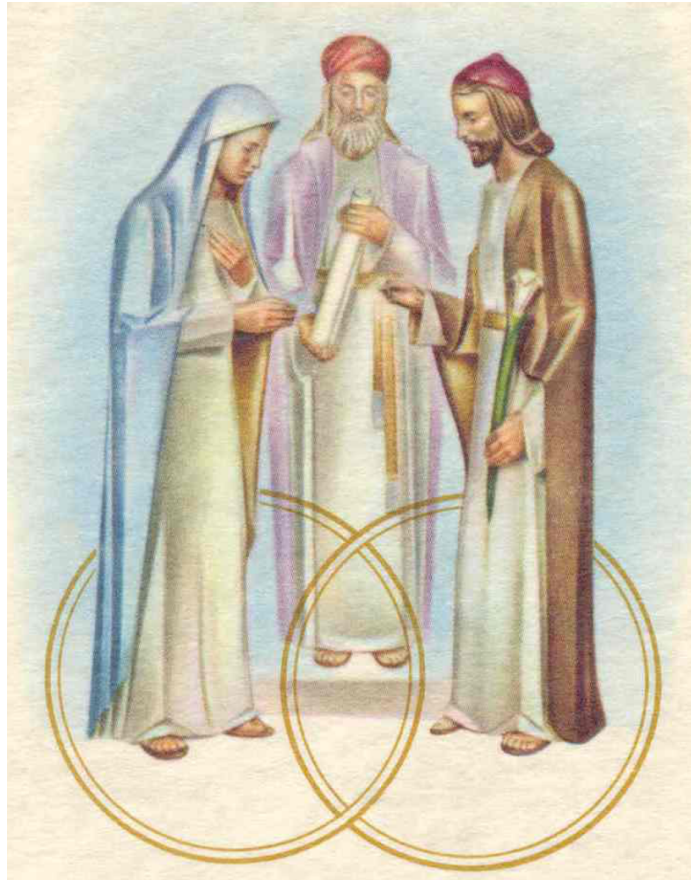


THE STIGMATINE NORTH AMERICAN PROVINCE



Dedicated to the HOLY SPOUSES, MARY and JOSEPH

Volume I

Historical Background and First Foundations

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Rev. Joseph Henchey, CSS

Tereza Lopes [Lay Stigmatine]

On the Solemnity of the Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, 2012

Last revised on Easter Sunday, 2014

PREFACE

[A STIGMATINE HISTORY]

MP: 30th JULY 1808¹

[17.] “For the examination of conscience one should choose a Saint of the same vocation as a mirror. In this way one finds matter for confession every day. Whatever falls short of that Saint's perfection is faulty.”

The Stigmatine Congregation owes its numerical strength and spiritual prosperity to a young priest who, in an era that spawned more dictators and persecutors than even today, braved intolerance and opposition and started a movement to reclaim the souls of the youth of his city.

Gaspar Louis Dennis Bertoni, born in Verona, Italy, on October 9th, 1777, entered its Seminary at the age of 18. Ordained in September 1800, not quite 23 years of age, he was assigned to one of the city's larger parishes where he witnessed a society ravaged by the French Revolution and Napoleon's takeover of Verona. The suffering and neglect – including the dissolution of schools and suppression of religious orders – caused him deep concern, and he decided to combat the evils of his time.

His approach was realistic - concentrate on the youth save them *before* they became hardened in evil. Despite political hostilities, he began the Marian Oratories [not unlike the modern C.P.S.], to provide youth with spiritual, scholastic and material aid, as well as recreation. As his ‘experiment’ spread throughout Verona and eventually all of Italy, other priests came to join him.

Fr. Bertoni organized his priest and brother associates into a society dedicated to assisting Bishops in any field of the Word of God whatsoever, but particularly in conducting preaching, teaching [*Euntes Docete* – Mt 28] - and caring for the education of youth and religious and priestly vocations. On November 4, 1816 – secretly, and without the use of a particular habit – the Congregation of the Sacred Stigmata of our Lord Jesus Christ, known as the ‘Stigmatines’, came into being. The name, representing the Five Wounds of Christ, was chose to reflect their willingness to undertake any work, no matter how difficult for the salvation of souls.

Within two years of Gaspar Bertoni's death [+June 12, 1853], the small community he had founded was given its initial approval by the Holy See – and in 1856, was formally erected as a Religious Congregation.

In the early 20th Century, the Stigmatines answered the call for priests and religious to serve the Italians who had sought a new life in the Americas, uniquely

¹ This the Personal Spiritual Diary of St. Gaspar Bertoni.

through offering local parochial assistance. In 1905, they followed the emigrants to the United States – and in 1910, to South America [Brazil]. At the request of the Holy See, some eventually undertook the special vocation of spreading the faith in the Far East, of China.

From the humble beginning of two priests and one Brother, the Stigmatine Fathers and Brothers have spread significantly in their Apostolic Mission – Italy, United States, Canada, England, Germany, Brazil, Chile, the Ivory Coast, South Africa, Tanzania and Thailand – conducting missions and retreats, teaching in schools, colleges and seminaries, promoting religious and priestly vocations.

Gaspar Bertoni himself was beatified by Pope Paul VIth, at St Peter's in Rome, on November 1, 1975 [a Holy Year] – and exactly 14 years later, Fr. Bertoni was canonized by Pope John Paul II – and now, may rightfully be called 'Saint Gaspar Bertoni!'

†

MP: 26th FEBRUARY 1809

[113.] We must make in ourselves a portrait of Jesus Christ.

Rev. Joseph Henchey, CSS

2012

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PRESENTATION

The Chronicle of the Stigmatine American Province is the history of the 20th century in the United States from our perspective. This was a stormy period for the Catholic Church, due to '**Americanism**', and its doctrinal rejection of Pope Leo XIII – and due to the '**Italian Problem**', [cf. the classic, *The Madonna on 115th Street*], noted by sociologists regarding the influx of Italian immigrants to the USA. The Stigmatines came to the New World in 1905, and by the year 2000, the Community showed clear signs of petering out. However, some important work was done - and some wonderful people passed through our open doors in these nearly 100 years.

By and large, the history of the Stigmatines in the United States is the history of numerous small Italian parishes and these stretched from Vancouver BC to Manassas and Woodbridge, VA - from Timmins and South Porcupine, Ontario in Canada, to a small shrine in the Ozarks out in Arkansas - from Salute Ste Marie in Canada, an Information Center and retreat house - to conducting the diocesan seminary in Guam. The community ran a summer camp, had a wide variety of houses of formation: Waltham primarily - Newton MA, Waterville NY to Wellesley MA, Springfield MA to White Plains NY, the Rectory there serving for less than a year as a Novitiate. The Province provided a flourishing retreat house for many years.

While there was not unmitigated success, many good Stigmatines from the United States served as Apostolic Missionaries in China, Thailand, Brazil - the Province provided good men for Hospital and Military chaplaincies.

Presently, a 'small remnant' continues the Stigmatine life in the USA under a special legislation, in the retirement house in Waltham MA - and two parishes, one where the Province began [Mount Carmel, Springfield MA] - and Sacred Heart in Milford MA - and with a reduced Provincial Council membership, and a very limited participation in the General Chapters of every six years.

This present Province Chronicle is planned for five substantial 'volumes':

Volume	Contents	Community / Mission	Location
Volume I	Historical Background & First Foundations	Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church	Hazleton PA
		St. Lucy Church	Scranton PA
		Our Lady of Pompeii Church	Milwaukee WI

Volume II	OLMC Churches	Our Lady of Mount Carmel	Springfield MA
		St. Ann	West Springfield MA
		St. Anthony of Padua	Agawam MA
		St. Joseph	East Longmeadow, MA
		Assumption	Ludlow, MA
		Our Lady of Mount Carmel All Souls	Pittsfield MA
		Our Lady of Mount Carmel Assumption	White Plains NY

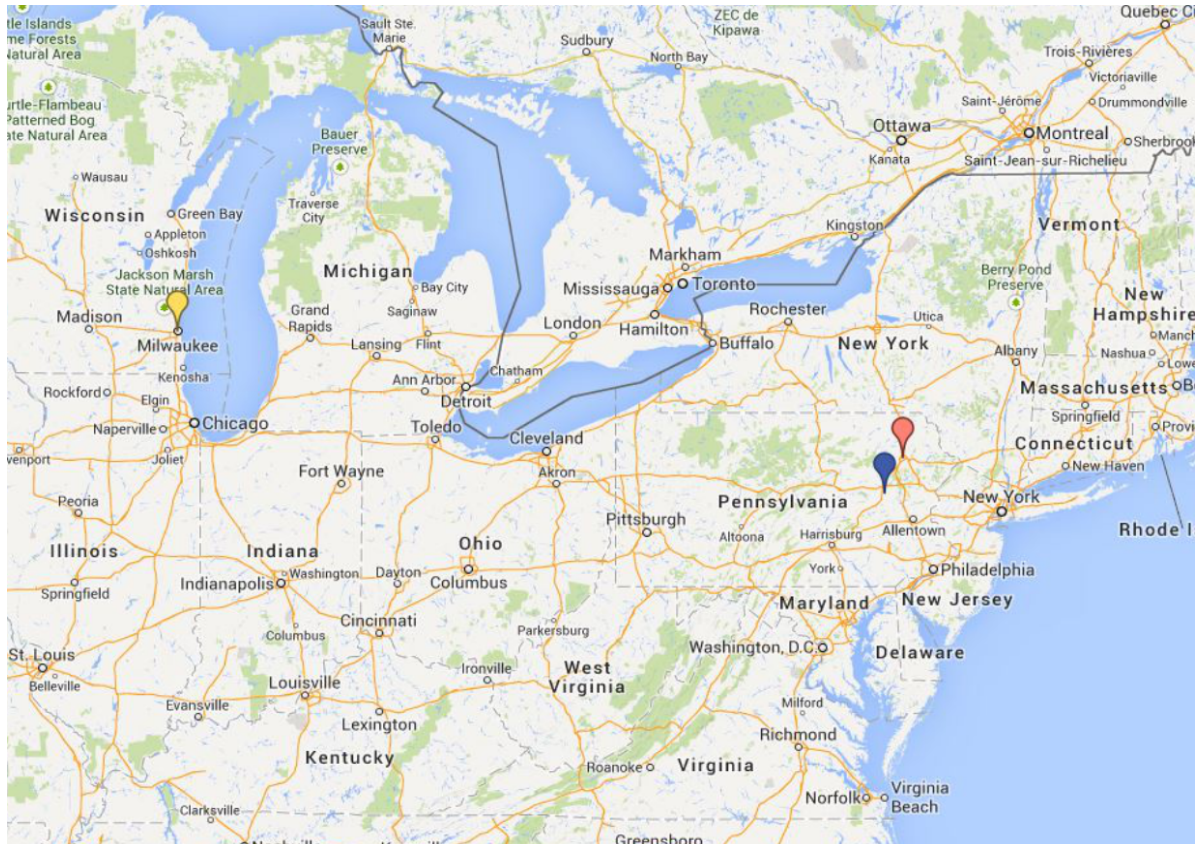
Volume III	Sacred Heart Churches	Sacred Heart	Waltham MA
		Holy Family	East Lynn MA
		St. Francis	West Lynn MA
		Sacred Heart	Milford MA
		Sacred Heart	Feeding Hills MA
		Sacred Heart	S. Timmins ON Canada
		St. Joachim	S. Porcupine ON Canada
		Sacred Heart	Vancouver BC Canada

Volume IV	Other Churches & Houses	Espousal Center	Waltham MA
		Retirement House ["Cape Cod"]	West Yarmouth MA
		Our Lady of the Angels	Woodbridge VA
		All Saints	Manassas VA
		Our Lady of the Ozarks	Winslow AK
		Information Centre	Sault Ste Marie ON Canada
		St. Joseph the Worker Church	

Volume V	Houses of Formation	The Stigmatine Fathers Juniorate	Waltham MA
		The Stigmatine Fathers Juniorate and Provincialate	Milford MA
		The Stigmatine Fathers Minor House of Studies ['Elm Bank']	Wellesley MA
		The Stigmatine House of Studies	Watertown MA
		House of Formation and Provincialate	Newton MA
		House of Formation and Provincialate [Maple Street]	Springfield MA
		House of Formation	Cromwell, CT
		Summer Camp for Students ['Camp Wyoma']	Hinsdale MA
		Our Lady of Guadalupe Novitiate	Waterville NY
		Our Lady of Guadalupe Novitiate	Timmins ON Canada
		The Stigmatine Fathers Major House of Studies	Washington DC
	Professorship	University and Seminary	Several locations
	Foreign Missions	Province Mary the Morning Star	Thailand
		Provinces of Holy Cross & St. Joseph	Brazil
		China	China
		Guam	Guam
		Philippines	Philippines
	Vocations		
	Ministries		
	Stigmatine Laity		
	Conclusion		

These five volumes are preceded by the General Introduction Volume, and succeeded by the Personalities Volume.

And this is the location of the Stigmatine foundations covered in this Volume I:



Hazleton, PA
[1st Foundation]

OLMC Church
212 West Walnut St.
Hazleton, PA 18201

Founder:
Rev. Anthony Dalla Porta, C.P.S.
Stigmatines: 1912 - 1914



Scranton, PA

St. Lucy Church
94 Scranton Street,
Scranton, PA

Founder:
Rev. Anthony Dalla Porta, C.P.S.
Stigmatines: 1913 - 1914



Milwaukee, WI
[Church demolished in
1967]

Pompeii Church
North Jackson Street
Milwaukee, WI

Founder:
Rev. Lodovico Luchi, C.P.S.
Stigmatines: 1913 - 1922

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

A. The Stigmatine Background

1. St. Gaspar Bertoni's broad interpretation of the Apostolic Mission, following St. Ignatius²

Apostolic, Geographic and Personal Holy Abandonment:

The Stigmatine Founder's ideal was based on the rule of St. Ignatius of Loyola and his broad interpretation of the Apostolic Mission – yet, St. Gaspar Bertoni did not presume to present every mode of the Jesuit charism, such as universities – St. Gaspar Bertoni never thought that Stigmatines would operate one. However all this may be, from St. Gaspar Bertoni's Original Constitutions, we may concentrate on several ideals upon which he insisted: quicumque [each and every member]; quocumque [anywhere in the Diocese and in the world] and quodcumque [each and every aspect of the ministry of the Word of God]:

[a] **QUICUMQUE** - each and every Stigmatine shares in Christ's own Mission

Jn 20 provides for us, Stigmatines, a profound biblical and theological reflection on our Charism. The **Sorrowful Stigmata** of Good Friday, and the **Lord's Passion and Death for our Salvation**, became the **Glorious Stigmata of Easter night – the Epiphany of the Risen Christ; the Epiphany of the Holy Spirit and the Sacrament of Reconciliation** [according to Trent]. As the Father has sent Jesus in his Personal Mission, in the manifestation of the Signs of His Resurrection, Jesus shows us that He is sending **each and everyone of the Baptized to continue His own Personal Apostolic Mission. Each of the Baptized is 'sent'**: Jn 20 is indeed a summit of Johannine Christology. All channels together to present Jesus His central place in the Father's plan. The account seems to have been composed to provide Jesus with His rightful place as 'the Risen Lord'. His is the initiative, He commands, He orders, He defends and He sends each and everyone on His own Mission. He 'explains' His unique relationship to the Father; He 'gives' His own Holy Spirit. Jesus is at the center of the Confessions of Faith It is thanks to His coming that one comes to profess the ever challenging Paschal faith – it is to Him we are indebted for the bestowal of eternal life³.

With this insight we also learn that although there is **one priesthood** in Jesus Christ, believers are invited to share in this according to their vocation in faith: there is the **ministerial priesthood** [cf. Vatican II: PO; OT], the sacrament of Holy Orders – and

² Co-author's note: Fr. Henchey is author of an extensive study of the Original Constitutions of St. Gaspar Bertoni, published in the website: "A Tribute to St. Gaspar Bertoni", under Stigmatines / Original Constitutions (<http://st-bertoni.com/original-constitutions>).

³ Fabien Blanquart, *Le premier Jour. Étude sur Jn 20*. Paris: du Cerf 'Lectio Divina' 146, p. 168

there is the priesthood of the Baptized – according to which all of us are enabled to make a liturgy of our lives by living them according to the mind of Christ Jesus - we are called to make an oblation of our lives to the Mercy of God [the Latin Vulgate here is: *obsequium*].

[b] **QUODCUMQUE – any ministry whatsoever of the Word of God**
[Pars IXa]

From the Founder's original rule, it is very evident that St. Gaspar Bertoni hoped that the **Apostolic Missionaries would appear in different countries of the world - quocumque in Diocese et mundo!** Some of this early malaise is due to this failure – despite that fact that Fr. Lenotti [1871-1875] had readied an international Mission Band. This 'internationality' is the heart of the Apostolic Mission as is presented clearly by St. Gaspar in Part IX of his Constitutions.

[c] **QUOCUMQUE - anywhere in the Diocese and World**

But, **Parishes [CF # 290] directly prohibited** - despite the broad scope offered by St. Gaspar, the Congregation often restricted itself to one major apostolate to the detriment of the many presented.

The Apostolic Missionary is Always 'on the move', no lasting home:

END OF THE CONGREGATION [PURPOSE] [CATECHISM]

In General

- conversion of souls	55	255	262
- salvation of souls	262		
- apostolic, dealing with others	273		
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- <i>graviora</i>	158	185	262		
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- <i>varia et propria</i>	185				

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- Spiritual Exercises	73	163/4	182		

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- goodness of habits	167				
- schools	166				
- education of <i>rudes</i>	37	72	165	182	
- Oratories for the young, uneducated	165				
- correction of bad habits	163/2				

Spiritual Means

- detachment	267				
- helps the General End	79				
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- of the work willed by God	185				
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- of virtues & gifts of the H. Sp.	223				
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- spiritual P.		47	
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- levels of membership		158, ff.	
- <i>graviora</i> [cf. END; MINISTRIES]		158	185 262

2. The Context of the Congregation preceding to the American Mission

Series of the General Chapters [1871 – 1911]

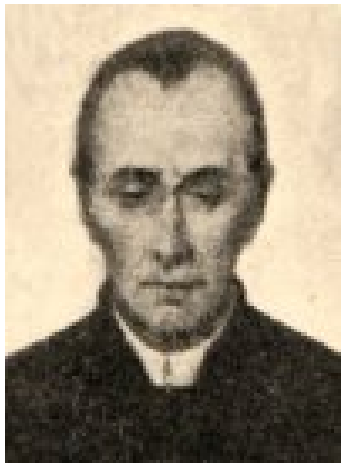
<u>PLACE</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>CAPITULARS</u>	<u>ACTS</u>	<u>SUPERIOR</u>
1. Verona-Massalongo	3-5 July 1871	13	Elec. of Sup.	J.B.Lenotti
2. Verona- <i>Stimmate</i>	11-13 Sept. 1871	16	Change Const.	
3. Verona- <i>Stimmate</i>	4-6 Oct. 1871	10	Sup. for 10 Years	J.B. Lenotti
4. Verona- <i>Stimmate</i>	9-10 Sept. 1872	8	Business	
5. Verona- <i>Stimmate</i>	25 Feb-2 Mar 1874	8	Business	
6. Verona- <i>Stimmate</i>	5 Aug. 1874	6	Business	
7. Verona- <i>Stimmate</i>	26-30 Oct. 1875	6	Elec. of Sup.	P. Vignola
8. Verona- <i>Stimmate</i>	26 Sept-4 Oct 1876	10	Business	
9. Verona- <i>Stimmate</i>	17-24 Feb. 1880	16	Business	
10. Verona- <i>Stimmate</i>	16-26 Feb 1881	14	Business	
11. Verona- <i>Stimmate</i>	12-25 Sept. 1889	17	Change Const.	
12. Verona- <i>Stimmate</i>	24 Sep-3 Oct 1890	24	Change Const.	
13. Verona- <i>Stimmate</i>	23-24 Apr. 1891	12	Business	
14. [I] Verona- <i>Stimmate</i>	24-28 Sept. 1891	11	Elec. of Sup.	P. Gurisatti
15. [II] Roma – <i>S. Nicola dei Prefetti</i>	21-24 Sept. 1896	15	Business	
16. [III]Verona- <i>Stimmate</i>	23-25 Sept. 1901	18	Elec. of Sup.	P. Gurisatti
17. [IV]Verona- <i>Stimmate</i>	18-20 Sept. 1906	20	Business	
18. [V] Verona- <i>Stimmate</i>	20-23 Sept. 1911	18	Elec. of Sup.	J. B. Tomasi

[NB: Roman numerals noted in Chapter 14-18. in parentheses [] denote the order of the Chapters after the Institute was approved].

The First Father Generals:⁴



John Mary Marani
Lived: 1790 - † 1871 (Age 81)
Superior General: 1855 - 1871



John Baptist Lenotti
Lived: 1817 - † 1875 (Age 58)
Superior General: 1871 - 1875



Peter Vignola
Lived: 1812 - † 1891 (Age 79)
Superior General: 1875 - 1891



Pio Gurisatti
Lived: 1848 - † 1921 (Age 73)
Superior General: 1891 - 1911



John Baptist Tomasi
Lived: 1866 - † 1954 (Age 88)
Superior General: 1911 - 1922

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⁴ A short biography of the first Father Generals can be found in the General Appendix (Volume VI).

a. The Prime Scope: Fr. Lenotti sharply contrasts with Fr. Marani

St. Gaspar Bertoni established a ‘clerical’ institute [cf. CF ## 49; 161] meaning that the prime scope of the charism is **priestly ministry** and all that can assist that being fulfilled. Each Stigmatine shares directly in the Apostolic Mission as understood by St. Gaspar Bertoni according to his common and personal vocation.

In the early General Chapters, we find recurring lists of the personnel - and we note that the majority of the confreres were either from Verona or Trent. As St. Stephen noted for the early Church, Fr. John Baptist Lenotti, 2nd successor of St. Gaspar, was limited to the shortest term, dying on his 54th birthday, September 5, 1875, is sharply contrasted with his predecessor, Fr. John Mary Marani, who wanted **all the Stigmatines to live in the same house, and to carry out the one apostolate, Parish Missions** – it was Fr. Marani who added the restrictive, **praeter missione** - whenever he presented Fr. Bertoni’s broad scope of apostolic service.

In other words, **Fr. Marani held that Parish Missions were the primary scope and everything else could be undertaken only after this scope could be realized.** In Fr. Lenotti’s very short and somewhat uncertain term of office, he had already formed a kind of **Mission Band**, studying the various languages to proceed beyond Verona, beyond Italy. Unfortunately, this dream took 30 years to realize due to the premature deaths of the Superior General Himself and some of his chosen ‘missionaries’.

A catalogue of the Congregation at this time was appended to the Minutes of the 4th General Chapter is presented in the Appendix 3.

b. Some of our Early Stigmatines in Troubles

[1] Fr. Francis Sogaro ‘s Resignation [1874]

Through letters from year 1874, Fr. Sogaro requests dispensation from the obligations he had taken in the Stigmatine Congregation, claiming **“he was oppressed with the need for another life”, and “his earnest desire of dedicating himself to the Foreign Missions”**.

The matter was discussed in the 6th General Chapter [August 5, 1874], that decided to release him.

Documents are presented in the Appendix 6.

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[2] Fr. Joseph Sembianti’s Resignation [1879 – 1890]

Fr. Joseph Sembianti was indeed a most valued member of the early community. He left with Fr. Dominic Vicentini, and joined the Scalabrini

Fathers – and they became the Vicar General and the Superior General of the Scalabrini Fathers - providing later on our first foundation in Brazil, **TIBAGY!**

In his letters presented here in the Appendix 7, he manifests a long record of some dissatisfaction.

[3] Fr. Dominic Vicentini's Resignation [1890]



Fr. Dominic Vicentini
1847 - † 1927

Fr. Dominic Vicentini: is another multi-talented early member, who was painfully moved to leave the Congregation – for his stated reasons that after near of century of life [1816-1890], the Stigmatines still did not have a foreign field in which to exercise the Founder's integral ideal of the Apostolic Mission. Among the Chapter documents, we find a number of communications from Fr. Vicentini, presented here in the Appendix 8.

[4] Frs. J. Marrocchi and J. Baptist Cavinato's Resignation [1890]

Their dispensation was discussed in the 12th General Chapter (24 Sep-3 Oct 1890).

The documents are presented here in the Appendix 9.

[5] Brother Emil Giuliani [fugitive - 1890]

Responding to the formal request of Brother Emil Giuliani, who was already fugitive for 2 years, the 12th General decided for his release of the Congregation, on October 3, 1890.

The documents are presented here in the Appendix 10.

[6] Fr. Andrew Sterza – inner turmoil [1880 - 1891]

Even the great Fr. Andrea Sterza, **preacher *extraordinaire* of the Parish Missions**, who would die at the young age of just 50, after perhaps more than three hundred parish Missions – seems to have suffered some malaise. His case was discussed in the 9th General Chapter [Feb. 17-25, 1880].

The documents are presented here in the Appendix 11.

[7] Fr. Michael Lanaro [health reasons] [1875]

Fr. Michael Lanaro asked to be released from his Community obligations due to health reasons – his letter was considered in the 7th General Chapter [Oct. 26-30, 1875].

The documents are presented here in the Appendix 12.

c. The strong prohibition of taking charge of Parishes and Religious Women

One real surprise in our Stigmatine history is that among the strongest prohibitions in the Founder's original rule was that of not accepting to take charge of parishes and religious women:

CF ## 290; 4: here is another special injunction regarding women; in general [cf. **CF ## 105; 108; 114; 290**] - and specifically, the perpetual care of parishes and religious women [cf. **CF ## 4; 290**]. For Fr. Suarez⁵, his **nn. 15 & 16** here⁶, refer back to his **Book I**⁷, but are explained here. This moderation explained here is especially regarding women. And firstly, the Society does not assume the care of nuns.' This is spelled out by St. Ignatius in the VIth Part of his Constitutions:

Likewise, because the members of this Society ought to be ready at any hour to go to some other parts of the world where they may be sent by the sovereign pontiff, or their own superiors, they ought not to take a curacy of souls, and still less ought they to take charge of religious women, or any other women whatever to be their confessors regularly or to direct them. However, nothing prohibits them in passing from hearing the confessions of a whole monastery for special reasons [CSJ n. 588].

The basic reason is given by Suarez on his next page: even though the spiritual care of souls is ordained to their spiritual salvation, this is nonetheless not accommodated to the end and the institution of the Society of Jesus. For not all cares, or solicitude which are ordered toward even the spiritual care of their neighbors are fitting for the Society of Jesus - both because of the sheer number of ministries [for not all of these can be satisfied by any one community]; and then also there are those ministries which bear with them certain obligations, and bonds which are repugnant to the central intention of the Society of Jesus. And principal among these is the

⁵ Fr. Francis Suarez [1548-1612] was a Jesuit priest who wrote commentaries on St. Ignatius's Constitutions, and in his Book IX St. Gaspar based the Part IX of the Constitutions for the Stigmatine Congregation. Further information on him may be found in the General Appendix (Volume VI).

⁶ Cf. Suarez, o.c., pp. 1049 b, bottom, ff.

⁷ cf. Suarez, Book I, Chapter 3; n. 13 - pp. 574, b, f.

perpetual care of souls which would excessively impede the workers of the Society, as it is necessary for them to be of the number of the more faithful and the more suited to going throughout the whole world, and they are ordained for this purpose.

Suarez adds a further reason here [n. 16]⁸: the monasteries of such contemplative nuns ought to be directed by those religious under whose rules they live, and the general institute of which they observe. Thus, the Nuns of St. Clare would not easily be directed by the Order of Preachers, and so on. According to the institute of the Society, it is proper to men, so that it cannot accommodate women. The reason is that the Company is not only ordered to contemplating, nor is it principally and of itself ordered toward austerity of life, nor to praying the Psalms together, nor to manual labor - nor lastly, to any of those ends which may be common to both men and women. The Society of Jesus is instituted for spiritual ministries, such as those which by women cannot, and should not be done - and for this purpose, Jesuits have a purpose and a rule accommodated to this lifestyle. As a result, they cannot easily set up monasteries of women, which would live under the rules of the Society, but it is required that Jesuits have a greatly different lifestyle. So, rightly the Society needs to abstain from the government and the care of women.

As for women in general, Suarez' title for n. 17⁹ reads: 'And indeed neither does the Society accept the care of secular women. Why this is so.' Suarez responds why there should not be any mutual bond between a Jesuit and any woman. A religious of the Society of Jesus, by his own institute, may never be constituted as the proper priest of any women, even though they are not connected to any religious family, because they have a totally other life-style. The Jesuit would be obliged out of justice to minister the sacraments to them. The ancient Jesuit prescriptions for priests [n. 19] reads: 'That no one shall assume the care of particular persons, especially women, and even though in his role as confessor, the Jesuit may impose a penance in the life of a woman, **he will not agree to accept the obedience of any person.**'¹⁰ This rule pertains not only to women - and Suarez quotes on the next page how this is also an old Franciscan rule.

