it was feared that the four teaching sisters at Resbalón would not return to that mission in 1966, the board considered the possibility of renting the school to the Chilean educational system.<sup>41</sup> Fortunately, when the Sisters of the Inmaculada Concepción de Génova reconsidered, they were given outright the entire educational plant built by the vicariate over the years.

That lengthy vicariate board meeting of 17 January

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<sup>40</sup> ASPB-S, "Circular Letters for the Fathers in Chile."

<sup>41</sup> ASPB-S, "Minutes, Book II, 30 November 1965."

also studied the possibility of building further facilities at the Escuela Apostólica. In the coming March school year it was hoped that an additional eleven newcomers would swell the number of priesthood students to twenty-four. Writing to the provincial, Father Aumen expressed the board's view: "Even though the building of a new seminary is not proximate, the Council deems it advisable to draw plans for a future new seminary building."<sup>42</sup> In the light of what was to happen in July, this correspondence became significant.

The second vicariate board meeting of the year was held on 12 March. The minutes disclose that the Sisters of the Precious Blood had accepted the administration and partial staffing of the parish schools at San José and Cerro Navia.<sup>43</sup> (Although some sisters did teach at San José, they did not staff the Cerro Navia school.) The board approved for one year the renting of an office in downtown Santiago to serve as a kind of way-station. The vicar provincial explained the reasons to Father Byrne:

Many times when one of us go [sic] downtown it is impossible for us to get attended in the public offices or get our shopping done in a half day. Here we will have a place to stay over the <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> hour dinner period. This office has a small bathroom.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> ASPB-D, "1964-1965 Vicar Provincial."

<sup>43</sup> ASPB-S, "Minutes, Book II, 12 March 1964."

<sup>44</sup> ASPB-D, "1964-1965 Vicar Provincial."

When the provincial council refused the request for an office, the whole episode would have been of no importance had it not resulted in some interesting letters. With the rejection notice at hand, Father Aumen replied to the provincial by describing some of his activity:

And at the same time I have tried to take care of some of the paper work of some of the men in the south who, before, had to do their own. This had included: renewals of passports, identification and owners' cards, payment of taxes and federal fees, detailed consultations with the architect for building, consultations with the lawyers over endless Chilean red-tape, pushing the paper-work in the semi-fiscal [semi-public] offices of CORVI for the Valdivia and Purranque loans, attending religious superior, post-mission and diocesan meetings in the Chancery, arranging for passages, presentation of government subsidy papers for the south, obtaining Caritas clothing and food donations, purchasing tires, truck parts and 101 other things which cannot be obtained in the south. Still this job wouldn't be so bad if things could be done in a Stateside manner. But here this is impossible.<sup>45</sup>

Father John Byrne was gracious in his acknowledgment of the letter: "As long as you feel free to register your honest reactions to our decisions, we'll be on the same wave-length and much good will be achieved for the Community here and in Chile."<sup>46</sup> Shortly after, the provincial council met, reconsidered its rejection, and then permitted Father Aumen to rent office space. The office was located on the corner of the Plaza de Armas one block from the main post office and the diocesan chancery build-

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> ASPB-S, "Provincial Old Letters 1964-1966."

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The second vicariate business meeting was held at the San Bernardo seminary on 14,15,16 July. The Peruvian mission sent a delegate in the person of Father Joseph Herber. As the first vicariate meeting had resulted, among other things, in de-emphasizing parish schools, so now the second meeting began to dismantle the seminary program.

Father James Bender, director of seminarians and chairman of the committee to study the seminary, prior to the meeting had prepared ten mimeographed sheets setting forth the findings and conclusions of his study group. After the vicariate chapter was over, he was delegated to send both the committee report and an explanatory letter to the provincial. His letter began:

When you were here last summer for the visitation, no problem was brought up by me regarding our vocational program in Chile, simply because none was in evidence at that time . . . Actually, though each of the new comers [sic] is a good boy, several have been found to be deficient intellectually [sic], and not all are ideal in regard to personality and energy of character. But these are ordinary problems, to be taken care of by prudent eliminations and more careful selection in the future.

But meanwhile deeper and more basic problems had been coming to light, demanding a complete reappraisal of our vocational efforts in the Vicariate. A growing unrest among some of our Fathers was becoming more and more constantly expressed, undoubtedly as a result of a more mature experience with the Chilean culture and makeup.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>47</sup>ASPB-S, A copy of this letter is found under "P. Aumen, 1955-1973," personal file.



The director of seminarians then outlined the procedure and the conclusions that his committee had reached. Some six weeks before the meeting, the study group interviewed eight priests, six of whom were Chilean, who had a particular expertise in the vocational field. The interviews produced the following conclusions: a virtuous family environment is all-important for vocations, yet it is found with some difficulty among the working classes in Chile; paid Catholic high schools are the source of vocations, if spiritual and apostolic formation are given to the students; taking boys from the lower class is a risk, rather seek vocations from the middle class; if good prospects present themselves from the lower class, take them as adults (18 years), after they have worked apostolically in their own milieu and on the condition that they work with their own social class after ordination; and finally, the traditional type of minor seminary does not work in Chile.<sup>48</sup>

At one of the sessions of the vicariate business meeting, Father Renato Poblate, S.J., a Chilean sociologist trained in the United States, developed further points on the vocational theme. He shared with the priests the results of his survey made among the major seminarians in Chile: students are generally from practicing Catholic families and had belonged to an apostolic group; of these

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

seminarians, 5% came from farm worker families, 7% from the urban working class, 30% from the middle class, 35% from the upper middle class, and 20% from the upper class. Furthermore, of these priesthood students, 48% came from catholic high schools, 28% from minor seminaries, and 24% from the universities.<sup>49</sup>

In the general discussion that followed Father Poblate's presentation, two motions were unanimously passed by the priests. The first was made by Father Emil Schuwey: "In view of the findings of the vocational committee I move we adopt their suggestions, especially with regard to age and social class of candidates, with the understanding that the Escuela Apostólica in San Bernardo will cease to function as soon as such circumstances warrant."<sup>50</sup> Father William Schenk submitted the second motion: "I move that we open a University Residence House for our own students in philosophy and theology . . ."<sup>51</sup> In his letter to the provincial, Father Bender repeated the thoughts of some of the missionaries: "Some wish that we would have made such a survey, as we have now made, before we began our minor seminary."<sup>52</sup> In any event, the Escuela Apostólica was to be phased out and a university residence house was to be sought.

In his letter to the provincial, Father Bender summed up his personal impressions of what the priests

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<sup>49</sup>Ibid. <sup>50</sup>Ibid. <sup>51</sup>Ibid. <sup>52</sup>Ibid.

generally thought regarding the future of the vicariate's vocational program:

In any case, the Fathers expect that there will be a certain necessary purgation of the present student body, without however, going wild and dismissing all of them on principle - there are some good prospects among the boys. Then, for the future, the hope is that we stress indirect vocational work among middle-class youths (through working with them apostolically) in the University, in (paid) Catholic high schools (especially Saint Gaspar), and in parishes, giving such boys at the same time adequate spiritual formation. Those in humanities [high school] would continue to live a normal affective life in their family circle. Candidates would be accepted then after completing high school.<sup>53</sup>

On the same day, 23 July, that Father Bender wrote his letter, Father Aumen also wrote to the provincial. The vicar provincial explained that two days of discussion on the problems of the Society's Latin American mission effort resulted in the motion: "Moved that because of present and foreseeable difficulties in our mission effort, the Chilean Vicariate and the Peruvian missions be joined in one South American Vicariate."<sup>54</sup> Father Aumen added that "this [step] seemed the only sensible and workable solution to make our Community's mission effort up-to-date and successful."<sup>55</sup> He then gave the reasons why the business chapter passed the resolution: such a merger would result in a unified program of modern missionary work; it would facili-

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> ASPB-D, "1964-1965 Vicar Provincial."

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

tate the easy interchange of personnel--"At present, for example, there are [sic] an overabundance of young, inexperienced missionaries in Peru who are struggling aimlessly for a solution to their problems; while Chile has many veterans who could be switched into the troubled parts."<sup>56</sup> --a new missionary from the States should not be sent directly to Peru; the Peruvian missionary, after three years in the altiplano, would get a psychological lift in knowing that he could transfer to Chile; and financially such a union would be advantageous.<sup>57</sup>

In the same letter, Father Aumen, referring to the motion that approved the establishment of a university house near the center of Santiago, informed the provincial that a \$20,000 check had arrived from the Bentz Foundation of Columbus, Ohio. This interest-free loan was to be paid back within ten to twenty years as resources permitted. Although the loan had been originally sought for the Valdivia parish, the vicariate board now wanted to apply it to the purchase of the university house.

It was only on 11 September that the provincial was able to reply to Father Aumen's letter. The provincial council approved the vicariate's new vocation program, "especially in regard to age and social class of candidates to be accepted."<sup>58</sup> Permission was also granted to estab-

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<sup>56</sup>Ibid. <sup>57</sup>Ibid.

<sup>58</sup>ASPB-S, "Provincial Old Letters 1964-1966."

lish a residence for the Society's students of philosophy and theology and to use the Bentz loan to purchase such a dwelling. However, with regard to the union of Chile and Peru into one vicariate, "the Provincial Council shared the opinion of the Peruvian missionaries that this matter should be well thought out and delayed for a period of at least two years."<sup>59</sup>

By 8 August, less than a month after the close of the second vicariate meeting, Father Aumen brought the provincial up to date regarding the Escuela Apostólica. In March, the program included 19 minor seminarians, 3 philosophers, and 2 brother candidates; now, the numbers had been reduced to 9 seminarians, 2 philosophers, and 1 brother candidate. Since the young men, for the most part, attended a school in San Bernardo, reports were received from teachers, the school psychologist, and a committee of students. As a result of this action, ten youths were dismissed. Father Aumen, who lived at the Escuela, saw the situation first-hand: "Not only was there a blatant lack of talent, but some of the low-class type of boys that we had accepted this year completely destroyed what had been built up in the others."<sup>60</sup>

Before Father Aumen had learned of the rejection of the Chile-Peru merger, the vicar provincial spent ten days

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<sup>59</sup>Ibid.

<sup>60</sup>ASPB-D, "1964-1965 Vicar Provincial."

in Peru to ascertain the thinking of the priests there concerning a possible union. The only concrete result of the trip was a new missionary for Chile. When the assistant at Morococha, Peru, was found to be suffering from the effects of altitude, Father Thomas Sweeterman (who had succeeded Father Buehler as superior of the Peruvian mission) and Father Aumen agreed that he should be transferred to Chile. Thus, near the end of the month, Father David Kettleon (29) was assigned as assistant at Santo Domingo parish.

The Chilean presidential election was held the first week in September. The Christian Democrat, Eduardo Frei, won easily over his Marxist rival, Salvador Allende. In July, while the campaigning was still raging, Chilean missionary Father Leo Herber, in Dayton, Ohio, received a telephone call from Cincinnati. The caller explained that he was a friend of Precious Blood priest Father Harold Diller, and that he was from the Central Intelligence Agency at Cincinnati. Although the C.I.A. in Chile was predicting an Allende victory, its counterpart in the United States was seeking the opinion of American priests who worked in Chile. As pastor of the vicariate's largest parish, Father Herber reported that Frei would win, because, although Allende's campaign photo could be found on the front door of many houses, Frei's photo was hanging

back in the kitchen.<sup>61</sup>

In late October the vicariate board met for the last time that year. A wide range of subjects was discussed: send brother candidate Ambrosio Llancoñanco to the United States for formation; keep looking for a suitable university house; give the \$20,000 Bentz loan to St. Gaspar school for its building program; add an all-purpose room to the rectory at San José; and an office building and a caretaker's house to the Roosevelt parish and study the matter of constructing a rectory there.<sup>62</sup> With regard to the Bentz loan, it will be recalled that the provincial council had authorized the money to be used in the purchase of a house of studies. However, when the purchase of a building with a high price tag fell through, the vicariate board decided that it would have to settle for a less expensive dwelling and thus freed the Bentz money for St. Gaspar school.

After spending four months at the Lima language school, Father Paul Bobay (33), a cousin to Fathers Leo and Joseph Herber, arrived in Chile on 10 November. His appointment as assistant to Father Donald Thieman meant that for the first time in its two-year history, Nuestra Señora de la Preciosa Sangre at Roosevelt had two priests.

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<sup>61</sup>Writer's interview with Father Herber, 23 July 1977, in Santiago. Post-election studies revealed that indeed more women than men voted for Frei.

<sup>62</sup>ASPB-S, "Minutes, Book II, 28 October 1964."

The Bench Mark Year

The 1965 retreat that ran from 11 to 15 January was noted for two innovations. According to the wishes of the priests, it was to be a "modern, discussion type retreat,"<sup>63</sup> and it was to give to the participants their first opportunity to concelebrate Mass, a privilege made possible by Vatican II.

According to the provincial program of having one of the council members visit the missions yearly, Father Francis Laudick, first consultor, was to visit Peru and Chile. He arrived in Chile about the middle of February, with his traveling companion, Father Raymond Halker, C.P.P.S. The visitors were in southern Chile with the vicar provincial, when Father Byrne sent a cablegram to Father Aumen:

Division of American Province approved by Holy See February 5 1965 for three fold division of Cincinnati Province Kansas City Province Province of Pacific. Details will follow in airmail letter.<sup>64</sup>

This notification was the outgrowth of a motion passed by the business chapter of the American province held on 17 April 1963. At that time, the delegates, voting 40 yes and 10 no, gave "the Provincial and his Board the required consent to make a proposal of a division of the

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<sup>63</sup>ASPB-S, "Circular Letters for the Fathers in Chile."

<sup>64</sup>ASPB-S, "Provincial Old Letters 1964-1966."



Province to the proper ecclesiastical authority."<sup>65</sup>

A special edition of the February Gasparian explained in great detail the manner of division. Under "Foreign Missions" appeared the following: "The foreign missions are to be sponsored by the Cincinnati Province. Reasons: 1) Administrative efficiency. 2) Financial support. 3) Not wise to burden new Province with foreign missions immediately."<sup>66</sup>

Following this paragraph was one on the military chaplains: "Military chaplains would be assigned to the Cincinnati Province. Reason: To support foreign missions, and thereby balance the liability of Latin American missions."<sup>67</sup> This reasoning was not too acceptable to the missionaries, but they conceded that by being in Chile, they could not contribute financially to the general provincial treasury.<sup>68</sup>

The actual division of the American province of the Society of the Precious Blood into the Cincinnati province, the Kansas City province, and the province of the Pacific was proclaimed on 20 April 1965 at St. Joseph College, Rensselaer, Indiana, by Father Herbert Linenberger, the moderator general. On the same day, Father John Byrne was

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<sup>65</sup>Gasparian 26 (May 1963): 61.

<sup>66</sup>Gasparian 28 (February 1965): 8.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid.

<sup>68</sup>Observed by the writer at the time.

re-elected provincial, now of the Cincinnati province, while Father Norbert Sweeterman was returned to office as provincial treasurer.

With the division of the American province, the largest grouping, the Cincinnati province, alone was responsible for the Chilean vicariate and the Peruvian mission. Moreover, when the major seminarians were distributed pro rata among the three provinces, this meant that the Cincinnati province was to ordain not ten or twelve priests a year but only four or five at most. While other factors contributed to the diminution of personnel in Chile (as we shall see), it cannot be denied that the division of the province proved deleterious to the mission effort. Although for several more years the maximum number of missionaries would remain at twenty-seven, the year 1965 marked a turning point in the history of the Chilean vicariate.<sup>69</sup>

Meanwhile, a new school year was underway in Chile. By this time, several of the priests had also become students. Father William Schenk, spiritual director and teacher at the school of education of the Catholic University of Santiago and author of Formación Religiosa en la Escuela Católica, received a degree in guidance and counseling in December 1964. In the summer months that fol-

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<sup>69</sup>After 1965 and down through 1971, only five new missionary priests came to Chile.

lowed, Fathers Milton Ballor, Anthony Spitzig, Paul Schaaf, and Kenneth Seberger began part-time studies toward the degree of pedagogy of religion.

When the Sisters of the Precious Blood purchased a country estate at Santa Inez, a few miles south of San Bernardo, to serve as their novitiate, Father Seberger took up residence there. But in March 1965, he was appointed assistant at San José, and was succeeded as chaplain by Father Gerard Ritzel.

If March in Chile means the beginning of the school year, in the United States it often signals the start of Lent. In March, on Shrove Tuesday, a group of mission-minded Dayton area Catholics staged a successful dance to raise funds for a mission camper to be used in the territory around La Oroya, Peru. Promoted by Father Norbert Sweeterman, brother of the Peruvian superior, the fundraising event became known as the Inca Ball and was held annually. In later years, the proceeds were disbursed equally between Chile and Peru.

On 13 March, Father Aumen brought the provincial up to date on the seminarians, who no longer lived at the Escuela Apostólica. As a temporary measure, Father James Bender had installed his one theologian and four philosophers in the empty convent at San José parish. By this time the original group of teaching sisters was thought to have been somewhat uncooperative in assuming a more active

role in the pastoral program of the parish. For this reason, Father Leo Herber sought the services of the Precious Blood sisters, who, however, would not be available for another year. In fairness to the first group of sisters, it must be stated that the Hijas de la Misericordia had sufficient work just in running the San José school.

In his letter, the vicar provincial referred to other matters as well.<sup>70</sup> The cardinal of Santiago had expressed interest in the use of the former Escuela Apostólica as a center for retreats and diocesan meetings. Later on, when the proposal was accepted, the vicariate continued to pay a family to live on the premises, take care of the grounds, and prepare meals for the retreatants. This arrangement lasted for several years.

