

Fr. John Baptist Lenotti



The Second Superior General

[The First Elected Superior General]

1871 – 1875

[Chapters 1 – 6]



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Schematic Outline of His Life¹



GIOVANNI BATTISTA LENOTTI (priest)

BORN: Verona – Sep. 5, 1817

ORDAINED: Mar. 12, 1842

ENTERED: Stimate – Apr. 22, 1834

DIED: Verona (Stimate) – Sep. 5, 1875

AGE: 58

After his priestly ordination, he was affected by a serious illness and suffered for one year. He then seriously applied himself to the sacred ministries under the guidance of Fr. Gaspar, who loved him tenderly.

He was appointed master of novices for many years, and subsequently formator of the professed. After the death of Fr. Marani, he succeeded him in the governance of the Congregation as Superior General.

He always showed the qualities of a good religious, for his zeal in keeping the rules, for his excellent piety and love of neighbour. He strenuously worked for the good of the Congregation. After solving the lawsuit with the Royal State Property, he completed the building of *S. Maria del Giglio*, purchased the property of the house of Trento and began the negotiations in order to open foreign missions. He also completed the agreement for the foundation of the house of Parma.

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¹ Source: Confrades.com – by Fr. Silvano Zanella, CSS.

Biographical Notes:

From the *Breve Cronaca*²:

43. In the meantime, on April 20, 1834 there entered the young man, **John Baptist Lenotti**, who was almost 17 years of age. He had been a former student at the Stimate: and on May 8th, he had been vested by the Episcopal Vicar, Monsignor Louis Castori. On July 24th of that same year, there came to join them as well the young lad, Louis Ferrari, who was not yet 14 years, a genuine ‘little dove’, as Fr. Gramego called him in his House Chronicle: he, too, would be vested in the clerical garb on the 18th of January of the following year. St. Gaspar himself took great care in the formation of these two tender sons of his, as he had with the earlier two. And having by now almost completed the Library, and in the time that remained over and above all this, he would have them read some work which would serve them to complete the studies they were following in School. He had them read and re-read Sacred Scripture with the commentaries of various authors, such as Petavius’ *Dogma*, Baronius’ *Annals*, St. Alphonsus; *Moral* and his *Apostolic Man*, the Decree of Gratianus, and the *Decretals* and the *Canonical Institutions* of Devoti. He assigned other particular studies of Gregorian Chant, Liturgy, Sacred Eloquence, or of other matters in conformity with the harmony of each one.

From the Early Biographies³:

By this time⁴, the Superior General was **Fr. John Baptist Lenotti, who was an heir of the genuine spirit of Fr. Bertoni, by whom he had been trained.** He completed the negotiations begun by Fr. Marani, to have a House of our own, in the vicinity of the city of Trent. Shortly afterwards, he recalled the students to Verona, and lodged them in St. Teresa’s Convent. Fr. Lenotti died in the odor of sanctity in the year 1875.

(...)

The religious family was not to be lacking its young seminarians. The first ones to enter were graduates of Fr. Bertoni’s little school. Charles Fedelini, Louis Biadego, John Baptist Lenotti and Louis Ferrari are to be mentioned here. As they represented the future hopes of Fr. Bertoni, he instructed

² *Breve Cronaca* [A Brief Chronicle] – by Fr. Joseph Fiorio, Stigmatine [1876 - † 1958]. English translation by Fr. Joseph Henchey, CSS [2005].

³ Biographies of the Early Stigmatine Community, by Fr. Ferdinand Colombari. English translation by Fr. Joseph Henchey, CSS [2006]. English translation by Fr. Joseph Henchey, CSS [2005].

⁴ As for a previous paragraph, this refers to the year 1971.

them with all his love, striving to imbue them with the true ecclesiastical and religious spirit. For the classes in philosophy and theology, he sent them to the Diocesan Seminary, and then assisted and guided them at home, perfecting and developing the instruction they received in their classes. How helpful he was to them was soon noted by their teachers and fellow students, as they always were in the upper brackets of the class. It was his will that they should not neglect any of the ecclesiastical studies, but that they should be well instructed in all of them. He did, however, assign them particular branches of study, that they might become more proficient in them, according to the varying attitudes of each one.

(...)

When Don Ferrari and **Don Lenotti** began their theological studies, there were additional assignments to the exegesis that they studied at the Seminary. They had to read sacred Scripture and give their explanations of the passages read to Fr. Bertoni. In the early times, it was just the text itself, but later, they also were expected to know the views of the various commentators.

For the study of the sacred canons, they used Devoti's Commentary at home. For outside reading in theology, they studied Antoine, Petavius and St. Alphonsus Liguori. Fr. Bertoni wanted his students well versed in letters, but even more so in all the sacred sciences, because to him, knowledge is the secret weapon of the Priest.

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A Compendium of Fr. Lenotti's Life and the Early Times of the Stigmatine Congregation⁵:

1817

Sep. 05: John Baptist Mary Lenotti was born about 2:30 p.m., the son of Anthony. He was baptized this same day in St. Luke's Parish.

1831

Feb. 26: John Lenotti, age 14, and his brother, Joseph, age 12, were enrolled as members of the Marian Oratory at the Stimate.

1834

Apr. 20: Feast of the Patronage of St. Joseph – young John Lenotti asked his Mother's permission to enter the Congregation at the Stimate, where he had been going to school – his Father was already dead at this time.

Apr. 22: John Lenotti entered the Congregation on this date, arriving at the Stimate at 7:30 a.m.. The House Chronicle notes that he was a *timid rabbit!* Fr. Zara noted years later in the Chronicle, on September 5, 1875 – the day of Fr. Lenotti's death as Superior General, that the *timid rabbit* had become a *giant*.

Sep. 20: Charles Fedelini was ordained this Ember Saturday⁶ by Bishop Grasser. John Lenotti was tonsured and received the first two Minor Orders.

1835

Jan. 18: It was the 2nd Sunday after the Epiphany. Monsignor Castori [the Vicar of Bishop Grasser of Verona – who had a sister a Carmelite Nun, who was once stationed at St. Teresa's Convent] came to the Stimate to vest a young student by the name of Louis Ferrari, who was only 14 and one half years old. The Monsignor stated that he had wished he could vest 50 young Stigmatines! He had already vested John Lenotti on May 8, 1834 – and young Ferrari was the second, and last, Stigmatine that he vested.

⁵ Source: A Stigmatine Calendar – compilation and English translation by Fr. Joseph Henchey, CSS [1967].

⁶ Ember days (corruption from Latin *Quatuor Tempora*, four times) are the days at the beginning of the seasons ordered by the Church as days of fast and abstinence. They were definitely arranged and prescribed for the entire Church by Pope Gregory VII (1073-1085) for the Wednesday, Friday and Saturday of the same week, in conjunction with the four seasons of the year. The Fall *Tempora* (in the North hemisphere) occurs after September 14th (Exaltation of the Holy Cross); on Winter, after December 13th (St. Lucy); on Spring, after Ash Wednesday; and, on Summer, after Whitsunday (Pentecost Sunday).

1836

May 02: Marietta Lenotti, sister of John Baptist, died today.