Suarez' n. 18¹¹ has as its title: 'Even when ministry toward women is admitted in the Society of Jesus, it demands certain circumstances: Mature age. Brief and serious discourse. In a conspicuous place.' This seems to have been summarized by Fr. Bertoni in **CF # 281**: prudence, circumspection, and a careful selection of ministers. Fr. Bertoni's summary of all this reads now as his **CF # 290**:

⁸ cf. Suárez, o.c., p. 1050 a.

⁹ cf. Suarez, o.c., p. 1050 b, f.

¹⁰ **NB**: These words are explicitly cited by Fr. Bertoni as his conclusion to CF # 290: ... *neque ullius [personae] obedientiam admittat*.

¹¹ This next number provides the qualities needed in the priest who would conduct this ministry among women. And this is found in Fr. Bertoni's CF # 281. [cf. Suarez, o.c., p. 1051 a & b, top].

‘Moreover, since it has been stated from the beginning that our Congregation does not admit the ordinary care of souls, this is to be understood not only with regard for the community of secular men, and especially for monasteries and congregations of religious women. But, this further implies that no confrere will accept there will assume this ordinary care of certain men, or especially of women, almost out of a mutual duty and obligation of one toward the other, nor is there to be admitted the obedience of any person.’

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3. Early Chapter Proposal for 5th General Chapter, 1875

[Early discussions on Stigmatine ‘Purpose’]

In recent years, the Stigmatines who have studied our history seriously have landed somewhat unilaterally on **the rather difficult 12th General Chapter [September 24 – October 3, 1890]**. Some of our studious members consider this Meeting as the cause of a number of confreres [in the view of a percentage of the community today] deciding to leave the Congregation. This was interpreted by some as largely due to Fr. Riccardo Tabarelli’s¹² insistence on **schools as equal to other aspects** of the *varia et propria ministeria* - to which the Congregation is clearly committed in the Founder’s Original Constitutions [cf. **CF, PARS IXa**].



Fr. Richard Tabarelli
1850 - † 1909

However, after a study of the Early General Chapters, this ideal was already the wording of a proposal 15 years earlier, for the **5th General Chapter [Feb. 25-27, 1874]**, representing the general consensus among the confreres.

¹² Fr. Richard Tabarelli taught for many years Philosophy and Theology to our professed students. He concluded the procedures of approbation of our Institute by the Holy See. In his illustrious Roman teaching years, among his students may be numbered Eugenio Pacelli and Angelo Joseph Ronconi. Further information on him may be found in the General Appendix (Volume VI).

... The Year 1874

**Proposals
of Individuals and Chapters
for the Vth Gen. Congregation**

**In the name of the Lord. Amen. ¹³
Verona, February 24, 1874**

Having assembled at the invitation of Fr. Director, those having a vote among the Apostolic Missionaries at the House of the *Stimate* in Verona, to express in Chapter, that which they would desire to be discussed in the Gen. Congregation, that is to be held in the very near future. These Rev. Fathers were present:

- Peter Vignola, Director ¹⁴
- Joseph Marchesini
- Charles Zara
- Thomas Vicentini
- Louis Morando
- Peter Beltrami
- Lawrence Pizzini
- Lawrence Rigatti

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:

¹³ The 1st Proposal is from the House Chapter at the *Stimate*. It was presented on large, un-lined paper, much like manila, drawing paper, measuring 17 x 12. It is folded in half, leaving four sides 8 and one half by 12. The Proposals of the *Stimate* are written only on the left hand side of the 1st page, in very small, but legible hand-writing. It seems to have been folded over again, possibly for insertion into an envelope.

¹⁴ In this signing, the name *Vignola* on this line, crosses out something else, that had been written there previously – most likely, by Fr. Vignola himself.

- [1st] corresponding to one of the principal ends of our Congregation, that was born and flourished with teaching ¹⁵;
- [2nd] corresponding to the desires of the public, which in the present circumstances, is asking for this;
- [3rd] 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!*

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 Rigatti

This was received today, and placed among the Acts, Feb. 25, 1874.
 Fr. John Rigoni, Secret.

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4. Fr. Lenotti's Mission Band ends because of his premature death

This more universal understanding of the Apostolic Mission is more clear in Fr. Lenotti's time as Superior General [1871-1875]. He was preparing a Mission Band – of young priests [e.g., Fr. T. Vicentini, and others] dedicated to learning languages – English, Danish, etc. – with the express purpose of sending Stigmatines beyond Italy and Europe, even Sweden. With Fr. Lenotti's premature death in 1875, this great dream of the *quocumque in mundo* did not begin to be realized until 1905 and 1910, when Stigmatines came to the New World for the first time – and not until 1925, when they went to the Far East.

¹⁵ 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**.

Many of the difficulties in the stormy 12th General Chapter in 1890 were that a number of the men wanted a much broader interpretation of the Apostolic Mission, in accord with the *Original Constitutions*. A number of the men ardently desired to go to Africa [e.g. Frs. D. Vicentini, Joseph Sembiani]. The dispute at that time was not so much the schools as such – but that the schools were receiving almost unilateral emphasis. The Founder's vision was ***quocumque in diocesi et mundo!***

In his earlier Instructions to the Novices, Fr. Lenotti expressed himself in this manner:

... G. B. Lenotti, "*Finis: Missionari Apostolici in Obsequium Episcoporum*", in: ***Collectanea Stigmatina. Collezione di documenti e studi riservata agli Stigmatini***. Roma: Curia Generalizia 1961, pp. 408, ff.: "***... Si vede chiaro che l'intendimento del P. Bertoni deve essere stato di istituire una Congregazione, la quale, come la Compagnia di Gesù e' in modo speciale dedicata, indirizzata all'ossequio e alle disposizioni del Romano Pontefice, avesse ad essere dedicata e determinata in modo tutto speciale e segnalato al servizio ed ossequio dei Vescovi ... I Nostri non facciano il voto di obbedienza al Vescovo, ma cerchino in ogni guisa che possano aiutarlo, assisterlo ossequiosamente, in modo particolare a lui dedicati ... Due le principali armi del Missionario: la spada della Divina Parola e la spada dell'Orazione... La Spada della Divina parola: ... nel confessionale, nelle carceri, sul pergamo, sul palco, dagli altari, negli Esercizi, Missioni, Oratori, Ritiri, conversazioni familiari, ecc., animandola dallo Spirito del Signore...***"

Summary

A much broader view may be offered by pondering the early General Chapters and their Decrees and decisions to show that there was a certain rather general malaise wide-spread among the confreres. Independent of the later emphasis of Fr. Tabarelli and insistence on **schools** as part of the Founder's original plan [as promoted again by the 12th General Chapter in 1890], it is easily noted that the unrest was fairly common among many of the confreres.

Remarkably, in the establishment of the first Province outside of Italy, only one apostolate was encouraged – that of parishes for Italian immigrants. The ugly rumor in vogue around the Province for years was that these parishes were a means of financing the development of the Stigmatine works in Italy.

At any rate, any unilateral insistence on one apostolate over another has always meant trouble, lack of enthusiasm - knowing full well that the Founder's Constitutions are crystal clear in this with multiple other suggestions and challenges.

It is hard to measure what the impact in our history has been this unilateral insistence on the conducting of these 'Italian Parishes' throughout our history in the USA.

It does seem, however, that the Founding of the US Province of Stigmatines in some way **was also reaction to the troubles among the membership already raging in the Community, prior, during and subsequent to the General Chapter of 1890.** This is the context out of which the U.S. Province of Stigmatines came into being.

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B. The American Background

Early in the XXth Century



Theodore Roosevelt [1858-1919], the youngest President of America, at age of 42, in 1901. He was the 26th President of the United States [1901-1909]. He was one of the greatest, most innovative and rebellious presidents in United States history.



Pope Leo XIII [1810-1903] was the 256th Pope of the Roman Catholic Church, reigning from 1878 to 1903. He was the oldest Pope (reigning until age of 93), and had the fourth longest Pontificate, behind St. Peter, his immediate predecessor Pius IX and John Paul II.

Outline:

The Americanism

A fuzzy modernistic interpretation of the Word of God – and, in general, the role of ecclesiastical authority over the interpretation of faith and morals.

The ‘Italian Problem’

Massive Italian emigration to the ‘New World’	Italy divided in small ‘countries’	Most Italian men traditionally did not go to Church
- since the last 20 years of the ‘old century’	- with varying dialets, hard for others to understand	- very little financial support for the Church in the New World
- never accompanied by a sufficient number of Italian priests	- many Italian priests from one region did not understand those faithful of another region	- while in Italy government was paying large subsidies to the Catholic Church

Prologue: The Scenery Early in the XXth Century

While making no claim for any expertise in either of these two ‘movements’ that were much in vogue at the very time [early in the 20th century] when the Stigmatines were moving westward out of Europe toward the United States of America [1905] and toward Brazil [1910]¹⁶. The two Provinces fared quite differently – in the United States, there are less than 20 Stigmatines still left – while Brazil has two active Provinces – with over 100 active members and several dynamic bishops and several retired bishops.

Whatever may be the reasons for this disparity, our duty here is to present these two realities that have graced the pages of Spiritual Theology [Americanism] – and the History of the Catholic Church in the United States. A key article regarding this latter is entitled: “The ‘Italian Problem’ in the Catholic Church of the United States [1880-1900]”¹⁷. With no claim to expertise in either matter – and admitting that even the historians of these two movements have widely divergent interpretations of them and their impact on the American Church – they are mentioned here simply because they did exist and have been studied by competent theologians and historians: the

¹⁶ A summary of the early times of the Stigmatines in Brazil is presented in Appendix 16.

¹⁷ cf. Rev. Henry J. Browne, in: *Historical Records and Studies*. 35 [1946], pp. 46-72

view presented here is that they did have something of a negative effect on the early Stigmatines' efforts in the United States.

With the new century, the dawning of the 20th, the United States had in office its youngest sitting President, Theodore Roosevelt – full of exuberance of the role he deeply believed destiny was asking the United States to play in history. Simultaneously, across the seas, was Leo XIIIth who was nearing his 90th birthday – having been elected to the Papacy [1879] at the age of 68, just about the time when the massive emigration toward the United States was beginning. He was recently surpassed by Blessed John Paul II as the third longest reigning Pontiff: St. Peter; Blessed Pius IXth; Blessed John Paul II – and Pope Leo XIII [1879-1903].

The 'New World' beckoned to the young of heart, to the adventurous as well as to the Missionary – those challenged by the terrible poverty of Italy – and emigration from Italy reached enormous numbers precisely in these years, the last 20 years of the 'old century'. The 'old world' thought of the United States as the image of 'the Gay '90's', the 'Far West', or even the 'Wild West' – the United States remained classified as a "Missionary territory", directly under the Congregation of the Propagation of the Faith until 1911! However, with the dawning of the 20th century, a new era was dawning - financial opportunities seemed to be abounding as well as religious challenges. **Americanism** was a fuzzy Modernistic interpretation of the Word of God – and in general, the role of ecclesiastical authority over the interpretation of faith and morals.

The second difficulty is known to U.S. Church historians as the '**Italian Problem**'. Italy had been divided once into small countries, with varying dialects, hard for others to understand, separated by the divisive Vatican State. This enormous emigration from Italy, by and large, was not accompanied by Italian priests – the few Italian priests who came were never sufficient – and further, many from one region did not understand those faithful of another region. For a very large part of them, Italian men traditionally did not go to Church – this was left to the women and the children until a certain age [Confirmation?]. In this setting, very little financial support could be encouraged for the Church in the New World, as in Italy the government was paying huge subsidies to the Catholic Church.

We will present these two conflicting difficulties here, and perhaps any eventual reader of these pages will be at least made aware of them.

1. "Americanism"

[D-S ## 3340-3346]

[Not to be confused with Americanism (ideology)]

Coined in the nineteenth century, in Roman Catholic use the term Americanism referred to a group of related heresies which were defined as the endorsement of the absolute separation of church and state. It was thought that these doctrines were held by and taught by many members of the Catholic hierarchy in the United States in the 1890s. Catholic leaders in the U.S. denied they held these views.

The Americanist heresy is characterized as an insistence upon individual initiative [an in-bred 'Declaration of Independence']:

... For this Law that I enjoin on you today is not beyond your strength, or beyond your reach. It is not in heaven, so you need to wonder: 'Who will go up to heaven for us and bring it down to us, so that we may hear it and keep it?' Nor is the (Law) beyond the seas, so that you need to wonder: 'Who will cross the seas for us and bring it back to us, so that we may hear and keep it?' No, the Word is very near to you, it is in your mouth and in your heart for your observance...- [Dt. 30:11, ff.].

Some circles of the highest level in the Vatican judged this movement to be incompatible with what was considered to be a fundamental principle of Catholicism: obedience to authority. Moreover, some of the Church conservatives distrusted and disliked the democratic ideas that were dominant in America.

Pope Leo XIII wrote against these ideas in his encyclical (*Testem Benevolentiae Nostrae*) to Cardinal James Gibbons. In 1898 Leo XIII lamented an America where church and state are "dissevered and divorced," and wrote of his preference for a closer relationship between the Catholic Church and the State, along European lines.

a. Americanism in Europe

During the French Third Republic (which began in 1870), the power and influence of French Catholicism steadily declined. The French government passed laws bearing more and more stringently on the Church, and the majority of French citizens did not object. Indeed, they began to look toward legislators and not to the clergy for guidance.

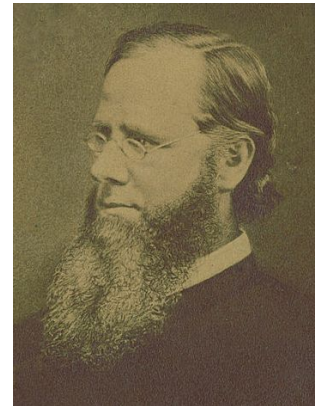
Observing this, and encouraged by the action of Pope Leo XIII, who, in 1892 called on French Catholics loyally to accept the Republic, several young French priests set themselves to stop the decline in Church power. They determined that because the Church was predominantly sympathetic to the monarchists and hostile to the Republic, and because it held itself aloof from modern philosophies and practices, people had turned away from it. The progressive priests believed that the Church did too little to cultivate individual character, and put too much emphasis on the routine side of religious observance. They also noted that Catholicism was not making much use of modern means of propaganda, such as social movements, the organization of

clubs, or the establishing of settlements. In short, the Church had not adapted to modern needs, and these priests endeavored to correct this. They began a domestic apostolate which had for one of its rallying cries, "*Allons au peuple!*" ("Let us go to the people.")

They agitated for social and philanthropic projects, for a closer relationship between priests and parishioners, and for general cultivation of personal initiative, both in clergy and in laity. [Some, perhaps including Cardinal Gibbons himself, called this whole movement 'Gallicanism'] Not unnaturally, they looked for inspiration to America. There they saw a vigorous Church among a free people, with priests publicly respected, and with a note of aggressive zeal in every project of Catholic enterprise.

b. Father Isaac Hecker

In the 1890s this issue was brought forcefully to the attention of European Catholics by Comtesse de Ravilliax's translation of a biography of Isaac Thomas Hecker by Paulist Father Walter Elliott, with the introduction by Abbé Felix Klein drawing the most ire from the Vatican. His biography, written in English by the Paulist Father Elliott in 1891, was translated into French six years later and proved an inspiration to the French. Father Hecker had been dead for years at this point and had never been viewed by the Pope with disfavor. However this translation of Hecker's biography and Abbé Klein's introduction to the book made him appear to have been much more of a radical than he in fact was.



Father Isaac Hecker

Hecker had sought to reach out to Protestant Americans by stressing certain points of Catholic teaching, but Leo understood this effort as a watering down of Catholic doctrine. Hecker also had used terms such as "natural virtue," which to the Pope suggested the Pelagian heresy. Because members of the Paulists took promises but not the vows of religious orders, many concluded that Hecker denied the need for external authority.

The French liberals particularly admired Father Hecker for his love of modern times and modern liberty and his devotion to liberal Catholicism. Indeed, they took him as a kind of patron saint. Inspired by Father Hecker's life and character, the activist French priests undertook the task of persuading their fellow-priests to accept the political system, and then to break out of their isolation, put themselves in touch with the intellectual life of the country, and take an active part in the work of social amelioration. In 1897 the movement received an impetus when Monsignor O'Connell, former Rector of the Pontifical North American College in Rome [and later the Cardinal

Archbishop of Boston for about 40 years], spoke in behalf of Father Hecker's ideas at the Catholic Congress in Fribourg.

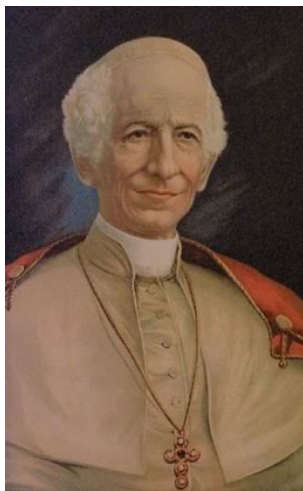
c. Opposition to Americanism

Conservative Catholics took alarm at what they considered to be symptoms of pernicious modernism or "Liberalism." They thought the "*Allons au peuple*" catchphrase had a ring of heresy, breaking down the divinely established distinction between the priest and the layman, and giving lay people too much power in Church affairs. The insistence upon individual initiative was judged to be incompatible with the obedience to the authority of the Church (due to the authority invested in the Bishops, and their successors, by Christ), that forms a fundamental principle of Catholicism.

Moreover, the conservatives were, almost to a man, anti-republicans who distrusted and disliked the democratic abbés. They complained to the Pope, and in 1898, Abbé Maignan wrote an ardent polemic against the new movement called: "*Le Père Hecker, est-il un saint?*" ("Is Father Hecker a Saint?").

Many powerful Vatican authorities also detested the "Americanist" tendency, and whilst Pope Leo XIII was reluctant to chastise the American Catholics, whom he had often praised for their loyalty and faith, he eventually made concessions to the pressures upon him.

d. Suppression of Americanism [Pope Leo XIII]



Pope Leo XIII

In his 1895 ENCYCLICAL, *LONGINQUA OCEANI* ["Wide Expanse of the Ocean"], Leo indicated a generally positive view of the American Church, commenting mostly on the success of Catholicism in the US but also noting the view that the Church "would bring forth more abundant fruits if, in addition to liberty, she enjoyed the favor of the laws and the patronage of the public authority." Leo warned the American Church hierarchy not supports this unique system of separation of church and state.

In 1898 Leo lamented an America where church and state are "dissevered and divorced," and wrote of his preference for a closer relationship between the Catholic Church and the State, along European lines.

Finally, in his pastoral letter *Testem Benevolentiae* (January 22, 1899; "Witness to Our Benevolence") addressed to Cardinal James Gibbons, Archbishop of Baltimore, Leo condemned other forms of Americanism. Catholicism had long allowed nations to tolerate other religions, but the Church

believes that the Catholic Faith must be favored, to the exclusion of other religions, when possible.

More relevant to this controversy, Pope Leo XIII expressed concerns about the liberalism of some American Catholics: he pointed out that the faithful could not decide doctrine for themselves (see Cafeteria Catholic). He also emphasized that Catholics should obey the magisterial teaching authority of the Church, which, according to Catholic doctrine, is infallible in matters of faith and morals. In general, he deemed exposing children to public schools as something to be avoided when possible. The Pope derided the idea that all opinions should be aired publicly, as he felt certain speech could harm general morality. He condemned the biography of Hecker and Americanism.

This document condemned the following doctrines or tendencies:

1. undue insistence on interior initiative in the spiritual life, as leading to disobedience
2. attacks on religious vows, and disparagement of the value of religious orders in the modern world
3. minimizing Catholic doctrine
4. minimizing the importance of spiritual direction

The brief did not assert that Hecker and the Americans had held any unsound doctrine on the above points. Instead, it merely stated that if such opinions did exist, the Pope called upon the hierarchy to eradicate them.

e. The American Response [James Gibbons, Cardinal Archbishop of Baltimore]



Cardinal Gibbons

In response to *Testem Benevolentiae*, Cardinal Gibbons and many other American prelates replied to Rome with a near-unanimous voice, denying that American Catholics held any of the condemned views. They asserted that Hecker had never countenanced the slightest departure from Catholic principles in their fullest and most strict application.

The disturbance caused by the condemnation was slight; almost the entire laity and a considerable part of the clergy were unaware of this affair. However, the pope's brief did end up strengthening the position of the conservatives in France. American Catholics claim that Leo's pronouncements

effectively ended the Americanist movement and curtailed the activities of American progressive Catholics.

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http://encyclopedia.jrank.org/HAN_HEG/HECKER_ISAAC_THOMAS_1819_1888_.html
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- [9] John Tracy Ellis, *The life of James Cardinal Gibbons* (1963) pp. 147-8

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Source: Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Americanism_\(heresy\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Americanism_(heresy))

d. The Actual Wording from Denzinger¹⁸

The actual wording from Denzinger, of the official Letter of POPE LEO XIII "*Testem Benevolentiae*", to His Eminence, James Cardinal Gibbons, January 22, 1899:

Americanism
[From the letter "*Testem Benevolentiae*", to Cardinal Gibbons,
January 22, 1899]

1967 The basis of the new opinions which we have mentioned is established as essentially this: In order that those who dissent may more easily be brought over to Catholic wisdom, the Church should come closer to the civilization of this advanced age, and relaxing its old severity show indulgence to those opinions and theories of the people which have recently been introduced. Moreover, many think that this should be understood not only with regard to the standard of living, but even with regard to the doctrines in which the

¹⁸ A short biography of Denzinger is presented in the General Appendix (Volume VI).

deposit of faith is contained. For, they contend that it is opportune to win over those who are in disagreement, if certain topics of doctrine are passed over as of lesser importance, or are so softened that they do not retain the same sense as the Church has always held.--Now there is no need of a long discussion to show with what a reprehensible purpose this has been thought out, if only the character and origin of the teaching which the Church hands down are considered. On this subject the Vatican Synod says: "For there is to be no receding. . . ." [see n. 1800].

1968 Now the history of all past ages is witness that this Apostolic See, to which not only the office of teaching, but also the supreme government of the whole Church were assigned, has indeed continually adhered "to the same doctrine, in the same sense, and in the same mind" [Cone. Vatic., see n. 1800]; that it has always been accustomed to modify the rule of life so as never to overlook the manners and customs of the various peoples which it embraces, while keeping the divine law unimpaired. If the safety of souls demands this, who will doubt that it will do so now? -- This, however, is not to be determined by the decision of private individuals

1969 who are quite deceived by the appearance of right; but it should be the judgment of the Church . . . But in the case about which we are speaking, Our Beloved Son, more danger is involved, and that advice is more inimical to Catholic doctrine and discipline, according to which the followers of new ideas think that a certain liberty should be introduced into the Church so that, in a way checking the force of its power and vigilance, the faithful may indulge somewhat more freely each one his own mind and actual capacity.

1970 The entire external teaching office is rejected by those who wish to strive for the acquisition of Christian perfection, as superfluous, nay even as useless; they say that the Holy Spirit now pours forth into the souls of the faithful more and richer gifts than in times past, and, with no intermediary, by a kind of hidden instinct teaches and moves them. . .

1971 Yet, to one who examines the matter very thoroughly, when any external guide is removed, it is not apparent in the thinking of the innovators to what end that more abundant influx of the Holy Spirit should tend, which they extol so much.--Surely, it is especially in the cultivation of virtues that there is absolute need of the assistance of the Holy Spirit; but those who are eager to pursue new things extol the natural virtues beyond measure, as if they correspond better with the way of life and needs of the present day, and as if it were advantageous to be endowed with these, since they make a man better prepared and more strenuous for action.--It is indeed difficult to believe that those who are imbued with Christian knowledge can hold the natural above the supernatural virtues, and attribute to them greater efficacy and fruitfulness. . . .

1972 With this opinion about the natural virtues another is closely connected, according to which all Christian virtues are divided into two kinds, as it were, passive as they say, and active; and they add that the former were better suited for times past, that the latter are more in keeping with the present. . . . Moreover, he, who would wish that the Christian virtues be accommodated some to one time and some to another, has not retained the words of the Apostle: "Whom he foreknew, he also predestined to be made conformable to the image of His Son" [Rom. 8: 29]. The master and exemplar of all sanctity is Christ, to whose rule all, as many as wish to be admitted to the seats of the blessed, must conform. Surely, Christ by no means changes as the ages go on, but is "yesterday, and today; and the same forever" [Heb. 13:8]. Therefore, to the men of all ages does the following apply: "Learn of me, because I am meek, and humble of heart" [Matt. 11:23]; and at all times Christ shows himself to us "becoming obedient unto death" [Phil. 2:8]; and in every age the judgment of the Apostle holds: "And they that are Christ's have crucified their flesh with the vices and concupiscence" [Gal. 5:24].

1973 From this contempt, as it were, of the evangelical virtues, which are wrongly called 'passive', it easily followed that their minds were gradually imbued with a contempt even for the religious life. And that this is common among the advocates of the new opinions we conclude from certain opinions of theirs about the vows which religious orders pronounce. For, they say that these vows are at very great variance with the spirit of our age, and that they are suited to weak rather than to strong minds; and that they are quite without value for Christian perfection and the good of human society, but rather obstruct and interfere with both.--But it is clearly evident how false these statements are from the practice and teaching of the Church, by which the religious way of life has always been especially approved. . . . Moreover, as for what they add, that the religious way of life is of no or of little help to the Church, besides being odious to religious orders, will surely be believed by no one who has studied the annals of the Church. . . .

1974 Finally, not to delay too long, the way and the plan which Catholics have thus far employed to bring back those who disagree with them are proclaimed to be abandoned and to be replaced by another for the future. - But if of the different ways of preaching the word of God that seems to be preferred sometimes by which those who dissent from us are addressed not in temples, but in any private and honorable place, not in disputation but in a friendly conference, the matter lacks any cause for adverse criticism, provided, however, that those are assigned to this duty by the authority of the bishops, who have beforehand given proof to the bishops of their knowledge and integrity...

1975 Therefore, from what We have said thus far it is clear, Our Beloved Son, that those opinions cannot be approved by us, the sum total of which some indicate by the name of Americanism. . . . For it raises a suspicion that there are those among you who envision and desire a Church in America other than that which is in all the rest of the world.

1976 One in unity of doctrine as in unity of government and this Catholic, such is the Church; and since God has established that its center and foundation be in the Chair of Peter, it is rightly called Roman; for "where Peter is, there is the Church." * Therefore, whoever wishes to be called by the name of Catholic, ought truly to heed the words of Jerome to Pope Damasus: "I who follow no one as first except Christ, associate myself in communion with your Beatitude, that is, with the Chair of Peter; upon that Rock, I know the Church is built [Matt. 16:18]; . . . whoever gathered not with thee scattereth" * [Matt. 12:30].

Whatever impact – if any – this movement had on the ‘ITALIAN PROBLEM’ – and vice versa - is unclear.

Source: Denzinger – The Sources of Catholic Dogma – p. 116 of 194
<http://www.scribd.com/doc/3983198/Denzinger-703-End>

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2. The ‘Italian Problem’

While the wording might differ, Catholic historians of the Church in America, consider the massive immigration of Italians to the U.S. A. from 1880-1900, to be imbued with the “Italian Problem”. In the words of one such historian, “the ‘Italian Problem’ was many things to many people, but to the Italian immigrants themselves, it may have been that the Church in the United States was more American and Irish than Catholic.”¹⁹ In this widely quoted article the peasants, of course, were the Italian emigrants – and the Prelates were the Church leaders, more Irish and ultra ‘American’ in a number of cases.

The rapid influx into a country of a strange people, speaking a foreign language, will naturally give rise to many difficulties. Who will say when this situation ceased to be troublesome, or if it really has been fully remedied? In this time frame – 1880-

¹⁹ Rudolph J. Vecoli, “Prelates and Peasants. Italian Immigrants and the Catholic Church;”, in: *Journal of Social History* 2 [1969], pp. 217-268. The citation is the concluding line of this more than 50 page substantive reflection.

1900²⁰ [remembering that the Stigmatines came to North America in 1905] - Church leadership was much distracted by secret societies, the labor movement, the new [Catholic] university, the school controversy and Americanism – to mention just some of the challenges the Bishops were facing.