Although Vatican Council II did not close until 8 December 1965, most of the priests of the vicariate (as well as others in Chile) thought that a visible sign of renewal would be to put aside the use of the cassock. By the end of 1964, some had begun to wear the familiar black suit and roman collar, while others, especially the Chilean clergy, wore a gray suit. But even these innovations quickly gave way to the wearing of secular clothing, at times distinguished by the addition of a small cross on the coat or shirt.

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<sup>70</sup> ASPB-D, "1964-1965 Vicar Provincial."

Father Aumen, believing that it was time to say something about clerical garb, admonished his priests:

As all of us know, clerical fashions are in the throes of violent change. Every day you see something new (or old). At the airport the other night I thought: "I hope some priest Dior gets some clerical fashion set up soon because this C.P.P.S. crew is getting to look like a real motley gang!" . . . I can hardly believe that it's quite acceptable for a professional man to wear a plaid shirt,<sup>71</sup> baggy pants and an unconventional State-side jacket.

In the same circular letter, the vicar provincial informed the priests that the Chilean bishops strongly encouraged all clergy to attend one of the renewal workshops (jornadas de aggiornamento) being held throughout the country. The two-week sessions were designed to bring the priests up to date in liturgy, scripture, moral theology, and the church. Because of the workshops, the vicariate retreat for 1966 was dropped. Within a month, another circular letter repeated a resolution that had been approved by the vicariate board: "In all our Vicariate places common Vespers are to be substituted for the time being in place of the usual evening prayers."<sup>72</sup> Although this change was in accord with the Society's experimentation in common prayer, in most vicariate houses there was to be little in the way of community spiritual exercises.

The search for a university residence, which really

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<sup>71</sup>ASPB-S, "Circular Letters for the Fathers in Chile."

<sup>72</sup>Ibid:

was to become the center house of the vicariate, was concluded with the purchase of a building on Calle Canadá 284. Located a street over from the Hospital del Salvador, the house was a large, two-story, cement structure, twenty-two years old. Writing the good news to the provincial on 4 June, Father Aumen stated that "with the good rate of exchange the house cost us \$30,000. About two or three thousand more will put it in perfect shape for us."<sup>73</sup> By late October, though, he had to tell Father Byrne that an addition to the dining room was to cost another \$4,500. However, his own personal mission money was adequate to cover this unforeseen expense.<sup>74</sup> Nothing was mentioned at this time about the costs of furnishing a house of that size. The expense of refurbishing the structure continued to mount, as a more careful investigation had revealed that all the plumbing had to be replaced at a cost of \$3,500. Board minutes for 27 September 1966 disclose that some \$46,000 went into the purchase and renovation of the center house.<sup>75</sup>

Until the dwelling on Calle Canadá became habitable, Father Aumen continued to reside at the Escuela Apostólica. There on 28 March, he experienced a strong earth tremor that rocked the Santiago area. All the adobe

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<sup>73</sup> ASPB-D, "1964-1965 Vicar Provincial."

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> ASPB-S, "Minutes, Book II, 27 September 1966."

walls in the deserted seminary suffered cracks from the top to the bottom. The old adobe church at the Resbalón mission was a complete loss, while the brick church at Santo Domingo had \$4,000 worth of structural damage. However, the church, school, and rectory at San José, built to withstand earthquakes, came through unscathed.

For two months, the vicar provincial could put aside his concerns with Chile, as he journeyed to Rome to attend an electoral chapter of the Society of the Precious Blood. Father Aumen traveled in the company of Father Thomas Sweeterman, superior of the Peruvian mission, both of whom were ex officio delegates to the assembly. The sessions covered the first three days of July. On the last day, as balloting took place for the election of new curia members, Father Emil Schuwey, pastor of Rio Negro, was chosen economist general of the Society. Born in Switzerland, speaking English, German, and Spanish, having received one vote for the same position six years earlier, Father Schuwey was not of unknown quality. What was surprising was the decision of the chapter delegates to select one who was not present as a delegate.

After visits to several countries in Africa, then the Holy Land, Greece, Italy, and the United States, Father Aumen returned to Chile and prepared for a vicariate board meeting scheduled for 20 August. The first order of business dealt with the requested transfer of Father Joseph

Herber and Father Eugene Schmidt from Peru to Chile. Then the board came up with the startling idea of "sending a team into Peru . . . composed of Fathers Wm. Frantz, David Kettleson and Joseph Grilliot who would work together in one of the parishes, i.e. Oroya."<sup>76</sup> Next the Chilean board proceeded to appoint Father William Beuth, then serving as pastor of a parish in La Oroya, to the pastorate of Santo Domingo parish, Santiago.

Six days later Father Aumen informed the provincial:

Now about Peru! . . . All the members were in agreement that if we really want to help the Peruvian missions get into a modern missionary program we should not just put one or other replacement up there who will get completely discouraged over the lack of planning in apostolic work. Wholeheartedly we agreed that we should make a sacrifice and send there a team who would set up a plan of evangelization as it has been worked out here in Chile.

Because of surgery, it was 14 September before Father Byrne gave his reaction:

I was rather startled with the proposal that a Chilean team headed up by Father Bill Frantz should invade Peru and set things right. I know you mean well and doing your best to help, but I am wondering about the reaction of the men in Peru. From there it might look like dictating the apostolic program in Peru. If the Peruvian program is all that bad I haven't heard about it.<sup>78</sup>

The whole affair of transferring personnel took ten

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<sup>76</sup> ASPB-S, "Minutes, Book II, 20 August 1965."

<sup>77</sup> ASPB-D, "1964-1965 Vicar Provincial."

<sup>78</sup> ASPB-S, "Provincial Old Letters 1964-1966."



letters and two months to be resolved. Among the misunderstandings was the right to transfer priests. Previously Father Aumen had received the privilege of moving men in an emergency without provincial consent. In August, the vicar provincial thought that this included moves between Chile and Peru. It did not. Then, too, the priests in Peru did not accept the idea of Chile's coming to their rescue; they did not think that they needed rescuing. To further complicate matters, by 12 September Father Joseph Grilliot had already left Chile for Peru, and Father William Frantz, after visiting Brazil, reached Lima on 25 September.

By 5 October, the provincial council had sorted out the various missionaries and then decided: Father David Kettleson was to remain in Chile; Father William Beuth in Peru; Father Joseph Grilliot to replace Father Joseph Herber, once again in Chile; and Father William Frantz to replace Father Eugene Schmidt. Moreover, Father Kettleson was to be considered the replacement for Father Emil Schuway; however, Chile still owed Peru a replacement for Father Kettleson.

Father John Byrne, on 2 November, closed the unfortunate episode with a gracious word:

I know full well how disappointing it has been for you accepting our decision not to send a "team" to Peru. But you accepted our plan manfully and gracefully. My esteem of you has increased. No question about it, the Grand Mission is a most effective program and I don't

blame you for crusading for it.<sup>79</sup>

The same year that saw the division of the American province also saw the departure of two veteran missionaries from Chile. With Father Emil Schuwey in Rome and Father William Frantz in Peru, the vicariate had lost two priests with a combined total of twenty-nine years missionary experience. Obviously it is impossible to estimate the influence they might have brought to bear upon the vicariate in the coming years, but their absence was felt in the turbulent times ahead.

Some twenty-five priests assembled at the former Escuela Apostólica 7,8,9 September for the annual vicariate meeting. The theme centered on the objectives and methods of training lay leaders. As a springboard for further discussion, several of the priests presented papers: Father William Frantz, sacramentalization; Father Leo Herber, evangelization; Father Richard Lovett, pre-evangelization; and Father William Schenk, the use of schools in Christian formation.<sup>80</sup> Since this vicariate meeting was more educational than innovative, it lacked the impact of the first two.

As the momentous year of 1965 was winding down, the vicariate board concerned itself with two churches in the south. The church at Purranque, still in the sorry state

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<sup>79</sup>Ibid.

<sup>80</sup>ASPB-S, "Chilean Publications, Chileletter."

in which it was left by the 1960 earthquake, was to be repaired and given a simple facade. Under the direction of Father Joseph Herber, now pastor there, the front of the church was restored and the entire exterior of the building painted.

The other church under construction was that at Rio Negro. Under the direction of Father Emil Schuwey, the parents of the parochial school children had put up a metal construction with a tin roof, which they had hoped one day to use as a gymnasium. The new pastor, Father Richard Lovett, now requested the board's permission to tear down the old church and with the salvaged lumber finish off the gym building. It was his intention to use this building as a temporary place of worship. With his own mission money and the \$3,000 that Father Schuwey had left for a new church, Father Lovett expected his people to contribute whatever else was needed to build a new house of worship. Father Aumen informed the provincial that "there is no layout [sic] of Vicariate funds at the present time. Possibly before the project is finished the Vicariate will have to subsidize it with \$5,000 to \$8,000."<sup>81</sup>

For several years construction on the church at Rio Negro lagged. When Father Patrick Patterson became pastor there in July of 1968, he found a skeleton structure that had no walls, windows, or floor. With great personal

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<sup>81</sup> ASPB-D, "1964-1965 Vicar Provincial."

effort and with the financial help of his people, Father Patterson was able three years later to bring the project to conclusion. On 10 December 1971, the seventieth anniversary of the founding of the parish, the new church was formally dedicated by the bishop of Osorno, Monseñor Francisco Valdés.<sup>82</sup>

Having finished his studies at the language school of the Society of St. James near Lima, the newest Chilean missionary arrived at Santiago on 8 November 1965. Father John Falter (32) was pleased to find his fellow missionaries friendly and hospitable, but "their new approach to the apostolate 'shocked' me a little at first."<sup>83</sup> Without saying just how he was shocked, Father John described some ideas that might be considered a departure from accepted practices:

For example, the idea of reaching the parents through the children simply has to be discarded. The new thinking is: GO DIRECTLY TO THE ADULTS. Form them first. Children are not likely to stand the tests of bad home life; they stand little chance of changing their surroundings . . . The gradation, in another way, is as follows;<sup>84</sup> men first, women second, youth third, children last.

It was about this time that the house trailer, purchased in the States and used for campo missions, was moved to Santiago. After being kept for some months at the

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<sup>82</sup>Gasparian 35 (May 1972): 1.

<sup>83</sup>Precious Blood Messenger 72 (February 1966): 48.

<sup>84</sup>Ibid.

former San Bernardo seminary, it was later hauled to a spot at El Quisco on the Pacific coast, where it served as a kind of summer cabin for the missionaries who occasionally used it. With the introduction of the Gran Misión, with emphasis now placed on the evangelization of the people and not sacramentalization, the era of the traditional country missions came to an end. A number of priests, in conscience, could no longer prepare a group of youngsters from Monday to Saturday and then let them make their first communion on the seventh day. The administration of the sacraments had always been an important element of the campo missions. In fact, their success was usually judged by the number of confessions, first communions, marriages, and baptisms that resulted.

In part to replace the campo missions, study days were set up to prepare lay leaders in the various southern parishes. From his post as senior assistant at Pitrufoquen, veteran missionary Father Leo Herber described the new apostolate:

One must begin to pull away from full attention to the crowds of people and give a reasonable amount of time to the individual leaders among these crowds . . . From the 12th to the 14th of July nine men from the five different centers met together at the Comuy school to study the communities in which they lived. They studied something of cooperatives and farm unions. They practiced the Bible Services and deepened their understanding of the Eucharist as the basis of all Christian life.

Will the jornada [workshop] method work? Will the teaching of a few eventually cause the many to know

Christ better?<sup>85</sup>

Although the vicariate had phased out its campo missions, it had not yet freed itself from its parochial schools. Particularly burdensome was the payment of teacher salaries. On 16 August 1965, Father Paul Aumen appealed to the moderator general, Father Herbert Linenberger, for a share of the bi-nation stipends from the American provinces. The vicar provincial bolstered his plea by stating that "we have a \$4,600 teacher salary at the end of each month. There is about \$1,300 which has to be paid out monthly in subsidies to different places and projects."<sup>86</sup> Replying shortly before Christmas, Father Linenberger stated that the "bulk of the income has gone to the Chilean and Peruvian Missions."<sup>87</sup>

But money woes did not cease for Father Aumen. In late April, 1966, when it became apparent that the government school subsidy from the previous year was to be delayed even further, and with the schools owing the vicariate \$29,920, the vicariate board took the following measures: it held up all current construction, it appealed to the missionaries to lend to the vicariate whatever personal and mission money they had, and it appealed to the Cincinnati province for a \$10,000 loan.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Precious Blood Messenger 73 (January 1967): 19.

<sup>86</sup> ASPB-S, "Moderator General 1962-..." <sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> ASPB-D, "Vicar Chile 1966-77."

In his letter of 13 May, Father Byrne replied favorably on the loan and then observed:

Your crisis is indeed an acute one. Having listened to the comments of our men in school work . . . I was not too surprised. The present delay could occur annually, couldn't it? If and when we can discreetly do so, I think we should gradually<sup>89</sup> get out of education - except for St. Gaspar's School.

There it was, out in the open: the possibility of giving up the vicariate schools, built at enormous sacrifice and considered at one time to be the hope of the church in Chile. This thought, expressed by the provincial himself, had been broached already on 3 May 1966 by Father Aumen in a circular letter. In it he mentioned as the ultimate alternative to the continuing financial plight of the schools, the idea to "drop our free-school educational program."<sup>90</sup>

In another letter, sent to the priests some three weeks later, the vicar provincial referred to Father Byrne's remark:

Taking the step which the Provincial advocates in his letter is a big one. It should not be done with great haste. Years of arduous work in building up a Vicariate educational edifice should not be tumbled down at anybody's first impulse. Some claim that our Vicariate was built up through government school subvenciones [subsidies]. At present we know it is a losing proposition. At present our schools are \$30,000.00 in debt. Many of us have complained because the Vicariate hasn't received outright annual subsidies from the Community.

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<sup>89</sup> ASPB-S, "Provincial Old Letters 1964-1966."

<sup>90</sup> ASPB-S, "Circular Letters for the Fathers in Chile."

On the other hand, it doesn't seem quite fair to insist that the Community pay for an educational program because the Chilean government is renegating its obligations.<sup>91</sup>

Father Aumen then announced that a committee had been formed of the priest directors of the Purrangué, Roosevelt, and San José schools. It was their purpose to conduct a study similar to the one made by the vocational committee. According to the vicar provincial, the committee was to "determine the possibility of cutting back on the educational program where the greatest loss is occurring."<sup>92</sup> However, the committee did not change a thing, because once the financial crisis had been weathered, the urgency to do something definite about the schools disappeared for a number of years.

The fact that it was New Year's day, 1966, did not keep Father Aumen from writing to the provincial. On 18 November Father Byrne had indicated that it was his wish to send Father Kenneth Seberger, an assistant at San José parish, to Peru. As early as 1962, the American province had agreed to supply one priest for the chaplain-professor post at the school conducted by the Immaculate Heart of Mary sisters at Lima. When the sisters' new La Planicie College was completed, the Cincinnati province kept its promise to provide a professor, who was now needed by March

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<sup>91</sup>Ibid. <sup>92</sup>Ibid.



1966. Although Father Aumen was willing to give up Father Seberger, his reply to the provincial revealed an intensity of feeling about the missions that was to quicken in the coming months:

Honestly, it doesn't hurt for us to help Peru. The hurt doesn't come in helping them. It came some time ago when we offered a program of help and after it was at first accepted it was almost as quickly rejected. It was done by the traditionally minded who neither know anything about modern mission methods nor are willing to give them a try . . . I'm sorry that I feel so strongly about this, Father John. This is not a personality difficulty. You know that. It's a problem that the Church in modern times is experiencing all over the world - resistance to change and experiment in order <sup>93</sup>to make our faith more effective in today's world.

In the next few months, the personnel picture in Chile changed. In March, Father Seberger left the vicariate for his new position, and in May, Father Emil Dinkel, with almost twelve years of mission experience, decided not to return to Chile. However, in January a new volunteer came to the fore in the huge person of Father Edward Novotny (33). Desirous of placing the missionary in Chile as soon as possible, the provincial learned that the Catholic University at Ponce, Puerto Rico, offered a language program that would permit Father Novotny to be at his new post by June. He and a volunteer for Peru were the first priests of the Society to attend the Institute for Intercultural Communication at Ponce.

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<sup>93</sup>ASPB-D, "Vicar Chile 1966-77."

The overall lack of volunteers for the missions began to trouble the Cincinnati province. The provincial's letters to Father Aumen now took on phrasing that was indicative of the coming years. Thus, on 18 November 1965: "I can't break him loose until June;" on 17 December: "I will not be able to release a man until next summer;" and on 3 January 1966: "I am unable to spring a man loose."<sup>94</sup>

The worsening man power situation of the Cincinnati province was growing. By the middle of June, 1966, the provincial had to face the reality:

I intend to use Father Joseph Grilliot as the replacement for Father Emil Dinkel. We just cannot send another man to Latin America this year. With only four allotted to the Cincinnati Province from this year's Tirocinium [program of <sup>95</sup>pastoral formation], we just cannot spare another man.

Father Paul Aumen, when he was in the United States to establish a mission-sharing program among the Society's parishes in the Cincinnati province, reported on the growing problem:

One of the most encouraging things I have heard during my visit is that a number of priests, including the Provincial [sic], want to direct the aim of our community during this renewal program toward the foreign missions . . . One sad thing at present is that our list of new volunteers for S.A. stands at almost zero. There are a number of old stand-bys, but the young men

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<sup>94</sup>ASPB-S, "Provincial Old Letters 1964-1966."