1841

Sep. 17: Fr. Anthony Rosmini preached the Annual Retreat at the Diocesan Seminary of Verona – John Lenotti made this Retreat in preparation for his Ordination to the Sub-Diaconate. He left a number of resolutions in his Spiritual Diary that have come down to us – he resolved to ask permission to help the Brothers once a week as a Priest in the kitchen. [During his administration as Superior General, he did this himself occasionally and also recommended all Priests to do the same]. He also resolved to be devoted to Joseph and Mary, under the title of the Sorrowful Mother.

Sep. 18: John Lenotti was ordained a Sub Deacon.

Dec. 18: Ember Saturday⁷ – in Bishop Mutti's residence chapel, John Lenotti was ordained a Deacon.

1842

Feb. 06: *Laetare* Sunday – at 2:00 a.m., the young student, Louis Ferrari, died. He was much admired by his friend, John Lenotti, who would be ordained within the week. Young Ferrari had been with the Congregation eight years.

Mar. 12: *Sitientes*⁸ Saturday – John Lenotti was ordained a Priest by Bishop Mutti in his Residence Chapel.

Mar. 13: Passion Sunday: Fr. John Baptist Lenotti, newly ordained, celebrated his First Mass at the Stimate. It was attended by his family, friends and a good number of the students staying at the Stimate. Fr. Bertoni's name did not appear in the Mass Book this day – nor did it ever again. He would not see any other First Mass of a member of the Congregation in his life-time.

⁷ Ember days (corruption from Latin *Quatuor Tempora*, four times) are the days at the beginning of the seasons ordered by the Church as days of fast and abstinence. They were definitely arranged and prescribed for the entire Church by Pope Gregory VII (1073-1085) for the Wednesday, Friday and Saturday of the same week, in conjunction with the four seasons of the year. The Fall *Tempora* (in the North hemisphere) occurs after September 14th (Exaltation of the Holy Cross); on Winter, after December 13th (St. Lucy); on Spring, after Ash Wednesday; and, on Summer, after Whitsunday (Pentecost Sunday).

⁸ Editor's note: the Saturday in the 4th week of Lent.

Mar. 14: Fr. John Lenotti celebrated one of his First Masses in the family Parish of St. Luke's.

Mar. 15: From this day onward, Fr. Lenotti's name appeared regularly in the Mass Book at the Stimate. He looked poorly at this time and Fr. Bertoni had him consult a doctor.

1843

Nov. 22: The date of the will of one Anthony Lenotti. He divided the family inheritance among the Lenotti brothers and sisters. The oldest of the three sisters, Marietta, was already deceased.

1846

Jun. 08: Fr. Lenotti seemed to have some fear of preaching – Fr. Bertoni suggested three simple rules for him: just before going out to preach, remain quiet, without studying; while preaching, try to imagine that it is God Who listens; rest a while after preaching, to regarding your strength and reflect on what you have preached to others. [In these days, sermons were sometimes about 45 minutes long, as a matter of routine – Fr. Bertoni often noted after the title of his text how many minutes it took to deliver his sermons].

Oct. 30: Fr. Lenotti preached at the Friday Devotions at the Stimate for the first time. His text was from the Book of Ecclesiasticus 50:9.

1847

Jun. 25: Fr. Lenotti preached on the only true contentment this world can offer is to those who serve God – worldly people have a life-long *Mardi Gras*, followed by an eternal Lent!

Aug. 15: Feast of the Assumption – Fr. Lenotti delivered a sermon to the members of the **Oratory** – he told the young men that, when they prayed, to imagine that Mary was kneeling along-side of them praying as well; then, their prayer would always be humble and confident.

1848

Jan. 01: Fr. Lenotti preached at the Stimate and told the congregation that the Word of God is omnipotent.

Jan 25: On this date, two Decrees emanated from the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, entitled **Romani Pontifices** and **Regulari Disciplinae**. Years later, in Rules that were presented to the IInd

General Chapter [September 11, 1871], these two Decrees were prescribed reading for the Superior General.

1850

- Mar. 06: Austrian troops came to live in a part of the Stimate – they were to remain there for over four years. During their stay at the Stimate, they presented a fertile apostolate to Bro. Zanoli, himself an old soldier, who brought a number of the Austrian soldiers back to the Sacraments. Fr. Lenotti would mention this years later, how the Brother had fulfilled the ‘End’ of the Congregation, through his apostolic conversations.
- Dec. 19: Frs. Lenotti and Fedelini left for a two week Mission at Avio, Trent. It was the first Mission preached by the Fathers of the Congregation in the ‘Tyrol.’

1851

- Jan. 23: Fr. Lenotti preached on the Feast this year, and said the distinctive characteristic of this marriage was a most singular and special holiness.
- Apr. 04: Fr. Lenotti gave the last of his 200 or more sermons at the Friday devotions at the Stimate. [There are copies of many of these sermons still retained in the Archives at the Stimate].

1853

- Jun. 24: Fr. Lenotti resumed his regular Friday preaching assignment at the Stimate – he was also made the Chronicler of the Congregation, which task he faithfully fulfilled [the source of much of the material for this *Stigmatine Calendar*] until shortly before his Election as Superior General [July 1871].

1855

- Apr. 04: John Lenotti received the last two Minor Orders, Exorcist and Acolyte, on this *Sitientes*⁹ Saturday.
- Apr. 17: Frs. Marani and Lenotti preached a three day retreat for young boys at Lugagnano, in preparation for the Formal erection of an Oratory there.

⁹ i.b.: Editor’s note: the Saturday in the 4th week of Lent.

Jul. 30: Frs. Lenotti and DaPrato returned from Peschiera where they had been assisting the cholera victims. The 1st anniversary of Fr. Bertoni's body being returned to the Stimate was noted.

1856

Apr. 14: Fr. Mark Bassi entered the Congregation – Fr. Lenotti noted in the House Chronicle that his name reminded the older Fathers of Fr Bertoni's frequent saying in the Veronese dialect: ***Bassi, bassi...!***

1857

Jan. 23: Fr. Lenotti wrote in the Chronicle this day that the Feast was celebrated with more solemnity than usual. Bishop Riccabona came at 7:00 a.m. for Mass, and there were then 40 Masses celebrated. In the evening, Monsignor Marchi gave Benediction vested in a new cope – 'the new organ sounded beautiful!'

Feb. 28: The *Trinità* became the Novitiate for the first time. There were 13 Novices, 7 Students, and 4 Brothers. Fr. Lenotti was Novice Master – and Bro. Zanoli carried on his customary number of tasks!

Aug. 12: The departing Missionaries concluded their Retreat at the Stimate and were now set for Africa. These men made a deep impression on Fr. Lenotti.

Sep. 11: Bishop Manfredi of Padua wrote to Fr. Marani to tell him that the work of his Diocese accomplished the previous months in two separate Missions by Frs. Lenotti, Benciolini and Rigoni was much appreciated. He asked Fr. Marani to tell the preachers of his [the Bishop's] undying gratitude.