It is well to bear in mind that the trek of inhabitants of the Italian peninsula to the United States, beginning in great numbers in the late 1880's and continuing up to World War I – was but a broader spectacle of a Europe in motion and overflowing to the New World. It may be easy to notice today that Italian emigration to this country stopped with World War I – while the prophetic voice among Stigmatines did not take note of this fact. Almost unilateral emphasis was given basically to territorial Italian Parishes – often several in the same town, or surrounding. One reason for this proliferation was the different dialects and mentalities active in those coming here. One statistical calculation arrived at a figure of upwards of two million Italian Catholics coming here in these last two decades of the 19th century. In 1850, there were 3,645 Italians in the USA – in 1880, there were 44, 230 Italians here – in 1890, there were almost two hundred thousand and at the end of the century about a half a million.

It has been theorized that the causes which sustained an immigration of millions of persons for half a century do in truth constitute a defect of inadequacy of great magnitude in the Italian economic system. The basic reason was economic. The Italian emigration from Italy after 1870 have been listed as the pressure of population on the means of subsistence, industrial stagnation, primitive agricultural methods, heavy taxes, government monopolies, and a semi-feudal oppressive aristocracy of large landholders. To these are added soil conditions, malaria, insect pest, corruption in local government and overpopulation were other factors. After so many of the Italians came here, studies showed that Italians for the most part lived in deplorable poverty, and not many 'made it' to the extent that they could move on to better districts for their struggling families. For some commentators, it became practically impossible for a good Catholic to be a good citizen in the recently united Italy.

The Italian immigrant, landing on these shores, brought along considerable mental baggage: religious ignorance; for the most part, the men in the household did not attend Church; each family seemed imbued with the habit of depending on the state to support the churches. Very few men thought of the Church as a good place to develop a vocation from God – in our Stigmatine history in the U.S. A., only the former

²⁰ A much quoted – and also contested - insightful article is by Rev. Henry J. Browne [a New York Priest, of the Catholic University in Washington DC], "**The 'Italian Problem' in the Catholic Church of the United States, 1880-1900**", in: *Historical Records and Studies* 35 [1946], pp. 46-72 – from where these initial thoughts are derived. Further sources:

- Dolan, Jay P.,
 - *The Immigrant Church* – University of Notre Dame, 2009;
 - *In Search of American Catholicism* – Oxford, 2002.
- ORSI, Robert A., *The Madonna of 115th Street* – Yale Press, 2002.



Father Lodovico Luchi
[1859 - † 1944]
From Romallo, Tyrol
Secularized in 1924

Stigmatine – Fr. Lodovico Luchi (who has also left many serious questions behind) – ever encouraged a goodly number of men from the Hazleton, PA area to become Stigmatines: but as we review the various Stigmatine foundations – almost all Italian parishes, hardly any ever supplied a single vocation to the Church, or to the Community. It would suffice to review the Stigmatine histories of Springfield [one] and Pittsfield MA; White Plains and Waterville NY; Vancouver BC and Waltham MA; Manassas and Woodbridge VA; Agawam and E. Longmeadow MA; Feeding Hills and Timmins ONT [not to forget South Porcupine!]. Milford provided three Stigmatines: Frs. Carlo Bevilacqua, Richard Scioli and Leonard Ferrecchia.

Archbishop Corrigan, the Archbishop of New York – was preceded by a Cardinal Archbishop – and followed by one - has been seriously studied in this connection.²¹ In preparation [in the Fall of 1883] for the Plenary Session of the Synod of Baltimore, he is quoted as having remarked that it is difficult to have special churches for the Italians for several reasons:

- the Italian immigrants are not accustomed to going to church;
- they live dispersed in all parts of the cities;
- they give nothing to the priests either for their support, or for their church.

These comments were somewhat echoed then in the Report of the Committee of Bishops in the final Document from the Synod of Baltimore:

- the Italians coming to America rarely thereafter go to church or use the sacraments;
- they live quite widely dispersed in the cities;
- they look on themselves as if in exile, so long as they stay in America, they do not intend to come here as to a fatherland, and hence, generally give nothing for the building of a church, or the support of the priest ...
- it is not unknown at Rome that the Italians suffer greater spiritual destitution than any other immigrants.

The Apostolic Delegate of that era also chimed in: for him, it was the poor religious background that exposed them to be easy prey for apostasy – allowed their children to follow heresy He noted: it was strange to many to see Italians coming from

²¹ Stephen Michael DiGiovanni, *Archbishop Corrigan and the Italian Immigrants*. Huntington IN: Our Sunday Visitor Publishing Division 1994.

a land of so many priests and religious, yet suffering from a lack of religious training. Very few made their First Communion – and even if confirmed, had no knowledge of the Catechism – and never attended Mass, and even as death approached, many neglected confession.

The Italians were practically without leaders in their new country – the Italian need was for the mere essentials, the ministration of priests. A movement to send them Italian priests was undertaken on November 10, 1887, when the Apostolic College of Priests was established in the Diocese of Piacenza, Italy. Bishop Giovanni Scalabrini established the Community of St. Charles Borromeo for this purpose – one of the early Scalabrini Superiors General, was Fr. Dominic Vicentini – as will be seen, he was a former Stigmatine, who left our Community with Fr. Joseph Sembianti [who joined the Combonian congregation] for the lack of Foreign Missions among the Stigmatines. Fr. Vicentini often visited New York.

The Pope was certainly aware of the ordeal that it was to cross the sea on a hardly sea-worthy vessel full of emigrants, in enormous numbers, leaving all behind in Italy to face an unknown future. The Pope seemed to have considered most regrettable and as a great evil the difficulty in supplying this mass of human beings with the saving care of ministers of God, familiar with the Italian speech. Monsignor Thomas S. Preston²², Vicar General of New York, on January 12, 1889 spoke of the wonderful missionaries in the New York and their heroic efforts among the Italian immigrants.

One of the negative factors – that was never intended to be so – as the so-called ‘duplex’ or ‘annex’ parish - the same building used for a dual purpose: the regular parishioners and their devotions and services –and then the Italians, relegated for years in the basement, or ‘back room’ of the parish hall for the Italians. Lack of financial support from their compatriots placed Italian priests in the often humiliating role of dependency before the American clergy. The relationship of inferiority was symbolized by the system of ‘annex’ parishes; thereby the basement was assigned for Italian worship. On July 27, 1890 Leo XIII had a document issued from the Sacred Congregation of the Council to address the problem of the emigrating Italian populace. It also became apparent that a number of the priests coming to the United States had come to the New World for many other reasons than for the zeal for souls: adventure, dissatisfaction, love of money – influenced not a few. A number of these immigrant priests were caught up in crass money schemes, land - speculation to alleviate their own lives, or somewhat more nobly perhaps, to help with the awful poverty still lived by their own loved ones left back in Italy – a powerful emotional draw on their honesty.

²² He was co-Founder of a community of Sisters, the **Religious of Divine Compassion**, first as a kind of mission to assist the needy new-comers – but, these Sisters eventually founded Good Counsel College, White Plains NY.

It would be far from the truth to consider the turn of the new century as a happy land-mark in the solution of the American church's 'Italian Problem,' Socially and economically the Italian immigrant was still far removed from the dreamed of 'good life'. On a national scale it was estimated that there was one priest for every 120,000 Italians living in the USA – while in Italy it was more like one priest for every 3570 persons. These figures may be more startling than accurate, but there was a great disproportion. What happened was: 'Large numbers did not seek the Church, nor did the Church seek them!'.²³ Many churches established for Italians were abandoned after a short time, because of lack of financial support. Although the Italian immigration increased greatly from the 1890s on, the number of Italian priests in America did not rise proportionately.

Many believe today that the United States was never really a 'melting pot', but much more a tossed salad! Ethnic diversity has been fundamental to the shaping of American Catholicism. Over the course of a century [1820-1920], the Catholic immigration from Italy was second only to that from Ireland. As a result, the American Catholic Church had a pronounced Hibernian cast during the period of Italian immigration. It was noted that in over 100 Bishops in the United States at this time, only three or four of Italian nationality emerged, with a population of about four million Italians – about 20% of the Catholics in the United States – one Bishop for every million people!

The Irish loyalty to the Holy See incited further rancor against the Italians in the late 19th century, due to their perceived persecution of the Pope in Italy. The anti-clericalism of the Italians scandalized the American Irish, who were distinguished by reverence and respect for their priests. By contrast, the Italian gained the reputation of excelling all others for 'irreverence, hostility and blasphemy.' One of the objectionable celebrations would be the overt mixture of the sacred and profane, pinning money on a statue being honored by processions and hymns. One fairly well known Italian priest, Fr. Luigi Guanella, felt such manifestations should be condemned.

Another problem is the fact that the clergy men from *alta Italia* often tended to look down on the southern Italians – while the latter, considered them as 'foreigners'. In World War I, priests of some sectors of Northern Italy suffered because of their German sounding names.²⁴

While the existence of an Italian Problem was generally acknowledged, there was [and still is!] considerable disagreement among churchmen with regard to its

²³ Sadly, this is still a '**Church Problem**' –for the 100th anniversary of the 'Italian Problem', we have this challenging Document from the Holy See: cf. Congregation of the Clergy, *Postquam Apostoli A Better Distribution of the Clergy*, ## 8-9 especially. March 25, 1980.

²⁴ The Stigmatines had at least two. Fr. William **LUDESCHER** [Ludessi] and Fr. Joseph **KUSTER** [Costa].

causes. This subject was brought up 'officially' at the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore in 1884.

Over the years, it was noted that the Italian religious priests were thought to be more successful than the secular priests in attracting and holding the immigrants. [In 1918, of the 710 Italian parish priests in the United States, only 223 were religious]. The success of priests pertaining to religious orders was attributed to their more vigorous defense of their right to provide spiritual care for their countrymen against the pretensions of the American clergy. Often, the American priests who presided over the territorial parishes resisted the erection of national parishes which they regarded as encroachments on their domain. As the United States Catholic Church had a very ethnic character²⁵, with an extreme limited capacity to absorb the Italians who came from very different cultural backgrounds.

There are certainly in this history some insight into the 'Modern Problem' the American Catholic Church is facing – shifting populations, great scandals within the priesthood and religious life - few native vocations - increasing numbers each year from minority populations.²⁶

Source:

Robert A. Orsi, *The Madonna of 115th Street. Faith and Community in Italian Harlem, 1880-1950*. 2nd edition. Yale Nota Bene University Press 2002.

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²⁵ In the 1970's, where demographics showed that the majority of the Catholics in the world are in the southern hemisphere - more than one half of baptized Catholics of the world dwell there. There developed this chant when a saintly [but non-Irish Prelate, His Eminence, Cardinal Madeiros was named to the very Irish See of Boston]: 'Hail Mary, full of grace – the Irish are now in second place!'

²⁶ Sadly this problem still exists – the Congregation for the Clergy issued a Document some 25 years ago, pleading for a re-distribution of the Catholic Clergy: ***Postquam apostolic, Directives for Collaboration among Local Churches and in particular for a Better Distribution of the Clergy***. A Document Issued by the Sacred Congregation for the Clergy (March 25, 1980).

C. The Early Times of the Stigmatines in North America

1. Historical Marks

Father Antonio Dalla
Porta [1874 – † 1932]
From Cembra (TN)



1904	The desire of a foundation in the Americas Fr. Louis Luchi's petition for a mission is not approved
1905	August: Fr. Louis Luchi's 2nd petition is approved October: the First Stigmatines arrive in Hazleton, PA
1906	Fr. Dalla Porta takes up residence in Springfield, MA
1907	Fr. Pio Gurisatti (General) and Companions make a visitation; Fr. Alfred Balestrazzi comes
1908	Fr. Victor Gurisatti and Fr. Lino Cembran come
1909	Fr. Balestrazzi is recalled to Italy
1910	Fr. General comes for a 2nd visitation
1911	
1912	
1913	Fr. Raymond Dalla Porta arrives Fr. L. Luchi, <u>without any authorization</u> , accepted a foundation in Milwaukee WI November: Fr. John Baptist Tomasi (new General) comes with Fr. Balestrazzi for his first visitation and sends three young priests December: a Church for the Italians is dedicated in Scranton
1914	The General Council decrees to abandon the two foundations in Pennsylvania
1915	A new house is purchased in Pittsfield, MA

1916	
1917	Fr. Erminio Lona is appointed as “Stigmatine Visitor of North America”
1918	Springfield - the ‘ <i>Patronato Italo-Americano Colombo</i> ’ is installed
1919	
1920	5 Sisters of Mercy of Savona come to help, and take residence in 2 small houses bought for them on Margaret Street. A small portable Church is bought and is used until 1925, when the new Church of St. Anthony was built. Fr. J. B. Zaupa is appointed as the Visitor for the Communities of North America
1921	In Springfield, Bishop Thomas Beaves dies; his successor, Bishop Thomas O’Leary, also shows great affection for our confreres. There was created the corporation: ‘The Trustees of the Stigmatine Father, Inc.’ Fr. Lino Cembran obtains indult of Exclaustration.
1922	Fr. J. B. Zaupa is elected Superior General by Postulation The Council decides to give up the House in Milwaukee; Fr. Fadanelli abandons the Institute Fr. Leonard Donazzan dishonorably leaves the Institute New foundations in Lynn MA and Waltham MA A new foundation in White Plains NY
1923	December: a large piece of property is bought on Lexington Street, in Waltham MA There was purchased a large hall in the Silver Lake region, in White Plains;
1924	Fr. Joseph Nardon publishes an English translation of the biography of our Founder, written by Fr. Joseph Fiorio in 1922 Fr. Anthony Dalla Porta recovers from a 2 months’ long serious illness September: Fr. Victor Gurisatti is suspended <i>a divinis</i> by the Apostolic Delegate October he celebrates his 25th anniversary of Priesthood November, in West Springfield: the new Church of St. Ann is dedicated Fr. Leo Stella and Fr. Joseph Rosa purchase a three story house, plus a two story building two large halls on South Lexington Street, in White Plains, NY
1925	January 28, in Waltham: the old Church is partially damaged by fire, and the work of restoration begins

Another piece of land was purchased on Ferris Avenue, in White Plains, with the intention of building a Church

A controversy about Fr. Fadanelli, who had obtained an Indult of Secularization, but was still in Milwaukee

August: the Superior General leaves Italy for Canonical Visitations of both Brazil and North America

Fr. Luchi leaves a declaration admitting and deploring his errors

Fr. Anthony Dalla Porta substitutes Fr. Louis Fantozzi as General Councilor

September: Fr. Anthony Toniolli died at the age of 39

September: Fr. Dario Wegher leaves to Italy to go to the missions in China

1926 January: Fr. William Ludessi takes over the direction of the Parish in Springfield, and later on builds a new Rectory for the Church of Mount Carmel and renews the Sister' residence. The property in Wilcox Street is sold.

A monument is erected in honor of Fr. Anthony Toniolli in the local cemetery

The Church of the Assumption is built on Ferris Avenue, in White Plains

1927 A disastrous flood badly damaged St. Ann's Church and Rectory causing great damage

Sacred Heart Parish in Waltham – the rectory and the bell tower are constructed; classes for Italian language start and a tract of land near the Church is purchased for the eventual construction of a parish school.

In West Lynn, a building that was purchased is converted into a Church dedicated to St. Francis; more property is acquired on Bessom Street, on which is built a Church in honor of the Holy Family, inaugurated on March, 1927. This Church is destroyed by fire on Christmas Day, 1926, and after a reconstruction work a new basement Church is opened to the public on February, 1928.

December: the complete basement of the Church in Milford is blessed

1928 Fr. William Ludessi is appointed Visitor for the region, transfers his headquarters to Waltham and takes over the direction of the Sacred Heart Church there.

Raccoon Island, not far from Boston, is bought as a summer home for the students.

1929 January: the Superior General, returning to Italy, takes back with him the first two American students: Joseph Riley & Daniel Meaney

A main altar is installed in the new Church in memory of Fr. Toniolli

Arrival of Frs. Julius Valentinelli and Dante Turri

December: the new Church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel on St. Lexington

Street in White Plains is opened

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|-------------|--|
| 1930 | <p>The old Church is converted into a hall, and a stage is erected for theatrical purposes</p> <p>The publication of the <i>Stigmatine Magazine</i> is launched</p> <p>Arrival of Brothers Gino Dehò, Ettore Linda, Joseph Bocchio and Joseph Fontanari</p> |
| 1931 | <p>The Sacristy of the St. Anthony's Church in Agawam is built, and the portable Church there in Agawam which had been used up to this moment is moved to Feeding Hills.</p> <p>In Waltham, the Novitiate is canonically erected, and Fr. Balestrazzi is appointed Master of Novices and, after the departure of Fr. Anthony Dalla Porta, also Ordinary Visitor.</p> <p>Fr. Peter Torreta comes to America</p> <p>25th anniversary of the foundation of the Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church – the Church is enlarged</p> <p>The parish in Pittsfield welcomes the Venerini Sisters, who open a school and teach Italian language</p> <p>In White Plains, Fr. Michael Madussi succeeds to Fr. Leo Sella and injects new life into the parish</p> <p>Fr. Joseph Nardon leaves to help our Fathers in Brazil</p> <p>September: our own internal school is initiated for the Aspirants, taught by our own Father and several lay teachers</p> |
| 1932 | <p>Fr. Anthony Dalla Porta dies in Waltham and Fr. Alfred Balestrazzi returns to Italy for reasons of health. In this same year, Fr. Richard Zambiasi comes to America</p> <p>The Sisters of Good Counsel College in White Plains and other instructors come to help</p> <p>September: the parochial school in Milford is declared unfit for use, and had to be remodeled</p> |
| 1933 | <p>Fr. Joseph Nardon dies in Rio Claro, Brazil</p> |
| 1934 | <p>The Italian government offers as a prize a free trip to Italy to 150 students of parochial schools in the USA in which the Italian language is taught – and 3 pupils from our school in Milford are chosen.</p> <p>The Church in Pittsfield is redecorated.</p> <p>General Chapter – Fr. Bruno Chiesa is elected Superior General. The Chapter expresses the firm purpose of <u>the regions of North and South America be</u></p> |

erected as Provinces, as soon as prove possible.

August: Fr. J. B. Zupa returns to the U.S., accompanied by Fr. Joseph Riley, the first native priest, who had been ordained at Trent in June 29 that same year

1935 The American students: Leonard Della Badia, John Golden, Louis James Bonan and John Louis Ecker are ordained to the Holy Priesthood and return home.

1936 January: in Waltham, a terrible fire destroys a good part of 'The House on the Hill', and the aspirants are sent home during the period of its restoration

February: the Filial House of West Springfield is established, under-training the direction of the Churches of St. Ann.

June 12: graduation exercises are held for the first time, and 20 young students receive their diplomas.

The American students: Hogan, Paul Vincent Daly and George Francis Ecker are ordained to the Holy Priesthood in Italy and return home.

July: the new cemetery of the parish is inaugurated

August: the Superior General arrives for Visitation. In Springfield, a Catholic Action Club starts, for the purpose of promoting Christian life in the parish, and other parishes soon follow its lead.

The American students: William Girolamo, Ellsworth Fortman and Samuel Chameal leave for Rome for study.

A new school of Philosophy is begun in Waltham.

September: a territorial parish in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, is entrusted to the Stigmatines, under the direction of Fathers Joachim Bortignon and Leonard Della Badia.

In Waltham, the Professed Students institute a Mission Study Club

November: Fr. Paul Daly, who had volunteered for the mission in China, arrives there.

December: the House and Italian parish of Timmins, Ontario is opened, under the direction of Fr. Louis Fontana.

1937 A new rectory is built in Vancouver.

Fathers Francesco De Michei and Angelo Da Prai are sent to America.

The American students: Paul Piskel, Joseph Welch, Charles Armour, John Stanton and Michael Cariglia are ordained to the Holy Priesthood in Italy and return home.

The American students: Gilbert Fini, LePere and Callaghan [the latter two were dispensed of their vows a few years later] leave for Rome for study.

1938 The American student Dominic Anthony Ruscetta is ordained to the Holy

Priesthood in Italy and returns home.

A new school of Theology is begun in Waltham.

The American students: James Mullen and Guy Rossi leave for Rome for study.

In Pittsfield, the basement is converted into a Chapel; more property is bought and the house on it converted into a hall.

Fr. Paul Zanini, Delegate of the Superior General, makes the Canonical Visitation of our houses.

In Lynn, the fund-raising campaign got underway for the completion of Holy Family Church.

Fr. J. B. Pelanda comes to the U.S. to preach Italian Parish Missions

1939 The American students: Adolph A. Ferrari and Mackin are ordained to the Holy Priesthood in Italy and return home.

In White Plains, the basement of the Church is converted into a hall.

1940 February: Fr. Henry Adami comes to the U.S., and has to remain until the close of the war.

In Springfield, a new electric organ is inaugurated. The Stigmatines become responsible for the direction of the houses of St. Ann in West Springfield, St. Anthony's in North Agawam and Sacred Heart in Spring Hills.

May: the General Chapter is held in Rome, and Fr. J. B. Zaupa is elected for his 3rd term, after a hiatus of 6 years.

June: Italy enters the war, and the Ordinary Visitor for North America is given extraordinary powers.

June: before of the sea lanes were closed because the II World War, all the American students return home, along with Fr. Paul Zanini .

Fr. Charles Zanotti is appointed Ordinary Visitor.

In Pittsfield, a new organ is installed.

In White Plains, the Mission Study Club, in the occasion of 'Mission Sunday', organizes an exhibit, displaying over 200 mission magazines.

As Waltham was proving to be inadequate to house all our professed students, the beautiful 170 acres property of 'Elm Bank' in Wellesley, MA is purchased, with the purpose of to be a House of Philosophy and Theology. In the sequence, in July, the students move into this new property; and a property in Hinsdale, MA, near Pittsfield, is also purchased, as a summer camp for our students

1941 The construction of the upper Church is started, but soon suspended as the U.S. entered in the war on December 7th that same year.

A Mission Exhibit is held in the Springfield Auditorium, and our booths

representing the mission of Yishien, China, receives the praise of newspapers and its many visitors.

In Pittsfield, the Church is dedicated and the facade is renovated

In White Plains, the Church is decorated and beautifully colored windows installed.

October: the Sacred Congregation of Religious gives the Superior General faculty to erect the Congregation into three provinces.

November: the provinces are approved to seven years *ad experimentum*.

1942	April 7 th : The Italian Province of the Sacred Heart is erected by the Decree of the Superior General.
1943	[The erection of the two American Provinces faced some difficulties because of the war, that interrupted all communications]
1944	January 21 st : The General Council decrees to erect the two American Provinces. The Superior General erects the two American Provinces officially with his Decree of January 23 rd , for the celebration of the Patronal feast of the Congregation; The North American region was to be known as the Province of the Holy Espousals; and The Brazilian region as the Province of the Holy Cross; Fr. Charles Zanotti, the Ordinary Visitor, was appointed our first Provincial.
1945	
1946	
1947	July: the Church in Milford is finished and opened to the public.

2. The almost simultaneous early times of the Stigmatines in Brazil

The Stigmatines arrived in Brazil in 1910, and both American Province of the Holy Spouses and Brazilian Province of the Holy Cross were erected at the same year, 1944.

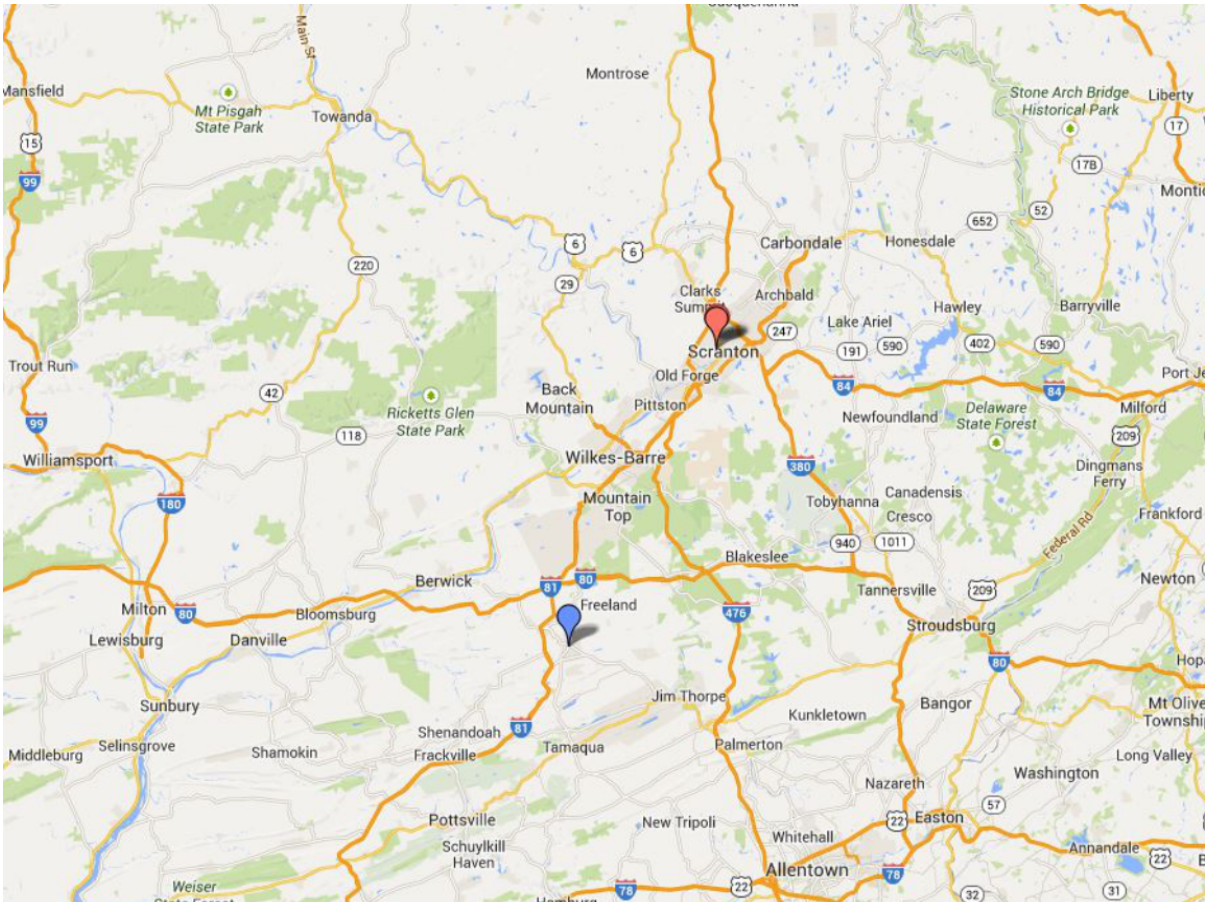
The history of the the early times of the Stigmatines in Brazil is presented here in the Appendix 16.

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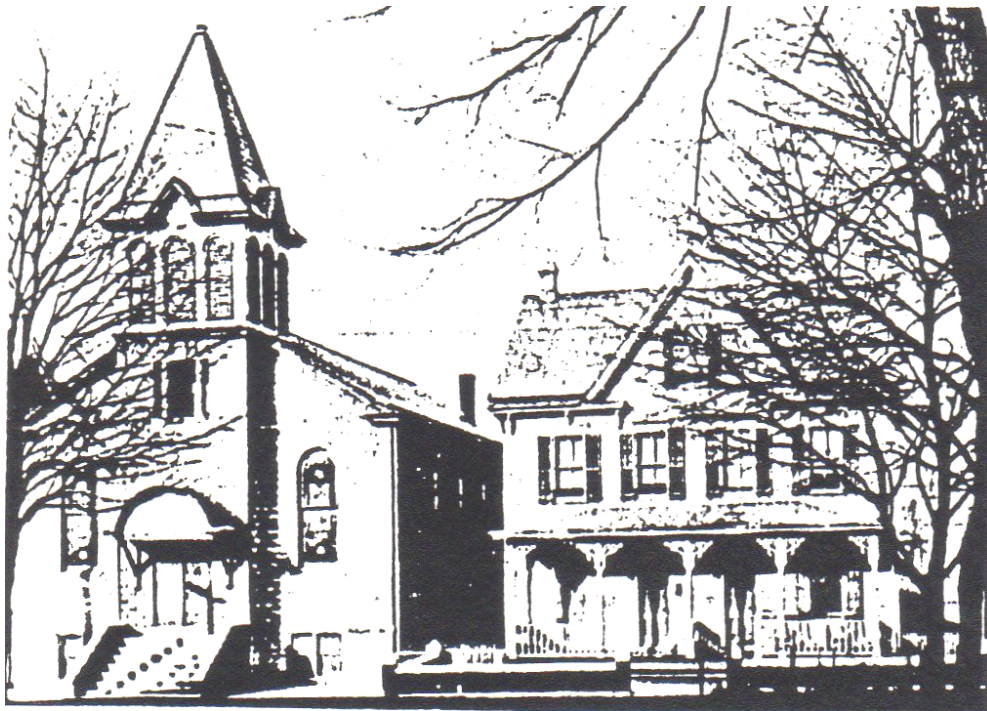
CHAPTER ONE: HAZLETON
[THE FIRST STIGMATINE FOUNDATION IN THE USA]
& SCRANTON, PA



Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church Hazleton, PA



Saint Lucy Church Scranton, PA



Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church and Parish House in Hazleton, PA, before 1942 renovation



Saint Lucy Church in Scranton, PA

Fathers Anthony Dalla Porta and Lewis Luchi left Trent on September 26, 1905, and, going by way of Basel and Paris, they embarked at LeHavre, France, on October 2, 1905.