<sup>95</sup>Ibid. Forced to leave Peru to undergo major surgery in the United States, Father Grilliot rejoined the vicariate.

are just not signing up.<sup>96</sup>

Just as the personnel picture of the vicariate was undergoing change, so too was its commitment to the diocese of Osorno. In February 1966, the parish of Riachuelo was reduced to the status of a mission attached to Rio Negro. This step was long in coming. As far back as February 1953, the vicariate board considered the possibility of taking the resident priest out of Riachuelo. Then eight years later, because the parish "has always been a burden financially and morally to the priest appointed to live there, all [board members] voted in favor of a motion to ask the Bishop of Osorno to change the residence of the pastor of Riachuelo to Rio Negro."<sup>97</sup> At this time, the motion was not to suppress the parish, but to have the pastor live with his fellow priests. By 7 August 1961, the bishop approved the measure on a temporary basis. Three years passed before Riachuelo again came up for discussion by the vicariate board. For the purpose of a unified apostolate with Rio Negro, the "Board is in favor of making a mission of Riachuelo. The Vicar Provincial will see the Bishop of Osorno about suppressing the Parish at Riachuelo."<sup>98</sup> But two more years elapsed, before the vicari-

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<sup>96</sup> ASPB-S, "Circular Letters for the Fathers in Chile."

<sup>97</sup> ASPB-S, "Minutes, Book II, 19 April 1961."

<sup>98</sup> Ibid., "Minutes, Book II, 17 January 1964."

ate freed itself from the obligations of providing a pastor for Riachuelo.<sup>99</sup>

For several months during the Chilean summer of 1966, the Escuela Apostólica enjoyed a new lease on life. During the previous school term the handful of seminarians had lived in the empty convent at San José. With the new school year, four Sisters of the Precious Blood were to occupy the building. Again installed in their old quarters until the center house was ready for occupancy, the seminarians commuted between their residence and the Catholic University in Santiago.

Two of the Chilean seminarians, Israel de la Fuente and Nivaldo González, completed their philosophy studies in December and then participated in apostolic work in several vicariate parishes. In late February, 1966, the two of them left Chile to enter the novitiate of the Cincinnati province at Burkettsville, Ohio. On 15 August 1967, both made temporary profession into the Society of the Precious Blood in the presence of Father Herbert Linenberger, moderator general. Later, before reaching ordination, seminarian González withdrew from the Society.

Exactly one year before the profession of the two priesthood students, Ambrosio Llancoñanco became the first Chilean brother of the Society. After completing his novi-

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<sup>99</sup>About 1970, the bishop of Osorno sent one of his priests to serve as pastor of Riachuelo. He soon left.

tiate in the United States, he spent several years acquiring the plumber's trade. But once back in Chile, where he was known as Juan de la Cruz, he was given apostolic work in the south. He also left the Society before his final profession.

The same month that seminarians de la Fuente and González left Chile for the United States, Miss Madalyn Miller of Rensselaer, Indiana, came to work for the Chilean vicariate. Recommended by several priests at St. Joseph College, Miss Miller was found to be more than a secretary. The Chilean seminarians and the North American priests were impressed by her skills in the office, in the kitchen, in art work, and on the lawns. The following year, she again donated her time and effort to the vicariate during the Chilean summer.

Concluding a letter to the provincial in early June, 1966, Father Aumen added the note that one of his nieces had volunteered to cook at the new center house. For more than a year, Mary Sue Gebhart worked at the task of feeding the priests and seminarians at the center house. Some months after reaching Chile, Mary Sue was joined by her sister, Paulette, who was to serve as her uncle's secretary for several years.

## CHAPTER VII

### DISORIENTATION WITHIN THE VICARIATE

#### The Breakdown Begins

At the urging of vicariate members that the provincial himself, rather than a council member, come yearly to Chile, Father John Byrne landed at Santiago on 14 March 1966. Both in the south and in the Santiago area, one day was set aside for an open exchange of views among the assembled priests and the provincial. On 6 April the center house, still several months away from occupancy, was blessed by Father Byrne. As a mark of appreciation to the provincial for his interest in the missions, the center house was named "Casa Byrne."

Upon his return to the United States, the provincial submitted, by way of report, his impressions of the Chilean church as he had just seen it:

Though previously warned, I was both startled and edified by much of what I had observed and learned. Probably nowhere - outside the "Transalpine" Church - will you find such a climate of apostolic freedom and experimentation as in the Chilean Church . . .

An outsider is confused at times, in determining what the Chilean bishops permit, or just what they wink at. All of this, of course, is immediately disturbing to the structured U.S. visitor . . .

Disenchanted by failures of every conceivable apostolic effort, sensibilities worn thin by the cold stare of

anti-clericalism, fearing the "moment of truth" between Christianity and Communism, the Chilean clergy justify their actions and attitudes by the initiative given by Vatican Council II . . .

You cannot live here long before the spirit gets to you. It has gotten to our Fathers. In no radical way, of course. They are just acutely aware of the critical situation, and more than convinced that the windows must be opened wide in Chile. With the Chilean hierarchy and its advanced clergy, they are opening them.<sup>1</sup>

Part of the changing scene was the new attitude toward the preparation of first communicants. The new approach consisted of the weekly preparation of the children's mothers by a trained catechist. In turn, each mother was expected to instruct her own child at home. The assistant pastor of the parish at Roosevelt, Father Paul Bobay, described a facet of the new catechetics:

In January Father Donald [Thieman] directed a one day workshop-picnic for seven mama-catequistas at our former minor seminary in San Bernardo. The senoras studied some about their role in the Church and talked about the coming year. A serious problem in the minds of some catechists who have some clear idea of Christian formation has been: Does it really pay to prepare the children for First Communion when there is simply no example of the Christian life in the homes of these children?<sup>2</sup>

On Ascension Thursday, 19 May 1966, the temporary occupation of the Escuela Apostólica came to an end. At the new center house on that day, while workers were still pattering on the first floor, Fathers Aumen and Bender with

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<sup>1</sup>Gasparian 29 (April 1966): 25.

<sup>2</sup>Precious Blood Messenger 72 (November 1966): 334.

their little group of seminarians took up residence on the second floor. An era of vicariate history ended, a new one began.

In the last week of the year, Father William Frantz left his post in La Oroya to come to Chile, where he conducted the annual vicariate retreat. At the conclusion of the spiritual exercises, Father Aumen had a group photograph taken of the assembled priests. Since none of the men was wearing clerical garb, Father Byrne observed that the picture had no value as mission propaganda. To this, the vicar provincial replied:

As you know, the priests in Chile are on the pendulum swinging to the far left when it comes to clerical dress. What does a Superior say to them that will have any effect? . . . I really think that the only solution is to try to encourage the priests to be well-dressed when they meet with their people. Who<sup>3</sup> is to say in this day and age what a priest must wear?

Some nine months after the visit of Father John Byrne, the vicariate was to host another visitor. On Tuesday, 31 January 1967, Father Herbert Linenberger, moderator general of the Society of the Precious Blood arrived in Chile. Elected to office in 1959, he was making his first inspection of the South American missions. Father Linenberger had wanted to come sooner, but his various duties in connection with Vatican Council II made this impossible. As a former seminary professor with prior

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<sup>3</sup>ASPB-D, "Vicar Chile 1966-1977."



parish experience, Father Linenberger had taught canon law and moral theology to many of the Chilean missionaries. Writing to the provincial, Father Aumen had this to say about the moderator general: "With his knowledge of Italian and with some study of Spanish for this tour he does remarkably well. Congeniality is one of his greatest assets."<sup>4</sup>

To facilitate traveling, Father Linenberger accompanied by Father Aumen flew to southern Chile. In the south and in Santiago he interviewed each priest privately, then held a formal session with each group, once at Pitrufrquén and once at the center house. According to Father Aumen, "the men pulled out all the stops to give him a true picture of what the C.P.P.S. is doing in Chile. In some instances, I would say that if he wasn't 'shook' at least he was a bit surprised."<sup>5</sup> After a little more than three weeks in Chile, Father Linenberger flew on to Peru.

After his visitation of the South American missions and the three North American provinces, Father Linenberger prepared a general report that was printed in the Gasparian of 6 January 1968. In it, he made no specific reference to Chile. However, back on 13 April 1967, he had already indicated to Father Aumen that a detailed report would be forthcoming:

In my conversation with the Provincial Council it was

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid. <sup>5</sup>Ibid.

advised that I curtail my report and do not make public the detailed account I had prepared. All recommended that I send the report to you and Fr. [Thomas] Sweeterman personally but without obligating you to mimeograph the copy for distribution. Inasmuch as I already gave you the substance of the observations, I do not think it necessary to send a report at this time.

In a circular letter dated 6 March, Father Aumen ~~sought~~ to share with his priests the "substance of the observations" made by the moderator general. The one thing that caused the Roman visitor the greatest concern was negligence in praying the breviary (by church law, every priest had the grave obligation of praying certain sections of the breviary daily). The vicar provincial then listed some other points that Father Linenberger intended to include in his final report on the Chilean vicariate:

- 1) Communication of our priests with the Chilean people is very poor. (mentioned by eight.)
- 2) Request for the right of a vote in Provincial elections and community affairs. [C.P.P.S. priests enjoyed the right of universal suffrage, but residence in Chile made voting impossible.]
- 3) Unwarranted use of vehicles for vacation and unofficial trips.
- 4) Too frequent changes of personnel in the Vicariate. (mentioned by ten.)
- 5) Too infrequent visits of the superior to the parishes in the south. (mentioned by two.)
- 6) Lack of consideration on the part of our priests for the Precious Blood Sisters who are working for us. (mentioned by eight.)
- 7) Chilean apostolate is [be?] directed to people and not to buildings. (mentioned by ten.)
- 8) Some of our houses are too affluent for the people with whom we work and live.
- 9) A new man should not go direct [sic] to Peru but have the breaking-in period here in Chile.
- 10) Vicar Provincial should commute and dispense from the Office [breviary] in individual instances and for good reasons.
- 11) The three months' visit to the States is not to be considered a vacation

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<sup>6</sup> ASPB-S, "Correspondence of Moderator General."

but for the purpose of giving mission appeals and the occasion to visit family and friends. Annual vacations are taken in Chile itself. 12) A strong plea on the part of some for a monthly day of recollection, and not just a business meeting . . .

Writing from Rome on 24 November 1967, Father Linenberger brought the vicar provincial up to date on his visitation report:

Now that I am back in Rome I can reflect. It is well that I waited this long before composing the final draft of the Chilean Report. Time gave me a better perspective. As you realize, I was swept off my feet at the laxity of the priests in the missions: I am referring to the prayer life! The liturgical experimentations I could absorb . . . though I did not like to see <sup>8</sup>it exceeded the permissions of the Council Decrees.

Less than a month later, 20 December, the moderator general had completed his Chilean report and sent a copy to Father Aumen. "You are free to file it away or publish it."<sup>9</sup> After the visitation, it was the belief of many of the vicariate members that the report was too explosive to be exposed to the air of Chile.<sup>10</sup> One wonders if its publication might not have been a good thing, because with remarkable perspicacity Father Linenberger diagnosed the ills of the vicariate. Apparently Father Aumen thought that his previous circulation of the condensed report was

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<sup>7</sup> ASPB-S, "Circular Letter for the Fathers in Chile."

<sup>8</sup> ASPB-S, "Correspondence of Moderator General."

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Observation of the writer at the time.

adequate. However, to capture the style and substance of the moderator general's report, some quotations are necessary:

Many of the fathers dolefully shook their heads when the conversation centered on the success of their work. A few mentioned that perhaps the Chileans would not even miss them if the missionaries would leave as the impact on their religious life is negligible.

In the beginning the missionaries resorted to a sacramentarian apostolate. They were trained for this in the United States. At that time the concepts of nativization and acculturation of the missionaries were not emphasized as they are today.

Experience proved that by adding to the statistics, baptizing more, confirming more, assisting at weddings, etc., only compounded the problem. More unprepared Catholics were placed on the census chart . . .

The air of disorientaton is as pronounced in Chile as anywhere else since the close of the Second Vatican Council. An ambitious program has been studied and presented by the national hierarchy of Chile, not excluding the worker priest movement, but many of the missionaries are still searching for the magic formula . . .

The missionaries are still debating among themselves whether the educational apostolate should have been inaugurated, and since its inauguration, sustained . . .

Rio Negro needs a new church. The pastor, as nearly all in Chile, is of the conviction that the churches and parish buildings should be built by the people, i.e. they are to supply the funds for them . . . A church building is truly needed at Poblacion Roosevelt. However, the Vicariate appears to hold the line in its resolution to let the people come forward with the suggestion and eventual funds. No CPPS money will be expended for Churches . . .

The comment of nine missionaries centered on the US methodology in missionizing and mode of life as being still too ingrained despite their whole-hearted dedication. An acceptable communication between the missionary and his flock is still lacking. The image of

affluence has to be downgraded by all, said these nine men, especially so the posh living and the use of vehicles . . .

The changes in assignment are too frequent. Eleven men became excited about this and warming up to the subject indicated that the Chilean Catholics have to be drawn by kindness, interest in his work, respect for his dignity . . . To accomplish this takes time. By the time he has established good rapport the order comes to move to a different place . . .

All had the highest praise for the Mission Procurator, but said that his work could be improved if he would have a still greater knowledge of the missions. He ought to live there for a few months . . .

For the moment all the Society's missionaries are US citizens, and can therefore be termed "tourist missionaries," ready to return when their pre-arranged tour of service has terminated. A large number spoke of the necessity to identify more with the Chileans and when ready to commit themselves to it, have second thoughts about it . . .

With the sad experience of contending with confreres who give only partial service, refuse some assignments, are not capable of adjusting to the cultural environment or fail to support the general overall mission program but insist on their preferred projects, a greater screening ought to be exercised in designating men for the missions . . .

The first impact upon me on arrival in Chile was the casualness of dress: T-shirts, sports clothes, etc. . . It is an accomplished fact, a solidly entrenched practice, that I, on a three weeks' visit, realized that I could not correct. My instruction therefore, was, that our missionaries are to conform to the practice of the local clergy, especially that of the local foreign clergy . . .

Poverty is a relative term when viewed from the US standards of living and compared with those that obtain in Chile. Even the reduced US standard of living when imported into Chile can exceed the limits of propriety according to the local standards of poverty . . .

Whatever differences exist in convictions, mission program, temperament and allied conflicts, the frequent and truly fraternal association among the missionaries is remarkable. Still, a voice, here and there, was

heard, deprecating the growing tendency to deviate from this healthy tradition by seeking recreation alone or in the company of the laity . . .

The memory of the embarrassment I suffered when I addressed the groups at Pitrufrquén and at the Casa Central causes me to shudder anew. I was constrained to defend the existing law for the recitation of the breviary! . . . I spent nearly three full weeks in Chile. The number of times the common prayers were recited was an embarrassment to me. I recognized the difficulties, the conflicting appointments which made it a true inconvenience to assemble . . .<sup>11</sup>

Father Linenberger, the most affable of men, was able to conclude his report with an optimistic appraisal of the missionaries:

I return to my own tasks with renewed fervor after witnessing the zeal of these missionaries. Floreatis! The charm of our priesthood and missionary assignment lies in this thought that we are invited to fill, if not the whole world, at least our own little world, with the spirit of God.<sup>12</sup>

This lengthy citation of the moderator general's fifteen page report serves as a partial background for the internal struggles that were about to afflict many of the missionaries in the near future.

Missionary work was still the reason for the vicariate's existence. In the Chilean summer of 1967, a new type of campo mission was employed. In the Mahuidanche sector of the Pitrufrquén parish, Fathers Leo Herber and Edward Novotny directed a two-week mission, assisted by two

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<sup>11</sup> ASPB-R, G III 3B, also ASPB-S, "Moderator General."

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

priests from Santiago, four of the vicariate seminarians, six young men from St. Gaspar school, and two lay catechists from Población Roosevelt. The goals of the mission were long-ranged: develop the Christian community, encourage and form lay leaders, and strengthen the liturgical life of the people.

Although the vicariate still had several Chilean priesthood students, Father Aumen now began the recruitment of seminarians from the United States. In an article that appeared in the Gasparian, he proposed this question to his fellow priests: "Are the 1,622 [U.S.?] missionaries placed in South America well-prepared language-wise, culturally and psychologically to do a Latin's job in thoroughly Latin countries?"<sup>13</sup> He answered his question by stating that it was hardly possible for a priest in his thirties to go to the missions and expect to be properly adjusted to his new culture. Far better to send to the missions young students who were about to begin their theology courses.

Moreover, the vicar provincial proposed that these seminarians come from all three American provinces. In conclusion, he suggested that all priesthood students should consider themselves as being on call for missionary duty:

In a foreign mission-minded community there is little

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<sup>13</sup>Gasparian 30 (May 1967): 39.

justification for handcuffing the Provincial with a limited list of those who have "signed up." . . . The Provincial, therefore, should be free to select any philosophy or theology student he<sup>14</sup> considers capable of doing a good job in the missions.

The following month, Father Aumen prepared a shorter article in which he stressed that the young priests were not volunteering for the missions. He reasoned that since so many of the seminarians were receiving specialized training, they believed that only in the States could they use this special knowledge. To this the vicar provincial responded:

The Chilean mission field is no longer in the horse-back riding, muddy-Jeep stage . . . Today the Chilean missions have changed to a progressive and modern apostolate. Volunteers who are specialized will have the opportunity and the freedom to use their training in Chile.<sup>15</sup>

But time was to show that no one accepted the invitation. Not one young priest with a master's degree came to Chile. Nor did another idea, announced in a circular letter of 19 May 1967, bear results. Father Aumen had provincial support for a "systematic training and placing of lay personnel in our missions."<sup>16</sup> According to the vicar provincial, Father Byrne had appointed two state-side priests to supervise the program. It produced nothing.

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

<sup>15</sup>Gasparian 30 (June 1967): 53.

<sup>16</sup>ASPB-S, "Circular Letters for the Fathers in Chile."



By now such mission-sending organizations as Papal Volunteers for Latin America were questioning their very existence. A realistic lay person would not volunteer during a time of intense reappraisal of the missionary effort.