Oct. 14: Fr. Lenotti preached a private retreat to **four Priests** who had come to the Stimate to make their annual Retreat. One of these Priests was Fr. Vincent Vignola, one of five blood brothers, all of whom were Priests. Later on, Fr. Vincent Vignola entered the Congregation and some time later, he was followed by one of his brothers, Fr. Peter Vignola – who went on [with Fr. Vincent's deciding vote in the Chapter] to be elected the 3rd Superior General of the Congregation. He was first elected on September 16, 1875 by the 6th General Chapter, and held this post until his very sudden death almost 16 years later, on August 23, 1891.

1858

- May 02: Fr. Anthony Graziani, rector of the Seminary of Vicenza, wrote to Fr. Marani, Superior General, to thank him for the fine Retreat that Frs. Benciolini and Lenotti had just preached at the Seminary.
- Aug. 09: Frs. Lenotti, Rigoni and Benciolini finished their Mission at the Cathedral in Padua, that was attended by the Bishop and the Canons. The Bishop was most effusive in his thanks and appreciation.
- Sep. 20: The Mission at Avesa ended – as Frs. Marani, Rigoni and Lenotti left, they were accompanied by a military band, the ringing of Church bells – and fire crackers!
- Sep. 24: Fr. Finazzi, Pastor of Holy Cross Parish in Padua, wrote to Fr. Marani to thank him for the fine work of Frs. Lenotti, Benciolini and Rigoni, who had preached a Mission in his parish the previous month.
- Nov. 07: Fr. Lenotti, Novice Maser, gave a Domestic Exhortation to the Novices, telling them to pray often for the Congregation, that was suffering so much at that time. Fr. Marani, the Superior General, had been seriously ill; Fr. Brugnoli was dying and Brother Marini had just died at the age of 19.
- Dec. 26: A Fr. Achetti wrote to Fr. Marani to thank him for the wonderful Mission that Frs. Lenotti and Vincent Vignola had preached in his parish of St. Peter's in Cariano. Fr. Achetti wrote that the two Priests proved to be most assiduous and charitable Confessors in handling the long lines that came to them.

1859

- Jul. 22: Frs. Lenotti, Rigoni and Vignola returned to the Stimmate after 39 straight days of preaching in the mountains, in little villages preparing for the Bishop's Pastoral Visitation. Some of the places they preached at were: San Rocco di Piegara, Revere di Vole, Tregno, Cogollo, Badia, Selva di Tregno, Mizzele, Pigosse, Castagno, Trezzalano, Moruri, Canelle and Salina.

1860

- Feb. 04: The Bishop of Padua, Bishop Manfredini, wrote to Fr. Marani, Superior General, to thank him for the fine Retreat just preached to the Seminarians there. The Rector of the Seminary, Fr. Lawrence Sartori,

wrote in a similar vein. This Retreat had been preached by Frs. Lenotti and Peter Vignola.

Mar. 05: A Fr. Cajetan Modena, a Camillian, who had assisted in the Confessions at the Retreat for the Seminarians preached in Padua by Frs. Lenotti and Peter Vignola, wrote this day to Fr. Marani. He said that the older Professors at the Seminary had told him that it was the best Retreat they had had there since one that the Jesuits had preached there 20 years earlier.

Jun. 04: Frs. Lenotti and Benciolini went to Montorio to preach a Mission. When it was over, they traveled through many little villages of Valle di Tregnago for a number of Missions.

Aug. 25: Frs. Lenotti and Peter Vignola preached the Annual Retreat to the **Clergy of the Diocese of Feltre**. After this, they then preached to the **Clergy of the Diocese of Belluno**. Bishop Renier was most exuberant in his praise of the Fathers. Fr. Lenotti expressed the hope that Fr. Sperti's offer to the Congregation to come to Belluno would be accepted. [It was not, however, but the Fathers of the Congregation did serve the Diocese some 50 or more years later, by taking over as the **faculty of the Diocesan Seminary**. Fr. Fancis Cappello, SJ – a latter-day 'Confessor of Rome', whose Cause of Canonization has progressed, served with them].

Nov. 29: Frs. Benciolini and Lenotti prepare for the Mission at San Ambrogio. In the ten years that he was Novice Master, Fr. Lenotti preached over 30 Missions – and about the same number of Retreats to Sisters and to the Clergy, as well as many other Retreats to various other groups.

1862

Mar. 05: Ash Wednesday – Frs. Benciolini and Lenotti returned to Galliera [Veneta] to establish a Pious Union to combat Blasphemy, to leave a visible memorial to the Mission they had preached there the previous December. Fr. Marani also went along to hear Confessions.

Aug. 19: Frs. Lenotti and Benciolini began two separate Retreats for the Clergy of the Diocese of Udine. In these two Retreats, they would preach to over 350 Priests, including Arch-Bishop Trevisanato, Bishop of Udine, who had been named Patriarch of Venice.

1864

May 13: Fr. Lenotti preached on this commemoration of the 'Madonna of the Novitiate', and said it was a memorable day for them, as the Novitiate was under the protection of the Mother of God.

1865

Feb. 17: Frs. Benciolini, Lenotti and DaPrato made a promise to St. Joseph that they would celebrate 100 Masses each annually in the Saint's honor, that some day the Congregation would receive papal approval. Fr. Marani had procured the **Decree of Praise** ten years earlier but nothing seemed to happen since.

Feb. 27: Frs. Lenotti, Benciolini and DaPrato made a petition to Fr. Marani, Superior General, to renew negotiations with the Holy See to obtain Papal Approbation from the Holy See.

Sep. 18: Fr. Lenotti went to Udine to preach the Annual Retreat to a group of Sisters called the *Converted*. While he was there, Fr. Fecchia, Spiritual Director of the Handmaids of Charity, wrote to Fr. Marani to see if Fr. Lenotti would also give a Retreat to the Handmaids - Fr. Marani so arranged.

Oct. 19: Fr. Picchia, Spiritual Director of the Handmaids of Charity, who conducted the Hospital in Udine, wrote to Fr. Marani to thank him for sending Fr. Lenotti to preach the annual retreat to the Sisters there. He stated that the Sisters had expressed to him the hope that someday Fr. Lenotti would come back to preach to them, as he had that summer.

1866

Mar. 28: Fr. Lenotti, who was preaching the entire month at the Church of S. Nicola in Verona in honor of St. Joseph, stated this night that St. Joseph was a model of Devotion to our Lord. This was Wednesday in Holy Week.

Mar. 29: Holy Thursday – Fr. Lenotti preached at S. Nicola's on this night, on St. Joseph as the 'Saint of Providence.'

Mar. 30: Good Friday – Fr. Lenotti preached at S. Nicola's in Verona on 'Conformity to the Will of God'.

Mar. 31: Holy Saturday – at the concluding services at St. Nicola's in Verona on the March Devotions, in honor of St. Joseph, Fr. Lenotti told his hearers

that fidelity and constancy are the characteristics of those truly devoted to St. Joseph.