On **October 8th** of that same year they reached Hazleton PA, and were received with great joy and enthusiasm by the Trentine colony.

Historical Background²⁷

1. For quite some time already, especially among the young Priests of our Congregation, there was the desire of making some foundation outside of Italy, particularly in the Americas. **Fr. Louis Luchi**, who was corresponding with a colony of Trentines in the State of Pennsylvania, was insisting on attempting a foundation in North America.

In 1904, he presented a Petition to the General Council, seeking approval to go with a companion to North America, to attempt a foundation in Scranton PA, but his Petition was not granted. He did not lose heart because of this, but continued his correspondence with that colony. In fact, he even wrote to the Bishop of Scranton, with the intention of soliciting an invitation from him.

In the following year, 1905, he renewed his petition and the General Council, in its meeting of **August 17, 1905**, granted him permission to undertake an **exploratory mission** in that region. They left Trent on September 26, 1905, and going by way of Basel and Paris, they embarked at LeHavre, France, on October 2, 1905. On **October 8th** of that same year, they reached Hazleton PA, and were received with great joy and enthusiasm by the Trentine colony.

On October 13th they left for Scranton to present themselves to the Bishop who received them with great cordiality, and gave them all the necessary faculties to exercise their priestly ministry for the good of the Italians and the purchase property on which to build a Church.

At the start, they used the local Lithuanian Church for the Italians. The Lithuanians were even disposed to sell it and to build a new one for themselves. At first our Fathers were in favor of buying that Church for the Trentine colony, and made an appeal for funds to all the Trentines throughout the United States for funds²⁸. Then, on second thought, even at the suggestion of the Bishop, they decided to buy a residence and a full lot, with the adjacent property upon which to build a Church. In 1906, Fr. Luchi began construction, and ²⁹during that same summer, he inaugurated the basement.



Fathers Anthony Dalla Porta and Louis Luchi upon their arrival in America

²⁷ For these notes, cf. the *Breve Cronaca* [two volumes] of Fr. Joseph Fiorio.

²⁸ Cf. Bonifacio Bolognani, *Tridentine Clergy in North America*. Trento: Edizioni Bernardo Clessio.

²⁹ Cf. Silver Jubilee and Dedication booklet, cited above, 1932; cf. *BERTONIANO*, 1924, p. 50.

2. **Fr. Anthony Dalla Porta:** instead, at the suggestion of Fr. Richard Tabarelli, who had spoken in Rome with the Bishop of Springfield MA, and who knew several priests from that city which had been his students at the Roman Seminary³⁰, Fr. Anthony went in March to Springfield, and he agreed with the Bishop there to establish a House and to dedicate himself to the spiritual needs of the Italians. He took up residence in Springfield on **July 26, 1906**, residing temporarily in the Cathedral residence and officiating on Sunday's for the Italians in St. Michael's Cathedral basement.

3. In 1907, the Superior General [**Fr. Pio Gurisatti** who served to full terms of 10 years as Fr. General – the most in our history], made a Visitation of our Houses, bringing with him **Fr. Joseph Nardon** [who would eventually transfer to Brazil, thus obtaining the distinction of physically serving all three areas of our provinces] and **Brother Camillo Ramus** [this Brother eventually left the community, married – and was known to our Canadian Stigmatines]. The Superior General noted the sublime and pressing need for new and gifted helpers in this burgeoning vineyard. On the Father General's return to Rome, he convinced one of his own General Councilors – the gifted and beloved **Fr. Alfred Balestrazzi** - to go to North America.



Fr. Joseph Nardon
[1873 – † 1933]
From Lisignano (TN)



Fr. Alfred Balestrazzi
[1871 – † 1945]
From Mariano di Parma (PR)

Fr. Balestrazzi willingly accepted this suggestion, and resigned his position on the General Council. He left Italy later that same year, and joined Fr. A. Dalla Porta in Springfield. In the meantime, Fr. Anthony had purchased two small houses on Wilcox

³⁰ Among these was a certain Fr. Kelley, who had the care of the Italians in the St. Michael's Cathedral parish there. For this information, cf. *The Silver Jubilee and Dedication, Our Lady of Mount Carmel*, Springfield 1932. Fr. Tabarelli was a favorite of Cardinal Parrocchi, Vicar General of Rome under S. Pius Xth. Among his illustrious students, Fr. Tabarelli could boast of the likes of the future Pius XIIth and Blessed John the 23rd. Fr. Tabarelli died in Rome very prematurely and suddenly, October 9, 1909, at the age of only 59.

Street and Union Street, respectively, using one of this as his residence, and the other as a temporary Chapel in which he regularly held religious services for the Italian emigrants, nobly assisted now by Fr. Balestrazzi.

Fr. Anthony had also accepted the direction of a Church in far away North Adams MA, a city about 70 miles west from Springfield, not far from Albany NY - Fr. Nardon was placed in charge of this community. Enthusiastic signs of development also were noted in the new Foundation in Scranton PA, the Bishop's See, where there were some 35,000 Italians registered.

4. Hence, in 1908 two other Fathers left for North America: **Fr. Victor Gurisatti** [the blood brother of the Superior General] – he was sent to open a house in Scranton. At the same time, **Fr. Lino Cembran** [who later left the Stigmatine Community] who remained in Hazleton with Fr. Luchi. In the following year, 1909, Fr. Balestrazzi was recalled to Italy – as St. Pius Xth entrusted the entire faculty assignment of Belluno to the Stigmatines and they taught there several years.³¹



Fr. Victor Gurisatti
[1866 – † 1931]
From Gemona (Udine)



Father Raymond Dalla Porta
[1883 – † 1966]
From Cembra (TN)

5. In 1910, the Superior General undertook a second Visitation of the new region for the Stigmatines in North America, as the work there rapidly was reaching the stage of consolidation. Fr. Pio Gurisatti took with him **Fr. Peter Piemonte** [who did not remain a Stigmatine] – who had recently made his First Profession of Vows. In

³¹ The Canon Law professorship was bestowed on the renowned Jesuit, **Fr. Cappello, SJ** - eventually known as the **Confessor of Rome**, whose Cause for Beatification has made great progress in recent years. Many of our North American Stigmatines, studying in Rome from 1952-1958, came to know Fr. Cappello - always impressed by the large gathering of Penitents who would wait for him every afternoon in the *Piazza della Pilotta*, just outside the Gregorian – and would then proceed in procession of song and prayer to St. Ignatius Church for the afternoon Confessions.

November 1913, **Fr. Raymond Dalla Porta** [the blood brother of Fr. Anthony Dalla Porta], also arrived in America.



Father Erminio Lona
[1878 - † 1970]
From Cembra (TN)



Father Antonio Toniolli
1886 - † 1925
From Cembra (TN)



Father Joseph Rosa
[1887 - † 1964]
From Lisignago (TN)

6. In November of 1913, **Fr. John Baptist Tomasi**, recently elected **Superior General in 1911**, accompanied his General Councilor, Fr. Balestrazzi, made his first Visitation to the Houses of North America. They immediately noted the need for more personnel, and they sent three young priests on the growing territory – they were **Frs. Erminio Lona, Joseph Rosa** and **Anthony Toniolli**. This made possible the opening of a new House in Milford MA – then in the Diocese of Springfield, and now Worcester MA] to which were assigned **Frs. Erminio Lona** and **Anthony Toniolli**. From the outset, the Confreres of Milford had to contend with a teeming colony of socialists and anarchists³². During the summer of 1911, Fr. Anthony Dalla Porta visited Italy and brought back with him **Fr. Nicholas Tomasi**, who, however, remained here only one year. He later authored a rather controversial Diary of the stormy 12th General Chapter of 1890. In 1909, **Fr. Angelo Simeoni** also came here – he is one more of this group who did not remain a Stigmatine!

7. As was noted above, Fr. Anthony Dalla Porta, back in 1911, had bought a House with adjoining property on William Street. In April of that year the work of building the Church got under way. In July, the Bishop blessed the corner-stone of the building and then **on December 24, 1912, the Bishop solemnly blessed the Church**. On Wilcox Street, in 1913, the Pastor also built a large hall, later called '**Columbus Hall**', which was to serve for the meetings of the Parish Societies and as a gathering place for the youth. Also **in Scranton in 1913**, a tract of land was purchased on which was built a Church for the Italians, and this was dedicated on December 28, 1913.

³² Milford was also the scene of the **Sacco and Venzetti** legal case – still discussed in American Juridical circles to this day

8. In 1915, Frs. **Leo Sella**, **John Baptist Zaupa** [future Superior General for three terms] and **Fadanelli** [he disappears from our roster of names] came to North America. A new House was purchased in **Pittsfield MA**, at the time, a city of some 45,000 inhabitants, 5,000 of whom were Italians. This was in the **Diocese of Springfield MA**, and Fr. Toniolli was assigned here. In the beginning he, too, had to struggle against a strong faction of subversives, but his charity and patience was soon able to win them over, to the extent that he could begin the construction of a magnificent Church, the basement of which was inaugurated during the Christmas Seasons of 1916.



Father J. B. Zaupa
[1883 - † 1958]
From Chiampo (VI)



Father Leo Sella
[1879 - † 1957]
From Laghi (VI)



Fr. Henry Fadanelli
[1887 - † 1974]
From Cembra (TN)

9. In **Springfield**, **Fr. John B. Zaupa**, after having taken up the Census of the Parish, began the publication of a parish bulletin, entitled: ***L'Amico della Verità***. In 1918, he initiated the '***Patronato Italo-Americano Colombo***' divided into three sections of culture, assistance, and sport]. In its hey-day, this was of great help to the civil and religious cause of the colony.

10. **Fr. L. Luchi**, all on his own, since **1913**, **without any authorization**, accepted a foundation in **Milwaukee WI**! Before pronouncing itself on this move, the General Council demanded from the same Father a complete report on what was going on. The Council was made aware that the House and property belonged to the Congregation, and that **Fr. Luchi had assumed in the name of the Congregation, a debt of \$5,000.00 the purchase price**. Earlier, **Fr. Simeoni** was sent there, but when he obtained his indult of secularization, having been incardinated into that Diocese. He was substituted then by **Fr. Fadanelli**.

11. The General Council decided to retain this foundation temporarily and nominated **Fr. E. Lona as Delegate for the Houses of North America**. He was given the faculty of making decisions within the limits of powers which was communicated to him. In order to avoid publicity harmful to the Institute, Fr. Lona thought it best to sign

a Promissory Note of \$5,000.00, corresponding to the debt assumed by Fr. Luchi. The Council also ordered him to place a mortgage on the property which would assure our rights and would include the under-written \$5,000.00.

In **1917**, in conformity with the approved Constitutions now in force [after the promulgation of the new Canon Law - The General Council], **Fr. Erminio Lona** was appointed as 'Stigmatine Visitor of North America'. The General Council re-confirmed his appointment as Visitor of North America, assigning him **two Councilors**.

12. In **1920**, the Superior General undertook a review of the work of our men, he realized the great need there was for more personnel to keep up with this increasing work. In Springfield, the year previous, Parish School for the Italian children. Five **Sisters of Mercy of Savona** came from Italy to staff it. At first, the Sisters took up residence in a small house annexed to the 'Columbus Hall', but later moved into two small houses which had been bought for them on **Margaret Street**. In **1920**, a small portable **Church** was bought for this district of Mittineague and **Agawam**. It was used through 1925, when **the new Church of St. Anthony was built**.

13. In this time, the **Stigmatines in Milford** thought of opening a Parochial **school**. They purchased two small houses to serve as living quarters for the Sisters and also a tract of land next to the old Church in which they were officiating since 1913. When later, house and property, situated between the Church and the dwelling of the Sisters, was donated to the Parish, our Fathers had ample room, centrally located, on which the build the new Church and to further their parochial activities. For the Christmas liturgies of 1920, two Sisters of Mercy also came to Milford. They assisted our Confreres in teaching Christian Doctrine, opened a Day Nursery, taught sewing and knitting, and the Italian language to the children of the parish.

When the Superior General returned to Rome, he appointed **Fr. John B. Zaupa as the Visitor for the communities of North America**. In 1921, Fr. Zaupa went to Italy to seek for new helpers for the work in North America. Since **Fr. Balestrazzi** volunteered to return to America, his petition was accepted, thus having to give up his office of Economist General and Postulator of the Founder's Cause.

14. In **Springfield in 1921**, there occurred the death of **Bishop Thomas Beaven**, who had shown such kindness toward our Fathers, especially and fortified him spiritually with the customary Last Rites. He was succeeded by **Bishop Thomas O'Leary**, who also showed sincere affection for our Confreres, showing deep appreciation for the work accomplished by them.

15. In this same year of 1921, by an ordinance issued from the General Council, there was formed a legal 'Corporation' approved by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, as **The trustees of the Stigmatine Fathers, Inc..** Its purpose was that

of cultivating virtue and piety within the Roman Catholic Faith members by rendering special service to the Bishops of the Roman Catholic Church – by **preaching, teaching and giving Missions** and providing general supervision of the Italian immigrants.’ It was also authorized ‘to purchase, lease, or otherwise acquire real estate and personally property necessary and convenient to carry out the purpose of the said Corporation, and to pledge, mortgage, or dispose of the same, or any interest therein.’

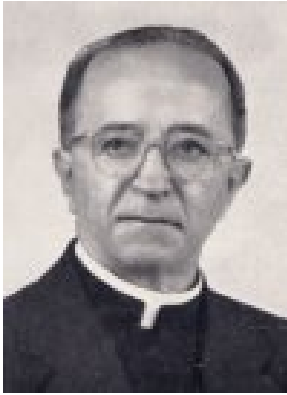
The General Council also ordained that the goods of all our Houses be put in the name of the Corporation, and that a Central Coffe be established, into which were to be deposited the movable capital of each House – which would retain the ownership and usufruct not necessary for the ordinary, annual administration of each House. **Fr. Victor Gurisatti** [blood brother of the Superior General!], **Director of the House of Scranton, refused to obey this order.** This same Father, the year before, had **refused** to go to Springfield where he had been transferred³³. Many times, ordered by the Visitor [something like a regional superior] and repeatedly threatened with expulsion, he would not submit. As a result, **the Superior General, with the consent of his Council, on April 10, 1922, decreed his Dismissal from the Institute.** After this Decree, Fr. V. Gurisatti applied to the Holy See for **an Indult of Secularization.** The Superior General opposed his secularization, unless he first complied with his obligations towards the Congregation.

16. Also Fr. Luchi opposed this order of Superiors, who directed him to leave Hazleton and to transfer to another House of North America. The General Council also showed Fr. Luchi some leniency allowing him to choose the House in North America he would choose to live and serve the Church. The General Council went a step further allowing him to remain in Hazleton on the condition that he would accept a Confrere as Director and another as Economus. **He repudiated such terms.** Not succeeding to remove these two Fathers from Hazleton and Scranton respectively, **the General Council decreed in 1914 to abandon the two foundations in Pennsylvania.**

17. In 1922, Fr. John B. Zaupa was elected Superior General by Postulation. At the end of this same General Chapter, the General Council appointed Fr. Anthony Dalla Porta as ordinary Visitor for the North American communities, and approved a Statute which specified the juridical powers of the Visitor and his Council. **Frs. Remy Zadra, William Ludessi, [Ludescher] Charles Zanotti, Louis Fontana, Joseph Costa [Kuster] and Brother Joseph Zuliani** were assigned to North America by the General Council. The General Council appointed **Fr. Alfred Balestrazzi, who was given opportune instructions and powers, to handle the thorny cases of Father Luchi and V. Gurisatti.** Since it was impossible for the Stigmatines to leave Fr. Luchi in Hazleton, he was given permission to choose the House of his preference; **Fr. V. Gurisatti,** though, was seeking

³³ The Council even showed itself disposed to leave Fr. V. Gurisatti as superior of Scranton – provided he would accept on confrere as Director and another as Economus.

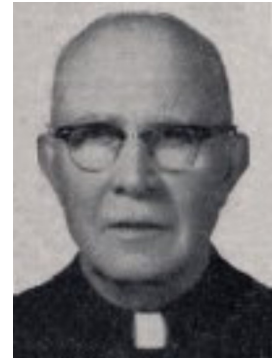
secularization, and was told that he would first have to settle his affairs with the Congregation.



Father Remigio Zadra
[1890 - † 1963]
From Cis (TN)



Father William Ludessi
[1889 - † 1969]
From Roethis (Austria)



Father Louis Fontana
[1893 - † 1982]
From Lisignago (TN)

18. The Council also decided to give up the **House in Milwaukee** and to transfer **Fr. Fadanelli** to another House. He refused to obey and petitioned the Holy See for secularization. To forestall such a move on his part, the General Council was willing to retain the House and leave him there as Pastor, provided he accepted a Director and Economist. **He did not accept and preferred to abandon the Institute; we shall see later that outcome of his actions.**

19. Also **Fr. Lino Cembran** in **1921** had obtained an Indult of Exclaustration ***ad annum*** on condition that the Decree ***Magni Semper***, of the Congregation on the Consistory of December 30, 1918, was observed. In 1922, the same Sacred Congregation forbade him under penalty of *suspension a divinis* to remain the United States, and, after a favorable judgment of the Superior General, gave him permission to go to South America. So, under these conditions, he obtained his indult of Secularization.

20. In **1922**, **Fr. Leonard Donazzan** dishonorably left the Institute, incurring the Canonical censures, which were later ratified by the Apostolic Delegate to the United States, Bishop John Bonzano. He returned to Italy in January of 1923, and obtained from the Holy See, absolution from his Censures, but not before submitting a written declaration in which he deplored his misconduct and sought pardon for the scandal he had given. In **May 1923**, he was granted an **Indult of Exclaustration ad annum**. This was later extended; in **1925**, he obtained the Indult of Secularization with a prohibition to return to the United States.

21. To offset these sad losses, suffered by the Congregation in North America, the Superiors sought establish other solutions for the ministry. Already in 1921, **Fr. Zaupa, the Ordinary Visitor to the region, after the two Houses in Pennsylvania were abandoned**, wrote to other Bishops in the United States, to obtain an Italian Parish in their Dioceses and the permission to establish a Juniorate. **The Cardinal Archbishop of Boston, William O'Connell**, replied, offering a parish in Lynn MA, 12 miles north of Boston, and granting the Stigmatines permission to start a Juniorate in an approved place. **Fathers Balestrazzi and Sozzi** were assigned the new foundation and they took **possession of the parish on April 20, 1922**. They conducted services in a small portable Church, which was dedicated on August 12, 1922. The Cardinal of Boston was pleased with the work of our men, and in November, also offered a Parish in **Waltham MA** to be conducted by our Congregation. **The Waltham Church was inaugurated on August 25, 1922.**



Father Carlo Zanotti
[1893 - † 1965]
From Lover (TN)



Father Joseph Costa
[1895 - † 1977]
From Feldkirch (Austria)

22. In this **same year of 1922**, the Archbishop of New York, upon the recommendation of the Apostolic Delegate, also offered to the Congregation the **Italian Parish in White Plains NY**, on the northern outskirts of New York City. This parish had been erected by a secular priest who resided in a small House and conducted services in another small House on Brookfield Street. The Foundation was accepted by **Frs. Leo Sella and Joseph Rosa took over the direction of this Parish in June of that year.**

23. In **December of 1923**, the Superior General came to the United States, accompanied by **two Professed Students, Joachim Bortignon and Louis Zuliani**³⁴. These two students were assigned to assist at the Juniorate and were to continue their studies at the same time in the **Archdiocesan Seminary of Boston [St. John's**

³⁴ It should be noted that from **1923-1926, Fr. J. B. Castellani was in the United States preaching Italian Missions**, principally in our own Parishes.

Seminary, Brighton MA]. The Superiors were inclined first to open the Juniorate in Lynn, but then conclude that the locale was not favorable for such an undertaking. **Waltham MA** offered better opportunities: there was an **elementary school there conducted by the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur**, and an **all boys' high school administered by the Christian Brothers**. Also, not too many miles away, there was a **Boston College where the Jesuits taught as well as the Archdiocesan Seminary near by**. And so it was, that right after our Fathers took over the Italian parish in Waltham, a large piece of property was bought on Lexington Street. It boasted of considerable acreage and two large houses. **In the year 1924, Fr. Erminio Lona formally inaugurated the Juniorate³⁵**.

24. The Stigmatine Clerics - **Bortigon and L. Zuliani** - during their first year here frequented Boston College to learn English, and the next year enrolled in the philosophy course at St. John's Arch-diocesan Seminary. In **1924, Fr. Joseph Nardon** published an English translation of the Biography of our Founder, which had been written by Fr. Joseph Fiorio, and published in Italy in **1922**.

25. In **1924**, in Springfield, Fr. Anthony Dalla Porta was stricken with a serious illness, which **for two months kept the whole parish in grave trepidation**. Public prayers were offered for his recovery and the faithful experienced great joy when he was able to return among them. He was given another manifestation of affection in October of this same year, on the occasion of the 25th Anniversary of his priesthood. Even the Mayor and the Italian Vice-Consul, representing the City and the Italian colony respectively, were present at the solemn reception tendered in his honor.

26. In **West Springfield, during November of 1924, the new Church of St. Ann was dedicated**. The Bishop was on hand to bless the Church, after which he celebrated a Pontifical Mass and administered Confirmation. Also in Pittsfield on Easter Sunday, April 20, 1924, the new Church was opened to the public, an event of interest to the whole city. The Superior General was present for the inauguration, and on October 24th, the Bishop of Springfield blessed it solemnly, with Pontifical and the administration of Confirmation. The basement was turned into a meeting-hall, and a stage was built for shows and evening concerns. In **June of the same year in Pittsfield**, two houses near the Church were purchased, for the **future residence of the Sisters**.

27. In **Waltham, on January 28, 1925**, the old Church was partly damaged by fire – and on February 10th, the work of restoration began. In the meantime, services were held in the basement. On February 20th, there was celebrated the decennial of the parish – and on March 12th services could again be held in the restored Church. On September 14th, work of the reconstruction began on the new Church. **On September**

³⁵ Up to 1931, the Aspirants attended St. Mary's High School on Lexington Street, conducted by the Christian Brothers.

14th, work of construction began on the new Church on River Street, and it was dedicated on December 24th.

28. In White Plains, Frs. Leo Sella and Joseph Rosa right from the start, were dissatisfied with the Chapel and Residence, which they considered wholly unbecoming and indecent. Hence, they were soon scouting around for a central location, one which would satisfy the needs and the aspirations of the Italian colony. They found one which they thought was suitable, **not too far from the railroad station on South Lexington Avenue**, but they met with strong opposition from the local Clergy and the Archdiocesan Council. Undaunted, they had recourse to Cardinal Hayes, explaining to him the needs and the distress of the Italians. The Cardinal authorized them to purchase the property which was spacious and roomy, and on which there was a large three story house, plus a two story building with two large halls. They assured themselves of his property by a first payment in September 1923 and with another payment of \$45,000.00 on May 1, 1924, and it became the property of the Italian parish. In the meantime, they sold the property on Brookfield Street, and on **July 1, they began holding services in the main hall on South Lexington Avenue** which was then **blessed by Fr. Sella on July 3rd**, to the great joy of the Faithful.

29. Also in White Plains, in the Silver Lake region, where there were 4000 Italians, a large hall was bought in 1923. It was converted into a Chapel dedicated to **St. Anthony, and administered by our Fathers**. Soon the Italians frequented it in great numbers, together with the faithful of other nationalities, thus, doubling the work of our two Confreres. And in 1925 another piece of land was bought with the intention of building a Church, on Ferris Avenue, in White Plains in a section where there were 1,000 Italians.

30. Fr. Fadanelli, who in 1922, had obtained an Indult of Secularization, was still in Milwaukee. However, the Consistorial Congregation informed the Archbishop that for special reasons, it would not permit Fr. Fadanelli to remain in Milwaukee, under penalty of suspension *a divinis*. Negotiations between the Superior General and the Archbishop were initiated, in order to arrive at some kind of an agreement regarding the foundation. Finally, after a written Declaration by the Archbishop, in which he stated that the Stigmatine Fathers had acted correctly in their actions concerning their withdrawal from Milwaukee, and had given assurance that Fr. Fadanelli had left the Archdiocese, and would not be permitted to return, the Superior General also in the name of his Council, decreed to relinquish all its rights in the controversy concerning the Italian Parish.

31. Also, Fr. Luchi in 1924, left a Declaration in which he admitted and deplored his errors, and sought pardon for the scandal given by his misconduct, acknowledging that the method of treatment of the Superiors had been correct and sadly necessary, After

this, the Superior General thought best of opposing his secularization. Fr. Luchi died in Hazleton in May of 1944, and was succeeded by his nephew, Fr. Henry Luchi.

32. Concerning **Fr. Victor Gurisatti**, The Holy See put the affair into the hands of the Apostolic Delegate, Bishop Fumasoni Biondi, who ordered Fr. Gurisatti to surrender all the books and records pertinent to his stewardship to two representatives of the Diocese and the Congregation respectively, so as to ascertain what goods of his belonged to the Diocese, and what goods belonged to the Stigmatine Congregation. He refused to turn them over, and therefore, **in September 1924, he was officially suspended *a divinis* by the Apostolic Delegate.**

In 1925, the Superior General, in order to facilitate the solution of this thorny matter, and to put an end to the simmering scandal, declared **that once Fr. V. Gurisatti obeyed the order of the Apostolic Delegate, and that afterwards he would obtain the Decree of Secularization,** the Congregation would charitably cede to him whatever the two representatives ascertained belonged to it. **He still refused to obey. So, the Superior General in 1927, with the consent of his Council, presented to the Sacred Congregation of Religious, the Decree of Dismissal already issued against him on April 10, 1921.** The Sacred Congregation of Religious ratified the Decree.

This unhappy Confrere, **Fr. V. Gurisatti**, **was stricken by some kind of a mental derangement, and was mercifully placed in a Nursing Home in Baltimore MD.** Upon coming to his senses, he acknowledged and deplored in writing the extended wrong he perpetrated against the Institute, and insistently begged to be re-admitted among us. The Superior General promised to accede to this wish of his just as soon as he would have fully recovered his health. Unfortunately, **Fr. V. Gurisatti died very suddenly on May 26, 1931. From September 12, 1928 he had been incardinated into the Scranton PA Diocese.**

33. **In 1925, Fr. Anthony Dalla Porta substituted Fr. Louis Fantozzi as General Councilor, when the latter went to our newly established Missions in China.** Shortly before this, Fr. A. Dalla Porta had translated into Italian, 5 small volumes entitled ***My Unchangeable Friend***, by Fr. Francis le Buffe, SJ.

34. In the meantime, the Superior General, on August 27, 1925, left Italy for the Canonical Visitations of both Brazil and North America, arriving here in the USA on December 2, 1925. **In January of 1926, Fr. William Ludessi took over the direction of the Parish in Springfield, succeeding Fr. Anthony Dalla Porta. Fr. Ludessi built a new Rectory for the Church of Mount Carmel and renovated the Sisters' residence.** After this, the property on Wilcox Street was sold. In 1927 in Springfield, a disastrous flood badly damaged St. Ann's Church and Rectory causing great damage. There was a recurrence of these floods in 1936 as in 1930.

35. In the town of Agawam, a Church dedicated to St. Anthony was built. The Sacristy of St. Anthony's Church was built in 1931. The portable Church there in Agawam which had been used up to this moment in time, was moved to **Feeding Hills MA** for the convenience of the Faithful there. In Waltham, by prescript of February 11, 1926, the Novitiate was canonically erected. Fr. A. Balestrazzi was appointed first Master of Novices and, after the departure of Fr. Anthony Dalla Porta, had also been elected Ordinary Visitor. On August 15, 1926, he vested our first class of Novices in the New World.

36. In the Sacred Heart Parish, Waltham MA, classes for the Italian Language were started and a tract of land was purchased near the Church for the eventual construction of a parochial school. In 1927, the Rectory and the bell tower of the Church were constructed. The new bells were also installed.

37. In **West Lynn** a building had already been bought and converted into a **Church and dedicated to St. Francis**. In 1926, on the occasion of the centenary of the Saint, it was beautified and a new organ installed. And more property was acquired on **Bessom Street**, on which was built the Church in honor of the Holy Family, and which was inaugurated on March 29, 1925. This Church was destroyed by fire on Christmas Day 1926. In November 1927, the work of reconstruction began, and on February 22, 1928, the new basement – church was opened to the public.