In spite of the apparent drought of volunteers for the South American missions, Father Byrne struck water. In April, after deciding to ask the young priests still in their year of pastoral formation at St. Anthony parish, Detroit, he quickly had two volunteers: Father Thomas Brenberger (nephew of Father Paul Buehler), assigned to the Peruvian mission; and Father Gerald Bowers (28), appointed to the Chilean vicariate. After language studies in Ponce, Puerto Rico, Father Bowers reached Chile on 14 December.

Usually Father Aumen had his niece type his correspondence, but on 30 June 1967, he did the task himself. He informed Father John Byrne that Father Eugene Stiker, veteran of thirteen and a half years in Chile, had made his request through the archdiocese of Santiago to be released from the obligations of the active priesthood. In his long letter, the vicar provincial remarked, "I'm afraid that from now on we are going to have to look at this thing with less disdain and accept it with less concern when it happens."<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> ASPB-D, "Vicar Chile 1966-1977."

But Father Aumen could not disguise his wonderment:

I never thought that anything like this could happen to us in Chile . . . We knew that we were working together for a great cause - the Community's mission effort. It has been noted that we are closer in spirit than any other North American community. This has happened to the [others]. But you never quite believe it could happen to our gang.<sup>18</sup>

In his return letter, Father Byrne indicated that he already knew of Father Stiker's petition. He added: "I suppose we might as well develop thick skins towards these requests. Frightening as it is, I think we'll probably receive more as time goes on."<sup>19</sup>

An act of significance for both the church of Santiago and for the vicariate took place on 9 July. On that day, Fernando Ariztia Ruiz was consecrated auxiliary bishop of Santiago. With the archdiocese divided into zones and Don Fernando spiritual leader of the western zone, he became a warm, understanding friend of the Precious Blood priests working there. Eventually he moved into San José parish, living in a humble, wooden dwelling, similar to the thousands of other ugly little houses occupied by the working class.

The holyday of the Assumption, 15 August, proved to be more than just another anniversary of the Society's founding. On that day, Joe Navarrete Hauri became the

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<sup>18</sup>Ibid.

<sup>19</sup>ASPB-S, "Provincial." After 1966, this is the file designation.

first Chilean sub-deacon of the Society. The ordination, in his home parish of Pitrifquén, was conferred by Bishop Guillermo Hartl of the Araucanía. Before the concelebrated Mass began, Joe made his perpetual profession to the Society in the presence of Father Paul Aumen. (Joe's name was just that; it was not Joseph or José or Pepe. Since his mother was an admirer of Joe Louis, the former heavyweight champion, he was named accordingly.)

Father John Wilson and Father John Kostik had reached Chile on 16 September 1947. Now, two decades later, the priests assembled at Casa Byrne to observe the twentieth anniversary of the vicariate. The date chosen, 20 September, began with a special noon meal. That evening, in a Mass concelebrated by some twenty of the missionaries, Joe Navarrete was ordained a deacon at San José church. In its own way, the ceremony reflected the difference between 1947 and 1967: a concelebrated Mass in Spanish in the new, unfinished church.

The following day all the priests and the new deacon assembled at the old seminary at San Bernardo. In the morning session, Father Ambrose Lengerich stirred a lively discussion with his paper on priestly prayer. The afternoon session dealt with vicariate business, including the need for a mission anthropologist. In a letter to the provincial, Father Aumen explained that "there is hardly anything which causes the missionaries to become more dis-

satisfied in their work than the insecurity of not knowing where they are going."<sup>20</sup> With the hope of getting direction in their mission work, the priests voted to send Father Edward Novotny to the Catholic University at Washington to obtain a master's degree in mission anthropology. With approval granted by the provincial, Father Novotny left Chile in January 1968 to begin his studies.

In preparation for the renewal meeting that was held on 21 September, Father Aumen had sent out a questionnaire to all the priests. In his reply, Father William Schenk noted that "there are so many uncertain factors in the field that it is hard to predict what the future will bring."<sup>21</sup> Although he wrote this in the context of his university work, he could very well have made the reference to his own priestly role. On 25 September, Father Aumen informed the provincial that Father Schenk had found it best to return to the United States. About one year later, he flew back to Chile, married a Chilean, and at once returned to the United States.<sup>22</sup>

In September, Father Gerald Dreiling, assistant pastor at Valdivia, translated and sent to the provincial a copy of a letter prepared by a group of non-Chilean

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<sup>20</sup>ASPB-D, "Vicar Chile 1966-1977."

<sup>21</sup>ASPB-S, "Circular Letters for the Fathers in Chile."

<sup>22</sup>Only those priests who married in Chile are cited in the text. See Appendix A.

priests. The letter was addressed to the Chilean hierarchy during its annual meeting. In a later Messenger article, Father Dreiling quoted from the foreign missionaries' communication to the bishops:

Do we help to solve problems, or does our presence delay a real search and actual finding of real solutions? Could we be acting as sort of a patch? If, for example, we would suddenly disappear from the country, could we not be doing a favor to the National Church in its search for imaginative and creative solutions - which would be both native and true?<sup>23</sup>

Perhaps because the Messenger was designed for family reading and not for controversy, the solution offered by the missionaries was not included in the article. However, in a letter to the vicar provincial, Father Byrne concurred with the solution originally suggested: follow the pattern of the Apostolic church in forming small Christian communities, ordain local deacons, ordain married men to the priesthood in order to offer the sacred liturgy.<sup>24</sup>

Because of the serious illness of his father, Father Gerald Dreiling left Chile on 7 October, with the intention of returning as soon as possible. However, it was only in 1969 that he felt free to return to the missions, but instead of returning to the vicariate, he joined the Peruvian mission.

Many of the missionaries had entered and left Chile

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<sup>23</sup>Precious Blood Messenger 74 (February 1968): 34.

<sup>24</sup>ASPB-S, "Provincial."

by way of the international airport at Los Cerrillos. Now a new facility, Pudahuel, located on the western side of the city, saw the arrival and departure of the missionaries. With the Precious Blood sisters' novitiate shortly to close, Father Robert Conway, the last vicariate chaplain at Santa Inez, left Chile on 4 December. Although it was his intention to remain in the United States, he returned to the vicariate nineteen months later.

### The Malaise Deepens

Back in August, Father Aumen had written to the provincial about his intention to write an article for the Gasparian treating "the Chilean missionaries' sentiment toward a disinterested Stateside community."<sup>25</sup> After the article was submitted, its printing was held up for further revision. According to the provincial, "We are both concerned about help. I have to agree with the general message. It is the expression that bothers me."<sup>26</sup> Defending his stance, Father Aumen replied:

At this stage of renewal we should be able to present our complaints openly and not sacrifice honesty because someone may be upset. The fact is that Chilean missionaries are not content with their lot. I doubt that his message can be presented to the rest of the community by soft-pedaling those issues which are the bone

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<sup>25</sup> ASPB-D, "Vicar Chile 1966-1977."

<sup>26</sup> ASPB-S, "Provincial."

of contention.<sup>27</sup>

It was a revised article that appeared in the Gasparian of November 1967. The thrust of the argument was the lack of interest in the missions on the part of the members of the Cincinnati province. On 6 November, Father Byrne expressed his reaction:

What comes through the article leads me to believe that the dispositions of our Chilean missionaries have changed to a degree that causes me no little concern. I think that it is high time I get down<sup>28</sup> there to get the "feel" of the men and the situation.

Because of the visit of the moderator general, Father John Byrne did not visit Chile during the current year.

In December, members of the Cincinnati province attended renewal meetings at St. Charles seminary. The aim of the sessions was to examine the Society of the Precious Blood in the light of Vatican II. Father Aumen made a special trip to the United States to attend. An entire page of the February Gasparian was given over to his observations on the renewal meeting that dealt with foreign missions. Some quotations indicate the tone of the article:

For looking at the Community coldly, it is far from being a progressive, mobile troop, pliable and versatile enough to move easily into the troubled spots of a modern Church. Using the volume of Vatican documents

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<sup>27</sup> ASPB-D, "Vicar Chile 1966-1977."

<sup>28</sup> ASPB-S, "Provincial."

as a measuring stick, the Community is greatly conservative. Only when it will be more free of structured, comfortable commitments will it<sup>29</sup> be able to consider itself a real missionary society.

With the province's renewal meetings concluded and the Christmas holidays celebrated, Father Paul Aumen in company with the provincial returned to Chile. Father Byrne was in the vicariate until 1 February. He later jotted down some of the impressions of his fifth visit to Chile:

No one here brags about success in the apostolate. Our men have tried at least 10 programs since 1947 and have discarded as many. If it does not work, try something else seems to be the Chilean policy. Right now, forming small Christian communities in the barrios is big. No worry about numbers. Just start with a<sup>30</sup> few and hope to instill some interest in Christ.

Prior to his coming to Chile, Father Byrne had indicated that he wanted to get the "feel" of the priests in the vicariate. Judging by what he wrote after his trip, there was a note of optimism among the missionaries. "No trace of discouragement did I detect. No slackening in zeal."<sup>31</sup> Although the provincial regretted his inability to bolster the number of men in Chile, he already had another volunteer lined up.

On 31 January 1968, Father Patrick Patterson (29) entered the language program at the Catholic University at

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<sup>29</sup>Gasparian 31 (February 1968): 17.

<sup>30</sup>Precious Blood Messenger 74 (March 1968): 75.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid.



Ponce. Upon completion of his studies and a visit home, he arrived in Chile the first week in July. Because of a pressing personnel problem, he was immediately assigned to the pastorate at Rio Negro.

Then on 5 February, Father Byrne sent the vicar provincial the encouraging news that Father James Gaynor (28) was to enter the language school at Lima within the next month. Father Gaynor, who had been ordained just the previous June, took up the apostolate at San José parish in early July, 1968.

It will be recalled that since January of 1962, Father James Bender had been director of seminarians. Upon handing over this responsibility to his successor, Father Paul Schaaf, in late 1967, Father Bender distributed a lengthy letter to the members of the vicariate. In answer to his question, "Are we needed in Chile?" he replied in part:

Let us say, then, that Chile does need priests - priests who, sharing the simplicity and abnegation of Christ, and, like Him, in the condition of the people to whom they are sent . . . But priests who live apart from and above their people . . . are not needed in any great number in Chile.<sup>32</sup>

As one who had been intimately associated with the seminary program for the last six years, Father Bender next treated the question: "Should we accept native vocations?"

It would first have to be determined or seen whether or

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<sup>32</sup>Taken from a copy in Father Bender's possession.

not we Precious Blood Fathers are going to continue as missionaries in Chile . . . I think that, because of our present manner of existence and according to our present frame of mind, the prospect of a vital and unconditional permanence of our Vicariate in Chile finds a shadow of doubt fallen across it.<sup>33</sup>

Although there was a great deal of soul-searching present in the vicariate, this did not keep several innovative ideas from being developed. One of these centered on Santo Domingo parish. With the construction of numerous five-story apartment buildings, the parish was divided along cultural and geographical lines. Father Bernard Mores, who eventually took up living quarters in one of the apartments, devoted himself exclusively to the apostolate of the apartment dwellers.

Another apostolic plan first came to the fore at the vicariate board meeting of 6 February 1968: "The bishop of Santiago has asked the Society for one priest for a new 'equipo misionero' [missionary team] to be formed, and Fr. Kettleson was given first choice to enter this group."<sup>34</sup> This was the first reference to the soon-to-be called "Pudahuel Experiment."

Lying beyond the parish of Roosevelt was the huge, new Pudahuel housing project. Although some of the inhabitants lived in apartment houses, most of the area residents were still building their own, crude, brick or wooden

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> ASPB-S, "Minutes, Book II, 6 February 1968."

homes. Instead of trying to establish a new parish in this area, the experiment envisioned a small band of priests forming a local Christian community. The original idea called for a limited stay (no more than six months), only long enough to find and form Christian lay leaders. These in turn would carry on and expand the work of evangelization. In the meantime, the team of priests was to live in a small, simple dwelling similar to those of their neighbors.

Three priests formed the apostolic team: Father David Kettleton of the Society; Father Noel Dunne, an Irish Columban missionary; and Father Alfredo, a Chilean diocesan priest, who later left the experiment. Much of the first three months was spent in building their own dwelling, which consisted of two small bedrooms; a combination kitchen -living room, and a minuscule bathroom.

But there was much more to the experiment than just living as the people did. The whole sacramental approach was to be re-examined. One conclusion the priests arrived at was that the sacraments were to be administered only within the Christian community. Until that was built up, the priests directed the people to the established parishes in the area for the sacraments. In the meantime, the team spent its evenings in organizing projects within the población. The priests believed that in trying to improve the human condition of their neighbors, they could gain their

confidence and eventually their interest in the Christian message.

Like others in Pudahuel, the priests worked for a living. Fathers Kettleston and Alfredo were salaried teachers in the Instituto Chileno-Norteamericano in downtown Santiago; Father Dunne worked in an automobile body shop.<sup>35</sup>

On Monday evening, 18 March 1968, an unprecedented ceremony was held in the chapel of the former Escuela Apostólica. At that time, Father Paul Aumen officiated at the marriage of Eugene Stiker to a former Chilean member of the religious congregation that staffed the Roosevelt and Resbalón schools. More than a month before, the Sacred Congregation of Doctrine had issued the rescript freeing Father Stiker from his priestly obligations. Within several days of the ceremony, the couple flew to the United States. Later the provincial congratulated Father Aumen: "What you did for Stike at San Bernardo was Christian and generous."<sup>36</sup>

Father John Byrne was getting concerned about an anti-mission attitude that was surfacing in the Cincinnati province. On 1 April, he voiced his feelings to Father Aumen:

Now that I'm back, Paul, and have a good feel of the pulse of the Province, I suggest that you lay off the letters in THE GASPARIAN relative to the Latin American

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<sup>35</sup> ASPB-S, "Provincial."

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

apostolate. I sense backlash! Your last letter did much to arouse many who were otherwise favorable to the missions . . .

I honestly believe that a cooling-off period is called for, now. Any further pushing of the mission cause would be damaging . . . Any further belaboring the point would bring about more backlash. Presently the mood toward the missions is not good. Not even on my Council. Lay low for a good long time. If the April Business Chapter decides to move the theologate, we can at least<sup>37</sup> assign a good group to study theology in Santiago.

Four days later, Father Aumen returned to the United States to attend the business chapter of the Cincinnati province. The most controversial order of business concerned the place of training for theology students. However, moving cautiously, the chapter decided that further examination was necessary.

The vicar provincial made a plea to the delegates that seminarians destined for the missions should be trained in Chile. To bolster his argument, Father Aumen appealed to the documents of Vatican II on priestly formation and the missions, which called for theological training in the place where one was to exercise his ministry.<sup>38</sup>

In spite of its misgivings about Chile, the provincial council did approve the sending of two seminarians to the vicariate for the study of theology. After language study at Ponce, Puerto Rico, James Gettig (26) and Thomas

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Gasparian 31 (May 1968): 4.

Hemm (23) reached Chile on 4 February 1969. At this time, the two did not know to which mission field, Chile or Peru, they would be assigned or would choose after completion of their studies. They took up residence at the center house. Because the vicariate already had two other Jameses (Father Jaime Bender and Father Santiago Gaynor), former U.S. navy veteran Gettig chose to be called Diego.

Writing to the provincial on the day that the newest volunteers entered Chile, Father Bender observed:

It could mark a progress that necessarily must take place in the vicariate, and that has begun to some degree: identification with the people with whom we work. These young men with their idealism and adaptability can fall right in stride with the young Chilean members of the vicariate, to set the pace for the future, of melting into the Chilean scene. No outside culture <sup>39</sup>can be imposed upon the justly proud Chileans.

Once again in Chile after the April business chapter, Father Aumen, on 11 June 1968, answered the provincial letter that had informed him of the coming of the seminarians to the vicariate. The vicar provincial stated that its joyful contents served to counter-balance the disappointing news that he had from Rio Negro: "I deeply dread the job of writing to you a third time in one year, informing you that one of our group has determined to drop out of the league."<sup>40</sup> Father Richard Lovett, pastor at Rio Negro, had written Father Aumen of his intention to return to the

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<sup>39</sup>ASPB-D, "Vicar Chile 1966-1977."

<sup>40</sup>Ibid.

United States, seek laicization, and then marry. When Father Lovett left Chile in early July, the newly-arrived Father Patrick Patterson was immediately sent south to succeed him as pastor.

Father Aumen concluded his letter with a plea for understanding:

I do not know what your Council, or for that matter, the rest of the Community are going to conclude from these losses . . . A few may see this as a forecast of what is going to happen in the States when renewal becomes more advanced. Whatever the explanation, I hope God gives us the strength to accept it patiently and charitably.<sup>41</sup>

If winter in Santiago produces some dreary days, in the south winter is a constant siege of rain with a series of days dismal and depressing. On 2 August in Rio Negro, Father Aumen expressed his feelings to the provincial:

I came south yesterday to attend the southern renewal meeting and today I've spent with Pat Patterson who is battling here alone. As I sit near the fireplace on this rainy afternoon, it's hard to keep my thoughts from covering the turn of events during this past year . . . Something must be done to help our priests through the crisis they are undergoing in Chile. Like wooden soldiers priests are falling from all sides.<sup>42</sup>

The vicar provincial then turned his attention to the upcoming vicariate meeting scheduled for October. He asked the provincial for permission to allow the priests for the first time to elect the vicar provincial, a proposal that had been aired previously. "I say this not because I am fed up, bored or hoping to duck out of the

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<sup>41</sup>Ibid. <sup>42</sup>Ibid.

job. However, I want the job only because I have the backing and support of the men."<sup>43</sup>

Eleven days later, Father Byrne replied, "I gather than you could stand some cheering up."<sup>44</sup> He then authorized the requested election to be held, and predicted that Father Aumen would be returned to office.

The next decade when some historian rifles through your official mail to put together a history of the Community, he will get a close idea of the pain endured during this time of change and renewal. As we said before, it is an<sup>45</sup> interesting time in which we live--not an easy time.