1867

- Feb. 27: Fr. Lenotti offered a Votive Mass in honor of St. Joseph that more vocations be sent to the struggling Congregation.
- Apr. 18: Holy Thursday - Fr. Lenotti was preaching to the Community at Villazzano during their annual retreat – and stated that the ***Apostolic Missionaries*** are soldiers who are to follow Christ until death. In Battle, we need resolutions and sustenance – for us, this means Holy Communion.
- Apr. 19: Fr. Vincent Vignola wrote in the *Nuovo Messaggero Tirolese* [the forerunner of the *Bertoniano*] that Fr. Lenotti had purchased the Jesuit Tangiorgia's work on Philosophy. Fr. Tabarelli had studied this author in his student days at Villazzano.
- Apr. 22: This was the 33rd anniversary of Fr. Lenotti's entrance. In accord with the customs of those times, Fr. Lenotti wrote a letter to the Superior General, who was then Fr. Marani. Fr. Lenotti candidly admitted to his Superior that he was having great difficulty in obeying him. Almost every year, for ten years, one of Fr. Lenotti's resolutions at the Annual Retreat was 'to obey', 'not to contradict'. And the like.
- Jun. 05: Fr. Lenotti preached at the Seminary of Trent on the occasion of establishing there a Congregation of Prayer to the Sacred Heart for the Priests of the Diocese.
- Jun. 07: Bishop Riccabona took part in the closing ceremony at the Seminary of Trent of the erection of a Congregation of Prayer for the Priests of his Diocese that had been preached by Fr. Lenotti.

1869

- Jan. 01: Fr. Lenotti preached a Domestic Exhortation. In it he said that Christ shed His Blood on three occasions before His Crucifixion: the Circumcision, in Gethsemani and at the scourging. We can shed our "blood" as Religious: 1st in accepting Superiors corrections; 2nd, by performing penances ourselves; 3rd, by accepting the opposition of those who may be our enemies.

1870

- Mar. 16: Fr. Lenotti left Verona to return to Villazzano, without Fr. Marani, who was too ill, and the weather too cold for him to make the trip. Fr. Lenotti had come down to Verona for the express purpose of bringing Fr. Marani back up with him.
- May 28: This date marks the last entry in Fr. Lenotti's House Chronicle. He was appointed Chronicler at the death of Fr. Bertoni, and for these 18 years he gave a most exact account of the Congregation and its varied Ministries: Parish Missions, Retreats and other ministries of the Word of God, catechetics, work among seminarians and Religious and youth work. Fr. Lenotti noted the good days and the bad endured through all these years.
- Jul. 20: The Court of Appeals at Lucca handed down a decision that was not too favorable to the Congregation in its quest to have its property returned. Fr. Lenotti stated that the legal battle would go on.

1871

- Jul. 01: Sunday - Fr. John Mary Marani, Superior General, died this day in the home of his niece, Mrs. Massalongo. It was about 2:30 p.m. – he was 81 years old a month and 27 days. He died 'in exile', as the government had confiscated the property in October 1867.
- Jul. 03: Fr. Marani's funeral was held at 7:00 a.m. this Tuesday morning. The revered body was carried out of the Massalongo home for services and then laid to rest in the cemetery. His slogan as General had been ***Parati ad omnia!*** [Be prepared for all!]

After the funeral, the First Session of the 1st General Chapter was held in the Massalongo home. The motion to choose a permanent Superior General was rejected 12-1. A Committee was chosen to add an ***Appendix to Part XII*** of Fr. Bertoni's *Original Constitutions*: the members were Fr. Rigoni [President], Fr. Lenotti and Fr. Bassi.

- Jul. 04: The Second Session of the 1st General Chapter returned to the Stimmate from the Massalongo House. Fr. Vincent Vignola was assigned the task of informing Frs. Lanaro, Morando and Sterza [all three had voted for Fr. DaPrato] – that Fr. Lenotti had been chosen temporary Superior. Fr. DaPrato was elected 2nd Councilor; Fr. Rigoni as 3rd Councilor and Fr. Peter Vignola as 4th Councilor.

- Jul. 05: The concluding Session of the 1st General Chapter – Fr. Rigoni was chosen Economus but was hesitant to accept; finally, he did. Fr. Benciolini was retained as Vicar General.
- Jul. 09: Fr. Lenotti, elected temporary Superior General, wrote to the Students at Villazzano to ask for their prayers – he told them that the Congregation was divided in body, but not in spirit.
- Sep. 03: The three members of the Capitular Commission: Frs. Rigoni, Lenotti and Peter Vignola – went out to Villazzano for their last meeting before the 2nd General Chapter was to convene.
- Sep. 06: The Capitular Commission [Frs. Rigoni, Lenotti, and Peter Vignola], preparing the **Appendix to Part XII** of Fr. Bertoni's **Original Constitutions**, left Villazzano for Verona, after three days of meetings.
- Sep. 08: Fr. Lenotti sent out word that the 2nd General Chapter would convene in three days – every Priest of the Congregation would attend it, even Fr. Dominic Vicentini, ordained but a month.
- Sep. 11: The 2nd General Chapter convened at the Stimate – 16 Capitulars were present [the only Priest absent was Fr. Bragato] to pass judgment on the *Appendix to Part XII of the Original Constitutions*, prepared by the Capitular Commission [Frs. Rigoni, Lenotti, Peter Vignola], chosen by the 1st General Chapter [July 1871]. It was decided at this Chapter that only **Apostolic Missionaries** could wield any authority in the Congregation – during Fr. Marani's administration, none were appointed.
- Sep. 13: Fr. Lenotti was confirmed as temporary Superior General until the subsequent Feast of the Espousals. The 2nd General Chapter adjourned on this date.
- Sep. 24: Fr. Lenotti, Superior General, sent out a notice that the 3rd General Chapter would convene at the Stimate on October 4, 1871.
- Oct. 06: Fr. John Baptist Lenotti was elected the 2nd Superior General of the Congregation by the 3rd General Chapter, to a five year term – he would not complete this term [as he died on September 5, 1875, after serving only three years and 11 months]. On this date of his election, he received 7 Votes; Fr. Benciolini received one – and the Vignola brothers, Fr. Peter and Fr. Vincent, received one each. The General Councilors elected were: Frs. Peter Vignola, Richard DaPrato, Francis Benciolini – this last named was also chosen to be 'Father Admonitor'

of the Superior General - and John Rigoni, also chosen as Procurator General. A motion was made and carried to elevate Fr. Louis Bragato as the first official ***Apostolic Missionary*** so declared by the Congregation – as Fr. Marani had not named anyone during his 18 year administration. The Chapter adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

Oct. 08: Fr. John B. Lenotti, newly elected Superior General, wrote his first ‘Circular Letter’ and it was to the Students at Villazzano. His purpose in writing it was to inform them of the proceedings of the 3rd General Chapter, just completed. He told the students that he was just the ‘Legate’ of Mary and Joseph, under whose care the Congregation has been placed by its Founder. He told them that they all had a cross to carry, but that he, as Superior General, had a larger share of that cross and so asked for their prayers. He also asked that they dedicate themselves to their main task before them, their studies and to maintain regular observance. He recalled to their minds the memories of Fr. Bertoni and Fr. Marani. It was in this Letter that he recommended a second half hour of Meditation for Novices, to be held in the afternoon.

1872

Mar. 06: Fr. Lenotti was appointed Diocesan Examiner of Vocations, a post held by Fr. Bertoni and Fr. Marani before him.