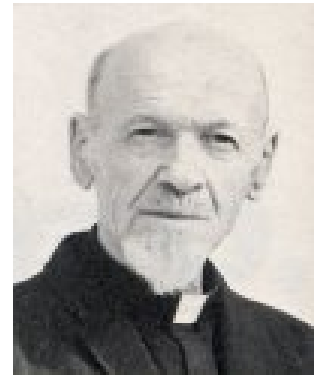
38. In **Milford in 1927**, work was also started on the new Church, and the completed basement was blessed on December 18th. The old Church in 1930 was converted into a hall, and a stage was erected for theatrical purposes.

39. In **Pittsfield, on the first of September 1925, Fr. Anthony Toniolli died at the age of 39!** His death triggered wide-spread grief among the whole Italian community. The next year, a monument was erected in his honor in the local cemetery and a large concourse of people attended its inauguration; and in 1929, a main altar was installed in the new Church in his memory.

40. In **White Plains on Ferris Avenue, the Church of the Assumption was built in 1926.** At Silver Lake, the Church of St. Anthony was enlarged. In 1929, the new Church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel was built on South Lexington Avenue, that was opened on December 23rd. In 1930, the main altar and two side altars were blessed gifts of a member of the parish; in October of the same year, the Church was solemnly blessed by the Cardinal Archbishop of New York. In 1930, by order of the Cardinal Archbishop, the debt of the Church was regulated, extinguishing part of the notes and placing on the Church a mortgage of \$200,000.00.

41. On **September 14, 1925, Fr. Dario Wegher** who had been Assistant at Mount Carmel, Springfield and Sacred Heart Waltham – both in Massachusetts - left for Italy to go to the Missions in China.

42. In October 1928, the Superior General came to the Visitation of our Houses, and **Fr. A. Dalla Porta**, who had regained his health, returned in his company to the USA. After the General Chapter, **Fr. William Ludessi was appointed Visitor** for the region. **He transferred his headquarters to Waltham, and took over the direction of Sacred Heart Church there.** Fr. **Erminio Lona** succeeded him as Pastor in Springfield.



Father Dario Wegher
1898 - † 1980
From Sporminore (TN)

43. **The Apostolic School [Juniorate] in Waltham was flourishing admirably, and in 1928, Raccoon Island**, not far from Boston, was bought as a summer home for our students. In **1930**, the publication of the ***Stigmatine Magazine*** was launched. In this time, other priests were being sent to the USA: **in 1929, Fathers Julius Valentinelli and Dante Turri** also arrived. **In 1930, Brothers Gino Dehò, Ettore Linda, Joseph Bocchio and Joseph Fontanari** came.

44. **The first hopes of the Apostolic School [the Waltham Juniorate]** also began to blossom: the Superior General, returning to Italy in **January 1929**, took back with him the first two American students: **Joseph Riley & Daniel Meaney**.

45. **In 1931**, the Superior General returned to America for the Canonical Visitations of our Houses. In Waltham, in September of this year, our own internal school was initiated for the Aspirants, taught by our own Fathers and several lay-teachers. The other students, after having completed their Novitiate, were sent to Italy to study Philosophy and Theology. Already in 1929, the first two had gone to Italy and were joined by others in the following years: 5 in 1930; 2 in 1931; 7 in 1932; 3 in 1933:

- **In 1929 Joseph Riley and Daniel Meaney** [who made his Novitiate but was not admitted to first Profession;
- **in 1930, Louis Bonan, Gerald Hogan, Leonard Della Badia; John Golden, Louis Ecker;**
- **in 1931, George Ecker and Paul Daly;**
- **in 1932, Adolph Ferrari, Paul Piskel; Joseph Welch; Guido Costabile** [who in 1930, was dispensed from his vows]; **Dominic Ruscetta, Charles Armour and Michael Cariglia;**
- **in 1933, Seraphim Piazzi; Francis Mackin and John Stanton.**

Hogan, George Ecker, Paul Piskel, Welch, Armour and Stanton remained in Rome for their Licentiate in Theology at the ANGELICUM; the others after their two years of Philosophy went to Verona in 1932. [Unfortunately, this division among the young Americans in Italy remained a breach for many years afterward]. **Dickinson**

returned to America in October 1935; and **Piazzì** in September 1939, for health reasons.

46. In Springfield in 1931, being the **25th anniversary of the foundation of Our Lady of Mount Carmel**, the occasion was taken to enlarge the Church which had become too small to accommodate all the faithful. **Already in 1929**, a house had been bought, contiguous to the Church, which impeded air and light, with the intention of demolishing it to afford a better view of the Church. But, then it was decided to make use of it for the enlargement of the Church itself, which was made longer and remodeled in the shape of a Cross, with the addition of two lateral 'arms'. This work was accomplished in 1931, and in the following year, it was decorated and furnished with a new organ. It was inaugurated on June 2nd, by His Excellency, the Bishop. After this work, **Fr. Erminio Lona**, following the premature death of **Fr. Anthony Dalla Porta**, was transferred to Waltham as Master of Novices and Director of the Apostolic School [Juniorate]. **Fr. Anthony Dalla Porta died on March 22, 1932, at Waltham MA** where he served as formation director and Master of Novices. During the same year, **Fr. Alfred Balestrazzi** returned to Italy for reasons of health. In exchange, **Fr. Peter Torretta came to America in 1931, and Fr. Richard Zambiasi in 1932.** **Fr. William Ludessi**, the Ordinary Visitor, returned to Springfield.

47. In Milford, the parochial school was in a flourishing state and, with the addition of more classes, the need was felt of enlarging its restricted quarters. In September 1932, following a government inspection, the school was declared unfit for use. It



Father Serafino Piazzì
[1914 - † 1992]
[Trentinian family]



Father Riccardo Zambiasi
[1878 - † 1952]
Family from Val di Non



Father Peter Torretta
[1907 - † 1969]
[Castellazzo di Rho
(Milan)]

would be allowed to function only if the parish would undertake the construction of a new building for the next school year. But, the Church could not assume this obligation due to a serious lack of funds; instead, the school was remodeled at the cost of \$4,000.00, and it was ready by the end of September.

In 1934, the Italian government offered as a prize a free trip to Italy, to 150 Italian students of parochial schools in the USA, in which the Italian language was taught. Three pupils from our school in Milford were chosen. They left Boston on July 14th, and visited the ports of Venice, Naples, Genoa, as well as the cities of Rome and Milan. Also in 1936, 4 pupils from Milford received the same prize; Fr. Valentinelli also accompanied them due to his merits in the field of education

48. In Pittsfield, in 1931, the parish welcomed the Venerini Sisters who opened a school and taught the Italian language, with good results. In 1934, the Church was redecorated.

49. In White Plains in 1931, Fr. Leo Sella was succeeded by **Fr. Michael Madussi**, who by his zeal injected new life into the parish. **In 1932, he obtained the help of the Sisters of Good Counsel College in White Plains** as well as other instructors for the teaching of Christian Doctrine to the Children. He attracted the children to attend Holy Mass and Christian Doctrine, and organized the showing of weekly movies, even in our other two churches of the parish.

50. In July 1931, Fr. Joseph Nardon, one of our first Fathers to come to North America, left to aid our Fathers in Brazil. **He died at Rio Claro on March 5, 1933.**

51. In the General Chapter of 1934, Fr. Bruno Chiesa was elected Superior General. This Chapter, acting on the proposal of **Fr. Louis Fontana of North America**, approved an 'order of the day' which expressed the firm hope that, as soon as would prove possible, **the regions of North and South America be erected as Provinces**. In this context, Fr. John B. Zaupa, leaving office after two terms as Superior General, in the Chapter had renounced his right, given him by the Constitutions, of choosing the house of preference for his future apostolate. In August of that year, he returned to the United States – accompanied by **Fr. Joseph Riley, the first native priest of the Congregation, who had been ordained at Trent on June 29, 1934.**

52. In August of 1936, the Superior General arrived here for the Visitation of the houses. The work of our Fathers was multiplying and bearing consoling fruit. In Springfield, a 'Catholic Action' Club was started, for the purpose of promoting Christian life in the parish. It was the first of its kind to spring up in the city, and other parishes soon followed its lead. Here, too, the 'Mount Carmel Guild' was outstanding for its activity. It comprised men and women who aided the St. Vincent de Paul Society, in seeking help for the many poor of the area, providing for them clothing and other necessities of life. In **February of that same year, the Filial House** of West Springfield was established, under-training the direction of the Churches of St. Ann. In this Church **in 1940 a new electric organ was inaugurated.** At this time, the Stigmatines became responsible for the direction of the Houses of St. Ann in West Springfield, as well as St. Anthony's in North Agawam, and of Sacred Heart in Feeding Hills.

53. In Milford, on Founder's Day, June 12, 1936 graduation exercises were held for the first time, attended by a large concourse of people. Twenty five young students received their diplomas. In July **the new cemetery** of the parish was inaugurated. **In 1941**, the construction of the upper church was started, but was soon suspended because of the U.S. entry into the war, on December 7, 1941, the Church was eventually finished and opened to the public in July of 1947.

54. In September 1936 a territorial parish in **Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada**, a city of some 300,000 inhabitants, was entrusted to us. **Fathers Joachim Bortignon and Leonard Della Badia** took over its direction on **September 26th**. Finding the old Rectory inadequate, they built a new one the following year. When the new parochial school was built, this Rector became the Convent for the Sisters, and our Fathers moved into a house adjacent to the school.

55. In December 1936 the **House and Italian parish of Timmins Ontario**, Canada was opened. **Fr. Louis Fontana** was assigned to it. In the beginning he held services for the Italians in the basement of the French Church. Construction got underway during the same month and on following October 10th the Church was ready for use.

56. During these years, the American students in Italy were being ordained and returning yearly to America. **In 1935, Fathers Della Badia, Golden, Bonan, Louis Ecker were ordained: in 1936, Fathers Hogan, Paul Daly, George Ecker; in 1937, Fathers Paul Piskel, Joseph Welch and Charles Armour, John Stanton and Michael Cariglia; in 1938, Fr. Dominic Ruscetta; and in 1939, Fathers Adolph Ferrari and Mackin.**

In 1936, William Girolamo, Ellsworth Fortman and Samuel Chameal went to Rome for study; Gilbert Fini, LePere, and Callaghan [the latter two were dispensed from their vows a few years later]; in 1938, James Mullen and Guy Rossi went. All returned to America in June of 1940 when Italy was about to enter the war.

Contemporaneously, **in 1936, the school of Philosophy was begun in Waltham, and in 1938, that of Theology** .In 1937, also **Fathers De Michei and Angelo DaPrai were sent to America**. With this increase of workers it was possible for the Congregation to expand and intensify its work here. **Fr. Paul Daly** volunteered for mission work **in China, arriving there in November 1936.**

57. In 1938, Fr. Paul Zanini, Delegate of the Superior General, made the Canonical Visitations of our Houses. Even more noticeable were the spiritual fruits being reaped by the Fathers in their Apostolic Mission. In Springfield, the lower Church had to be used on Sundays for religious services, the upper Church having become inadequate to accommodate the faithful. **In 1941, a Mission Exhibit was held in the Springfield Auditorium. One of the booths represented our Mission of Yishien, China, and it received the praise of newspapers and its many visitors.**

In Pittsfield, in 1938, for the same reasons as noted above, the basement was converted into a Chapel for the convenience of the faithful. Here, too, in **1940** a new organ was installed and in **1941, the Church was dedicated and the facade was renovated**. Also in Pittsfield in 1938, more property was bought and the house on it converted into a Hall for meeting our purposes. In 1940, Fr. Charles Zanotti was appointed Ordinary Visitor.

58. In Lynn in 1938, the fund-raising campaign got underway for the completion of **Holy Family Church**.

In White Plains in 1941, Our Lady of Mount Carmel was decorated and beautifully colored windows installed; in 1939, the basement of the Church was converted into a Hall.

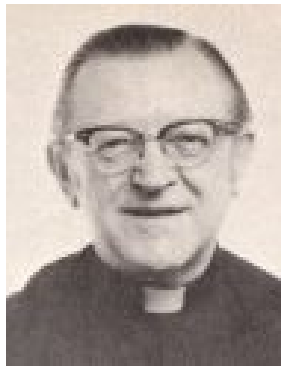
In Waltham on January 20, 1936, a terrible fire destroyed a good part of 'the House on the Hill', and the aspirants had to be sent home during the period of its restoration.

In 1939, the 'Stigmatine Aid Society' was started for helping our Juniorate. **In 1936**, the Professed Students instituted a **Mission Study Club**, which in **1940** on the occasion of 'Mission Sunday' organized an exhibit, displaying over 200 Mission magazines.

At this time, Waltham was proving to be inadequate to house all of our professed students in formation. To respond to this, **the beautiful property of 'Elm Bank' in Wellesley MA** was purchased at a reasonable price in **1940**. It proved to be an extraordinary purchase, and would be pressed into service as a House of Philosophy and Theology. It consisted of 170 acres, with a stately main building of 50 rooms, spacious lawns, gardens, wooded areas, and bound on three sides by the Charles River.



Father Vittorio De Michei
[1898 - † 1966]
From Cles (TN)



Father Angelo Da Prai
[1909 - † 1987]
From Bresimo (TN)



Father Paolo Zanini
[1901 - † 1970]
Family from Cles (TN)

The Students would move into their new home in July. This beautiful piece of land and its building was purchased for the rumored price of \$45,000.00 and was sold in the early 1970's [a 30 year investment] for more than 4 million dollars!

During **this same month of July**, a property in **Hinsdale MA, near Pittsfield**, was also purchased, as a summer camp for our students, where they had spent their summer vacation during the previous summer of 1939. Eventually, the lake front property and boat house came to be known as '**Camp Wyoma**' [**Little Flower**] and the young campers were counseled by our Professed Students, and this proved to be a wonderful formation element. Its entire history, unfortunately, was clouded by the founded accusation of child-abuse by a few of the Stigmatine professed members.

59. In May of 1940, the General Chapter was held in Rome, and **Fr. John B. Zaupa** was elected for his third term, after a hiatus of 6 years. **Fr. Emilio Baretella**, one of the Capitulars elected to represent North America, did not go for reasons of health.

When Italy entered the War [June 10, 1940], the Ordinary Visitor for North America was given extraordinary powers to make those decisions with the vote of his Council, even in those matters which would require the consent of the Superior General, when it would be impossible to seek or receive approval within satisfactory time.

Meantime, right after the termination of the General Chapter, in **June 1940**, and before the sea lanes were closed, **the American students who were in Italy returned to America. Fr. Paul Zanini** also came along with them.

In 1938 and 1939, Fr. J. B. Pelanda came to the USA to preach Italian Parish Missions. In February of 1940, **Fr. Henry Adami** also came – and he had to remain until the close of the war.

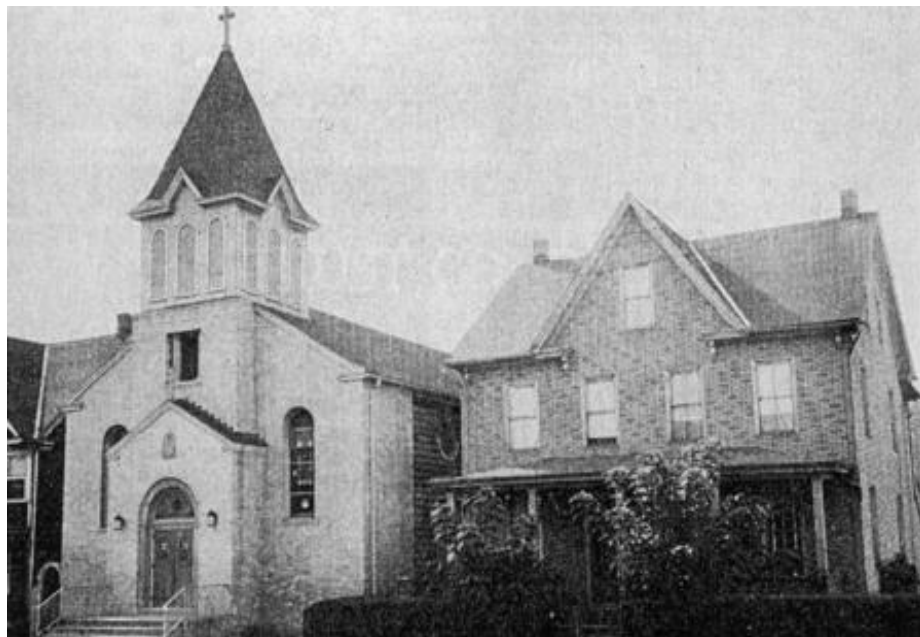
60. On October 10, 1941, the Sacred Congregation of Religious gave the Superior General faculty to erect the Congregation into three Provinces, and on November 28th, approved them to seven years *ad experimentum*, the Constitutions regarding them.

The Italian Province of the Sacred Heart was erected by the Decree of the Superior General, on April 7, 1942. The erection of the two American Provinces presented special difficulties, because of the existence of War having interrupted all communications, it was impossible to transmit the necessary information regarding the Provincial Appointments. Hence, the execution of the Pontifical Rescript was set aside for these regions, in the hope that conditions would ameliorate. Finally, **the three years' trial period granted by the General Chapter, having already transpired** and, there being no sign of political conditions getting any better, **the General Council on January 21, 1944, decreed to erect these two Provinces also.** And **the Superior**

General erected them officially with his Decree of January 23rd, for the celebration of the Patronal Feast of the Congregation. The North American region was to be known as the Province of the Holy Espousals and the Brazilian Province as the Province of the Holy Cross.

Fr. Charles Zanotti, the Ordinary Visitor, was appointed our first Provincial.

61. In 1942, Father Luchi promoted a great renovation in the Church. The existing structure was lengthened twelve feet to accommodate another 75 people. The height of the Sanctuary was later raised about five feet and the edifice was re-bricked to add new beauty to it. New pews were also installed. The Church was dedicated on October 4, 1942. Many civic and religious leaders of the Hazleton area sent letters of appreciation to Father Luchi, upon His achievement, which were incorporated into a booklet to commemorate the occasion.



Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church and Rectory, in Hazleton, PA

Summary of the Stigmatine Presence in Hazleton

1. The above is an abbreviated and most troubled historical survey of the painful beginnings of the Province of the Holy Espousals. While it is difficult to pass judgment on the financial machinations of Fr. L. Luchi, he certainly over-stepped his grounds – by **incurring debts** of excess of \$10,000.00 in the name of the Congregation, and also in **the opening of a house in Milwaukee, with no official authorization**.

2. The 12th General Chapter Constitutions would have been in vogue then, and this is what we read – making clear that Fr L. Luchi's conduct may not have been in according with the official Constitutions of the community.

†

OLMC Church in Hazleton, PA - Closed in 2009

Researches on internet resulted the final Mass of Our Lady of Mount in Hazleton, PA, which was the last of its kind for Tyroleans, was celebrated on Sunday, the first Sunday of Advent, in 2009, at 2 p.m.

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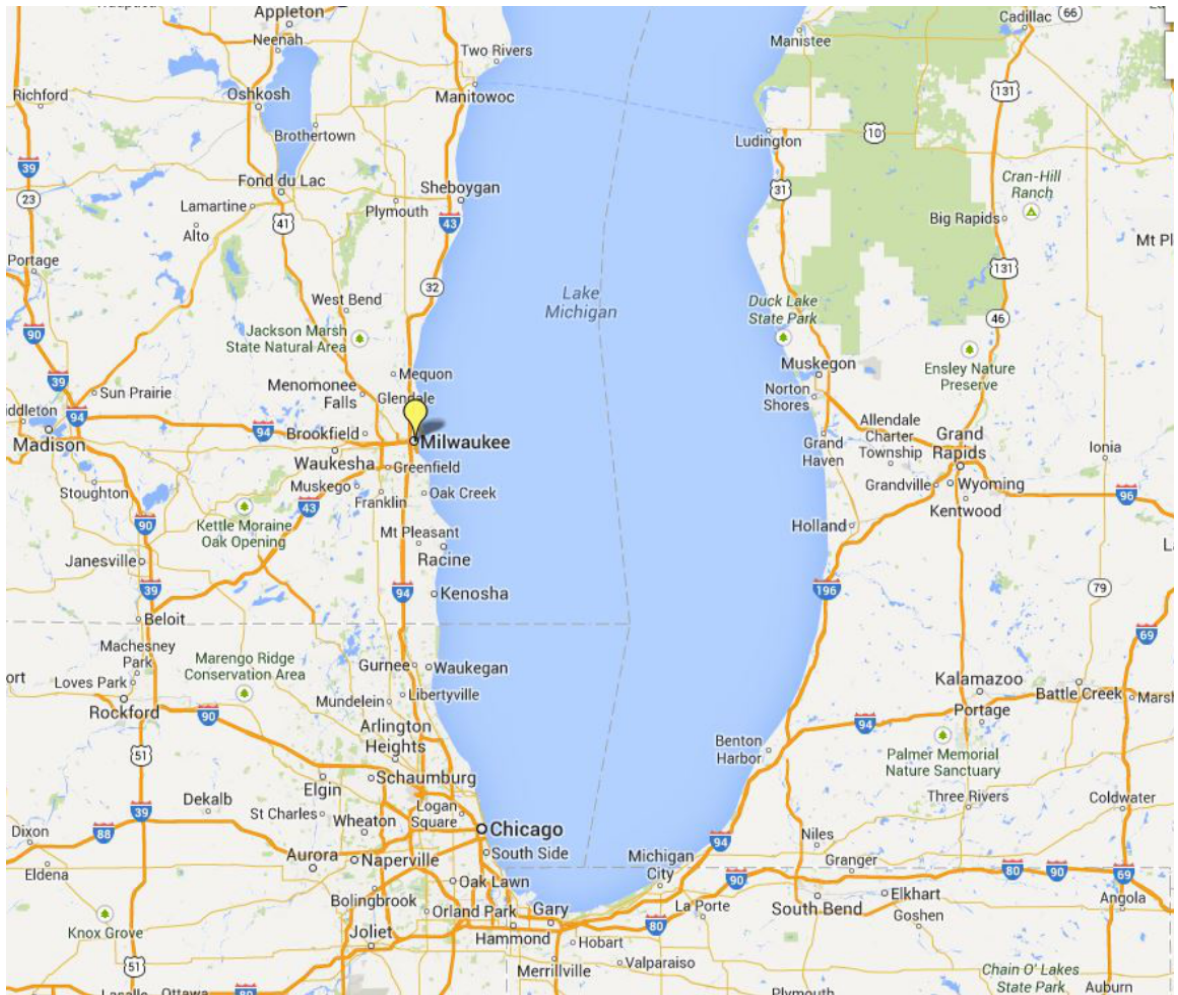
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CHAPTER TWO: MILWAUKEE, WI



Our Lady of Pompeii Church in Milwaukee, WI

“It was in May of 1915 that the story of the Stigmatine Fathers and the Archdiocese of Milwaukee and the parish of our Lady of Pompeii had its beginning. On the 15th of that month, Archbishop Sebastian Mesmer sent a letter to the Rev. Lewis Luchi. ... The Archbishop was anxiously seeking help with a growing Italian population.”



Our Lady of Pompeii Church

Milwaukee, WI

I. The Early Beginnings [1915]³⁶

It was in May of 1915 that the story of the Stigmatine Fathers and the Archdiocese of Milwaukee and the parish of our Lady of Pompeii had its beginning. The Archbishop was anxiously seeking help with a growing Italian population.

Fr. Victor Gurisatti, who came to the U.S. in 1907, along with Fathers Joseph Nardon, Alfred Balestrazzi and Bro. Camillo Ramus would play an essential role of the Stigmatines beginning in this country. He would be stationed in Scranton PA, and he and its history of that time would be one of much sorrow and pain.

Father Balestrazzi would minister in North Adams MA.



Father Giuseppe Nardon
[1873 - † 1933]
From Lisignago (TN)



Fr. Victor
Gurisatti

Meanwhile, other two Stigmatines priests who would arrive here in the New World, namely Frs. Lino Cembran and Angelo Simeone, would be also involved in the history of Our Lady of Pompeii.

Fathers Lino and Angelo soon began preaching in other Italian Parishes throughout the country. It may have been through one of these priests that the Archbishop of Milwaukee came to hear of the Stigmatines. There seems no other explanation how an Archbishop of Milwaukee would reach out to this new group, miles away from Hazleton, or Massachusetts - where at the time there was also a small band of Stigmatines who were carrying out their apostolic mission. Be what it may, a letter was received by Father L. Luchi in May of 1915.

³⁶ These notes are copied from neatly typed pages, entitled: 'Chapter 1 – Our Lady of Pompeij – Milwaukee Wisconsin.'

From the tenor of the letter, there seems to have been some communication between the Archbishop and Father L. Luchi, regarding a coming of the Stigmatines to Milwaukee, as the Archbishop could make use of them. In this letter, the Archbishop mentions that a certain 'Father Leone', now in charge of the parish, was to leave for the Diocese of Louisville KY. The time element was within the next two to four weeks. He would be more than pleased if Father Luchi would come at once: 'If you have a Father', the Archbishop writes, 'who understands the Sicilian and Calabrese dialects, it will be well to bring him with you as fully 70% of our Italians here are Sicilians, a very hard set!

Those of us³⁷ who know of the deep distrust that the northern Italians have for the southern Italians, and those who know that our first Italian Fathers were from the north, would indeed wonder why Father L. Luchi, who for his whole existence in the States would minister to the Tyroleans, and even build the only Church in this country for the Tyroleans would want to go to Milwaukee for this ministry among southern Italians. It was true that in Massachusetts many of the Italians were from the south, but it must have been a long time before they understood their dialect. From a personal view point, I doubt whether Father Zanotti from the North of Italy, ever understood my Mother, who spoke only in the Calabrese dialect. However, let it be. This is just an aside.

Father Luchi would answer this letter and would promise that as soon as he heard from the Archbishop, he would send one of our Fathers who will stay there until his Superior from Italy comes. The Superior is bringing over other priests and then he would make final arrangements about the parish. He was to go with Father Angelo, but, he could not be sure if he would leave the parish.

On July 19th, the Archbishop writes to Father L. Luchi, telling him how happy he was as Archbishop to receive Father Luchi's telegram. He stated that all arrangements for legal transactions were made. I quote his next few words, because they would turn out to be crucial even in this tormented history:

'... But, you will send me at once by letter the legal name of your community to which the property is to be transferred so that we can have the documents ready, when Reverend Simeone comes...

The Stigmatine Fathers had no legal entity status as yet. They would become 'incorporated' in the State of Massachusetts on September 10, 1918. The reason the Archbishop wanted our legal name was because we were to buy the property of the Church and Rectory for the sum of \$5,000.00 and we would have to carry this mortgage. This is how the document read:

³⁷ Who is intended here? Who is the author of these lines?

‘... Now, therefore, in consideration of the said sum of five thousand dollars so paid by the Mortgagor to said Mortgagee, the said Mortgage acknowledges that the balance unpaid on said note so secured by said Mortgagee amounts to the sum of Eight Thousand Dollars...’³⁸

It was on July 23, 1915, that the Archbishop met with his Consultors and all agreed – except for one - that the Parish would be given to the Stigmatines. Once again, the Archbishop asks how the deed is to be made out. Is it to be made out singly to ‘Father Lewis Luchi’, or to ‘the Reverend Luchi, superior of the Congregation of the Stigmatine Fathers’. The Diocese of Milwaukee insists on the how important the precise wording on how it is to be made out. Whatever the outcome indeed was, it was made out simply to the ‘Reverend Luchi, as Superior.’

The priests who came over on the SS. *Stampalia* which landed in New York on September 27, 1915, were Fathers Leo Sella, John B. Zaupa, and Henry Fadanelli. These last two would be the main characters in the saga of Our Lady of Pompeii.



Fr. Leone Sella



Fr. John Baptist Zaupa



Fr. Henry Fadanelli

Although there were others who became involved in this story, and whom we shall give more information about when the time comes – Archbishop Mesmer, Father John Baptist Zaupa and Father Henry Fadanelli would be a kind of ‘trinity’ in the long and bitter battle that was to occur in the Diocese of Milwaukee WI.

The Superior General at that time was Father John Baptist Tomasi, who had been elected on September 22, 1911.

³⁸ This document would have been a bomb shell in Italy!

II. Father Fadanelli becomes the first Stigmatine Pastor [1916]

Father Fadanelli was then sent by Fr. L. Luchi to care for the Parish of Our Lady of Pompeii, in Milwaukee WI. Father Henry was ordained in 1909. His first years of priesthood were spent in the Gregorian Seminary of Belluno.³⁹

At 29 years of age, he became Pastor of Our Lady of Pompeii. The exact date of his arrival there is not known. How he was received by the southern Italians remains unknown.

In fact, throughout the whole history of this parish, there is very little noted about the parishioners. They are mentioned only in passing.