Thus began Father Aumen's letter of 24 September 1968 to the provincial. His preface was prompted by the news that Father Eugene Schmidt had returned to Chile, after visiting his twin priest-brother in the Peruvian mission, with a definite decision: he was going to marry a Chilean, remain in the country for several years, and then return to the United States. All of this he did. After somewhat less than two years with the Ford Motor Company, Eugene Schmidt and his family returned to the States in early November of 1970.

But the vicar provincial had more in his letter. Father Joseph Herber, pastor of Purrarque, cousin to Chilean missionaries Father Leo Herber and Paul Bobay, had

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> ASPB-S, "Provincial."

<sup>45</sup> ASPB-D, "Vicar Chile 1966-1977."



"definitely made up his mind to request official release."<sup>46</sup> During the October meeting of the vicariate, Father Herber publicly announced his decision to his confreres. Shortly thereafter he left Chile.

The Gasparian that appeared in late September devoted more than a page and a half to a letter written by Father Paul Aumen. Entitled "From the Chilean Missions An Open Letter Trying to Explain," the article detailed what the writer considered to be the reasons for leaving the active priesthood. He summed up:

Many Latin priests are convinced that as soon as the Church accepts a married clergy, it will not only attract many talented and devoted men, but present to the people a more acceptable and natural dedication, capable of understanding the problems and suffering of the people's life . . .

This is the present, explosive atmosphere of the Chilean clerical church. An atmosphere in which our missionaries breathe, live and work . . . As Americans they are accustomed to a noted success in their work. They are not used to working for five years in a place and being content when their churches are still empty, their faithful still indifferent. More deeply they feel the frustrations, the unrest, the hopeless condition of the Latin American clergy. It makes them face a new decision in life, a decision a former regimented way of life made them believe they would never have to face. All of<sup>47</sup> which makes this decision far from being an easy one.

This was to be the last article that Father Paul Aumen, in his position as vicar provincial, was to write for the official publication of the Society in the United

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<sup>46</sup>Ibid.

<sup>47</sup>Gasparian 31 (September 1968): 72.

states. Less than a week after his open letter appeared in print, he was not returned to office.

Chillán is a small, pleasant city located somewhat mid-way between the vicariate missions in southern Chile and those in the Santiago area. Here the local bishop had constructed a retreat house that featured motel-style individual rooms, a welcome innovation for Chilean houses of retreat. It was in this setting that the annual vicariate meeting was held on 1 and 2 October.

Father James Bender, ordained sixteen years and a Chilean missionary for the last thirteen, was elected to the position of vicar provincial. To replace the now discarded vicariate board, he was free to select two consultants to assist him. The missionaries decided that future policy was not to be left in the hands of the vicar provincial and a board, but rather it was to be set by a motions committee, whose members were to be elected by the assembly. The only other business of importance at Chillán dealt with the free schools of the vicariate. Each school was encouraged to form a council of teachers and parents, that eventually, it was hoped, would assume complete lay control of the institution.<sup>48</sup>

Although the change of vicar provincials was not to occur until 1 November, October was the month of transition. On 16 October, Father Byrne sent a letter of con-

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<sup>48</sup>Gasparian 31 (November 1968): 79.

gratulation to Father Bender, while at the same time, he admitted his surprise over the election. The provincial concluded with further words of encouragement:

I am delighted with the choice of the Vicariate . . . In this post-Vatican II era, I feel confident with you at the helm. I don't have to tell you that you take your new responsibilities at a time when Superiors need the wisdom of Solomon. I can only offer you my prayers and full support.<sup>49</sup>

In a mimeographed letter sent to his friends in the United States, Father Bender explained his new position:

My main activity will be moving about among our men [23 North Americans and 4 Chileans] . . . to enter into constant, brotherly dialogue with them, and to synthesize and interpret what they are thinking and feeling.

Likewise, I will need time for reading and reflection on the Scriptures and post-Vatican theology, and for attending local diocesan meetings. There will always be loads of mail to answer and decisions to be made. At the same time, I am determined to remain a missionary among missionaries by working part-time in one of our Santiago parishes<sup>50</sup> that teem with untold thousands, and swirl with dust.

On the holyday of All Saints, 1 November 1968, Father James Bender assumed the office of vicar provincial. On that day he prepared a circular letter for his priests that had for its central thought clerical celibacy. Father John Byrne, who later received a copy of the letter and had it printed in the Gasparian, wrote his appreciation to Father Bender: "I was inspired. I think all the members of the Society of the Precious Blood in the States will be

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<sup>49</sup> ASPB-S, "Provincial."

<sup>50</sup> Taken from a copy in Father Bender's possession.

too."<sup>51</sup> Several citations convey the thrust of the article and its relevance to the Chilean missionaries:

Recent happenings within our vicariate have sent out reverberations of dismay among us who survive. We have seen crumble, to an alarming degree, that way of life which had securely sustained us in our vocation. Brothers in the priesthood, with the same background and formation as ours, have chosen another path. You, like myself, may well have groped through some dark hours, re-examining the why of remaining personally in this form of life . . .

It is true that man's nature will at times cry out for its feminine counterpart, but it is also true that there is a divine depth and desire in his heart that not even the ideal wife could reach, a depth that responds only to the touch of his Maker and Redeemer. It is this place in our heart that we vicariate members once reserved for God and His People. Will I permit that another love, human and satisfying though it be, blind and bind me, whatever the pretext and whatever the vocation of the good woman? The women whom Christ loved and who truly loved Him, did not attempt to rescue Him from the Cross . . .

Even my "failure" among the Chileans, in the light of faith and hope, appears uncommonly like the sacrifice and "failure" of <sup>52</sup>Christ--the ever-necessary prelude to the resurrection.

In the same circular letter, Father Bender informed his priests that Monseñor Santos of Valdivia, had asked that Father Paul Aumen be assigned to Preciosa Sangre parish in that city. Consequently, Father Richard Beischel was to continue as co-pastor responsible for the CORVI housing projects, while the former vicar provincial was to work among the new homes in the southwestern part of the

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<sup>51</sup>ASPB-S, "Provincial."

<sup>52</sup>ASPB-S, "Circular Letter for the Fathers in Chile."

parish.

If the current year produced dissonance in abundance, it was about to close on a note of joy. On 23 November, Joe Navarrete Hauri was ordained to the priesthood in the Society of the Precious Blood. The ceremony, which took place in his home parish at Pitrufrquén, was performed by Monseñor Fernando Ariztía, the young auxiliary bishop of Santiago. Down from the United States for the historic occasion came two of the pioneer missionaries to Chile, Fathers John Kostik and Paul Buehler. Father Navarrete began his ministry in the parish at Valdivia.

Another young Chilean, Oscar Orrego Sandoval, now finished with his first year of theology at the Catholic University of Santiago, was sent to the United States in January, 1969. Although he arrived with the idea of making his novitiate at Burkettsville, Ohio, he was first assigned to live with the Society's seminarians at Rensselaer, Indiana. When a business chapter in April dropped the novitiate program, Oscar then spent the remainder of his stay in the United States with former Chilean missionaries at Garden City, Kansas, and Whiting, Indiana. He returned to Chile in February, 1970.

The yearly retreat for the vicariate members was scheduled for 7-9 January 1969, at the empty seminary at San Bernardo. When the retreat master, Bishop Enrique Alvear of the San Felipe diocese, became ill and could not

come, Father Ambrose Lengerich took over the task.

If the morale of the vicariate members was being threatened, so too was the health of some of the missionaries. Several years earlier, Father Gerard Ritzel had contracted hepatitis. The only cure for this debilitating illness is complete bed rest, sometimes up to three months. On 17 February, Father Bender informed the provincial that now Father David Kettleson had hepatitis and was already confined to bed at the center house. But he was not to be the only victim. Shortly thereafter Father James Gaynor came down with the sickness. By the time that Father Kettleson had recovered enough to leave Casa Byrne, another assistant from San José parish took over the vacated bed. The third hepatitis patient was Father Gerald Bowers (known in Chile as Padre Miguel). By May, when both Fathers Gaynor and Bowers were sufficiently recovered, they traveled to northern Chile to recuperate further.

Shortly after noon on 5 March, Father John Byrne flew into Santiago for his sixth and last visit of the Chilean vicariate. Little was written about his stay, but he himself on 9 March jotted down his impressions of the Pudahuel experiment. Aware of past failures, he observed that "experiments are constantly tried here in Chile."<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> ASPB-S, "Provincial."

After a ten-day swing through the southern missions, he moved on to Peru. How different everything had become since his first visit, as first consultor, back in 1958.

Father Byrne arranged his South American trip so that he could be back in the United States in sufficient time to chair another business chapter of the Cincinnati province. The new meeting was necessary because the Parent Corporation (the legal union of the three American provinces) was no longer willing to subsidize the novitiate program. Father James Bender, as superior of the Chilean vicariate and therefore an ex officio delegate, attended. The assembly (21-22 April) was held at St. Charles seminary, Carthagen, Ohio. The delegates not only suspended the year of novitiate pending the general chapter to be held that September in Rome, but also voted to move the theologate out of St. Charles, its home since 1861.<sup>54</sup>

By 27 April, Father Bender was again in Santiago. After a stop-over in Lima, he was able to tell the provincial that the Peruvian missionaries "are not convinced that the seminarians studying in Chile would be best prepared for Peru."<sup>55</sup> The provincial replied that "the men in Peru just have to recognize the advantage of the Catholic Uni-

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<sup>54</sup>Gasparian 32 (May 1969): entire special edition.

<sup>55</sup>ASPB-D, "Chile Vicar 1966-1977."

versity [at Santiago] over training here in an American Seminary."<sup>56</sup> More importantly, Father Byrne gave the names of two more seminarians who were coming down: Karl Willman, who chose to work in Chile; and Barry Fischer, who picked Peru.

However, almost a year passed before the seminarians got to Chile. After a stay of more than seven months in Peru, a time given mainly to the study of Spanish, they arrived in Santiago on 1 March 1970. There they took up residence at Casa Byrne. But their situation soon changed, for in May, Karl Willman returned permanently to the United States, and in June, Barry Fischer was permitted to become a member of the Chilean vicariate.

### Still No Respite

The first two North American seminarians in Chile were beginning to make their presence felt. Writing to the provincial on 29 May 1969, Father Bender gave some details: "On their own initiative Tom Hemm and Jim Gettig are exploring the possibilities of sharing more the life of the people with whom they hope to work."<sup>57</sup> Father Byrne did not hesitate in answering. On 5 June, he stated quite frankly: "I can't say that I am too excited about Tom Hemm

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<sup>56</sup> ASPB-S, "Provincial."

<sup>57</sup> ASPB-D, "Chile Vicar 1966-1977."



and Jim Gettig moving into the barrio."<sup>58</sup> He added that Father Paul Schaaf, director of seminarians, and two Chilean seminarans were quite disturbed over the North Americans projected move out of the center house.

Two weeks later, the provincial gave expression to his growing alarm:

I am still terribly concerned about our Seminarians moving into the barrio. I'm afraid that a "back-lash" toward the South American Missions might be triggered here in the U.S. It could possibly affect<sup>59</sup> the sending of more Seminarians to Chile in the future.

But how could Father Bender object to the seminarians' plan to avoid living in the center house, when he himself was already in the process of moving elsewhere? In his 9 May letter to Father Byrne, he had written:

The vicariate is taking little by little the course it has to, if it is to survive. My own little contribution is taking form: I have in my wallet the receipt for a two-room<sup>60</sup> "house" that I bought for a hundred and fifty dollars.

Six months later, he elaborated further upon his new style of living:

Without doubt, our vicariate will continue its tendency toward a more evangelical type of existence, that could make us living witnesses of the Gospel, and towards a more profound identification with the Chilean culture. I myself am determined to remain a missionary among missionaries, through my collaboration<sup>61</sup> in parish work over in Quinta Normal [San José parish].

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<sup>58</sup> ASPB-S, "Provincial."

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> ASPB-D, "Chile Vicar 1966-1977."

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

Father Bender was most earnest about this: he was going to leave the center house, move into his tiny pre-fabricated wooden dwelling located some short blocks from the San José rectory, take his meals with the priests of the parish, evangelize two sectors of San José, ride across town on his bicycle to conduct any necessary business of the vicariate at Casa Byrne, and "remain a missionary among missionaries."

Therefore, he thought that the proposals of James Gettig and Thomas Hemm were not at all far-fetched. The vicar provincial was shortly to write this about their venture: "What might seem startling in a northamerican [sic] culture, can well be proper and even necessary in a southamerican [sic] one."<sup>62</sup>

Only on page two of his 29 May letter to the provincial did Father Bender bring himself to write: "I suppose in this connection I must relay to you the sad news that Father Paul Bobay has taken concrete steps toward following another vocation."<sup>63</sup> By this time, Father Bobay had left the parish at Roosevelt, begun to look for a job, and had spoken with a family regarding marriage with its daughter. For some four years Paul Bobay lived in Valdivia, where he taught school and in a limited way assisted Father Paul Aumen in his apostolate there. In 1973, he and

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<sup>62</sup>Ibid. <sup>63</sup>Ibid.

his family returned to the United States.

With the locale the retreat house at Chillán, the annual vicariate meeting was scheduled to run from 30 June to 4 July, 1969. A great deal of effort went into preparing position papers for the assembly and a number of motions were voted upon. The future planning committee prepared an attractive ten-page study of the vicariate's southern parishes, which concluded that there was no convincing proof that the Society should abandon its commitments in that area.<sup>64</sup>

The director of St. Gaspar school, Father Milton Ballor, saw his four motions passed unanimously. These were: that the vicariate accept the formation of a St. Gaspar College Educational Foundation; that this entity be given the usufruct, for a period of thirty years, of all the properties of the school; that the vicariate condone the \$20,000 debt owed it by the school; and that the \$22,000 balance still due on the Bentz loan be taken over by the St. Gaspar Foundation, once it received juridical personality.<sup>65</sup> However, the parents of the St. Gaspar students never accepted the idea of a foundation. Consequently, the vicariate remained responsible for the entire institution.

The motions of the building committee were also

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<sup>64</sup>ASPB-S, "Reuniones, Superior y Consejeros."

<sup>65</sup>Ibid.

passed: that there be a moratorium on all vicariate building; that if there be a demand for new religious buildings, the Christian community would be responsible for construction; and that permission to improve the housing of the missionaries could be granted by the vicar provincial and his consultors.

At this juncture of the meeting, Father Paul Aumen, now in charge of the Teniente Merino sector of the Valdivia parish, proposed that the vicariate build a parish house there. The motion that was finally passed by the assembly stated that the vicariate was willing to lend the bishop of Valdivia the money necessary for the construction. When construction got underway in 1970, Father Aumen received \$6,000 from the vicariate. The new rectory was to cost Bishop Santos nothing.<sup>66</sup>

Another motion of the business meeting approved the sale of the seminary property at San Bernardo. The priests then voted that the money thus gained be invested in Chile.

The newest and youngest members of the Chilean vicariate, Thomas Hemm and James Gettig, had also prepared papers in anticipation of the Chillan meeting. During the assembly they distributed two mimeographed articles: "The Apostolic Family: Evangelical Poverty" and "The Apostolic Family: Community and Obedience." The paper on poverty was buttressed with pertinent quotations from the documents

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<sup>66</sup>The writer was vicariate treasurer at the time.

of Vatican II and Medellín and elsewhere. Some quotations will convey the thrust of the article:

We wish to form a small community which will be really incarnated in the poor environment. This would involve a more vigorous manifestation of voluntary poverty and community sharing . . .

We feel that the Church has not always witnessed to the evangelical poverty needed today. It is easy to find religious communities falling into the pitfalls of big businesses, such as depositing its money in European and North American banks, and of being guilty of neo-colonialism . . .

Our commitment to the poor requires us to criticize clearly and courageously many ideas and customs we once accepted and professed. We therefore realize that the steps we are taking will not permit us to maintain the structures of the past.<sup>67</sup>

The article on "The Apostolic Family: Community and Obedience" followed the same style of presentation. Again many of the thoughts were backed up by authoritative quotations. A further sampling of its contents:

We will start by forming a small team of eight people (four men and four women) so that we will be able to better dialogue with each other and with the community around us. Our move to the población will not be free of hardships and at times of extreme frustration . . .

We can no longer set our sights on an existence of "sacrament machines" or living the schizophrenic life of doing one thing (dispensing the sacraments) while professing another (the necessity of commitment).

We would consider ourselves as revolutionaries - not in the sense of rebels or fanatics but as critics. We consider ourselves as prophets - not in the sense that we foretell the future but as critics.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Cited from a copy in Father Gettig's possession.

<sup>68</sup> Cited from a copy in Father Hemm's possession.

Additional points of the Hemm-Gettig program included the breaking of all financial ties with the Society; the withdrawal of Thomas Hemm from the Catholic University, thereby permitting him to be independent in his theological formation; and to seek housing in one of the barrios.

In his letter of 14 July to the provincial, Father Bender gave his understanding of the reaction of the veteran missionaries to the proposals of the newcomers: "There is no doubt but that the Fathers by a great majority approve the idea that the young men follow their charism and go out into the barrio."<sup>69</sup>

If beauty is truly in the eye of the beholder, then Father Bender viewed the proposed experiment as a thing of beauty. The Hemm-Gettig program was an affirmation of his own longing to live with the people and accept their lifestyle. On the other hand, that many of the missionaries in Chile reacted strongly against the whole proposal cannot be denied. In fact, for the next several years it was the most divisive element in the vicariate.<sup>70</sup>

That Thomas Hemm would agree with this assessment of the priests' reaction, can be deduced from the open letter he sent to the vicariate members about one year after the Chillán encounter:

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<sup>69</sup> ASPB-D, "Chile Vicar 1966-1977."

<sup>70</sup> Observed by the writer at the time.