Apr. 27: Due to his repeated attacks of apoplexy, Bishop Riccabona made it known that, for the coming summer, on doctor’s orders, he would have to use his summer residence at Villazzano. Fr. Lenotti, Superior General, immersed in numerous projects at the time, had the added item of trying to find a new Student House before summer.

May 06: Fr. Lenotti, Superior General, wrote to Pius IX to see if the Congregation could ordain some young men to Sacred Orders even though the Congregation still could not provide the canonical title, *Mensa Communis*.

June 24: Pius IX, in response to Fr. Lenotti’s request of the previous May 6th, answered that the Congregation could ordain its members in the future even without the title of *Mensa Communis* [as the Congregation had been exiled from its property] – as long as the new Clerics would have some means of their own independent support.

Aug. 02: Fr. Lenotti, Superior General, wrote a letter to the Students at Sale di Povo, and told them to draw a lesson from the Lawyer’s profession

and, in particular, from Attorney Brasca. He said that lawyers often must practice heroic humility and they have to take the 'back seat' even after extraordinary accomplishments. He exhorted the students to extra effort in the practice of silence.

- Aug. 04: Fr. Vincent Vignola and Fr. Bassi had received permission to be away from the Student House at Sale di Povo for a few days. Fr. Lenotti wrote and asked them to be sure that there would be no lessening of discipline while they were away.
- Aug. 26: Fr. Lenotti, Superior General, wrote to Fr. Vincent Vignola, Superior of the Student House at Sale di Povo, that the summer trips of the Students be not too fatiguing, and that their piety be not neglected.
- Sep. 04: Fr. Lenotti, Superior General, wrote to Fr. Vincent Vignola, Superior at the Student House at Sale di Povo, that it would be more in accord with the traditions of the Congregation that if the Fathers who were sent to the Parish Church at Povo, not to stay for dinner – he also asked the Fathers to recite Vespers and Compline in common in the afternoon. Fr. Vignola wrote back and said the latter would not be possible, as they all had different schedules and it would be difficult to assemble them for that in the afternoon.

1873

- Feb. 05: Fr. Lenotti was at the Student House, now at Sale di Povo, preparing for his departure the next day to visit Fr. Bragato at Prague. The long Court case seemed to be settled, and it would only be a matter of time as to when the property would be returned to them.
- Feb. 21: By Decree of the Superior General, Fr. Joseph Sembianti was promoted to the **Grade of *Apostolic Missionary***. He was the last member so promoted in Fr. Lenotti's life-time. There were none during Fr. Marani's 18 year administration, 1853-1871.
- Feb. 26: Fr. Lenotti, Superior General, wrote to Fr. Vincent Vignola, Director of the Student House at Villazzano, and recommended silence and humility to all, as 'these are all that we need.'
- Mar. 07: Frs. Lenotti and Vincent Vignola were expected at Prague at 9:00p.m. Fr. Bragato, now nearly 83, needed assistance when he walked. During the stay of the Fathers at the Imperial Court, they meet a Fr. Negrelli, the Court Librarian. The trip from Sale di Povo through Bolzano, took 27 hours.

- Mar. 12: Fr. Lenotti and Fr. Vincent Vignola knelt for Fr. Bragato's blessing as they concluded their five days in Prague. He had seen the Empress Marianna, and thanked her for her charity in financing the House at Villazzano during the hard years of the Students' exile. Fr. Lenotti had always admired Fr. Bragato who had been his first Confessor when he entered the Congregation.
- Mar. 15: Fr. Lenotti, Superior General, having returned to Sale di Povo the day before from his trip to Prague, returned to Verona.
- Apr. 24: On this date, Fr. Lenotti, Superior General, noted in his Spiritual Diary that he had been called to perfection but that so far he felt that he had done very little. He resolved to boast little about the Congregation and the work it was doing, unless this could serve to promote God's glory.
- May 19: Fr. Lenotti, Superior General, wrote a letter to Fr. Vincent Vignola, Director of the Student House at Villazzano, and urged all there to have the apostolic spirit of Frs. Bertoni, Marani, Gramego, Cartolari and DaPrato – now all deceased.
- May 27: With the long legal battle for the restoration of the confiscated property now out of the way, Fr. Lenotti, Superior General, could now turn his attention to other matters for the Congregation. He decided to finish construction on the Church of *Santa Maria del Giglio*.
- Jun. 17: Fr. Lenotti, Superior General, was appointed extraordinary Confessor to a group of Religious.
- Jul. 22: Fr. Lenotti, Superior General, hastened to the bed-side of Fr. Sterza, who was seriously ill – young Paul Gradinati was deeply impressed this day for Fr. Lenotti's solicitude for the sick members of the Congregation, and it made an impression on him that he never forgot.

1874

- Jan. 25: Fr. Sterza told Fr. Lenotti of a letter written by Monsignor Daniel Comboni, Pro-Vicar Apostolic to Central Africa, that appeared in several recent issues of the *Voce Cattolica* - in which the Monsignor stated that there was an immediate need there of '2,000 Jesuits and 50 Stigmatines of Verona... and some Benedictines of Subiaco!' This letter greatly impressed the young Stigmatine, Fr. Francis Sogaro.
- Feb. 05: Fr. Bragato wrote from Prague in response to Fr. Lenotti's request for advice concerning St. Teresa's. He advised Fr. Lenotti against giving the

Convent to the Sisters and even suggested that they should pay some rent.

Feb. 25: During the 5th General Chapter, it was noted that the Superior General, Fr. John Lenotti, had appointed a number of the members of the Congregation to the **Grade of Apostolic Missionaries**, but that he himself had never been made one! And the technicality arose that, in Fr. Bertoni's Original Constitutions, only an **Apostolic Missionary** could be elected Superior General. This was disposed of with the solution that by his very Election, *ipso facto*, Fr. Lenotti was an **Apostolic Missionary!**

Apr. 16: Fr. Lenotti, Superior General, sent Fr. Peter Vignola and Fr. Francis Sogaro to meet with the authorities at the Shrine of Caravaggio, that had been offered to the Congregation during Fr. Marani's administration. The Administrators of the shrine opposed the Congregation coming to Caravaggio, so negotiations were called to a halt. Bishop Bonomelli had made the offer.

Aug. 05: The 6th General Chapter convened on this date to discuss Fr. Francis Sogaro's request to leave the Congregation. A vote was taken and permission was given to him, 5 – 1. Fr. Lenotti felt his departure keenly and so he had been looking more in earnest for a possible Foreign Mission Field for the Congregation, to satisfy this aspect of the Stigmatine Vocation, particularly among the talented young members.

Aug. 06: Fr. Lenotti, Superior General, spoke to the Students of Theology on humility.

Aug. 07: The members of the Congregation drafted a letter to Fr. Lenotti, besieged with difficulties, in which they affirmed their fidelity.

Aug. 08: The letter drafted by members of the Congregation promising their fidelity, was given to the Superior General, Fr. Lenotti.

1875

Jan. 06: Fr. Lenotti, Superior General, spoke to the Community and told the members to thank God for the graces the Congregation had received during 1874. The two deaths of the previous year (Fr. Bragato and the Aspirant Brunati) were really just called home to God.