The *BERTONIANO*, the official 'Bulletin' of the Stigmatine Institute, began publication in 1912, early in the Generalate of Father John Baptist Tomasi. From 1915 – 1921 [during World War I] there was no publication. The reason, of course, as many have conjectured was the First World War. Yet, when publication was resumed, there is not a single bit of information regarding what actually happened in Milwaukee.

In 1922, there is in the Distribution of Personnel, the names of Father William LUDESCHER [*Ludessi*] and Father Raymond Dalla Porta as being assigned to Milwaukee. Since by then, Father Zaupa had been elected Superior General at the time, one would readily understand how difficult it is to strive a century later to delve into this rather unclear period, of why concerning this Parish: Our Lady of Pompeii, in Milwaukee WI – nothing is mentioned ever mentioned. The only information we have are the letters that have survived – and which he been collected in recent years through an American General Councilor's efforts⁴⁰.

So it was in 1916 that we find Father Fadanelli, in Milwaukee, and from his first writings that have come down to us over the near century of history that has passed, we can see the ugly storm clouds gathering and so many unverifiable rumors beginning to take hold. The rumbling of disharmony became more and more apparent. In 1916, Archbishop Mesmer had heard that Father L. Luchi did not have permission of his Superior to assume the care of Our Lady of Pompeii Parish in Milwaukee. In his letter, His Excellency informs Father Luchi that he would testify that in all his negotiations with Father Luchi that the matter was still subject to the approval of the

³⁹ This was a prestigious seminary which the Stigmatines assumed under the influence of St. Pius X's Vicar for Rome, Cardinal Pamphili – due to our own Father Richard Tabarelli, renowned Professor in Rome at the time. The Canon Law department in that seminary was headed by the 'Confessor of Rome', Father Cappello, SJ – whose own cause for Sainthood is presently well advanced. In the Church of Sant'Ignazio, his old confessional presently is glassed in – it is here that the saintly canonist and confessor would lead his abundant flock of penitents each day after lunch in procession from the Gregorian to the Church of Sant'Ignazio in Rome

⁴⁰ This would Father Carmen T. Russo, USA – twice General Councilor under Fr. José Luis NEMES, CSS, Superior General.

Stigmatine Superior in Rome. The Archbishop made it clear that he would be quite distressed if the Stigmatines should decide to now give up the parish, after all the negotiations that had been undertaken up to this present moment. This is one of those rare times in which the parishioners are mentioned. This letter was written in March 1916.

In that June of 1916, we have a letter written by the Superior General to Father Lona. Most of it refers to the last two letters that Father Lona had written to him concerning the foundations in the United States. One page, however, deals with Milwaukee. He mentions a letter that Father Fadanelli had written, asking that Father Leo Sella be sent to help him in Milwaukee and that no more priests would be forthcoming at least until after the War. He agreed with Father Lona that Father Fadanelli remain alone in Milwaukee. He also states that he had written a letter to the Archbishop in English concerning his negative report on Father Simeone's conduct, and that it was never answered. He thought that the Archbishop's manner in these negotiations was somewhat strange. He then refers to Father Luchi and his own [personal] acceptance of Milwaukee in the name of the Stigmatines. In this, he had declared that the ultimate approval of that foundation – as with all of them [!] - rested more on the Superiors and consultation. Father Luchi evidently had acted totally on his own – and this may be the reason for some of the ugly rumors. Among the men, it was very clear that the proper protocol was that only the Superior General in Rome or the Regional Stigmatine Superior in the USA – they alone had such authority, and not Father Luchi. As we will shortly see, by now, Father L. Luchi had lost all interest in Milwaukee, as Father Fadanelli's letter later that year makes abundantly clear.

In November of this year, Father Fadanelli wrote a letter to Father Lona, explaining the problems he encountered. He mentions that he had requested someone to come and assist him in the Parish and no one was sent. He mentions the fact that he had tried to organize a Club and it failed. Yet, the Archbishop in his letter to Father Luchi states that a great spiritual renewal has taken place there. [Where?] Father Fadanelli figures that he has to attempt something else. He wanted to renovate the basement of the Church and make a theatre out of it. More importantly however, was the pressing need of the installation of a new boiler that would cost another two thousand dollars. The money would have to be raised in one manner or another, but that he was against borrowing money until conditions were more favorable. What did Father Lona think about all this? He mentions that he is still waiting for Superiors to do something – just what this would be can perhaps be known from his next letter!

The following day, he tells of receiving Father Lona's letter and though he had just mailed him a letter, he would respond to what Father Lona had to say. It remains a moot question if the letter of the Superior General in June is the response to the questions that Father Fadanelli had raised. Be this what it may, this letter to Father Lona is a letter of recriminations, disappointments and assumed betrayal. One of the

answers that Father Fadanelli had offered was now answered in this letter. He believed that this would be the answer to his question noted above. It appears, however, that the question hinged on the help that he had requested. Whatever Father Lona had to do, he understood primarily the necessity of obeying the Superior General. Father Fadanelli, however, wished for Father Lona's letter being more decisive.

Father Fadanelli now goes into a tirade about Father L. Luchi. Considering himself in a bind, there is nothing else for him to do now. He does not relish the idea of giving Father Luchi nightmares, but there is nothing else that he can do considering the present situation he has been placed in. He is simply manifesting the facts, and no matter what Father Luchi says, he cannot disprove these facts. Fact one: Father Fadanelli notes that it was Father Luchi who 'sent' him to Milwaukee; even though there may have been little else Father Luchi thought he could do with the circumstances facing him. Father Fadanelli came, obeyed, believing in the promises given him – that help indeed would be forth-coming. If he had believed in the promises that he had received then, and knew then what he now knows, under no conditions [*'non c'era barba di Papa'*]⁴¹ would Father Fadanelli have hesitated. It is now the present situation: that after all the promises and even oaths pronounced seeing the situation as it is now, Father Fadanelli would have even fought to come to Milwaukee – as the need facing Father Fadanelli he felt was so great.

Another fact needs to be recalled: Father Luchi then sought to justify his disinterest in Milwaukee by giving false reasons either consciously, or not, to me and maybe even to others. It is not quite honorable for one who had to risk so little and had to make little sacrifices to put us in such a bind as we are presently in!

Father Fadanelli had informed the Superior General that now was the time to make a choice between Hazleton and Milwaukee. Father Fadanelli had asked that Father Lino come not as one who would be an 'extra hand', or, as one who would be put to the mere minimum simply to make life tolerable. Otherwise, it would be better to accept the other point of the looking dilemma: this presumably would imply the giving up of Milwaukee - and this, despite the almost endless hopes that Milwaukee offered us as a community. For Father Fadanelli – whose heart by now is totally in Milwaukee – the leaving of Milwaukee would be a sorry day for him personally – it would portray a terrible impression regarding our Community: we just don't keep our word! While one could accept, he claimed, such a judgment regarding himself is not all that bad because we can always find solid, valid reasons for so doing.

⁴¹ This seems to be applied to Father Luchi as superior: he did not have the stature of a Pope!

The situation becomes even more murky because of Father Simeone who will make an argument out of this to put himself in a better light [this still seems to be Father Fadanelli's viewpoint]. Fr. Simeone could easily discredit the Institute while at the same time, bettering his own standing by so doing. What would make matters even worse is that Father Simeone would take over from Father Fadanelli! God forbid that Father Luchi would be made an accomplice to this complicated 'plot'.

Father Fadanelli then continues: he clarifies his offer of 'leaving the place', and just stating the facts as they have unfolded. He is not pleading his own case to keep Milwaukee – and with the consequence, giving up any other of our foundations, except Hazleton.

Father Fadanelli then slips in another damaging factor regarding Father Simeone and how the Superior General is too good to him. The Archbishop, however, has lost esteem for him. Back to Hazleton and because of Hazleton and Fr. Luchi: this foundation exists! Father Fadanelli asks that Father Lino might come; and, if Father Luchi is then worried about him, he can take direct supervision of him. [Father Fadanelli continues with a threat]: 'This affair has to be concluded by Christmas. Otherwise, I will spend my holidays in Christmas and have someone else take care of the place, while I am away!'

III. Closing of the Mission and Departure of Stigmatines [1921]

The Milwaukee Drama is dated as an 'event from May 19, 1915 - Nov. 22, 1925'. In one way or another, at least 4 Stigmatines left over this 'American venture':

- **Father Lewis Luchi**: [Born: August 25, 1859, Val di Non, Trento; Perpetual Vows: May 8, 1881; Ordained: September 30, 1883; Arrived in USA October 7, 1905; Secularized⁴² [February 1924].
- **Father Angelo Simeone**: [Born: August 12, 1876, San Luca, Verona; Perpetual Vows: May 5, 1894; Ordained: August 13, 1889; Secularized in USA: 1908
- **Father Lino Cembran**: [Born: May 8, 1879, Cembra, Trento; Perpetual Vows: Dec. 15, 1905; Ordained in the USA, August 13, 1905; Came to USA in 1908 – Exclaustated 1921].
- **Father Henry Fadanelli**: [Born: Cembra, Trento, on March 9, 1887; Perpetual Vows, Oct. 20, 1909; Ordained on Dec. 9, 1909; Came to USA on Sept. 17, 1915; Secularized in 1922.

⁴² As is known, 'secularized' usually means dispensed from the priestly life – and 'exclaustated' means dispensed from religious life – these terms are not clear here.

The Stigmatine Superiors involved in this difficult time: Fr. Erminio Lona, Fr. Gurisatti's regional superior; he came to the USA on Nov. 6, 1913; Fr. John Baptist Tomasi, Superior General from Sept. 22, 1911, until August 1922; Fr. John Baptist Zaupa, elected by 'Postulation' and under age on August 10, 1922, and he was already in the USA .

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IV. Blessed Virgin of Pompeii Church in Milwaukee, WI - Closed in 1967



Researches on internet resulted that :

“Blessed Virgin of Pompeii Church (known among locals as the ‘Little Pink Church’, because of the distinctive paint shade that eventually coated its exterior) maintained a spiritual and cultural vitality that rallied Milwaukee for decades, until the church’s last Mass on July 30, 1967, when it was forced to close.”

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CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS

The turmoil of these years in some of the lives of these men presented many difficulties for the Church in the U.S.A. - [not to speak of scandals!] - and real losses on all sides. This following imposing list of names includes those men who made their formation as Stigmatines, but who then do not appear in the Necrology, as they left the Stigmatines prior to their deaths. Here are the names – or at least of some of them:

CARRARA, Fr. Bellino

CAVINATI, Fr. J. Baptist [dismissed]

CEMBRAN, Fr. Linus

DONAZZAN, Fr. Leonard

FADANELLI, Fr. Henry

GIULIANI, Bro. Emil

GURISATTI, Fr. Vctor

LANARO, Fr. Michael [illness]

LAUDON, Fr. Eugene

MARROCHI, Fr. Joseph

PIEMONTE, Fr. Pietro [incardinated into Boston in 1912]

RAMUS, Bro. Camillo

SEMBIANTI, Joseph [brought John B. Tomasi to the congregation – left and joined the Combonians – left in the context of the 1890 General Chapter but professed long dissatisfaction]

SIMEONI, Fr. Angelo

SOGARO, Fr. Francis [succeeded + Daniel COMBONI in Africa – and led the prestigious Vatican *Academy of Noble Ecclesiastics* - the training school for the Vatican Diplomatic Corps. He died an Archbishop].

VICENTINI, Fr. Dominic [left due to the lack of foreign mission opportunities – became Superior General of the Scalabrini Fathers, and provided us with our first Brazilian community: TIBAGY!]

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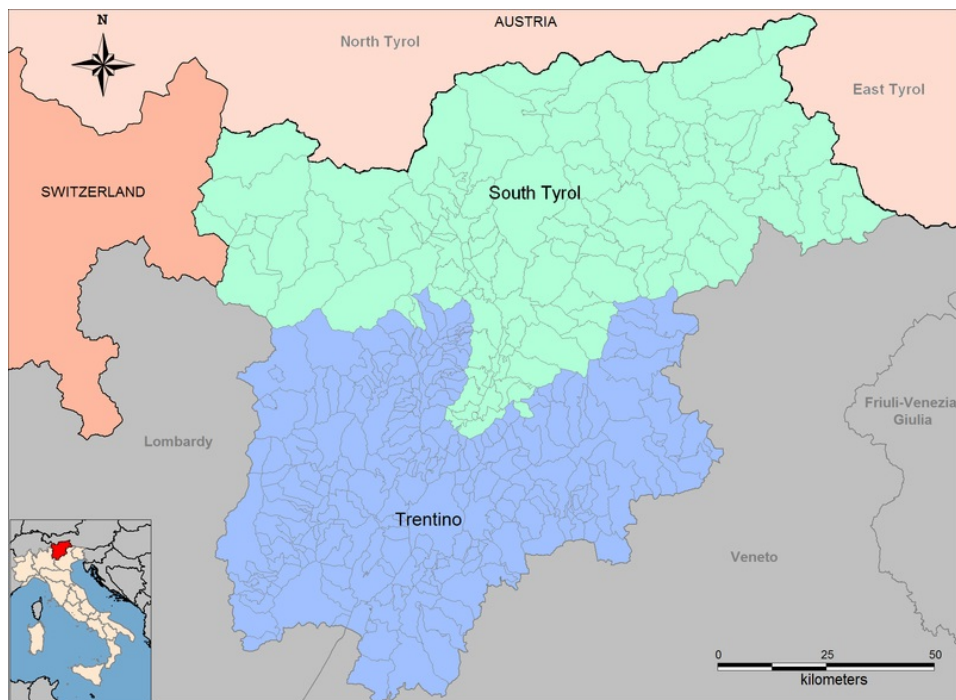
Trentino - South Tyrol

A History of a Border Region, Trentino - South Tyrol

From the Origins to our Times

[The information found for these pages is taken from a publication, written in Italian, and transcribed into English by the author, Paolo Magagnotti. He was assisted by several other contributors, and this work was subsidized by the Italian Government, through the Regional Government of the Province of Trento.

We will attempt to cover mostly the era from the beginning of the 20th century to the present time, as to include all of the book into this narrative would be too long and cumbersome].



The region of Trentino-South Tyrol, formed by the Provinces of Trento and Bolzano, has a surface area of 8,168 sq. miles, 3,728 sq. miles of which are in the Province of Trento – and 4,440 sq. miles in the Province of Bolzano. The population of the region counts 863,876 inhabitants: 442,845 residing in the Province of Trento, and 421,031 in the Province of Bolzano.

To be familiar with the history and the reality of the land we live in and where our ancestors lived, is not only a piece of our cultural information but also a necessity, in order to have a better understanding of ourselves and to be able to make choices

regarding the society of today and tomorrow with a full knowledge of the facts. The historical events which, over the centuries, affected the populations who inhabited the territory corresponding to the present Trentino-South Tyrol are not only special – as the history of every land and population always is - but they present unique traits which distinguish quite clearly and originally the relations between peoples who speak different languages and who, by mixing on both sides of the Brenner Pass, have formed one of the delicate corners of Europe.

Trentino-South Tyrol with its linguistic groups, its traditions and culture, the history of its emigration, its peculiar legal system and economical aspects, and its charming country-side, is frequently the object of analysis and research carried out by scholars, journalists and all those interested in examining the problems of a border region. Lately we have noticed the growing interest in the history and all the other problems which concern our region, shown by individual citizens and, above all, by teachers and students from Trentino-South Tyrol and other Italian regions. As well as that of foreign circles. Special information and news are also requested by our communities and emigrants abroad.

The Regional Government had prepared this publication in order to satisfy these demands and offer simple information accessible to all. We wanted to offer young people in particular, information regarding the roots of our autonomy so that the wealth of autonomist values and inter-ethnic society, so laboriously built up by our population, can be understood, kept and valued with more conviction and through the greatest possible participation.

A Journey through the centuries [from the Origins to 1815]

Like every region, Trentino – South Tyrol has its own history made up of physical and natural events and human expressions which represent important points of reference, reflection, pride or bitterness, depending on the events and the subjective value each one gives them; it is always a set of values and experiences which the people who live together within such a territory cannot and do not want to give up. Communities, families and individual citizens are all rooted in these values.

With regards to the characteristics which distinguish the history of every region and community, Trentino-South Tyrol has unique properties which are not only represented by the Dolomites, but mainly also by three linguistic groups: Italian, German and Latin, all living together in the same territory.

In addition, the geographical position of this area has been the meeting point for the Northern and Southern populations.

Until a few years ago, it was thought that the human settlements in the territory of the Region of Trentino-South Tyrol dated back only to the Neolithic, that is,

the last period of the Stone Age. The date of the first human presence on this land has been moved back following recent research, i.e., the discovery of traces from the Paleolithic Age, the most ancient period for the activity of pre-historic man.

The population from the period between 2000 and 800 BC came from the North East and the South and they ended up in valleys, initially attracted by the great quantity of game. A few groups dedicated themselves to the search and fusion of minerals. Over the centuries, cultivation and living conditions changed; between 1500 and 1300 before the Christian Era, we find populations from the Middle Bronze Age – whereas after 1200 there are populations from the recent Bronze Age, marked by the Luco Culture.

Accurate research helped to see the settlements of the lake-dwelling period in the Middle Recent Bronze Age, with the presence of a society that lived in forests, pastures and agriculture, and engaged in commercial exchanges with the South and the North.

The Provinces of Bolzano and Trentino, like many regions in Italy, Austria, and other parts of Europe, changed faces many times in its history. Our most immediate background, however, can be placed in the Austrian-Hungarian Empire, which fought for its survival many times.

Andreas Hofer, an inn-keeper and farmer, became the charismatic leader of the Tyrolean Valley in the various battles and military actions fought against the Franco-Bavarian troops for the liberation of Tyrol. In these battles, the German speaking farmers from Tyrol and the farmers from Trentino, fought side by side. In the latter group there were peasants from the Valleys of Giudicaire, Non, Sole, Fassa and Primiero Valleys.

So, in perspective, these battles laid the groundwork for the immediate boundaries of the present Tyrol and Trentino provinces. After the First World War, in 1919, the above Provinces of Tyrol and Trentino were ceded to Italy. Not everyone approved of this decision to cede these Provinces. The Bolzano Provinces, later called the 'Alto-Adige', strongly opposed union with Italy.

Today, it is practically self-autonomous. The people of these Provinces, just south of the Austrian Border, speak two languages: German and Italian.

The Provinces of the Trentino, named for the capital city, remained Italian, with heavy emphasis from the Italian Government to 'Italianize' the Province. However, our beloved Tyrol-Trentino Province remained culturally, socially and language-wise, separate from the rest of Italy. Its customs, food and language [Tyrolean Dialect] are totally different from the Italian. So, in essence, our people came from the Austrian-Hungarian Empire, and many people to this day, remind the Italians of this fact.

Summary

The Province of the Trentino is under the flag of Italy, as one of its province-regions. If a visitor to the Trentino hears the dialect spoken, he knows he is in the Province of Trento. There are many dialects, principally, the Nones, Solandri, etc. spoken. When our forefathers emigrated to America, at the turn of the century, they brought with them their heritage, customs, and language.

There is very little Tyrolean dialect spoken now in our local parish community. It is a sad situation. Many of our younger people seem not to understand even one word. Sad again.

Perhaps our planned Heritage room in our Church basement Social Room, can bring alive a little of this native heritage. We sincerely hope so.

Our Trentino Province gave many noted natives to public life, both in the country of Italy and America. They are too numerous to mention, but one stands out in particular. He is Alcide di Gasperi, Prime Minister of Italy after the Second World War, and the Leader of the Christian Democratic Party for many years.

We will list some of the towns from which many of our people emigrated to America: Trento, Cles, Revo, Romallo, Mezzolombardo, Tassullo, Rabbi, Ville di Giovo, Smarano, Castelfondo, Rallo, Tuenno, Sanzeno, Fondo, Lona, Bolognano, Salter, Tregiovo, Vervo, Verla, Coredò, Lavis, Daiano, Laureano, Siror.

You will note that we did not single out any individual for mention in this Parish History. There is one publication which depicts the lives of many of our parishioners and can be obtained very easily by contacting the Historian of these narratives.

Many of our parishioners have joined to social clubs, sprung from our parish and the Tyrolean Community. These are the '*Tirolesi Alpini*' and the 'American Tyrolean Club'. These two organizations were formed to perpetuate principally the Tyrolean Heritage, and have been very successful in their efforts.

Finally, we wish to conclude this long parish history by saying this: We have tried to cover this historical narrative to the best of our ability with the information we accumulated over the years. We think that it covers the period from our founding in 1905 to the present⁴³. Every one of our parishioner can have a copy, which will be available in the 'Heritage Room'. We hope it is a must reading for everyone, if possible, our younger generation should also be a part of this reading. Many thanks.

Gus Pilati, Historian, Josephine Trettel, Dorothy Endrizzi,
Denise Chocolas, Typist.

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⁴³ For all practical purposes, this could cover the 20th century!

Stigmatine Issues Never Unraveled

[There follow here 31 pages, double spaced, perhaps prepared under the direction of the late Fr. Carmen T. Russo, CSS, General Councilor for some years, under the Superior General Fr. José Luis Nemes, CSS. Perhaps Fr. Russo's interest in this tormented matter dates from his friendship with his class mate of ordination class of 1945, Fr. Joseph H. Fellin, CSS. The work is not uniformly clear – no credits given for authorship, where these would be warranted for clarity sake – there is also a series of Letters of the Apostolic Delegation; as well as those of the Abp. [Mesmer] of Milwaukee WI of that era, and the Apostolic Delegation of Washington DC], along with Fr. Zaupa's official correspondence as Fr. Gurisatti's Religious Superior Religious Superior.

1. This is the story of Father Victor Gurisatti, the first Stigmatine to take on the administration of the Church of St. Lucy, Scranton PA. It is more a history of this person and how tragically it all ended! There are many questions that will ever be asked – such as: why was he ever allowed to come to the USA? In Italy, he was the treasurer and rumor has it that he was already in some trouble over there. If this is so, was he 'hiding' out here? Why did he come? Was the fact that his brother – Fr. Pio Gurisatti - served two ten year periods as Superior General, from 1891-1911 – was this a factor in his coming? Why did Fr. L. Luchi choose him to be the Pastor of the church? Whatever the answer to all these - and the myriad of questions this text will arouse: why Father Victor Gurisatti? Whatever the answer to it all: this is a sad story and it ends tragically, not only for the Stigmatines – but, also for the Diocese of Scranton PA – and also for Father Victor Gurisatti!
2. The turn of the 20th century was a time of contrasting hopes here in the USA – our youngest man ever was President of the United States, Theodore Roosevelt – who thought of America as the answer to the challenges of the dawning 20th century. Across the sea, was Pope Leo XIII – terribly worried about a plague in spirituality called 'Americanism', rejected in the Pope's Letter to the Archbishop of Baltimore, James Cardinal Gibbons, *Testem Benevolentiae Meae*: a hodge-podge of faulty spiritual principles, such as activism; no room for the 'passive virtues', such as humility, obedience, mortification etc. Were many of the younger confreres 'sucked in' by the deluge of the new world and its excessively 'action orientation' mentality???
3. It was in the beginning of the century that requests were being made by Brazilian Bishops to send priests to care for the Italian immigrants. Father Luchi, on his own, petitioned the General Council to be allowed to come to Hazleton PA, to intercede for him. Finally, in 1905, two priests were allowed to come to the USA: Fr. Lodovico Luchi and Father Anthony Dalla Porta. They were assigned to Hazleton. Peter Magagna, a resident of White Haven PA, came to Trent to accompany them to the

New World. St. Pius Xth accorded them a private Audience. Finally, on September 26, 1905, they began their long journey via Basel in Switzerland; to Paris, France and on October 2nd, 1905, they left LeHavre and arrived in Hazleton on October 13, 1905.

4. Father Anthony Dalla Porta left Hazleton shortly afterwards, and went to Springfield MA. The Stigmatines were already somewhat known there by some of the diocesan priests in that Diocese who had studied in Rome under our own Fr. Richard Tabarelli, our Stigmatine Confrere, as their Roman Professor. Father Luchi remained in Hazleton and began caring for the Tyroleans of that city. He was chosen as the Superior of the new foundation – and enjoyed every confidence of the Bishops of Scranton. Father Joseph Nardon arrived in 1907, with Brother Camillo Ramus. In November of 1907, Father Victor Gurisatti also arrived! Father Gurisatti was born in Gemona, Italy, on July 25, 1866. He entered our Congregation in Verona on November 26, 1879, and made his Perpetual Profession on August 15, 1886. He was ordained to the priesthood on November 16, 1890 – and he left the Congregation in 1927. He was eventually re-instated and incardinated into the Diocese of Scranton PA on August 23, 1928 by Most Rev. Thomas Charles O'Reilly.

5. His first area of responsibility in the new world was St. Lucy's Parish in Scranton PA. It was founded in 1901, and the first mention of Father Gurisatti's presence there was 1909. He was also stationed in North Adams MA – not far from Albany NY, and perhaps 100 miles west of Springfield. On August 2, 1914, the *Scranton Truth*, a newspaper, ran this article under the title: 'To build a Church'. The Reverend Victor Gurisatti, in charge of the Church of St. Lucy's for Italian Catholics, has purchased the property of Dr. E. A. Herman, on 94 Scranton Street, where he will build an elegant new Church. He has been stationed at this parish since September 1908. Before coming here, Fr. Gurisatti was stationed in North Adams MA for six months and also was assigned to Hazleton PA for another six months.

6. The first issue of the *BERTONIANO*, the journal, or bulletin reserved to the Stigmatines, was issued in August 1912. In Vol. 2 [1912] the Community in Scranton was listed as living at '115 Chestnut Street.' The list of the members of this community was: Fr. Victor Gurisatti and Fr. Angelo Simeone – both of whom, along with Father L. Luchi, left the Congregation. From this point on, for the note-taker of this material, technical terms are confusing for the compiler! At any rate, the 'Congregation' would mean the Stigmatine Religious Institute – the Sunday 'congregation', as is evident, means something else.

7. A Dynamic Pastor: since he became Pastor the number of families under his care increased from 700 to 900. He is very popular with the parishioners and he is an indefatigable worker. By his exemplary zeal he did much to maintain and fortify the religious spirit of his people. The plans of the new Church are designed by John Howley and Vicent Russoniello, who will care for the project. The dimensions of the new

edifice will be 66 feet by 105. The height up to the top of the Cross will be 104 feet. There will be a cupola of 40 feet in diameter and windows in the roof to give light to the sanctuary and the two sacristies, one for the priests and the other for the acolytes. There will be a gallery with kneelers for the exclusive use of the Nuns in the Convent of St. Lucy. The ceiling and the large dome will be sustained by eight columns that surround the floor of the Church, which one ascends on a flight of steps through a portico with four columns. The cost of construction for this Temple is about \$40,000.00.

8. The news paper known as the *Tribune-Republican* carried this article on September 25th:

... In the presence of many hundreds of people, yesterday morning, the first shovel-full of dirt was had for the new Italian Church of St. Lucy. It was a nice ceremony in which the most prominent members of the parish attended. The Church will be most beautiful and the largest Church in the western part of the city. Building will begin immediately and brought to early completion. The ceremony of the first digging took place at 9:45 a.m. A procession of the children from the school with banners, directed by the Sisters, the Priests and the members of the Parish Congregation walked from the present Church. Father Gurisatti took the first shovelful followed by Father Joseph Nardon. The Mother Superior and others followed. Father Joseph gave the homily in Italian and congratulated the Pastor and the members of the Commission, this is one of the largest Italian congregations in the Diocese of Scranton and the necessity to build a new and larger Church was contemplated for some time...'

9. The Divided Personnel: Father Joseph Nardon was later to go to Brazil where he died in Rio Claro in 1933 at the age of 60. He spent seven years in Scranton.

Father Peter Piemonte came to help out in Scranton when Father Gurisatti became ill and took a leave of absence. He was born on December 17, 1862, and was ordained on May 30, 1885. He left the Institute in 1912, and was incardinated into the Boston Diocese.

The *BERTONIANO* records these dates: May 2, 1913 – purchase of the new property; September 24, 1913 – beginning of construction; November 11, 1913 – blessing of the corner-stone; December 25, 1913 – Father Nardon celebrated Christmas Mass – January 26, 1914 – the move into the house next to the Church.

10. Father Gurisatti ⁴⁴wrote this following article, which is published in the *BERTONIANO* [a rather opinionated piece!]:

⁴⁴ The views seem rather pessimistic, to say the least!