We had managed to conjure up a rather unmoving establishment that needed the challenge of us "prophets." Against this establishment we devised the tactic of "unnegotiable demands." . . . I don't think that we realized as clearly then as we do now to what extent we had smothered all possibility of dialogue in that meeting itself, as well as between us and the rest of the vicariate members since then.<sup>71</sup> Perhaps there's a chance for true dialogue yet.

On the night of 25 July 1969, Father James Bender began his trip back to the United States. It would lead eventually to Rome and the general chapter of the Society in September. Even though Father John Byrne knew that the vicar provincial would not see his letter for several months, he wanted Father Bender to have in his files a record of the provincial council meeting of 4 August. He wrote:

As you recall, the Provincial Council went along with the new plan of formation for our Seminarians in Chile, i.e. their living in the barrio as long as you live with them or near them. The Council objected to their living completely alone. This seemed to the Council that the young men would be forming themselves. The new style of formation is approved as long as there is some supervision on your part.<sup>72</sup>

The outcome was that James Gettig and Thomas Hemm moved into the small house at Pudahuel to live with Father David Kettleson and Father Noel Dunne. (By this time the Chilean member had left the experiment.) While James returned for the second semester at the university, Thomas withdrew from formal studies. Both were able to obtain

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<sup>71</sup>Cited from a copy in Father Hemm's possession.

<sup>72</sup>ASPB-S, "Provincial."

well-paying positions as teachers of English at the local Berlitz language school. However, when for reasons of conscience they could no longer accept their large salaries, they applied for and received a monthly subsidy from the vicariate. They were not successful in obtaining the assistance of apostolic women from the United States to form their religious family.

In addition to the July departure of Father Bender, other men were leaving Chile. Father Rocco Cosentino and Father Milton Ballor both returned to the United States to take up priestly work assigned by the Cincinnati province. Also in the month of July, Father Gerard Ritzel yielded his post as pastor of Roosevelt and returned permanently to the States.

During Father Bender's absence, one of his counselors, Father Donald Thieman, served as temporary vicar provincial. In October he had to journey to Pitrufrquén and Villarrica to speak with the bishop of Araucanía. The pastor of Pitrufrquén, Father Joseph Silvester, had indicated his decision to leave the active priesthood and to marry a local Chilean woman. Since the local bishop had more priests than either the bishop of Osorno or Valdivia, it was decided to return the parish of Pitrufrquén to the Araucanía.<sup>73</sup> Thus, abruptly the Society's twenty-year

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<sup>73</sup>Noted by the writer at the time.



apostolate at Pitrufrquén was terminated. Within a year of his marriage, Joseph Silvester and his wife took up residence in the United States.

Still further south, the handful of priests that remained was busy in the apostolate. Father John Falter, living alone at Purrarque, organized a weekly bible study group with eight men of the parish and initiated the use of lay readers at Sunday Mass. With the help of a committee, he began to run bingo games to finance the refurbishing of the interior of the church, still in disrepair since the earthquake of 1960.<sup>74</sup>

At Rio Negro Father Patrick Patterson, also living alone, was teaching classes in orientation at the public high school and at the parish grade school. The politically appointed governor of Osorno named Father Patterson to the high school board of directors, while the bishop of Osorno appointed him to the diocesan council.<sup>75</sup>

Over in Valdivia, Father Paul Aumen and Father Joe Navarrete made the Cursillo or short course in Christian living. Later, Father Navarrete himself directed these programs of spiritual renewal, promoted programs for the youth of the parish, and accepted appointments as spiritual

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<sup>74</sup>Gasparian 32 (September 1969): 99.

<sup>75</sup>Ibid.

director for the San José de Mariquina seminary and coordinator of the formation program for religious women in Valdivia.<sup>76</sup>

The tenth general chapter of the Society of the Precious Blood opened in Rome on 3 September 1969. The purpose of the assembly, which ran more than five weeks, was to frame a new constitution or normative text for the Society in the light of Vatican II. Father James Bender, as a vicar provincial, was an ex officio delegate.

On 10 October, the moderator general, his curia, the provincials, and the vicar provincials all met. Father Bender was invited to talk about the crisis within the Chilean vicariate:

I gave a stark list of possible reasons for the diminution . . . of our number in Chile. The secretary termed it "beautiful and honest" - lest you [vicariate members] fear. But I ended on a note of personal hope.

By the first week in November, Father Bender was back in Chile. In a letter to friends in the United States, he wrote:

Upon my return from the Chapter, I moved my belongings over to this "poor" side of town. Here at San José parish house I join in Community life with Frs. Don Thieman, Bob Conway, Jerry Bowers and Jim Gaynor. But I sleep in my little pre-fab house<sup>78</sup> out among many neighbors and uncounted barking dogs.

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<sup>76</sup>Ibid.

<sup>77</sup>ASPB-S, "Circular Letters for the Fathers in Chile."

<sup>78</sup>Cited from a copy in Father Bender's possession.

However, within a year or so, Father Bender was forced to take up residence at San José rectory. A persistent bronchial condition, brought on by the chilled air of his pre-fab dwelling, necessitated this move.

Thanksgiving weekend, 1969, was used to hold a meeting at St. Charles seminary, Carthagena, Ohio, of the province's theologians, now dispersed by the new theologate program. Paying his own fare, Thomas Hemm flew from Santiago to attend the session. Of interest is what he wrote about his meeting with Father John Byrne:

I was concerned about the [provincial] Board's reaction to Jim's and my words and actions over the past months, as well as possible effects these may have had in other areas. Father Byrne said that Jim Bender's presentation of our (seminarians) "case" had convinced him, but not all the members of the Board. So that when the possibility was raised about [Father] Larry Eiting's coming to Chile, the Board was persuaded not to send any more priests to Chile for the moment . . . Thus there is at least a temporary moratorium on sending priests to Chile and Peru.<sup>79</sup>

During the year, three members of the vicariate had returned to take up assignments in the United States, while two others had withdrawn from the active priesthood. Now a third was to join this latter group. On 24 November, Father Byrne informed his vicar provincial: "I received Father Tony Spitzig's letter announcing that he too was leaving our family . . . Your numbers are dwindling."<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>79</sup>Cited from a copy in Father Hemm's possession.

<sup>80</sup>ASPB-S, "Provincial."

After Anthony Spitzig married a former Chilean member of the Precious Blood Sisters, he was able to support his family with his position at the Chilean-North American Institute at Santiago. In December 1971, the Spitzigs went to live in the United States.

Once again it was retreat time for the members of the vicariate. The spiritual exercises, which ran from 28 December to 3 January 1970, were conducted by Father Bernard Welling, an English-speaking Dutchman and a Mill Hill missionary to Chile.<sup>81</sup> The setting was the former seminary of the Oblate Fathers, located in a suburb of Santiago.<sup>82</sup> Since the office of vicar director (as he was now called) was held for only one year, an election took place at this time. With a good majority of the votes, Father James Bender retained his position.

As soon as the retreat ended, a number of the participants were eager to get back to Santiago. From 6 to 22 January, they entertained visitors from the United States. In the group of some twenty people were relatives of Fathers Donald Thieman, James Gaynor, John Falter, and Patrick Patterson. Another who made the trip was Precious Blood Brother Cletus Scheuer.

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<sup>81</sup>During the military coup of September 1973, he was forced to flee Chile.

<sup>82</sup>According to Father Joe Navarrete, who served as a Chilean military chaplain, the seminary became the Los Alamos detention center under DINA, the post-coup secret police.

The Chilean summer was still in full swing, when on 6 February, the provincial revealed his thoughts to Father Bender about the shortage of personnel and seminarians:

I'm glad I'm getting out [of office] soon. It's going to be rough trying to keep all our commitments in the U.S. and in South America. Ordination classes are bound to be slimmer.

I think our best bet is sending seminarians to be trained in Latin America. Maybe that's our trouble. Our men have been formed for the U.S. Church and when they face the open and adventurous Church of Latin America, they collapse. A seminarian, who learns his theology in Latin America, soaks up the culture and absorbs the awareness of the new Latin American Church, will have a better chance to survive. No seminarian has <sup>83</sup>hanged on my door to go to Latin America this year.

Apostolic work at San José parish was taking on a new look. Father James Gaynor described one aspect of it:

Christian Community is still our goal and (sometimes it seems impossible) dream. The latest step we've taken in building our parish christian [sic] communities is to gather the parents of the babies to be baptized for two conversations. Both center around the promises they are making for their child and the incorporation into the Christian Community. Many want their child baptized, of course, but want nothing to do with any promises or Christian Community stuff. But in a few cases the parents have responded beautifully.<sup>84</sup>

From 1 to 3 April, the members of the vicariate met at the retreat house in Chillán for still another assembly. The meeting offered a full agenda of business and reflection, with the latter furnished by Bishop Eldio Vicuña of Chillán. He also conferred the minor orders of porter and

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<sup>83</sup> ASPB-S, "Provincial."

<sup>84</sup> Gasparian 33 (June 1970): 39.

lector upon seminarians Oscar Orrego, James Gettig, and Israel de la Fuente.

Three days later, back again in Santiago, Father Bender sent a letter to Father Charles Bricher, newly-elected provincial director (the term now used) of the Cincinnati province:

Congratulations! . . . The Santiago airport door is always wide open to you, and the doors of our houses in Chile. Meanwhile, we hope to show our adherence to the Cincinnati Province through communication by mail.<sup>85</sup>

Father Bricher and his newly-created twelve-man senate were formally installed on 13 May 1970. Once in office, the director and his senate gave the Chilean vicariate a great deal of autonomy. In fact, among some of the missionaries, the idea grew that such autonomy was really a case of "benign neglect."<sup>86</sup> No longer were letters exchanged frequently between Chile and the United States. As a matter of fact, provincial correspondence with the Chilean superior almost ceased: 18 June, 28 June, 15 December 1970; 15 January 1971; 17 January 1972; 12 January 1973.

On the same day that the new provincial and senators assumed office, Father Richard Woytych on his motorcycle and a doctor in his automobile violently collided on a slippery street in Santiago. Hospitalized at Salvador, Father Woytych suffered a badly broken leg and multiple

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<sup>85</sup> ASPB-D, "Chile Vicar 1966-1977."

<sup>86</sup> Observed by the writer at the time.

bruises. For a month, he was in a confused world of shock, pain, and drugs. Because of the urgent advice of the doctor in charge, the conviction of certain vicariate members, and his own desire, on 10 June Father Woytych returned to the United States. Within a year, he was on the way to full recovery, but he never returned to the missions.

June also saw the departure of two other vicariate priests. From the campo of Pitrufquén, where he had been living with a Chilean family and attending to some pastoral duties, Father Joseph Grilliot flew home to the United States. About a year later, now dispensed from the obligations of the priesthood, he returned to Chile to marry a sister of Anthony Spitzig's wife. After the ceremony he and his wife took up residence in the United States. In June of 1970, one of the co-founders of the experiment at Pudahuel, Father David Kettleon, returned permanently to the United States.

### Signs of Recovery

The diminishing number of vicariate members met at Casa Byrne from 30 June to 1 July 1970. In preparation for this gathering, a questionnaire was distributed which answered such things as:

Shall our parishes continue to have schools? (2) yes; (12) no.  
Does the Vicariate have sufficient purpose for remaining in Chile? (13) yes; (0) no.

Are you satisfied with the formation program of our seminarians? (3) yes; (11) no.  
Where should the seminarians live? (5) Center House; (0) Pudahuel; (8) elsewhere.<sup>87</sup>

In an attempt to resolve the conflict over the formation program of Thomas Hemm and James Gettig, the participants at the meeting voted on this resolution: "The North American seminarians should continue to live, work and experiment in Pudahuel." Before taking the vote, all present agreed that the motion implied granting permission for the two to continue in Chile. Although some of the priests were not convinced that the young men should live apart from the Society, still these same priests did not think that they had the right to expel anyone from the vicariate.<sup>88</sup> The vote read: (9) yes; (7) no. Shortly after the meeting, when two Maryknoll Sisters moved into the little house in Pudahuel, Father Noel Dunne, Thomas Hemm and James Gettig took up residence with a nearby Chilean family. However, by September, each man was living alone with an area family.

Other resolutions were passed during those two days: that San José school be phased out of vicariate control; that an educational committee be formed in each of the remaining free schools with the intention of yielding all direction and financial responsibility to this group

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<sup>87</sup> ASPB-S, "Circular Letters for the Fathers in Chile."

<sup>88</sup> Observed by the writer at the time.



whenever possible; and that Father Rudolph Bierberg of the Cincinnati provincial senate represent the vicariate in that assembly.<sup>89</sup>

About the middle of August, Father Edward Novotny, who had completed his course work for a master's degree in mission anthropology at the Catholic University in Washington, returned to Chile to work on his thesis. After moving into the rectory at San José, he quickly realized that Father Donald Thieman, pastor of Roosevelt, needed help in caring for his huge parish. On his own, Father Novotny began to assist there.

During his first Sunday back in Chile, the returned missionary witnessed a demonstration taking place at the rear of the San José rectory. A large group of teachers from the parish school were posting placards that read, in translation, "Stop the red tape," "We want justice," and so on. What did it mean?

More than a year before, when the last of the Precious Blood sisters withdrew from the teaching staff and the priest director resigned from the active priesthood, the school had no religious representative. However, when the 1970 school year began, the priests at San José congratulated themselves on hiring as director a former Precious Blood sister, a young Chilean.

But all was not well. In May, a group of teachers

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<sup>89</sup> ASPB-S, "Reuniones, Superior y Consejeros."

and parents took over the parish gymnasium in an attempt to keep area basketball leagues from playing there. Employing a tactic common to Chile in those days, the protestors occupied the building. Finally, to stop the confrontation and to avoid the bad publicity in press and radio, Father James Bender accepted their demand: the school alone would use the gymnasium. Unfortunately for the neighborhood basketball players, the school rarely used the building.

When one of the resolutions of the July vicariate meeting called for the phasing out of San José school, Father Bender sought to bring this about. He offered the teaching body two possibilities: form a cooperative or assume complete ownership of the school. Naturally some of the teachers were opposed to any change that could threaten their employment.

On that Sunday afternoon in August, the teachers, many of them old friends of the missionaries, demanded an immediate resolution of the school's ownership. Among the demonstrators were the director and her fiance, former Precious Blood brother, Ambrosio Llancoñanco (Juan de la Cruz).

With patience and perseverance, Father Bender was able to settle the problem: at the end of that scholastic year, December 1970, the parish school of San José was given over to the state school system for a period of five years. No reimbursement of any kind was made to the vicar-

iate, but it was relieved of an unacceptable burden.

On 4 September, nearly three million Chilean men and women went to the polls to elect a president. In a three-man race, the Marxist candidate of the Unidad Popular, Doctor Salvador Allende Gossens, won by a breathtakingly close 36% of the votes. Father Paul Aumen, writing from Valdivia, gave this remarkably prophetic view:

Many are hoping that since none of the candidates received a plurality, the congress, when it convenes in November, will choose the rightest candidate. Since this is not highly probable, one of two things is likely to happen: 1) Allende will follow a watered-down form of socialism according to the democratic constitution of the country until he has armed backing to pursue Marxism, or, 2) the Chilean army, predominately right, will take over the government the moment Allende disregards freedom and the constitution.<sup>90</sup>

Three years later Allende died in the violent overthrow of his experiment in socialism. During the years of the Unidad Popular, three or four members of the vicariate took a keen interest in the practical application of the teachings of Christ to the pronouncements of Marx. When a reduced group of foreign and Chilean priests organized to form "Christians for Socialism," several of the younger vicariate men participated on the fringes.<sup>91</sup> In November, 1971, Fidel Castro spent the entire month in Chile, as the invited guest of Allende. During his stay in the country, Castro invited members of the predominately

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<sup>90</sup>Gasparian 33 (November 1970): 85.

<sup>91</sup>Observed by the writer at the time.

clerical "Christians for Socialism" to a gathering at the Cuban embassy in Santiago. Theologian James Gettig managed to get in and even to exchange a word with the bearded revolutionary. In its very short life, the government of Salvador Allende never disturbed the church in Chile.

On 18 June, Father Charles Bricher acknowledged the congratulatory letter of Father Bender and then proceeded to give the conclusions arrived at in a recent senate meeting. After a great deal of discussion, the senators proposed that the Chilean vicariate and the Peruvian mission "make a serious, real and complete self study to determine the purpose, the effectiveness and goals of the apostolate in the light of the developments in the Church today."<sup>92</sup> In addition, each missionary was to evaluate himself in the light of his current assignment. The provincial director, a congenial person, added:

Certainly, this is not meant as a harsh comment, rather it is a serious effort on the part of the Community here in the States to become a really valuable ally, an understanding brother, sharing the crosses, the problems, the daily hardships the missionaries so generously, quietly and religiously carry.

By October, Father Bender had distributed to the twenty-one vicariate members the questionnaire that he had prepared. The exhaustive list of seventy questions with numerous subdivisions omitted nothing. The survey included

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<sup>92</sup> ASPB-S, "Provincial."

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

such topics as the purpose of the Society in Chile, the lifestyle of the missionary, his personal qualifications or lack thereof, his prayer and intellectual life, his choice of apostolate, his thoughts regarding the departure of so many former members.<sup>94</sup>

When the results were tabulated, the vicar director sent individual copies to each member of the vicariate, to Father Bricher, to Father Rudolph Bierberg of the Cincinnati senate, and to the director of the Messenger Press. Officially nothing more was ever heard of the questionnaire. With the same questions always being asked, the missionaries had grown increasingly introspective. Perhaps the greatest good derived from Father Bender's survey was that all possible questions had been asked. The missionaries could now forget themselves and get back to work.

In the same month that Father Bender distributed his questionnaire, the members of the vicariate assembled at Casa Byrne to elect a vicar director. Father Bender had indicated, at least indirectly, that two one-year terms were enough for him. On 21 October, Father Donald Thieman, 43 years old and 12 years in the missions, was chosen vicar director. Running second in the balloting was the recently returned Father Edward Novotny.