May 30: Fr. Lenotti, Superior General, sent Fr. Rigoni to Rome to see Fr. Alfieri, to look into the possibility of obtaining a Foreign Mission for the Congregation.

- Jun. 03: Fr. Lenotti, Superior General, on this first Thursday of the month, preached a day of recollection to the Diocesan Seminarians of Verona in the place of Fr. Maestrelli, recently deceased.
- Jun. 08: Fr. Lenotti, Superior General, wrote to Fr. Rigoni, Procurator General, who was in Rome, to tell him that he was most pleased that Cardinal Franchi [Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of the Propagation of the faith] had seen him and that they had discussed a possible mission field for the Congregation.
- Jun. 11: Fr. Lenotti, Superior General, sent precise instructions to Fr. Rigoni, who was in Rome to speak with Cardinal Franchi, the Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of the Propagation of the Faith. Fr. Rigoni was instructed to ask the Cardinal the following: [1] what studies future Missionaries should take up, and could they study in Verona, or would they have to go to Rome; [2] who would bear the expenses of their trips; [3] what dependence would be expected of them toward the Sacred Congregation, and in what would they be subject to the Superiors of their own Congregation in Verona.
- Jun. 12: Fr. Rigoni took part in a public audience granted by Pius IX and got close enough to kiss the Pontiff's feet – he had the rosaries blessed, as Fr. Lenotti had requested.
- Jun. 16: At 8:45 p.m., Fr. Rigoni was ushered into the presence of Pope Pius IX for a Private Audience with him. The Audience lasted one half hour. Fr. Rigoni wrote exuberantly that the Holy Father was a 'Miracle of a Pope'. As soon as he returned to his lodging in Rome this night, he wrote immediately to Fr. Lenotti. Fr. Rigoni received the following from the Holy Father: permission for the Blessed Sacrament in Trent; the commemoration of the day of the Espousals was raised to a Double of the 2nd Class, with an Octave – and the Pope promised his personal assistance to the Congregation in its efforts to obtain Papal Approbation.
- Jun. 18: Fr. Rigoni wrote again from Rome concerning his Audience with Pius IX. In the exchange of letters between Frs. Lenotti and Rigoni, great emphasis was given to the fact that the Audience took place on the Pope's 29th anniversary of his Election as Pope, and the 2nd centenary of the Apparitions to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque. In answering these letters, Fr. Lenotti told Fr. Rigoni to pray to some saint that he [Fr. Lenotti] might be relieved of his terrible headaches.

- Jul. 12: The ailing Fr. Lenotti, Superior General, left the Stimmate for Trent for some weeks of rest, and a hoped-for cure.
- Jul. 13: Fr. Lenotti was joined by Fr. Lanaro, also in failing health – both set out for the waters of Rabbi, in search of a cure.
- Jul. 18: Fr. Lenotti, Superior General, on sick leave at Rabbi, wrote to Fr. Rigoni, telling him to follow up on the progress that had already been made in the efforts to obtain Papal Approbation. Fr. Lenotti wrote that he envied Fr. Rigoni's opportunity to go to Rome.
- Jul. 19: Joseph Lenotti, the brother of the Superior General, died this day – he and his brother, long ago were members of the Oratory at the Stimmate. [His brother, the Superior General, would follow him in a pre-mature death just about 6 weeks later, September 5, 1875].
- Aug. 02: Fr. Lenotti was at Trent, having just returned from Rabbi. He said that he had to spend several days in bed and was not even able to pray his Breviary. He said that he felt like a 'Hebrew Priest' – he expressed concern over the families of his two brothers – Joseph [recently deceased] and Francis.
- Aug. 06: The President of Equador, Garcia Moreno, was assassinated. Previously he had made an offer to pay the expenses for any Missionaries who would come to his country – the offer was seriously considered by Fr. Lenotti.
- Aug. 07: Fr. Lenotti, Superior General, ailing in Trent, wrote again to the Stimmate and asked for their prayers so that he could return home.
- Aug. 11: Fr. Lenotti, Superior General, wrote to Fr. Rigoni about an offer for the Congregation that had been made by Bishop Dominic Villa, Bishop of Parma.
- Aug. 15: Fr. Lenotti, Superior General, sent a Circular Letter out to the Congregation - it was to be his last. He asked for volunteers for the **Foreign Missions**, as Fr. Rigoni had just made some successful contacts in Rome, including Cardinal Franchi. Fr. Lenotti asked that those so inclined should volunteer before the end of the coming September – sadly, he would die on its 5th day! He urged the members to study German and also Swedish. His letter was signed from San Bernardino Vecchio, Trent.
- Aug. 20: Fr. Rigoni went to Trent to accompany the ailing Fr. Lenotti, Superior General, back to Verona.

- Aug. 23: On the doctor's advice, Fr. Lenotti went out to Sezano with Fr. Rigoni. Fr. Rigoni wrote that they were awaiting those students who had gone to Padova for the examinations of accreditation. Melchiade Vivari, a student, noted that the Superior was visibly slipping – he managed to get up every day, but could not hold anything on his stomach.
- Sep. 01: Dr. Corradi went out to Sezano to see Fr. Lenotti – they both returned to Verona. He told Fr. Lenotti to go to bed – Fr. Lenotti would never get up again. The Students visited him that night and they knelt for his blessing.
- Sep. 02: The Students went for an outing to Sezano – when they returned in the evening, Fr. Lenotti's condition had become grave. Dr. Corradi brought in a specialist, Dr. Morganti. He suggested that Fr. Lenotti should be anointed. Right after Night Prayers, about 9:15 p.m., Fr. Peter Vignola, Director, brought Holy Viaticum. In a clear voice, Fr. Lenotti asked pardon of God and his Confreres, and then received Holy Communion.
- Sep. 03: There was no change in Fr. Lenotti's condition – about 9:00 p.m., his Confessor, Fr. Beltrami, went to his room and suggested that he be anointed again for this new crisis. Fr. Lenotti asked for Fr. Peter Vignola, Director, and then Fr. Beltrami anointed him. His breathing was quite heavy.
- Sep. 04: After midnight, Fr. Lenotti took a decided turn for the worse - he raved about the Aspirants in Trent passing by his bed. About 2:00 a.m. he asked for Fr. Peter Vignola – he then expressed the hope that he might be called to heaven on the day dedicated to Mary. He spoke with Fr. Sembianti and told him to exhort his students to be most observant of their vows and to be devoted to Mary and Joseph. Fr. Pizzini and Fr. Tabarelli came and he blessed them – to the latter, he said that his blessing was for always and repeated that several times. Bishop di Canossa came about 6:00 p.m., and blessed the dying Superior General. He was visited by his brother, Francis Lenotti.
- Sep. 05: Sunday – **Fr. John Baptist Lenotti, Superior General, died on his 58th birthday.** His most productive, but too abruptly ended, administration of four years comes to an end. He had opened the first House of the Congregation outside of Verona, in Trent - he was negotiating for a House in Parma – he was carrying on negotiations with the Holy See for Papal Approbation of the Community, and was seeking a Foreign Mission field for the Congregation. Many of his efforts, then, would not

reach fruition for many years to come. He died about the same hour he was born.