... In our situation, one could write a book, not the few sentences that appeared in your last volume. To talk about Scranton is to talk about America, which is but one phase. Let me tell you what I think. America is but a *phantasmagoria* that presents itself, at the most a very optimistic dewdrop and in the least, the worst of pessimism. Scranton is a city destined to become deluded. The population is always growing. With its suburbs more than 160,000 live here and the Italian population numbers about 15,000. They were cared for by three priests and now by the Stigmatines. The Italians differ from other Catholics. Few of them are church goers. They are ignorant. They will not support the Church of their priest. On the other hand, the Irish, the Polish and Germans differ. The Italians are an enigma to them. When we talk about morality, there is a different picture. The Irish are very religious and quite generous to their priests, who do not care to be disturbed. Many of their priests are content to live comfortably. To have a Church, a school, a nice rectory is their goal and they care little about the rest. They have many confessions, communions and full Churches.

'The Italians, however are *'aut-aut'* - *either/or*. Each one is contemptuous of formality. He is somewhat religious, even though not practicing. He possesses a lot of domestic and moral virtue. However, it is true that America, with its pleasure and money, can attract people much easier. Much more than Austria can do, because of her severe measures, America is that 'siren', that happy land that devours its inhabitants. We will do what we can to save these Italians until we can make them proud - even though they might not know why they are Catholics. At present, the Priest leans towards the material side. To keep in contact with those who rarely come to Church. It is a challenge to require that they pay for ecclesiastical ministry, keeping in mind that they have to pay for the construction of the Church. This Church is twice the size of the one in Springfield [MA]. The price at present is \$15,000.00. We care for another Church, less pretentious than this one. It is in the other part of Scranton and is called St. Francis. The City of Scranton is twice the size of Milan. We are very busy. We do not want to brag that we are real missionaries because we live well and lack nothing...⁴⁵

11. A Brief Review of the Principals: As is clear, Fr. L. Luchi himself seems to have accepted the foundation in Scranton PA, while many of the particulars remain unknown. There were about 35,000 souls of Italian descent. Fr. Angelo Simeoni was to be his first assistant. He was born in Verona on August 12, 1876. He was ordained on August 13, 1899. Coming to the United States in 1908, he was stationed in Hazleton. He preached many parish missions. Mention is made of him as being in Chicago, Atlantic City, New York, Philadelphia and Buffalo. From all appearances, he did great

⁴⁵ 'The compiler of these notes inserts an astute comment here]: 'Why this letter was written one can only guess. It appears that [the author] had a few gripes or too much wine to drink.' [sic!]

work. He instructed children in preparing to receive the sacraments. He was with Father Fadanelli in Milwaukee. He asked for and received a Decree of Secularization [Exclaustration ???] and was accepted in that Diocese.

12. The Superiors General of this era: Fr. John Baptist Tomasi, as Superior General, came to the USA in 1911-1922. He was accompanied by Fr. Alfred Balestrazzi, General Councilor, and one who would play an important role in the Scranton Saga! When Father John Tomasi had completed a later canonical visit in 1920, he communicated his observations regarding the foundations in the United States. He also requested a history of the parishes in which the Stigmatines were serving. What follows is Father Gurisatti's response to the Superior General including some interesting demographics of the time:

a. In the beginning of the century, Scranton could boast of a population of 145, 000. It had 45 schools, and 17 annexes, ten colleges and academies, 125 Churches, chapels and missions. It was governed by a Mayor and a City Council. It was a coal mining town, and produced 20,000,000 tons annually! In his report, Father Gurisatti states that there are about 5,000 Italians [????], one fourth of whom were over 30; one fourth who were from 15 -30.

b. The majority of the Italians were from the south. They were from Avellino, Sicily, Calabria, Perugia, Gubbio, Rome and Tuscany. Most worked in the mines, factories, and building roads. A few had special trades among which were chisel workers, store keepers, and a few were business men. The Italians were accustomed to saving money, and thus their economic conditions are good. About a fifth of them own their own homes but, most of these are mortgaged. There are many who desire to own their own homes, and they join a company and sign a contract to pay a certain sum at the beginning, and the rest of monthly payments. This is a risky adventure and many lose what they had earned, saving the money that they would send to their own in Italy.

c. I was told that my parish would be a congregation of poor people. Those Italians who had left their native land to better themselves are mainly illiterate and not civic minded. Very few care to become citizens. There are those, too, who join subversive parties. The southerners join the socialists. There also exists a club for the socialist and that anarchist. They are mainly from the south of the city, most young and unmarried.

d. Protestantism is quite diffusive and in the confines of the Parish, there is a Presbyterian and Methodist Mission. The most active one is Presbyterian, mainly because their Minister was an Italian named Danno, from Sicily. He died some months ago and the Methodists are close by and attract the children with gifts and games. The unmarried are taught English and offered jobs. The Italian Minister was funded by the members of his sect, and they possess great power.

e. We Catholic Priests do not have many affluent Italians to support us. The only time we receive anything is when we offer them something. The religious atmosphere is the same as in most of the other parts of the country. The Italians have religion but are not practicing it. The young and the old do not attend Church - mainly, perhaps, because in the beginning they had no one to lead them. This parish did not possess priests with great qualities. Their tenure was brief. They had little influence on the people. On Sunday mornings there are too many meetings going on at the same time as the devotions in the Church. Many have had to work on Sunday.

f. It is much better now. Civil marriages are lessened and infant baptisms have increased. The Odd Fellows Lodge boast of more than 200 members. This group was formed before we arrived in this parish. One has to be on the alert to keep his members. The majority remain faithful except those even of our nationality who are against all religion and are atheist. In the Odd Fellows' Rule, one can see obey their articles that they do not believe in God. Those who join, however, often receive economic help.

g. Orphans are admitted into their orphanages freely. Here, of course, they receive a Protestant education which is an embarrassment for the Catholic Pastors. We are, as I have mentioned above, hounded by the Gubbi and the Perugini, who are anti-clerical and firmly ensconced in their doctrine of socialism and anarchism. They, too, go about diffusing literature to non-members. The language used by the older ones is Italian, and the children are using English. This soon leads the immigrant to losing a taste for his own language, since one must study English in the class rooms.

**A Catalogue of the Congregation
of the
APOSTOLIC MISSIONARIES
FOR THE ASSISTANCE OF BISHOPS.
The Year 1873. ⁴⁶**

VERY REV. FR. JOHN BAPTIST LENOTTI, SUPERIOR GENERAL, since October 6, 1871.

Rev. Fr. John Rigoni, Proc. Gen.

Fr. Joseph Sembianti, Associate Coadjutor of the Procurator General.

GENERAL COUNCILORS

Fr. John Rigoni; Fr. Francis Benciolini, Fr. Peter Vignola, Fr. Vicent Vignola, substitute for the deceased Fr. Richard DaPrato.

GENERAL EXAMINERS

Fr. John Rigoni; Fr. Peter Vignola; Fr. Charles Zara.

Fr. Joseph Sembianti, a substitute for the deceased Fr. Richard DaPrato.

Fr. Andrew Sterza, substitute for Fr. Sembianti transferred in Verona.

FATHERS HAVING THE GRADE

Fr. John Baptist Lenotti; Fr. John Rigoni; Fr. Louis Bragato; Fr. Francis Benciolini; Fr. Peter Vignola; Fr. Vincent Vignola; Fr. Mark Bassi; Fr. Francis Sogaro; Fr. Joseph Sembianti.

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⁴⁶ [This Catalogue, in Latin, is found in: CS III, pp. 355-358, with the following note, added by Fr. Stofella]; **This document is in the hand-writing of Fr. Lawrence Pizzini, charged with a copy of this for presentation somewhere. At this time, Fr. Pizzini was newly ordained, and was assigned to the Mother House, where he is presented as a *Collaborator Priest*. This means, of course, that we find here a particular example of Fr. Bertoni's idea of an ordained Priest, who had not yet received the Grade of the Apostolic Missionary. In this *Catalogue*, there are other names as *Collaborators*, but they are designated rather by the name of the special duty to which they are assigned, and thus it seems that this language did not have a long life.**

The date of this Document as far as the year is concerned, is explicitly presented. And there can be attempted a closer approximation by the fact that in this *Catalogue* there may be found not only the ordination of Fr. Pizzini, and also Fr. Pio Gurisatti and Fr. James Marini, which took place on March 27, 1873. There is also the indication that others were already ordained priests: Bartholomew Perazzani and Bellino Carrara were on June 7th, 1873. However, the priestly ordination of Lawrence Rigatti and of Richard Tabarelli would take place only on December 20th of that same year. Hence, most likely this document came out either in the summer, or the autumn of 1873].

The folder in which this *Catalogue* is found would be legal size. On close observation, one name is missing, which could have been on another sheet, which is now lost. However, Fr. Joseph Marchesini lived outside of Verona on the Pozzi estate, and there he administered his own property, as he did during the long struggle with the government: this litigation had just concluded in either May, or June of that 1783, whereas the restitution of the goods dragged on until that September.

It seems evident that this Document offers some indication that under Fr. Lenotti's administration, the various *Rules for the Various Offices* had their influence.

THE MOTHER HOUSE OF THE SACRED STIGMATA, VERONA⁴⁷

Director of the House: **Fr. Peter Vignola**
 Economus and Master of Exterior Discipline: **Fr. Peter Beltrami**
 Ordinary Confessors: **Fr. Francis Benciolini and Fr. Peter Beltrami**
 Master of Spiritual Matters: **Fr. Peter Beltrami**
 Sacristan: **Fr. Thomas Vicentini**
 Building Maintenance: **Bro. Anthony Rigoni**
 Librarian: **Fr. Charles Zara**
 Prefect of the Gardens: **Fr. Peter Vignola**
 Gardener: **Bro. Luis Ferrari**
 Porter: **Bro. Philip Tessadri**
 Cook: **Bro. Louis Falzi**
 Guardian of the Wardrobe: **Bro. Louis Falzi**
 Guardian of the Laundry: **Bro. Louis Falzi**
 Priest Collaborator: **Fr. Lawrence Pizzini**
 Student of the IVth Theological Course: **Frat. Alexis Magagna**

THE HOUSE OF St. MARY of the LILY

Director: **Fr. Francis Benciolini**
 Economus and Master of Exterior Discipline: **Fr. Dominic Vicentini**
 Prefect of the Marian Congregation: **Fr. Francis Sogaro**
 Prefect of the Garden: **Fr. Francis Sogaro**
 Porter: **Bro. Anthony Nicora**
 Tailor: **Bro. Anthony Nicora**
 Assistant to the Tailor: **[stud.] Albano Clemente.**

THE TRIDENTINE HOUSE OF THE NOVITIATE AND OF STUDIES

Director: **Fr. Vincent Vignola**
 Master of Novices: **Fr. Mark Bassi**
 Councilors: **Fr. Mark Bassi and Fr. Louis Morando; Fr. Andrew Sterza and Fr. James Marini.**
 Economus and Master of Exterior Discipline: **Fr. James Marini**
 Ordinary Confessor: **Fr. Mark Bassi**
 Master of Spiritual Matters: **Fr. Mark Bassi**
 Sacristan: **Fr. Michael Lanaro**
 Building Maintenance: **Alternating Professed Students**
 Porter: **Bro. David Chiesa**
 Gardiner: **[Bro.] John Pigozzo, Novice**
 Cook: **[Bro.] John Pigozzo, Novice**
 Guardian of the Laundry: **Bro. David Chiesa**
 Bell: **[Bro.] Charles Saloker, Novice**

⁴⁷ There is lacking here the name of **Fr. Joseph Marchesini**, who remained mostly on his own estate, as has been noted.

Tailor: **Bro. David Chiesa**

Tailor's Assistant: **[Bro.] Joseph Giovanni, Novice**

In charge of Sewing: **Bro. James Zadra**

Prefect of Studies: **Fr. Louis Morando**

Sub-Prefect: **Fr. Andrew Sterza**

Lector of Dogmatic Theology: **Fr. Richard Tabarelli**

Lector of Canon Law: **Fr. Michael Lanaro**

Lector of Moral Theology: **Fr. Mark Bassi**

Lector of Sacred Scripture, Eloquence and Catechetics: **Fr. Mark Bassi**

Lector of Church History: **Fr. Bellino Carrara**

Lector of Philosophy: **Fr. Bartholomew Perazzani**

Lector of Mathematics, Algebra and Arithmetics: **Fr. Bellino Carrara**

Teacher of IInd Humanities: **Fr. Bartholomew Perazzani**

Teacher of IVth Grammar: **Fr. James Marini**

Teacher of IInd Grammar: **Fr. Pius Gurisatti**

Master of Ist Grammar: **Fr. Paul Gradinati**

Teacher of the Greek language: **Fr. Richard Tabarelli**

Teacher of the Teutonic Language: **[frat.] Melchias Vivari**

△△△

STUDENTS OF THE IVth COURSE

[frat.] Angelo Graziani; [frat.] Bonaventure Vidalli; [frat.] Cajetan Pizzighella; [frat.] Louis Gasperotti; [frat.] Joseph Zandonai; [frat.] Julius Zanini; [frat.] Anthony Oss-Bals.

△△△

Ist COURSE

[frat.] Paul Gradinati

△△△

ASPIRANTS

Of the Second Humanities Class

Louis Battisti; Joseph Nicolini

△△△

IVth Grammar

Joseph Marocchi; Anselm Brunati; Louis Tomasi; Eugene Laudon

△△△

IInd GRAMMAR

Stephen Rosa

Louis Lievore; Leo Vicentini; John Baptist Cavinato; Francis Pigler

Personnel List for the Year 1911
[the first Houses out of Italy – in the Americas]

There is also appended to the Minutes of the 18th General Chapter, this list of Confreres for May of 1911:

STATE OF THE CONGREGATION AT THIS TIME

I. House of Belluno

1. Fr. J. B. Tomasi, Director and Rector of the Seminary
2. A. Balestrazzi, Professor in the Seminary
3. Joseph Fiorio " " "
4. Leo Sella " " "
5. Dominic Rossi, Economus
6. Joseph Stofella, Professor in the Seminary
7. Fortunato Pedot, " " "
8. Henry Fadanelli, " " "
9. Godfrey Friedmann " "

II. House of Capodistria

1. Erminio Lona – Director
2. Edwin Job
3. Alexander Acler
4. Cleric William Ludescher ⁴⁸
5. Bro. Aldo Prada [Perpetual Profession]

III. House of Gemona

1. Pio Gabos – Director
2. Louis Tomasi
3. Cesar Benaglia
4. Edward Castellani
5. Henry Gabos – Economus
6. Angelo Pagliarusco
7. Richard Piccioni
8. Emil Recchia
9. Joseph Rosa
10. Cleric ⁴⁹
11. Bro. Emmanuel Savoi
12. Bro. Angelo Guzzola – Cook.

⁴⁸ In World War I, Fr. William would Italianize his family name to **Ludessi**.

⁴⁹ As was noted in the alphabetical list above, Joseph Rosa at this time was a Cleric. This may refer to him.

IV. House of Hazleton PA (United States)

1. Ludovicus Luchi – Director
2. Linus Cembran

V. House of Milan

1. Joseph Antonioli – Director
2. John Mary Lona
3. Fortunato Mantovani
4. Charles deFerrari – Economus
5. Bro. Santo Albertini
6. Bro. Valerian Veronesi – cook
7. Bro. Louis Varena [triennial vows]

VI. House of Parma

1. Joseph Louis Bertapelle – Director
2. Hyacinth Largher – Chaplain at ‘S. Carlo’
3. Silvio Segà – Economus

VII. House of Pavia

1. Paul Sozzi - Director
2. Egidio Stofella
3. Emilio Baratella
4. Bro. Dominic Sighel
- Joseph Tristan [aspirant brother]

VIII. House of Piacenza

1. Peter Scotton – Director
2. Ferruccio Zanetti
3. Benjamin Miori

IX. House of Pistoia

1. Albino Sella – Director
2. Joseph Tondin
3. Raymond Dalla-Porta

X. General House, Rome – S. Maria dei Miracoli

1. Pio Gurisatti – Superior General
2. Cajetan Pizzighella- Director
3. Bro. Isaac ...⁵⁰
4. Bro. Joseph Spagnoli

⁵⁰ Family name not given – maybe *Basetti*.

XI. House of S. Nicolo' dei Prefetti, Rome

1. Angelo Graziani – Director
2. Louis Gasperotti
3. Bro. William Borra

XII. House of Scranton PA (United States)

1. Victor Gurisatti
2. Angelo Simeoni

XIII. House of Springfield MA (United States)

1. Anthony Dalla-Porta – Director
2. Joseph Nardon
3. Peter Piemonte
4. Bro. Camillus Ramus

XIV. House of Tibagy (Brazil)

1. Alexander Grigolli – Director
2. Henry Adami
3. Bro. Dominic Valzacchi

XV. House of Trent

1. Erminio Pivato- Director and Master of Novices
2. Augustus Fieramonte – Economist
3. Paride Lucchetti
4. John Baptist Perenzoni
5. Bro. Damian DeCarli
6. Bro. Louis Guardia
7. Bro. Quirinus ...⁵¹

Cleric Novices: 1. Louis Fedrizzi; 2. Quirinus Elbi ⁵²; 3. Tullius Marcantaoni; 4. Guido Pancheri; 5. Joseph Rigotti; 6. Adolph Rigotti; 7. Victor Berti.

Brother Novices: 1. Bro. Joseph ...⁵³; 2. Bro. Louis Massarati

XVI. House of Udine

1. Octavian Piccoli – Director
2. Joseph Mattei – Professor
3. George Zanghellini – Vice-rector, Archiepiscopal College
4. Richard Zambiasi – Professor of Music
5. Francis Pedrotti – Assistant at recreation program
6. Dominic Pittioni – Rector of Archiepiscopal College
7. John Baptist Pelanda – Director of the Recreation Program
8. Louis Benedetti – Censor at Archiepiscopal College

⁵¹ No family name given – it may be *Toller*.

⁵² Hard o read: either *Ebli*, or *Elbi*.

⁵³ No family name given.

9. Bro. Louis Mattinella ⁵⁴
10. Bro. Edward Avesani

XVII. House of Verona, the *Stimmate*

1. Michaelangelo Zanetti - Director
2. James Marini
3. Stephen Rosa – Rector of S. Lassurd ⁵⁵
4. John Baptist Castellani
5. Emmanuel Zanotelli – Professor at the Seminary
6. Louis Fantozzi – Director of the Patronato
7. Julius Zanini - Rector of the Church of the *Stimmate*
8. Hygino Gruppo – Teacher at the Patronato
9. Dominic Plotti - teacher at the Patronato
10. Ernest Battisti – Teacher at the Patronato
11. Tarcisio Martina – Newly Ordained
12. Joseph Toniolli - “ “
13. Bro. Anthony Nicora
14. Bro. James Lonardonì
15. Bro. Anselm Martini
16. Bro. Attilio DalSasso
17. Bro. Joseph Zuliani – cook
18. Bro. Angelo Martinelli [triennial vows]

XVIII. House of S. Maria del Giglio, or ‘Sezano’

1. John Baptist Zaupa – Director and Prefect of Professed Students
2. Alexis Magagna
3. Bruno Chiesa
4. Bro. Antony Sighele
5. Bro. Valentine Garola
- Bro. John Groff [Novice] – he left in September.

Perpetually Professed Clerics: 1. Felix Odorizzi; 2. Humbert Socrella; 3. Joseph Angeli; 4. Victor Nicolodi; 5. Valerius Tommasi.

21 Triennially Professed Clerics: 1. Prosper Angeli; 2. Charles Berlande [perpetuals]; 3. Angelo Caimi; 4. Hyacinth Calligaro; 5. ⁵⁶ Donazzan; 6. Michael Madussi; 7. Joseph Mantovani; 8. John Marcucci; 9. Joseph Pedot; 10. Dominic Soravito; 11. Nervius ⁵⁷ Toffolini; 12. Cyril Zadra; 13. Remigio Zara; 14. Charles Zanotti; 15. Anthony Berlanda; 16. Alexander Bonfanti; 17. Louis Fontana; 18. Victor Formolo; 19. Virgilio Job; 20. Joseph Lona; Hector Turco.

⁵⁴ Hard to read!

⁵⁵ Unclear

⁵⁶ No list name – was in *Lawrence*

⁵⁷ Not clear

2 Clerics, still Novices: [not admitted to profession, because of illness]: 1. Constans Gosetti; 2. Louis Noldin.

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A list of 'Those having the Grade' ⁵⁸

- | | | | |
|-----|------|-----|-----------------------|
| 1. | Rev. | Fr. | Peter Vignola |
| 2. | | Fr. | Francis Benciolini |
| 3. | | Fr. | Vincent Vignola |
| 4. | | Fr. | John Rigoni |
| 5. | | Fr. | Joseph Sembianti |
| 6. | | Fr. | Mark Bassi |
| 7. | | Fr. | Charles Zara |
| 8. | | Fr. | Louis Morando |
| 9. | | Fr. | Peter Beltrami |
| 10. | | Fr. | Dominic Vicentini |
| 11. | | Fr. | Andrew Sterza |
| 12. | | Fr. | Pio Gurisatti |
| 13. | | Fr. | James Marini |
| 14. | | Fr. | Bellino Carrara |
| 15. | | Fr. | Bartholomew Perazzani |
| 16. | | Fr. | Richard Tabarelli |

So many of these names will appear later in our history – and many, many of them simply disappear. It is most helpful to review the Documents appended to the early General Chapters – the problems did not seem directed against anyone [Fr. Lenotti seems to have feared Fr. Marani – and others found Fr. Lenotti to be too weak, too much like a 'rabbit'!] – but the manner of life lived by our early confreres was under fire.

⁵⁸ Facing what is 'p. 40' of the Original Chapter Minutes notebook appears this List of the *Patres Graduati*, the *Professed*. [cf. Part IX of the *Original Constitutions*, CF ## 158-186.

Father Victor Gurisatti

Introduction

It is quite clear that Fr. Victor Gurisatti was a most unhappy, angry person. In his writing, there is much evidence of sweeping negative exaggerated allegations about his own Italian people and the Congregation. There is little doubt that the much venerated Fr. Lodovico Luchi – ‘Rector of the Stigmatines in Pennsylvania’- broadly over-stepped his limited bounds both in financial loans and in ordering, assigning Fr. V. Gurisatti to Milwaukee WI – and to begin a Stigmatine foundation there. This is his story from the scant records that have come down to us.

His Own Decided Slant on these Matters

Fr. Victor went to St. Francis’ Church, Scranton PA that had been founded in 1920, the year of this Mission’s foundation. In an accounting he offered, he notes that Mass is regularly at 9:00 a.m. Among the religious works is placed the purchase [about three years earlier] of the property of a Dr. Herman’s on Scranton Street, where there is a nice house. Here the new basement was opened in 1913, since it was absolutely necessary with the growth of the Parish.

The Parish School and convent were sold to the Daughters of Jesus [Mother Cabrini] for half its value so that they could continue with their school with fewer problems. Another spiritual work was the Church [dedicated to St. Francis] built in the southern part of the city where there was a population of 300 Italians in danger of leaving their faith. Real efforts were undertaken to commence these works, since it was useless to hope that the members of the Congregation that helped in the past. Nothing was ever obtained for bad administration of those who earlier were in charge of this church; and on the other hand, having fixed at least half of the value of the land and the building of the church cared for by the parish congregation [lay] and the other half by the Institute [the Stigmatine Congregation⁵⁹] with the signature of the bishop, by a resolution of the same congregation, we were entrusted to supply part due immediately, with the understanding that all would be reimbursed bit by bit at a time.

We have one here to help with religious instruction for our children. The children of either sex attend the school of the nuns or the public schools. To care for souls has been done more than once. Preaching is had on Sunday by explaining the gospels; Forty Hours Devotion; a Parish Mission each year. As a religious organization, we are a branch of the ‘Cavalieri of St. George’ founded about four months ago. This order is founded to counteract the youth from joining the ‘Odd Fellows’, and to give up this organization and join theirs which is predominantly Catholic. They promise the

⁵⁹ By ‘congregation’ these notes often mean the Parish, the parishioners – the Stigmatine Community is often referred to as the ‘Institute.’

same benefits and even more. We have the Society of Mary for the girls, and that of St. Louis for the boys. The Order of St. George has about 100 members, and now is forming the 'St. George cadets' for boys from the ages of 12 – 16.

We get no public assistance. Many times a society for mutual benefits carries the name of a saint. Even though there is nothing Christian about it, and even sometimes there is a breath of anti-clericalism among the members. but really they are not anti-clerical and at times, come to some catholic demonstration when they are invited. We have no libraries, nor charitable catholic institutions. Those who wish to start them must modify them, not as they were in Italy. if we had the people with the know-how, we could have a theatre for recitations in both Italian and English. Some years ago, there were two performances in both languages and they were both very successful.

The priestly salary in this diocese is \$900.00 a year for the Pastor, and \$500.00 for the Assistant. Each family is asked to donate .50 cents to help defray the expenses of the Church and the Rectory. The Sunday collections also help to defray expenses. This quota that is had in all the other parishes is paid with ease. With Italians, it is more difficult. The Italians who have to pay the doctor, or the pharmacist, or a lawyer when needed, and on the occasions of Baptism, weddings and funerals, when they need conveyances, or have banquets, they are not shy in paying for these conveniences. When it comes to the priest, or to the Church, they do not want to give anything. This gives a bad impression to the other Americans and other groups. Since Italy is supposed to be the center of Catholicism there should be better examples. What is the reason? They say that this is not the way it used to be in Italy. But, they should remember that the other nationalities coming here adapt themselves to the custom. The Italian does not adapt, because he is top concerned to increase the deposits in the bank and does not spend unless there is some material advantage in doing so. In fact, he never complains when he has to pay dues to the society, or for mutual help, so that they can be helped if need be. The Church is owned by the Congregation and is under the name of the Bishop who is the Trustee and who is responsible for the Parish Congregation. No one can sell or buy without the approval and the signature of the Bishop, as the Bishop cannot without the resolution of the Congregation.

The value of the basement with its contents is worth about \$23,000.00. The House is accommodating and well furnished and is valued at \$11,000.00 with a mortgage of \$9,000.00 in our name. The debt of the two parish congregations is about \$7,000.00. For the church of St. Lucy we have as a guarantee the resolution of the congregation with the signature of the Bishop. We have in our parish the Sisters of Mother Cabrini. They have a parish school and teach catechism to the children of either sex [Sisters of the Sacred Heart]. In the vicinity of Scranton, there are other villages where Italians have settled. Like many others, they live by the rail road tracks

and could use the services of a priest. However, we are unable to do much for them, especially when we have to care for those who have no job and who are sick and in the hospital.

The candle collection brings in about \$100.00 a month, mainly due to the Americans and a few Italians. Concerts and recreational activities once were organized in the past, but now are forgotten. The size of the basement is 105 ft. by 60 ft. We are always in contact with the congregation when they need our help. We meet with the bishop for church matters or parishioners' problems. Relations with priests nearby or far away, some of whom we invite on special days, is O.K. – but, in general, the American priests do not have a warm feeling for Italian priests for the simple reason that their parishioners attend our devotions. To tell the truth, sometimes they are right to cry, but they are also wrong when they easily handle baptisms, marriages and funerals of the Italians, making it quite difficult for the Italian priest to organize his parish. It is true that the Irish priest, because of the privileges from Rome, since they were the first to come here to inscribe other nationalities in their parish, but this privilege is restricted to those who pay their monthly quota. In practice, it seems that they are ready to help when they are receiving, but, when they have to care for the sick, then they call for those who can speak their language. We have to stay within our limits – period! If they cross their limits, it is O. K. We get along pretty well with the Italian priests, not so well with the others. The rivalry between the northern and southern Italians is continued here in American. If the priest is a religious, it is even worse.

The debt of St. Lucy amounts to \$12,000.00; \$10,000.00 to First National Bank; \$2,000.00 to different companies which is paid a bit at a time. The debt to the Institute is \$6,000.00. The debt of St. Francis, south of the city, is \$2,284.00, plus a \$1,000.00 owed to the Institute of the \$2,284.00 – 1,500.00 is owed to the First National Bank, the rest to different companies. The value of St. Francis Church is \$4,370.00.⁶⁰

There is little hope for the future unless we can teach children without faring for the adults. If we place our attention on the children, we would easily gain the attention of the adults who little by little would begin to put some confidence in the priest. The priests have caused great scandal which is quite evident to the people in all the colonies. By their actions they are ridiculed and there is no shame in the parents telling their children of these failures. A good work would be the 'Garden of the Infants', started by the Sisters.

Fr. Gurisatti continues his slanted view: the Italian children have many dangers; bad example from their parents, boarders living in the homes, Protestant propaganda, lack of education by the parents, since they are not educated themselves.

⁶⁰ Is this clear – it would be hard to audit this account on these facts, no?

The Italian women are admirable for their good habits which they have maintained. However, they have been unable to inculcate this in their children. In this American culture many things must change, but outside of this good trait, the southern Italian woman, with few exceptions, cannot care for their homes, are uncouth and incapable of instilling their children with good habits. They need to be more careful in attending to them. The 'Garden of Infancy' can give much more to the child, a moral and civil aspect, a continuance of their education especially in Catholic schools. To keep the children after they finish their school, it would be useful to organize clubs in the same way as the Americans have, We have hopes that the 'Cavalieri of St. George' will be able to do this.