The following night Father Patrick Patterson, back

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<sup>94</sup>ASPB-S, "Circular Letters for the Fathers in Chile."

at his parish in Rio Negro, was conducting a fund-raising bingo in the municipal gymnasium. At nine in the evening, someone burst into the hall to shout that the rectory was on fire. Although the firemen managed to save the single-floor office section of the house, the two floors of living quarters were destroyed. After the fire was extinguished and everyone had gone home, Father Patterson surveyed the scene: "The once beautiful parish house - empty, jagged ghost-eyes where windows used to be, the tin roof rattling in the night breeze, announcing: nobody lives here anymore."<sup>95</sup>

Although arson was strongly suspected as the cause of the fire, this charge was never proved. Within a year, Father Patterson had a new rectory, built over the foundation of the previous one, but without a second floor. The vicariate treasury contributed to the refurnishing of the house.

Up in Santiago, another house figured in the life of a vicariate member. While living in Pudahuel and working in the apostolate there, James Gettig continued his formal studies for the priesthood. On 29 November, in the little house where he once lived and now occupied by Maryknoll sisters, he was ordained a subdeacon. After the private ceremony, he was joined by fellow missionaries and others, and all walked over to a nearby public school.

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<sup>95</sup>Gasparian 33 (November 1970): 77.

There in a concelebrated Mass, Bishop Fernando Ariztía conferred the order of deaconate upon him. According to the new deacon, "It was a tremendous experience for me - to be ordained in the place where I have been living, studying, and working for the past year and six months."<sup>96</sup>

The yearly spiritual exercises of the vicariate were held from 28 December to 1 January, 1971, at the retreat center in Chillán. From St. Joseph College in Indiana, Father Rudolph Bierberg, member of the Cincinnati provincial senate, came down to lead the group in a number of scripturally-oriented conferences. At the same time, Father Emil Schuwey, former Chilean missionary and now economist general of the Society in Rome, was present on his first trip back to Chile since his departure in 1965.

Late Wednesday afternoon, 30 December, everyone left Chillán to make the half-hour trip north to the small town of San Gregorio. Here, at his home parish, Israel de la Fuente Soto (28) was ordained to the priesthood in the Society of the Precious Blood by Bishop Eladio Vicuña of Chillán. The vicariate now had two Chilean priests. After a brief vacation, Padre Israel joined Father John Falter in Purranque.

During the course of the retreat, some vicariate business was conducted. Under the guidelines of the Normative Text of the Society, the vicariate was to elect a

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<sup>96</sup>Gasparian 34 (March 1971): 25.

delegate to the general assembly to be held in Austria later in the year. Father Donald Thieman was selected. The missionaries also considered the formulation of statutes designed to conform to their mode of life in Chile.

When Father Thieman remained in Chillán to participate in the first solemn Mass of Padre Israel, Father Edward Novotny volunteered to take the 8:00 evening Mass in Población Roosevelt on Sunday, 3 January. It was the last Mass of his life. When Father Novotny had finished the service and retired to the makeshift sacristy, some people waited for him to reappear after removing his vestments. Growing concerned, they entered the room and found the priest still vested and lying on the floor. Father Thieman, just back from the south, gave the stricken priest absolution. Apparently partially paralyzed and semi-conscious, he was rushed to a downtown hospital. Early the next morning, Father Edward Novotny (38) died.

Although the original plan called for burial in Chile, the family wanted its son to be buried in the United States. Since bodies are usually interred within twenty-four hours, embalming is rarely done in Chile. However, this procedure was accomplished. Even more formidable were the hectic four days that Father Thieman endured trying to obtain the nine legal documents necessary to ship the body out of the country.

In the meantime, on Tuesday evening, a concele-



brated Mass of the Resurrection was offered in the poor, tumble-down, wooden dwelling that served as a church for Población Roosevelt. Bishop Fernando Ariztía and a large number of priests, both native and foreign, participated. Two days later, 7 January, the remains were flown to the United States, where burial took place in the Novotny family plot in Youngstown Ohio.

Upon completion of his Chilean visit, which ran from 16 December 1970 to 26 January 1971, Father Emil Schuwey prepared a nineteen page report for the moderator general. In summary he observed:

As for Community prayers, like cassocks, they were conspicuous by their absence while I was there. On some private occasions the Mass is celebrated by some with no more than a stole to signify any semblance of vestments . . . Yet whatever their private opinions are on dress, liturgy, and prayers, I found that our priests are making a very good and serious effort to cooperate with the bishops in their apostolic programs.

Some years later, after another trip to South America, he recalled his previous visit:

Six years ago when I visited Peru and Chile, I was not at all well impressed. There was such division and lack of unity, such confusion of purpose and self interests that I had no desire to return to our South American apostolate.

After a drought of three years, the Chilean vicariate received another volunteer, Father Lawrence Eiting

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<sup>97</sup> ASPB-R, G III 3B.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

(30).<sup>99</sup> Upon completion of language studies at Lima, he reached Santiago on 8 March 1971. Even before leaving the United States, the new missionary knew that he was to work at Rio Negro. For several years, Father Patrick Patterson, pastor of that southern parish, had encouraged Father Eiting to come down and help him.

It had been a number of years since the Santiago area was shaken by a severe tremor, the last having occurred in March, 1965. In the late evening of 9 July, a powerful jolt was felt throughout the capital and beyond. One casualty was the rectory at Santo Domingo parish. First center house of the vicariate, the old building was never comfortable, but it could boast of many memories. In the past, after every strong tremor, its adobe walls cracked more. When the July quake rendered the house unsafe, Father Leo Herber, the pastor, and Father Ambrose Lengerich, director of St. Gaspar school, took up quarters at Casa Byrne, not far away. At this point, student Barry Fischer gave up his one-room dwelling at the rear of the Santo Domingo property to join Father Bernard Mores in a rented apartment.

In the following month, Father Donald Thieman, vicar director, was in Salzburg, Austria, to attend the

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<sup>99</sup>As of January 1979, no new volunteer has come to Chile. However, one Chilean and one Peruvian veteran did re-volunteer for the vicariate. Moreover, a priest from the European Spanish vicariate is at Rio Negro.

eleventh general assembly (formerly known as general chapter) of the Society of the Precious Blood. At the sixth plenary session, 10 August, the outgoing moderator general, Father Herbert Linenberger spoke on the economic affairs of the Society. A later condensed report of his observations stated:

Special attention was directed to the question of the disposition of Community property in the Chilean Vicariate, whose members have decided to alienate that property as a witness of Christian poverty and to be more at the disposal of the local Church.

It was noted that although the alienation of property has taken place with the proper provincial permission, nevertheless, there remains the fact that the General Council has never to this date been properly and sufficiently informed about this matter by the Chilean Vicariate.<sup>100</sup>

The fact of the matter was that the vicariate never did own much property. At Santo Domingo, Rio Negro, Riachuelo, and Purrangué it owned nothing. In later years, the vicariate did hold title to land in Valdivia, Cerro Navia, and Población Roosevelt. At San José, Plaza Garín, only the rectory and the land it stood on belonged to the vicariate. At the time of the Salzburg meeting, the missionaries were promoting the sale of the San Bernardo property.<sup>101</sup> All holdings not in the name of the Society were held by the local bishop.

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<sup>100</sup>Gasparian 34 (Special Edition): 63.

<sup>101</sup>"Data on the Condition of the Ecclesiastical and Civil Titles of C.P.P.S. Places," from the writer's files.

Shortly after his return from Europe and the United States, Father Thieman presided at the annual vicariate meeting, held at a retreat house in the southern city of Concepción from 25 to 28 October. Among the topics discussed were the formation of the seminarians and the possibility of transferring all vicariate property to the respective dioceses. At the conclusion of the sessions, Father Thieman was elected to a second one-year term as vicar director.

In late October, when Father Gerald Bowers returned permanently to the United States, only three priests of the Society were now attached to San José parish. However, through the ceaseless efforts of Bishop Fernando Ariztía, other missionaries took up residence within the boundaries of the huge parish. Two French priests, a German priest, and two religious from Canada began to work in the sprawling area beyond Cerro Navia. This included the old mission at Resbalón and the new housing project, Violeta Parra, set down on former truck farm land. Later on, two more European priests joined two Chilean priests to work in the area. Also within the mini-diocese of San José parish were ten different congregations of religious women engaged in apostolic work in ten parochial sectors.

On Sunday afternoon, 21 November, James (Diego) Gettig was ordained to the priesthood in Población Pudahuel. The vast housing project, made up of day laborers,

uncounted thousands of children and dogs, was now five years old and still without a place of worship. The ordination took place in the open yard of a pre-fabricated school. The episcopal vicar of the western zone of Santiago, Bishop Ariztía, was the ordaining prelate. Soft-spoken, gently humorous, aware of the times, he had maintained a constant interest in the Pudahuel experiment and in Diego. With scores of youngsters shoving to get a better view of the ceremony, what happened was almost predictable. During the prostration rite, with Diego stretched out on the ground, a big brown dog leaped over him and disappeared into the crowd. After the ordination, the bishop admonished the people not to crush the new priest with abrazos, because "he is imported and everybody knows that imported articles are hard to come by these days."<sup>102</sup>

In December there were more ordinations. On the first of the month, Barry Fischer was ordained to the sub-deaconate, and eleven days later to the deaconate. The ceremonies were conducted by the other auxiliary bishop of Santiago, Monseñor Ismael Errázuriz.

During the week after Christmas, the members of the vicariate assembled in Chillán for the yearly retreat. The conferences were directed by a Chilean diocesan priest, Padre León Toloso, who had episcopal permission to lead the

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<sup>102</sup>Overheard by the writer at the time.

life of a hermit on an island near Valdivia.

The new year, 1972, was to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Society in Chile. Some kind of celebration was surely in order, but the missionaries were already thinking that to commemorate the actual day of the arrival of Father John Wilson and Father John Kostik, 16 September, was not feasible. Since January in Santiago is a delightful month, it was decided to hold the observance then. But that was still twelve months away.

On Thursday, 17 February, all the Santiago area priests of the Society gathered at Pudahuel international airport to welcome Father Daniel Schaefer, the new moderator general elected by the Salzburg assembly, and Father Charles Bricher, provincial director of the Cincinnati province. The unassuming and genial manner of both visitors made their stay in Chile a pleasant interlude for the missionaries.

Four days after their arrival, in the company of Father Thieman, they flew to Valdivia. Until 28 February, they remained in southern Chile, visiting all the missionaries and getting a first-hand view of life in the campo. Back in Santiago, Fathers Schaefer and Bricher made the center house the scene of some lively gatherings. Then it was on to Peru and the Precious Blood missions.

With the missionaries returning to the United States every three years for a home visit, the three-month

leave was usually not noteworthy. But a departure in June was out of the ordinary. At that time, Father James Bender, Father James Gettig, deacon Barry Fischer, student Thomas Hemm, and the three North American sisters working in Población Pudahuel all left Chile together.

Later in the month, nearly the entire group assembled at Chesterland, Ohio, for the first solemn Mass of Father Gettig. When the home visit came to an end, everyone but Thomas Hemm returned to Chile. In September, he journeyed to Brookland, Nova Scotia, to live, work, and study with Brewster Kneen, a Protestant theologian, farmer, and economist. The following April, Thomas Hemm returned to Chile and Población Pudahuel.

16 September 1972 - twenty-five years earlier Fathers Wilson and Kostik entered Chile. Now, two and a half decades later, the priests of the vicariate were going about their business.

In Santiago, Father Leo Herber was pastor of Santo Domingo parish, with residence at Casa Byrne. Caring for an autonomous section of the parish, the bloques, were Father Bernard Mores and deacon Barry Fischer, who shared a third-floor apartment. Father Mores had recently completed the construction of a community center, which was located on land belonging to St. Gaspar school. The director of St. Gaspar was Father Ambrose Lengerich, who also lived at Casa Byrne.

The chaplain of Hospital del Salvador continued to be Father Joseph Herod. With the exception of a six-month stint as assistant at Santo Domingo, all of his twenty-three years in Chile were at the hospital. Continuing his studies for the priesthood, now imminent, and helping at the hospital, was deacon Oscar Orrego. Father Paul Schaaf, after a number of years associated with St. Gaspar school, was now beginning to be drawn to the charismatic renewal. Non-professed Chilean theologian, Antonio Lagos, was a student at the Catholic University. All four of these men lived at Casa Byrne.

Across town, Father Donald Thieman, vicar director, continued as pastor at Población Roosevelt, while Father James Gettig headed the Christian communities at Población Pudahuel. Caring for those areas of San José parish still entrusted to the Society, were Fathers James Gaynor, James Bender, and Robert Conway. All five priests lived at San José rectory.

The southern city of Valdivia never figured in the future plans of the founding fathers. Now there were three priests there. Living in the simple, cramped dwelling that had served for the past ten years, were Father Richard Beischel, pastor of Preciosa Sangre parish, and his assistant, Father Joe Navarrete. On the other side of the parish and caring for the people of various sectors, especially those of Teniente Merino, was Father Paul Aumen. He



was living in his recently-built rectory-office.

Further south, in Rio Negro, Father Patrick Patterson continued as pastor of that rural town. Working in the campo was his assistant, Father Lawrence Eiting. Over at the most southern of the vicariate parishes, Purranque, were Father John Falter, and his assistant, Father Israel de la Fuente.

All these priests and seminarians met at the center house in Santiago for the annual vicariate meeting, 25 to 27 September. Even though a number of resolutions was subsequently approved, the participants did not consider them as motions, but rather a consensus. The statutes of the vicariate, the vocation program, and the upcoming silver jubilee were among the issues.

According to the formation program of the Cincinnati province, after the completion of college, each priesthood student began a period of special formation. The first phase entailed living for six months in a house of the Society. With this in mind and with an interest in the missionary apostolate, James Seibert now came to Chile. Already familiar with Spanish, he mixed easily with the young people of San José parish, as well as those in Valdivia and Rio Negro. Upon his return to the United States, he chose to work in the parish apostolate.

Father John Kostik was the first Precious Blood pastor of San José parish. During this anniversary year,

it was fitting that a son of the parish, Oscar Orrego Sandoval, be ordained in the church that fronted on Plaza Garín. The ordination Mass took place on Sunday evening, 17 December, with the ordaining prelate and principal concelebrant being Bishop Ariztía. Nearly all the vicariate priests, along with a group of diocesan clergy, participated in the ceremony. The shortened liturgy prayed in Spanish, the youthful singers, and the active congregation made for an emotional and spiritual experience.

A sure sign that the year was drawing to a close was the annual retreat, again held in Chillán. The spiritual exercises were conducted by Padre Francisco Cox, the young Chilean pastor of the neighboring parish of San José, Nuestra Señora de Dolores (Carrascal).<sup>103</sup>

The silver jubilee celebration was programmed to cover several days. Originally it had been planned to include a banquet, but the impossibility of obtaining sufficient quantities of food ruled out that idea. (By this time, Allende's experiment in socialism was seriously bogged down in falling production, in lines of people trying to buy food, and in constant conflicts in factory and on street.)

Although none of the missionaries who came to Chile in 1947 (excluding, of course, Father Ambrose Lengerich),

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<sup>103</sup>At 42 years of age and 14 years in the priesthood, on 2 March 1975, he became the bishop of Chillán.

returned for the occasion, Father Charles Bricher, provincial director, and Father Thomas Clayton, director of the province's public relations, did arrive on 22 January. Down from Peru came former Chilean veteran and currently superior of the Peruvian mission, Father Kenneth Seberger.

The following evening all the members of the vicariate, along with representatives from the diocesan and missionary clergy, and the stateside visitors, gathered at Santo Domingo church for the concelebrated Mass of thanksgiving. In the congregation were the Sisters of the Precious Blood and other old friends and well-wishers of the Society. The chief concelebrant of the Mass was to have been Cardinal Raul Silva, but because a trip out of town delayed his coming, his Eminence preferred that the assembly not wait for him.

After the Mass, the cardinal was in the sacristy, waiting to congratulate the missionaries on their anniversary. Everybody then made the short walk over to the gymnasium of St. Gaspar school for the traditional Chilean cocktail and buffet dinner.

Although at Casa Byrne on the next day, the members of the Society had their own celebration, the highlight of the jubilee was the ordination of Barry Fischer to the priesthood. On Sunday, 28 January, in the gymnasium of St. Gaspar school, he received Holy Orders from the hands of Bishop Ismael Errázuriz. The ceremony took place where it

did, in order to give the people in Father Fischer's nearby housing project the opportunity to participate.

A day later, when Fathers Bricher and Clayton flew out of Santiago, the twenty-fifth anniversary celebration was over. However, some of the spirit lingered in a letter which Father Daniel Schaefer, moderator general, sent to the members of the Chilean vicariate:

I ask that each missionary in South America - priest and seminarian - use this happy occasion to rededicate himself to the mission St. Gaspar left us, his sons. In his own words: "For this I am a priest to apply the merits of the Precious Blood . . ." <sup>104</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> ASPB-S, "Reuniones, Superior y Consejeros."

## EPILOGUE

The historical account of a religious community tends to be counterproductive. Instead of seeing dedicated people striving to bring Christ closer to their neighbor, we are confronted with such eye-catching events as earthquakes, fires, departures from the active priesthood, deaths of missionaries, and with the tangible world of churches, chapels, and schools. In a way, though, this external activity serves as an indicator, however imperfect, of internal, spiritual development.

Until the end of Vatican Council II, the Chilean vicariate put enormous effort into building and conducting parish schools. The construction was impressive: in addition to the grade and high schools at Plaza Garín, three other sectors of San José parish maintained grade schools; in the south Rio Negro, Purranque, and Pitrifquén built grade schools, while Purranque and Pitrufrquén also maintained high schools. In Santiago, near Santo Domingo church, a large, well-constructed primary and secondary school for middle class boys was undertaken by the Society.