- Sep. 06: Fr. Lenotti was waked in the little Oratory of the Immaculate Conception at the Stimate. It was noted that his face was yellowish, but he seemed to be at peace. Fr. Peter Vignola was chosen Vicar until the Congregation could elect a new Superior General.
- Sep. 07: Fr. Lenotti's funeral was held celebrated this morning at the Stimate – 23 Masses were celebrated; Fr. Peter Vignola was celebrant of a High Mass of Requiem – Fr. Giacobbe led the procession from the Stimate to the *Trinità* – the Capuchin Fathers sang the burial service.
- Sep. 08: The newspaper *Riposo Domenicale* contained an article that mourned the three-fold loss to the Church in Verona that year: Fr. Maestrelli [Co-Founder of the Sons of Mary] – Fr. Brazzeli [once a student at the Stimate, became Rector of the Diocesan Seminary] – and Fr. Lenotti – he was described as a Priest who had led 'an immaculate life.'
- Sep. 13: A Memorial Service for Fr. Lenotti was held at St. Lawrence's Church that was conducted by Monsignor Sorego.
- Sep. 20: Fr. Nichola Negrelli, Librarian of Ferdinand of Augsburg, learned of Fr. Lenotti's death from Monsignor Gaspardis, and an article in the *Riposo Domenicale*. He wrote of his sorrow to the Stimate.

1876

- Sep. 05: Paul Gradinati, a Student, eulogized Fr. Lenotti on his first anniversary, in the *Messenger of the Sacred Heart*.

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Fr. Lenotti's Conferences on the "End" of the Congregation to the Novices

Fr. Lenotti's 4TH Conference to the House of Novitiate

COMPENDIUM RUDE

1. The Objective of this Community is to be: Apostolic Missionaries for the service of Bishops.

2. The Manner of Achieving this Goal: [the Apostolic Missionaries are] *to work under the direction of, and dependent on the Ordinaries of those places in which the Missions may be offered. The Missionaries are to be totally submissive to these Bishops, concerning all that pertains to the exercise of their Apostolic endeavor. The Missionaries are to receive beforehand from them their permission, along with the necessary faculties, always observing the guide-lines set down by these Ordinaries concerning the places and the time in the exercise of their apostolate.* [From the Decree of the Sacred Congregation of the Propagation, December 20, 1817].

3. Weapons: The Divine Word and Prayer

The End – The Manner: As the Company of Jesus is with regard to the Pope, we are we towards the Bishops, without binding ourselves by vow to individual Bishops. – *Prepared for all* - The Weapons: the sword of the Word of God and the armament of Prayer. The saying of Fr. Carafa – Exhortation.

Beginning to read our *Original Constitutions*, we read that which our Saintly Founder puts at the forefront.

It is seen clearly that Fr. Bertoni's intention would have to have been that of instituting a Congregation, which like the Company of Jesus is in a special manner dedicated, directed toward the assistance and the dispositions of the Roman Pontiff, would be that of being dedicated and determined in a very special and outstanding manner to the service of Bishops: however, with this difference, that while the professed of the Company of Jesus make a Vow of Obedience to the Pope, our Members do not make the Vow of Obedience to the Bishop, but seek in every way that they can, to help him, to assist him obsequiously, in a particular manner to be dedicated to him. Since it is one matter to vow oneself to the Pope who has the administration of the entire Catholic Church, it is another to be committed to a Bishop in this way. For, by dedicating oneself to a single diocese would mean to restrict also the sphere of our ministry. We would then be *Apostolic Missionaries for the Assistance of a Bishop*, and not of the *Bishops*: indeed a single Bishop could, in such a case, by sending us here and there, now one confrere, and then another, this

would destroy us and consume us. This, then, is the essence of our Institute, its end and the manner of obtaining it¹⁰.

This is a great commitment, as you see well as well as the excellence of this end: to serve¹¹ the Bishops, *whom the Holy Spirit has placed to rule the Church of God* [cf. Ac 20:28]. We are called to be the successors of the Apostles, and companions of all Missionaries dispersed¹² all over the world.

But, as we have said other times, we have to be Missionary-Soldiers, disposed for anything: *parati ad omnia!*¹³. We are called to proceed through the level paths as well as through the steep ascents; we are soldiers in peace as well as at war, in prosperity as well as in adversity and tribulations. We are called, in all of the above, to remain firm at our post, and to defend ourselves from the enemies and to wage combat in the wars of the Lord. Therefore, for this we need weapons.

The principal weapons of the Missionary are two: the Sword of the Divine Word and the Sword of Prayer.

The Sword of the Divine Word: *the sword of the spirit, which is the Word of God* [cf. Ep 6:17]. This is that sword, that is more penetrating than another sword with two cutting edges: *for the Word of God is living and effectual and more piercing than any two-edged sword* [cf. Heb 4:2], which penetrates even to the most intimate part of the soul, and wounds and conquers. And this, my brothers, it is necessary to learn to handle well, with studies and with holy lectures, and to use it well, according to the circumstances: in the confessional, in the prisons, in the pulpit, on the platform, from the altars, in the Exercises, Missions, Oratories, Retreats, familiar

¹⁰ This is a very important text: the model for Fr. Bertoni's *Compendium Rude* seems to have been the *Formula* of the Society of Jesus. The nine numbers of this *Formula*, contain 'Five Chapters', perhaps the original Ignatian jotting: 1. the End of the Company and its Fundamental Regimen; 2. The Special Obedience to the Supreme Pontiff; 3. Obedience within the Company; 4. The Poverty of the Company; 5. Miscellaneous : no specific habit; no service in Choir, etc. Fr. Lenotti's emphasis in this comparison he makes is the special obedience the Stigmatine owed to Bishops [in the plural]. This is the *Stigmatine Modus* - there is an interesting study on the Ignatian *Modus: Appunti di Spiritualità* 12. *El modo nuestro de proceder – il nostro modo d'agire*. [Conference of Fr. General, January 18, 1979. Fr. Stofella has noted that the Founder's CF # 185 articulates the headings left as incomplete sentences in the *Compendium Rude*. It seems that for Fr. Lenotti the essence of the Stigmatine Community is this qualified *obsequium* – service of the Bishops.

¹¹ It may be of some interest to note the Fr. Lenotti renders *in obsequium*, as to serve [cf. also CF # 3]: St. Ignatius wrote his Constitutions in Spanish, and the words; *servir, servicio, servo* recur over 1,000 times. In translating these Constitutions into Latin, the faithful Secretary of St. Ignatius, Fr. Polanco, varied between *servitium* – *auxilium* and *obsequium*. It seems that Ignatius was moved by the Servant of the Lord, that Christ had come to serve, not to be served: cf. Mt 20:28; Mk 10:45; Jn 12:26.

¹² This is Fr. Bertoni's geographical abandonment, *quocumque in dioecesi et mundo!* [cf. CF # 5].

¹³ This is Fr. Marani's oft-repeated motto – and it is interesting to see Fr. Lenotti using it here in a very broad application of the various services to which the Community is committed in the Apostolic Mission – the priestly services very often appear in the plural: *actiones; labores; media; varia et propria ministeria; missiones; munera; opera*.

conversation, etc¹⁴, animating it with the Spirit of the Lord, Who always ought to be in our hearts, so that the inflamed Word might proceed to move and to enkindle the hearts of the faithful.

The other weapon, the other sword is prayer. My brothers, this is what I really want to reaffirm: that we might fix well into our minds the great need we have of prayer and that we would give ourselves over to it with great fervor.

Prayer, as you know, is that canal through which the Lord has determined to give us His graces: prayer is that means which, even alone, obtains all: *and being but one, she can do all things*¹⁵: prayer is the key to God's treasures. It brings a sweet violence to God's heart.

Prayer unites us with God; it fills us with courage, with lights, with strength. What good can we do, both for ourselves as well as for others, if the Lord does not endow us with His help and grace? Our words would be gone with the wind. It was a familiar saying of Fr. Vincent Caraffa that to convert souls, *a good person of prayer is more suited than a most accomplished orator*. He used to call prayer *the proper task in leisure, and the real leisure for one's tasks*.

The Moabites and the Ammonites were congregated against Josaphat, the King of Juda. He did not lose heart, but had recourse to God with all his heart, with his people and his children. They went into battle not with the sound of trumpets and drums to excite the soldiers, but with the Canticle of Praise for the Lord. And God brought it about that the enemies would kill each other among themselves, and none escaped from death. So, the soldiers of Josaphat had no other task other for three whole days than carrying off the very rich spoils. And so, still singing their praises to the Lord, they returned to Jerusalem¹⁶.

¹⁴ Etc.!! – once more *Missions* appear as one part of a list, and not even mentioned first here – Fr. Bertoni offers his list in his Part IX [cf. ## 158-186] of the Constitutions, where he develops in 7 Chapters the *varia et propria ministeria* of our Apostolic Mission. St. Ignatius has three separate lists for his *quodcumque Verbi Dei ministerium*: *Formula # 3*; Part IV, c. 8, nn. 400-414; Part VII, nn. 637-654. The discernment to judge which aspect of these 'varied and proper ministries' of the Apostolic Mission is the law of *magis*, what is more needed, good, universal, the greater glory of God, the larger number of needs [cf. CSJ nn. 622, ff.]. It is hard to understand what is sometimes referred to the Stigmatine lists from the pen of the Founder as a *genericità rischiosa*. St. Gaspar's well remembered visit to the Altar of St. Ignatius [MP, September 15, 1808], speaks of promoting the Glory of God *by the same paths, even thought not in all those manners* [the word here is *modi*] *that he was able to employ...*"Fr. Bertoni also uses here the image of the Word of God as a sword. The Jesuits have a broad spectrum of possible apostolic services – this seems to be the parallel Fr. Lenotti is drawing.

¹⁵ cf. Ws 7:27 – here this text on the fruits of Divine Wisdom is accommodated to Prayer.

¹⁶ Cf. 2 Ch 20:1-30.

So, my brothers, prayer is so necessary to fulfill the scope of our vocation. Let us pray much for our brothers on the Mission¹⁷, and more for the increase and progress of our Congregation. Prayer is our *refuge from the trouble which has encompassed us* [cf. Ps 31:7]. Let us pray much, then, let us trust in God, and He will not fail to bring us help in our needs: *He flew on the wings of the wind* [cf. Ps 17:11]: thus, God flies to respond to whomsoever prays to Him: *I have called upon You... and You have heard me...* [cf. Ps 85:7]¹⁸: *no one has hoped in the Lord and has been confounded...* [cf. Si 2:11].

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¹⁷ It is interesting that Fr. Lenotti has left this word in the singular – in many communities, to be ‘on the Mission, means the men are carrying out their Apostolic tasks for the Lord. The allusion here is to our Stigmatine Apostolic Mission.

¹⁸ Fr. Lenotti has made an accommodated use of this verse: *I have called upon You in the day of my trouble: because You have heard me.* It is close to Ps 4:2: *When I called upon Him...God heard my prayer...*

The Central Ecclesial Service in the Founder's Plan

[A Long Discussion with the Community, started on Fr. Marani's term
as Superior General]

[1] The General Chapters during Fr. Lenotti's term as Superior General [Chapters 1 – 6]

An English translation of the General Chapters 1 – 19 is offered in our Bibliography. Follow a copy of some excerpts corresponding to the Central Ecclesial Service in Founder's Plan.

[2] Proposal from the House of the *Stimmate* to the 5TH General Chapter [Feb. 25-27, 1874]¹⁹

Having invoked divine assistance, the Director explained the reason for the meeting, and he invited those attending, in the order of their seniority, to propose whatever in the Lord, they believed expedient to propose to the Gen. Congregation, for the greater glory of God, for the development of the Congregation, and for the greater profit of its members.

When various proposals had been discussed and formulated, and put to a secret vote, the three following resulted as the ones to be presented to the Gen. Congregation:

1. The Congregation is asked to review the Rules for the special offices of the individual Superiors, for the purpose of avoiding the danger of conflicts.
2. It is asked to open an Elementary, and a High School. If this should not be presently possible, it is asked to look into the possibility of opening at least a High School, for the purpose of:
 - corresponding to one of the principal ends of our Congregation, that was born and flourished with teaching²⁰;
 - corresponding to the desires of the public, which in the present circumstances, is asking for this;
 - avoiding scandal, in having such a large building, without any scope of public benefit – furthermore, because of the statement of our Holy Father, Pius IXth: *For the instruction of the youth, go to any extreme, save sin!*

¹⁹ This early General Chapter clearly saw the importance of the Apostolic Mission of Schools – this would be specifically formalized in the XIth General Chapter of 1890. Fr. Marani was of a different opinion.

²⁰ Clearly, in the minds of these Confreres, teaching is a primary apostolate of the Congregation – both conceptually and historically. It is to be noted that the XIIth General Chapter, in 1890 will continue this ideal – will place 'school' on the same level of as other apostolic endeavors, an essential aspect of the Founder's ideal of the APOSTOLIC MISSION.

3. There is expressed the earnest desire that a greater number of Aspirants might be accepted.

This meeting was adjourned, and all affixed their signatures.

Fr. Peter Vignola, Director

Fr. Joseph Marchesini

Fr. Charles Zara

Fr. Thomas Vicentini

Fr. Louis Morando

Fr. Peter Beltrami

Fr. Lawrence Pizzini

Fr. Lawrence Regatta

This was received today, and placed among the Acts, Feb. 25, 1874.

Fr. John Rigoni, Secret.

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[3] The response from the 5th General Chapter:

The 5th General Chapter went on and this is the conclusion it reached on this matter:

3. Next came the discussion of the 2nd of the three Proposals of the House of the Stimmate, namely, the Proposal of an Elementary and High School, and a Night School, at the Teresians.

The unanimous Congregation, in recognizing the necessity of taking part in public instruction, in order to come to something concrete, accepts the following Proposition, and puts it to a vote:

Proposition

That two individuals, to be designated by the Superior, are to prepare themselves, and present themselves to be approved for High School teaching. Then, as for the time and manner of actuating the Schools, this is left to the Superior with his Council.

This was put to a vote:

Voting	8
Yes	7 votes
No	1 vote

IT WAS PASSED.

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