In 1961, the vicariate began a new parish in Valdivia; some years later another parish was formed in that southern city; in 1962, the Roosevelt sector of San José

became an independent parish. For several years one of the missionaries worked on the development of pedagogical courses and material at the Catholic University of Santiago. When the Sisters of the Precious Blood, who entered Chile in 1957, began a novitiate for Chilean vocations, a vicariate priest was assigned as chaplain to their expanding institution.

In March 1958, the Society opened a minor seminary on a renovated farm property near San Bernardo, just south of Santiago. By the middle of 1964, the vicariate members realized that such an undertaking was not feasible in Chile. However, three young men were eventually ordained as priests in the Society of the Precious Blood; in late 1974, a fourth Chilean reached the priesthood. All of these men studied at the Catholic University of Santiago.

In 1962, when the American province began its Peruvian mission, this enterprise meant that two countries held claim for personnel. At first additional priests were forthcoming; spurred on by the plea of Pope John XXIII, more missionaries did come to South America. By 1965, in Chile there were twenty-seven Precious Blood priests, in Peru, ten. This was the highwater mark of the (U.S.) Society's commitment to Latin America.

Several factors explain the gradual decline in available personnel. When in the spring of 1965 the American province was divided into three provinces, the largest

group, the Cincinnati province, was alone responsible for the Chilean vicariate and the Peruvian mission. Yet, the major seminarians were distributed among the provinces. Consequently, the Cincinnati province no longer ordained ten or twelve priests a year, but only four or five. Finally, the world-wide drop in vocations affected the Society also. With missionaries returning to stateside service after years in Chile, with others leaving the active priesthood, with still others sick, retired, or dead, the number in the missions dropped off. In 1979, the Society in Chile has one Spanish priest, three Chilean and twelve North American priests. In addition, there are five Precious Blood missionaries in Peru and one in Guatemala.

As a result of the personnel situation, vicariate commitments changed. No longer does the Society staff the parish of Pitrufrquén or the Hospital del Salvador; Riachuelo is now a mission attached to Rio Negro; no one is assigned to the Catholic University or to the Sisters of the Precious Blood. San José parish, now grown to some 100,000 people, has only two vicariate priests.

Although the Pudahuel experiment was never a vicariate commitment, the project was made up of one Precious Blood priest (along with an Irish Columban missionary) and two U.S. priesthood students. However, within a few years three members of the pastoral team left Chile and the fourth took on a different assignment within the vicariate.

Since the early days of the Second Vatican Council, the direction of the apostolate has changed. In spite of great sacrifice and expense, the parochial schools did not produce generally a type of Christian more committed to the faith than his public school companion. Without the example of conscientious parents, children gained very little from their attendance at parochial schools. As a result, the vicariate has turned over its free schools to the government or to Christian cooperatives.

The approach to the administration of the sacraments has also undergone a great deal of revision. According to the pastoral plan of the Chilean hierarchy, the parents of a baby must assist at pre-baptismal conferences. Anticipating these measures, huge parishes such as San José and Roosevelt have been divided into sectors, with each sector, often under lay leadership, responsible for the preparation of parents. Engaged couples attend pre-marriage courses; first communicants are prepared by their parents; and those to be confirmed attend a two-year formation program. They must be at least eighteen years of age before receiving this sacrament of Christian maturity.

None of these innovations came easily to the priests or to the people. Yet their implementation was necessary for a deeper Christian life and for the formation of lay leaders. More and more dedicated Christian men have assumed positions of leadership in the parishes staffed by



the Society of the Precious Blood. It is the hope of the missionaries that the idea of Chileans learning to help the Chilean church, will prove the most enduring work of the Society in Chile.

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Casilla 6073, Santiago

The following underlined categories are the headings used in the files:

#### Provincial Correspondence

1. Provincial Letters 1947-1949-1950, Fr. John Wilson.  
(There is no reason why the year 1948 is omitted.)
2. Provincial Letters Sept. 1950-Sept. 1956, Fr. Leonard Fullenkamp
3. Provincial Letters, Fr. Paul Buehler
4. Provincial Letters 1961-19
5. Provincial Old Letters 1964-1966
6. Provincial (After 1966, this is the sole designation on the folder.)

Ideally both the Dayton and the Santiago archives should contain the same number of provincial and vicar provincial letters. That is, an original letter should be in the files of the recipient and a copy in the files of the sender. Because in the early years the vicariate office frequently made no carbon copies, in this area the Santiago archives are not as complete as those at Dayton.

The correspondence of both provincial and vicar provincial is never found in separate files in either archives. In other words, letters to and from the other are filed chronologically in the same folder.

#### Vicariate Board Minutes

1. Book I (19 May 1948 - 10 December 1957)
2. Book II (16 January 1958 - 14 May 1968)

Correspondence of Moderator GeneralProvincial VisitationsHistoria del Vicariato

1. Copies of Bishop Joseph M. Marling's letters written during his 1946 trip, and newspaper clippings.
2. "A Few Historical Notes About the Chilean Vicariate (specifically notes of Fr. Paul Buehler)." These twenty-two typewritten sheets were compiled in 1962, as Father Buehler was about to go to Peru.
3. Two small diaries of Father John Kostik covering the time between 3 September 1947 and 10 August 1949. About one half the writing is devoted to his first four months in Chile. Nothing was written from 17 November 1948 to 28 May 1949.

## Miscellaneous:

1. Reuniones, Superior y Consejeros
2. Autobiographical accounts by some early missionaries
3. Financial and spiritual reports
4. Correspondence between missionaries and superiors
5. Mimeographed letters and articles from the personal files of Fathers James Bender, Paul Aumen, James Gettig, and Thomas Hemm
6. Private, official files of each missionary

Due to the confidential nature of much of the foregoing material, access to the archives is restricted.

## Archives of the Archdiocese of Santiago (AARs)

Erasma Escala 1822

Casilla 30 D, Santiago

1. #59 - Parroquia San José de Plaza Garín
2. #63 - Parroquia Santo Domingo de Guzmán
3. #157 - Parroquia Nuestra Señora de la Preciosa Sangre

Archives of the Apostolic Vicariate of the Araucanía  
 Jerónimo de Alderete s/n  
 Casilla 276 V, Villarrica

1. #16 - Parroquia Pitrufquén

Archives of the Diocese of Valdivia  
 Maipú 168  
 Casilla 520, Valdivia

Before the diocese was divided in 1956 to create the diocese of Osorno, the parishes of Rio Negro, Riachuelo, and Purrangué belonged to Valdivia. In 1960, the vicariate took up work in Valdivia itself.

1. Unnumbered folder - Congregación de la Preciosa Sangre
2. #14 - Parroquia Riachuelo
3. #74216 and #723152 deal with contracts between the diocese and the Preciosa Sangre parish.

Archives of the Diocese of Osorno  
 Brasil 1015  
 Casilla 899, Osorno

1. #7 - Purrangué
2. #10 - Riachuelo
3. #11 - Rio Negro

#### PRIMARY SOURCES IN THE UNITED STATES

Archives of the Cincinnati Province (ASPB-D)  
 Provincial Office  
 431 East Second Street  
 Dayton, Ohio 45402

Provincial and Vicar Provincial Correspondence:

1. Before 1947 - Preliminary Correspondence
2. 1947-1949 Chile Vicar
3. 1950-1954 Chile Vicar

4. 1955-1959 Chile Vicar
5. 1960 Vicar Provincial
6. 1961 Vicar Provincial
7. 1962 Vicar Provincial
8. 1963 Vicar Provincial
9. 1964-1965 Vicar Provincial
10. Vicar Chile, Vicar Provincial - Current (1966-77)
11. Vicar Miscellaneous Current [1963 to 1977]

Printed Minutes of Provincial Chapters:

1. Community, Chapter-Business, May, 1944
2. Community, Chapter-Business, October, 1946
3. Community, Chapter-Business, June, 1953

Publications of the American Province:

Both the Gasparian, the official news letter of the province, and the Precious Blood Messenger, a family oriented magazine, printed letters and articles written by missionaries. Although at times there was some editing, the material remains primary documentation.

1. Gasparian  
Messenger Press  
Carthagena, Ohio 45822

Various houses of the Society have bound copies of the Gasparian. Those at the provincial house are preserved thus:

1938-44 vol	1-7	1955-57 vol	18-20	1968-73 vol	31-36
1945-49	8-12	1958-62	21-25		
1950-54	13-17	1963-67	26-30		

2. Precious Blood Messenger (ceased publication in 1968)  
Messenger Press  
Carthagena, Ohio 45822

Archives of the Cincinnati Province  
 St. Charles Seminary  
 Carthagena, Ohio 45822

Miscellaneous Material:

1. Photographs and numerous slides and motion pictures
2. A history of the Pitrufrquén parish by Father George Fey
3. A diary of Father Fey, written in seven notebooks of various sizes, that runs from 18 November 1947 to 1 February 1952.
4. Less than a dozen letters, some mimeographed, that extend from 1947 to 1963.
5. A St. Gaspar school yearbook
6. Under "South American Missions," newspaper clippings of departure ceremonies, etc.
7. A very thin folder of Messenger articles on the missions

PRIMARY SOURCES IN ITALY

Archives of the Society of the Precious Blood (ASPB-R)  
 Generalate  
 Viale di Porta Ardeatina 66  
 I-00154 Rome

1. PI 1886 - Correspondence between Father Gaetano Caporali, moderator general, and Father Patrick Hennebery
2. G II 1 - Constitutions or Rules of the Society, specifically those of 1881, 1942, 1946, and 1969
3. G III 3B - Reports of official visits made by the moderator generals and others delegated by them
4. Miscellaneous - "Merlini Centenary Year, 1973," and "C.P.P.S. in Mexico 1912-1914."

SECONDARY SOURCES

Bowers, C.G. Chile Through Embassy Windows, 1939-1953. New York: Simon, 1958.

- Coleman, William J. Latin-American Catholicism. Maryknoll New York: Maryknoll Publications, 1958.
- Einaudi, Luigi; Maullin, R.; Stephan, A.; and Fleet, M. Latin American Institutional Development: The Changing Catholic Church. Santa Monica, California: Rand Corporaton, 1969.
- Fergusson, Erna, Chile. New York: Knopf, 1943.
- Galdames, James. A History of Chile. trans. and ed. I.H. Cox. New York: Russell and Russell, Inc., 1964. (First printed in 1941)
- Gross, Leonard, The Last Best Hope: Eduardo Frei and Chilean Democracy. New York: Random House, 1967.
- Herring, Hubert. A History of Latin America: From its Beginnings to the Present. 3d ed. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1972.
- Hurtado Cruchaga, S.J., Alberto. Es Chile un País Católico? Santiago de Chile: n.p., 1941.
- Oberhauser, Isidore. History of the Society of the Precious Blood. Carthagen, Ohio: mimeographed, 1929.
- Papasogli, Giorgio. Vita e Tempi de San Gaspare Del Bufalo. Rome: Piero Gribaudi, 1977.
- Pike, Fredrick B. Chile and the United States, 1880-1962: The Emergence of Chile's Social Crisis and the Challenge to U.S. Diplomacy. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1963.
- Silvert, K.H. Chile, Yesterday and Today. New York: Holt, 1965.
- Vergara, Ignacio. El Protestantismo en Chile. Santiago de Chile: Editorial del Pacifico, 1962.
- Wolf, Eric R. and Hansen, Edward C. The Human Condition in Latin America. New York: Oxford University Press, 1972.
- Priests and Religious for Latin America: the Proceedings and Conclusions of the First Inter-American Conference of Major Superiors. (Mexico City, February 8-12, 1971). U.S. Catholic Conference, Division for Latin America, Washington, D.C.

APPENDIX A



## VICARIATE PERSONNEL - SEPTEMBER 1947 TO JANUARY 1973

1. Father John Wilson, September 1947 - May 1958
2. Father John Kostik, September 1947 - March 1962
3. (a) Father Paul Buehler, November 1947 - July 1962
4. Father Ambrose Lengerich, November 1947
5. (b) Father Carl Reikowsky, November 1947 - January 1953
6. Father Alphonse Jungwirth, November 1947 - January 1953
7. Father John Hoorman, November 1947 - May 1954
8. Father George Fey, November 1947 - February 1960
9. (a) Father Kenneth Seberger, August 1948 - May 1950 and March 1962 - March 1966
10. Father Leonard Fullenkamp, August 1948 - May 1961
11. Father William Frantz, August 1948 - September 1965
12. Father Bernard Mores, August 1948
13. Father Samuel Homsey, August 1949 - January 1956
14. Father Arthur Grevenkamp, August 1949 - April 1950 (died)
15. Father Joseph Herod, August 1949
16. (c) Father Leonard Burghart, October 1950 - February 1956
17. Father Walter Junk, October 1950 - September 1961
18. Father Thomas Sweeterman, March 1952 - January 1963
19. Father Emil Schuwey, February 1953 - July 1965
20. Father William Higgins, February 1953 - October 1954
21. (b) Father Raymond Zupkie, December 1953 - February 1955
22. (b) Father Eugene Stiker, December 1953 - March 1968
23. Father Augustine Hanchak, June 1954 - January 1959
24. Father Leo Herber, November 1954
25. (b) Father William Schenk, November 1954 - October 1967
26. Father Emil Dinkel, November 1954 - May 1966
27. Father James Bender, September 1955
28. (d) Father Paul Aumen, October 1955
29. Father William Donohoe, October 1955 - October 1960
30. Father Donald Thieman, September 1958
31. Father Milton Ballor, September 1958 - July 1969
32. (b) Father Richard Lovett, August 1959 - July 1968
33. (b) Father Joseph Herber, August 1959 - November 1962 and August 1965 - October 1968
34. Father Rocco Cosentino, April 1960 - July 1969
35. (b) Father Anthony Spitzig, July 1960 - December 1969
36. (b) Brother Aloysius Kramek, July 1960 - June 1963
37. (a) Father Gerald Dreiling, December 1960 - October 1967
38. (b) Father Richard Woytych, November 1961 - June 1970
39. Father Robert Conway, November 1961 - December 1967 and July 1969
40. (b) Father Joseph Silvester, March 1962 - October 1969
41. Father Paul Schaaf, November 1962
42. (b) Father Joseph Grilliot, November 1962 - June 1970

43. (b) Father Gerard Ritzel, December 1962 - July 1969
  44. Father Richard Beischel, November 1963
  45. (b) Father David Kettleon, August 1964 - June 1970
  46. (b) Father Paul Bobay, November 1964 - May 1969
  47. (b) Father Eugene Schmidt, September 1965 - September 1968
  48. Father John Falter, November 1965
  49. Father Edward Novotny, June 1966 - January 1968 and August 1970 - January 1971 (died)
  50. (b) Father Gerald Bowers, December 1967 - October 1971
  51. Father James Gaynor, July 1968
  52. Father Patrick Patterson, July 1968
  53. Father Joe Navarrete Hauri, November 1968 (ordained)
  54. Father Israel de la Fuente Soto, December 1970 (ordained)
  55. Father Lawrence Eiting, March 1971
  56. Father James Gettig, November 1971 (ordained)
  57. (b) Father Oscar Orrego Sandoval, December 1972 (ordained)
  58. Father Barry Fischer, January 1973 (ordained)
- (a) Missionary in Peru, 1979
  - (b) Left the Society
  - (c) Incardinated into diocese of Dodge City (died: 31 July 1970)
  - (d) Missionary in Guatemala, 1979

Arrival of students from the Cincinnati province:

1. James Gettig, February 1969
  2. (a) Thomas Hemm, February 1969
  3. Barry Fischer, March 1970
  4. (b) Karl Willman, March, 1970
- (a) Ordained in Chile 30 December 1978
  - (b) Left the Society

APPENDIX B



APPENDIX C

## MONEY GIVEN TO THE CHILEAN VICARIATE 1946-1961\*

<u>General Donations (a)</u>		<u>Individual Donations (b)</u>
\$ 26,000.00	(before 1953)	\$ 22,600.16
24,420.30	1953	6,186.27
2,100.00	1954	11,611.00
4,200.00	1955	8,611.00
8,000.00	1956	7,825.71
31,900.00	1957	28,611.00
50,500.00	1958	25,932.00
39,000.00	1959	30,465.00
27,000.00	1960	38,907.00
<hr/>		<hr/>
\$213,120.30		\$180,749.14

(a) given directly to the vicariate

(b) given directly to the individual missionary

Through the years the American province made direct grants to the vicariate. Obviously more money than indicated on official reports was spent for the good of the vicariate. For example, when the missionary on home leave needed medical care, the expense was absorbed by the provincial treasury. Moreover, the living expenses of the missionaries in Chile were covered by Mass stipends sent by the American province. The following table lists the direct grants made by the province to the vicariate:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Travel</u>	<u>Subsidy</u>
1946-47	\$3,806.87	
1947-48		\$11,026.77
1948-49		4,328.40
1949-50		5,500.00
1950-51		6,000.00
1951-52		22,000.00
1952-53		
1953-54		
1954-55		2,820.00
1955-56		
1956-57		
1957-58		
1958-59	2,579.83	
1959-60		
1960-61	1,970.45	
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	\$8,357.15	\$50,675.17

\*ASPB-S, "Vicariate Financial Reports."

APPROVAL SHEET

The dissertation submitted by Robert L. Conway, C.P.P.S. has been read and approved by the following committee:

Rev. Charles E. Ronan, S.J., Director  
Professor, History, Loyola

Dr. Joseph A. Gagliano  
Professor, History, and  
Associate Dean, Graduate School, Loyola

Dr. Paul Leitz  
Professor Emeritus, History, Loyola

Sr. Margaret Thornton, B.V.M.  
Professor, History, Mundelein College

The final copies have been examined by the director of the dissertation and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the dissertation is now given final approval by the Committee with reference to content and form.

The dissertation is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

October 16, 1979  
Date

Charles E. Ronan, S.J.  
Director's Signature