For the adults another society would be foolish since there are already so many mutual societies. There are many societies for the different groups of Italians. It is a shame how they increase. The Catholic priest has little to say in all this. Yet, we see how other societies grow and they are Catholic and the priest has a lot of power and sees to it that they practice their religion. What would be good is to put out a Catholic weekly paper – or, better still, control the articles that are printed in other papers. However, this calls for financial help. The Diocese of the Bishop of Scranton has 12 different ethnic groups to care for. We cannot expect help from them.

What would be good is to have an Italian Bishop who has no Diocese and that he would thus be free to raise money to help these immigrant Italians. You would probably say that we have an Apostolic Delegate who is an Italian. However, his is a political assignment, and he is unable to care for the many needs that we have – whereas, an Italian Bishop could solve the financial matter by placing a tax on all Italian priests, and there are many. From this fund, we could solve many problems. He could do many things, because he could understand the nature of these problems. He could have a greater hand in counteracting the Masons who are corrupting not only the cities but the small towns.

Fr. V. Gurisatti's views are as firm as they are slanted. He is a tragic figure and this will be his ending, as will be noted in the course of what follows.

A Convolutd Treasurer

Now we enter a further phase in the history of St. Lucy's in Scranton that becomes more and more of a personal problem that became indeed a church problem. It appears that in these unhappy years, the *status quo* of the parish remained quite good. By sharp contrast, though, the *status quo* of the Pastor, Father Victor Gurisatti, becomes one of further turmoil, much agony, complicated frustrations – bitter accusations and high-level Church decisions. The culmination of

all this will be his sudden and unexpected death, while being treated for 'nervous exhaustion'.

The Bishop of Scranton at this time is His Excellency, + Michael J. Hoban. There is little that is written about him during this era in the history of St. Lucy's Parish. He died in 1926 and was succeeded by His Excellency, † Thomas O'Reilly, who ruled the Diocese until his death in 1938. However, an Auxiliary Bishop is chosen by Bishop Hoban who will play a central role in this entire scenario. Bishop Brennan would assume the obligations of Fr. Paul Kelly, who had been chosen as the Delegate of the Diocese to handle this case. The Apostolic Delegate in Washington at this time was the rather youngish † Giovanni Bonzano, who would later be succeeded by His Excellency, † Pietro Fumasoni-Biondi. On the Stigmatine side would be the Ordinary Visitor, Fr. John B. Zaupa, who represented the Superior General of the time, Fr. John B. Tomasi. Fr. Zaupa in 1922, by the process known as 'Postulatio' [elected by the Chapter in Rome in which he was not a Delegate – and for which election Fr. Zaupa did not yet have the required age of 40 – he was only 39 – and a dispensation was needed], would be elected Superior General. The very kind Fr. Alfred Balestrazzi was then chosen to be the USA Delegate for the Stigmatine Fathers.

The letters that flow from Fr. Victor Gurisatti's troubled heart are full of comments of deep bitterness and harsh complaints of how the Institute had treated him over the years. In his letter of February 4, 1921, he states that he is willing to accept [where before he had refused] a Director and a Treasurer assigned over him to regulate his community affairs. He would not accept Fr. Erminio Lona, but would accept Fr. Leo Sella. Fr. V. Gurisatti was upset because in his view, Fr. Lona had offended him by some personal insult – he also felt that Fr. Lona could not carry out the duties of the busy parish. At the same time, though, Fr. V. Gurisatti insisted on a freedom from what he alone thought was right.

A month later, March 22nd, a Committee of the parish congregation wrote to all the parishioners that the debt of \$24, 000.00 was eliminated, but that they still had a long way to go to complete all their financial obligations. They asked that a certain sum be given weekly in the future. We mention this here because it expressed their very positive thoughts regarding their Pastor, Fr. Victor Gurisatti. They praised his work and dedication, his tireless efforts and good will.

One thing we remind ourselves of is that we have no original copies of Letters sent to him by superiors. The Archives at that time were in Verona, and though quite available, are not easy to find. So we have to presume that Fr. Victor's answers were all that his letters said they were.

On May 27th, in answering Fr. Zaupa's letter, he writes about the temporary help he had asked for and though it had been promised to him at one time, later this promise was denied. Fr. L. Luchi in 1913 had insisted that Fr. Victor build a Church, but

when the time came to borrow the necessary money, he reneged. His refusal led to the denial of this borrowing any money from the bank. The Superior General, Fr. J. B. Tomasi, during his visit to Scranton, knowing of Fr. Luchi's outright denial, in writing and in speaking to the Bishop told the Bishop that the Stigmatine Community would help. Fr. Victor asked to whom he should write for the money. He was told to write to Fr. Anthony Dalla Porta. On his arrival back in Rome, the Superior General wrote that he could not lend Fr. V. Gurisatti the money because it was contrary to the wishes of the Congregation of Religious – he had already formally appealed for exclaustation from the Stigmatines. In writing to Fr. Anthony, Fr. Victor Gurisatti was told that he would be loaned \$200.00 a month, but he had to have a secured guarantee. Under these conditions, Fr. Gurisatti remarked that he could do better at any bank.

All this led to much embarrassment because he was in debt of more than \$40,000.00 – no estimates that Fr. Gurisatti had rendered ever come near this staggering figure. Fr. Gurisatti then asked for a resourceful priest to be sent there to help him out. This is all somewhat confusing. Over the years, there had been Stigmatines assigned there. He was told there was no one available and yet the following month, three Stigmatines were sent to Springfield. It seems Fr. Gurisatti writes, that no one cared for him, his health gave way, after three years of such hard, nerve-wracking labor. His request to be helped was denied. Yet, from other sources, our unknown Chronicler here states that a Fr. Peter PIEMONTE⁶¹ was indeed sent there and Fr. Gurisatti returned to Italy to recuperate.

“For the last 13 years, no one had any faith in me. I was treated badly and I came to the conclusion that it would be better to leave the Institute. This was unanimously approved by the flock of St. Lucy, who would approach the Bishop and ask that I be incardinated in the Diocese.

“At present, I am awaiting the decision of the Bishop before I make my request to Rome and to the Congregation of Religious. If the Bishops desire that the Stigmatines run the Church and refuse to accept me, I will be obliged to remain here in my residence [the House was in his name] and complete my affairs, and then seek a benevolent Bishop.

“This is my decision, dear Fr. Zaupa, and it would be useless to try to change it. It will be then your worry of what to do with Fr. Sozzi, with whom I have a wonderful relationship.”

[Signed by
Victor Gurisatti.

⁶¹ This Fr. Piemonte would eventually leave the Stigmatines and was incardinated into the Boston Archdiocese.

On June 15, 1921, he sends in his financial report and requests permission to leave the Congregation. He still expresses no aversion towards the Institute, because of his many years in it. He states that whatever money is his personally, he will give to charity.

On June 25th, he writes a scathing letter to Fr. Zaupa regarding the treatment he had received:

- from his superiors;
- the many problems he had to endure;
- the peace he seldom had;
- the priest who served with him;
- to be content with the report sent him;
- that the investment she had made that have failed;
- that though many houses have endured financial collapse, his is on safe ground;
- how he was to be transferred to Springfield, as a punishment he did not deserve;
- and that the only consolation he received was from his parishioners.

It seems that the underlying problem was his removal from Scranton. He talks about what repairs have to be made, how much must be given to the house-keeper and how she must be provided for because of the thousands of dollars he had borrowed from her.

From that August of 1922, we have a Letter in the files from the Apostolic Delegate. The Congregation of Religious grants to Fr. V. Gurisatti the Decree of Secularization [or: exclaustation?] with the proviso:

- that the Bishop of Scranton accept him immediately;
- that Fr. Gurisatti declares in writing before two witnesses that he is willing to recognize the authority of the Institute;
- that he be given a severe admonition for his conduct as a religious, that was wrong and not worthy of a religious towards his superiors and the Institute.

The Apostolic Delegate, before the execution of this Document, wanted to know if Fr. Gurisatti still persisted in having Fr. Anthony Dalla Porta arrested! Fr. Gurisatti had gone to a lawyer to have Fr. Dalla Porta arrested for opening and reading a letter addressed to him.

On October 10, 1922, the Superior General, Fr. John B. Zaupa, gave to Fr. Alfred Balestrazzi full powers to settle the financial problems between the Institute and Fr. Gurisatti. In an article published – made public [!] in the Italian newspaper in Scranton at this time, we have a very strange letter that he wrote. The date is missing and this

communication was meant to be the first of a series, but there are none others that have since come to the fore. This strange letter speaks for itself [!]:

“... We, who speak the Italian language, have little interest either as an Italian, or as a believer, to have priests appear less than honest. To fulfill an elementary duty of hospitality, with the hope that the eloquence of others and their scrutinizing of this will become useful in completing the campaign to eliminate the total debt of this Church, we publish this article of Fr. Gurisatti, but our advice is that the best way of raising money is by way of a competent committee. We wish that his committee itself, at the end of this publication, to congratulate Fr. Gurisatti and to accept his judgment in how this question should finally be resolved, one way or the other, and have it laid to rest... [Here follows Fr. Gurisatti's own words:

‘... Three months have gone by since I had to leave the Church of St. Lucy in such a tragic manner and which some of my faithful friends feared for my life.

‘To begin, for three years or more, I have suffered with an acute case of nerves. As yet, I am not wholly cured, even though I am much better, due to the one sure way of accomplishing this, that is to possess a stronger feeling and have an iron will to overcome this sickness. Because of my sickness and the intense work that I encountered after my suspension, I was unable to give you a report on the status of the Church [as the one that I gave to the committee] because of outside pressures – this did not tell the whole story. There were checks and bills of the fourth year as you can see, which because of my condition, are not complete.

‘In leaving my position after 19 years of labor and suffering, I do so with a clear conscience, knowing that I did my duty. My duty was to be willing to sacrifice for the good of the Italians in this industrious city of Scranton, in a modest manner, I can say successfully, when one considers the humble and miserable conditions of St. Lucy's Parish. It was on the 13th of September that the late Bishop Hoban, the head of the Diocese of Scranton, took me, without anyone's knowledge, to Chestnut Street to see the future site of my ministry. He entrusted to me this parish in which my predecessor, Fr. Bellini, was stationed. The parish, at that time, included three sections: Hyde Park, Providence and the south side. There was but one priest for the 1200 families. In the 4th year of my being in Scranton, with the assistance of Frank Mercuri and Joseph Notarini, to help in the Providence section, we visited - despite the cold weather - all the families in that area. The Church was quite a distance from them, and they wanted their own Church.

‘We agreed with the people so we bought a piece of land where the Church could be built. Fr. Margotta built the basement and later a beautiful Church was built by Fr. Fuazi, the present Pastor⁶².

‘A few years later, on the south side, the Church of St. Francis [1920] was built for the reason that they were too far away from the Mother Church. It was administered by Fr. Casibba, a very zealous priest. There were about 600 souls to care for. My time, however, was spent in the Parish of St. Lucy. Let me remind you that where Bishop Hoban brought me, there are now three churches and four priests.

‘In publishing these *memoirs*, and recalling certain facts that I was involved in, I am sorry that I have to bring this to light. The reason being that the little good one accomplishes, especially we priests, should never be a reason for blowing one’s own horn. It should all be for the eyes of God alone, Who sees all and Who is worthy of all honor and praise.

‘However, in these last months, there is a great deal of gossip, some disgraceful and some calumnious. Patience, if it had remained in the midst of my parishioners. I would have remained faithful to my habit of keeping everything secret, being assured that one day the truth would surface and the lies that were spread even among others would be vindicated. But, these rumors are being wide-spread and it damages my reputation as an Italian.

‘Let us get back to the beginning, when I assumed the Parish of St. Lucy on September 13, 1908. The souls were in a quandary when for three times I had to go to Bishop Hoban, since I was not allowed to say Mass and it took the tact and the rank of Cosimo DeMarco, recently returned from Italy, that I was able to celebrate Mass as the Bishop had ordered. Passing over the attempts on my life [a sign of that era], I believe it is well worthwhile to recall the sad conditions of the parish.

‘Of the two buildings that the Congregation owned on Chestnut Street, the parish house was in good condition because it was recently built. However, there was no furniture in the house, plus it was not heated. The material for the heat was taken away two years previously by the plumber. The pastor was Fr. Landro. In 1908, there was a severe cold that gripped the area, and I caught a serious chest ailment. The second, which was no school building, had been made smaller because of its three-fold use: Church, school and convent. I begged for

⁶² Fr. Gurisatti is very unclear here – this might refer to the Church of St. Anthony of Padua, which was built in 1913. [A note inserted here in the text by its anonymous author]

immediate repairs. In a few years others followed me. [Fr. Angio Calabrese remained one month – had enough, and left!⁶³

The Apostolic Delegate, on May 27, 1924, requested a representative of our Institute and a representative of the Scranton Diocese to meet and discuss the complicated monetary affairs of Fr. Victor Gurisatti and to come to an amicable conclusion. On the Institute side, Fr. Alfred Balestrazzi was chosen. On the diocesan level, a Fr. Paul Kelly was chosen. Fr. Victor was asked to submit his financial records to the Bishop. Fr. Kelly asked for a meeting on June 23rd. On June 24th, there is noted: that in a letter to Fr. Balestrazzi, Fr. Kelly states that he had received a letter from Fr. Victor stating that he had received a notification from the Apostolic Delegate stating that the two priests were given the right to determine in base of rights what belonged to the Diocese and what would belong to the Stigmatine Congregation. He stated that he had wired the Apostolic Delegate on June 5th for an interview and was notified that the Delegate would be away for seven weeks. This was Fr. Victor's reason for not having given us satisfactory replies in our discussion on the 23rd. I send you here a copy of his reasons. He felt sure that the Apostolic Delegate would insist upon his judgment, but he felt that Fr. Victor would not hand over his financial records for scrutiny. These are presented here:

"... The case had already been decided upon by the Rt. Rev. A. J. Brennan [who would be away until August], to whom the Apostolic Delegate gave full power to decide and his decision was in my favor.

"I desire first to have an interview with the Apostolic Delegate regarding my case.

Because I have received instructions from my attorney in Rome, whose instructions are opposite to the last decision of the Apostolic Delegate."

On June 26th, then, Fr. Balestrazzi is in Hazleton and writes to Fr. Kelly to see if he [Fr. Balestrazzi] could see the statements made by Fr. Victor Gurisatti. He wrote:

... the request is to show you the documents by which we may know the declarations and mind of Fr. Gurisatti – both about the amount of money and about the property of the House, before his appeal to Rome. To discuss the exception made by him and by others that the Institute did not spend a cent, and therefore, is entitled to nothing – as everything was derived from the free-will offerings of the people here...'

If we agree on the principles underlying this cause and overlooked by so many people, it will be easier to reach a final decision between us - if not, with Fr.

⁶³ The anonymous author left here a note: This is the end of the letter and it would have been even more revealing, if we had other issues.

Victor who, for the moment, is wrong on the question of the property for, as a religious, he certainly has none!’

On July 30th, Fr. Balestrazzi received a letter from the Auxiliary Bishop of Scranton, + Bishop Brennan, in which he stated that he was the ‘delegated Jude’ in the Gurisatti case, and he made it quite clear that he wanted to settle the case as soon as possible. Bishop Brennan made reference that he knew little of the case but that he would focus on its practical points. He proposed a cross examination for the following day. Fr. Balestrazzi told him that it would be useless.

The following day, Fr. Balestrazzi returned. He saw Fr. Gurisatti leave – he appeared dazed and in deep thought. The meeting proved to have no effect. The Bishop wanted to dictate the terms of who would get what. Thousands of dollars and the possession of the House were involved. Fr. Victor became obstinate and that no one would make him give a red cent to the Stigmatines. He simply would not present his books. The Bishop lost his cool and threatened to have Fr. Gurisatti jailed! The meetings were a complete failure. To settle the issue, the Apostolic Delegate did not accept the position of Bishop Brennan on the question of finances.

On September 5, 1924, Fr. Victor Gurisatti was suspended *a divinis*, by the Bishop of Scranton, since he refused to have his books audited.

Fr. Kelly heard a rumor that Fr. Gurisatti would put up his property for sale and he asked Fr. Balestrazzi to intervene.

On September 10, 1924, the Apostolic Delegate wrote to Fr. Balestrazzi that Fr. Gurisatti was suspended *a divinis* by the Bishop of Scranton and that he believed that Fr. Victor Gurisatti was still living in the house with an assistant, and the documents from Rome are not in the hands of the Bishop.

In 1924, it becomes painfully clear what investments Fr. V. Gurisatti had taken on, by his own initiative. One of his convoluted deals was with Alessandro Caccia, a lawyer from New York City. Thousands of dollars were sent to him! He was to purchase some land in Plainfield NJ! [For what?!]. New homes were being built in the area and the idea seems to have been to buy and sell, at a great profit. In one letter, of February 16, 1925, he states that of this date he has received from Fr. Victor Gurisatti, the sum of \$10,500.00. In June 2, 1925, his letter relates to the work being done there. On January 16, 1927, the amount received was \$17,000.00; ‘Therefore, we credit you with the said amount up to this date on the value of the said property, together with future advances which will be required for the completion of the present works is to be repaid to you by cash, or mortgage, etc...!’

On May 16, 1928, Fr. Victor writes to the clerk of the county asking how many acres are in the property belonging to the above mentioned, Mr. Caccia. His address now is 123 Tenth Street, Scranton PA.

On May 1, 1928, he received a letter from one Charles E. McGrath, whom Fr. Victor Gurisatti must have hired to look into this deal. He writes that there was no property in Plainfield which is in Union County, but not in NO. Plainfield, which is in Somerset County. He had little estimation of this property. A large house and four houses not completed and a building inspector who will not pass on them, because of repeated code violations. A legal case was not brought again Caccia. What the final results of this mess were, there is no record in the files available to the one who compiled these notes.

Further, Fr. Victor also invested money in a Boland and Company, and these, too, appear to be a failure. IN fact, when Fr. Victor was hospitalized, Fr. Balestrazzi ordered them not to write to him because this would upset him. Whatever financial deals this man made, one can only surmise a century later.

Finally there seemed to be a break in the 'Fr. V. Gurisatti case' – on September 30, 1925, Fr. Victor wrote to Fr. Balestrazzi that he is now willing to hand over his books. On December 9, 1925, Fr. Kelly wrote that these books were finally audited and returned to Fr. Victor Gurisatti. On January 28, 1926, one Paul Marella⁶⁴, then Secretary to the Apostolic Delegation, acknowledges that the conclusions of Fr. Gurisatti had been received.

On October 6, 1926, the Apostolic Delegate, Bishop Fumasoni-Biondi received a letter from his secretary stating that he is sick of this whole matter and he cannot do anything more than he already has. On April 19, 1927 there is another letter stating that by the Deed of November 24, 1925, the property was conveyed to Bishop Hoban and that Fr. Victor Gurisatti would be named permanent Pastor! On March 24, 1928, there is news of the arrest of one Mr. Manion, a person with whom Fr. Victor Gurisatti had some financial dealings on a stock probe. On August 23, 1928, Bishop O'Reilly lifts his suspension and accepts Fr. Victor Gurisatti into his Diocese.

Then, on December 28, 1928, Fr. Victor Gurisatti is hospitalized in Wilkes-Barre PA. He asks pardon for his past actions. He refers to his dealings with Attorney Caccia, and how he came to choose Mr. McGrath to take action against him. On February 28, 1929, Fr. Victor declares that amounts and assets in his possession belong to the Trustees of the Stigmatine Fathers, Inc., particularly shares, savings, insurance policies, and real estate investments in New Jersey. Also on that same date, Fr. Zaupa wrote to the Bishop informing him that the statement made by Fr. Victor in October of 1925, was false.

The news eventually broke that Fr. Victor Gurisatti had a nervous breakdown and was in the Mount Hope Retreat, Baltimore MD. Here, a certain Sister Clothilde takes an active interest in him and communicates with Fr. Balestrazzi about his

⁶⁴ He lived to a ripe old age as a Cardinal in the Roman Curia – and lived to participate in Vatican II.

condition. It appeared that Fr. Victor had become very worried over his past Mass intentions. A Petition to the Holy See regarding his Mass Intentions is answered by Eugenio Cardinal Pacelli ⁶⁵ to the consoling effect that a sanction had been given for the totally confused Mass intention records not well kept – a very serious obligation for priests.

This sad story comes to a surprising end, on May 26, 1931 when Fr. Victor Gurisatti died apparently quite suddenly in the 'Mount Hope Retreat' – variously described as a mental institution of some kind. Fr. Gurisatti's body was returned to Scranton where the funeral Mass was held.

The sudden death was communicated almost immediately from the Baltimore house of recovery, to Fr. Balestrazzi in White Plains, followed the next day by another telegram, regarding his funeral:

†

Baltimore MD – May 26, 1931 at 1:34 p.m.

Reverend Father Balestrazzi

Father Gurisatti passed away suddenly at twelve thirty – have notified Bishop.

Sister Clothilde

†

and the next day:

Baltimore MD - May 27, 1931 at 8:51 a.m.

Rev. Balestrazzi = [48 cents]

92 S. Lexington Avenue White Plains NY

Funeral St. Lucy's Church, Scranton Pennsylvania nine a.m. Friday.

Sister Clothilde

†

Two days after the announcement the following article appeared in the local papers:

Thursday morning

May 28, 1931

FORMER HAZLETON PRIEST SUCCUMBS

Rev. Victor Gurisatti, Who served with Father Luchi here, dies in Scranton⁶⁶

⁶⁵ The future Pope Pius XIIth.

⁶⁶ This mistake may just be an exemplar of the many misprints in news papers.

Rev. Lewis Luchi of the Church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, this city, yesterday received word of the death of the rev. Victor Gurisatti.

Rev. Father Gurisatti was born in Gemona, Friuli, Veneto, about 66 years ago. When yet a young boy, he entered the Stigmatine Fathers in Verona, and was ordained a priest by Cardinal Canossa, about 40 years ago. After 15 years of ministry in Verona, he came to America, and passed six months with Rev. Lewis Luchi, in Hazleton.

Afterwards he was sent by Father Luchi to Massachusetts, where he was appointed to the Italian Parish in North Adams, by Bishop Bevan. He remained there for two years, when he was called to Scranton by the late Bishop Hoban, who appointed him to St. Lucy's in Scranton. Here he found the parish disorganized, financially and religiously, but after a few years 'hard work, he had the great satisfaction of seeing the parish in a flourishing condition. He had paid the debt, bought ground for a church, finished the basement and later built the lovely Church of St. Lucy, where tomorrow his body will lie for the last time.

Father Gurisatti was a pious, hard-working priest and a credit to his order, the Stigmatine Fathers of which his brother, Rev. Pius Gurisatti was many years Superior.

He is survived by one brother, Anthony, who is very prominent in Catholic activities in Verona, and by two sisters, both nuns of the Mercy order, one in Verona and one in Milan. A brother, now deceased, was a professor in the '*Belle Arti*' college in Florence, Italy.

The hard work, and the worries incidental to the rebuilding of a parish, led to a nervous breakdown, and for the past two years, Father Gurisatti has been a patient at the Mt. Hope Hospital, where he died suddenly on Tuesday.

The funeral will take place from St. Lucy's Church in Scranton, on Friday morning at 10:00 o'clock.

It is expected that the Bishop will be the celebrant of the Requiem Mass, and the sermon will be preached by Rev. Lewis Luchi, of this city, who was a close friend of the deceased.

†

We will return now to the concluding Chapter of this first Volume of the Stigmatine History in the USA, a 20th century story. We go back to Fr. Henry Fadanelli, and the giving up of his Stigmatine vocation – truly a real loss of a talented man caught between empty promises that should not have been made to him, and the harsh world

of world-wide poverty and other problems that made these promises unattainable. At the time, we were a very small Congregation – and the men in the province were making of their foundation the sole work of the entire Congregation, assuming financial obligations, and taking on ministries for which we did not have the resources to cover them.

†

MISCELLANEOUS DOCUMENTATION

BUSTA 157 - 2⁶⁷

[I] THE RELIGIOUS INSTITUTE

OF THE PRIESTS OF THE STIGMATA OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

GURISATTI Victor

Born in Gemona on the 25th day of July 1866

Entered into the Congregation on the 26th day of November 1879 [Verona]

Made his perpetual profession on August 15, 1886 [Verona]

Was ordained a priest on November 16, 1890 [Verona].

He died

He left the Congregation from North America in 1927

Number # 212 of those who entered.

Exhibit IV

[II] St. LUCY's ITALIAN CONGREGATION⁶⁸ 949 Scranton Street Scranton PA

WHEREAS: It has come to our knowledge of the Congregation of St. Lucy's Church that Rev. Victor Gurisatti, its Pastor, has been ordered to be transferred from St. Lucy's Church by the Stigmatine Order to which Rev. Gurisatti belongs, and,

WHEREAS: The St. Lucy's Congregation has never placed itself under the jurisdiction of the above *Preti Stigmatini's* Order, and,

⁶⁷ This is Fr. Victor Gurisatti's 'vital statistics' as held in the Stigmatine Archives, Rome.

⁶⁸ This is a formal Declaration of the Officers of the St. Lucy's 'Congregation' [apparently a legal entity] issued in defense of Fr. Victor Gurisatti, their Pastor.

WHEREAS, The Lucy's Congregation has asked and obtained the consent of the Rev. Victor Gurisatti to withdraw from the Order of The *Stimmatini* and remain at the service of the St. Lucy's Congregation under the jurisdiction of the Rt. Rev. Hoban, and,

WHEREAS: St. Lucy's Congregation for many years suffered religiously, morally and materially because of the incompetency and selfishness of its priests, and,

WHEREAS: Under the leadership of the Rev. Victor Gurisatti, this Congregation has prospered religiously, morally and materially, and,

WHEREAS: THE Congregation is now in the midst of a champagne [sic!] to erect a splendid edifice, and,

WHEREAS: The Rev. Victor Gurisatti has proved himself a man of splendid character, a great lover of the Church, a moral up-lifter, and a zealous and disinterested worker for the cause of St. Lucy's Church, and,

WHEREAS: The Congregation pays for all the expenses connected with St. Lucy's Church, and,

WHEREAS: The Rev. Gurisatti has committed no offense against the Catholic Church, but on the contrary has made great sacrifices for its cause:

THEREFORE: it is unanimously resolved, by the Congregation of St. Lucy's Italian Catholic Church duly assembled, this 6th day of March A.D. 1921, to acquaint the Rt. Rev. Bishop Hoban, that the Congregation will, for the above stated reasons, not permit the Rev. Victor Gurisatti to depart from St. Lucy's Church, but indeed respectfully begs His Excellency to help the Congregation to retain its beloved Rector, the Rev. Victor Gurisatti.

Signed: Chas. A. Masucci, President

John F. Bronzo, Secy.

Antonio Maiore, Vice-President

Charles A. Manze, F. Secy

Louis Coputo, Treasurer

Lorenzo Masucci,

Trustee

Joseph Notartomase,

Trustee

Antonio Agnone,

Trustee

†

(III) MESSAGE FROM THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE

Scranton PA – 22nd of March, 1921.

Dear Sir,

With joyful soul, we the undersigned send you the happy news that the debt of our Church of St. Lucy, which amounted to \$24,000.00, has been entirely extinguished this past

November. This was accomplished in the brief passage of time of only 7 years. The fund raising campaign in the past season, for raising the final \$7,000.00 happily reached its scope. Please notice that the above-mentioned such of \$24,000.00 represents only the expense of the lot. The building and the furnishings for the Church, and not the ordinary expenses of running expenses which come up each year, even adding on these expenses, the amount raised would have equaled \$38,000.00. The Administration of the Church Congregation conserves accurately all the receipts that show exactly these figures. This shows a genuine success in our Congregation, and the first merit for this progress, pertains to all of you, who in the midst of your own work and affairs, you have not forgotten the worship and the glory of the Lord.

Our Rev. Pastor, with admirable zeal, began this holy endeavor, while we of the Central Committee have fully supported him, and you are with witnesses to the sacrifices, and thus, to the good will of all, that enabled us to reach this goal. May the Lord be thanked. Now we are also very happy to make you know that we have opened an account in the Bank to begin the first deposit which we earnestly yearn will increase right away so as to inspire and encourage us so that within a very few months, we can undertake the second part of the building of the Church. This will depend on the good will of all, and if to that wonderful band of good people who have already given their contribution, there will be united also those who for whatever reason have not yet responded to our appeal, this common and ardent desire of all will become more sure and very shortly, a reality.

The Offertory expected of each one is of course in accord with the means of which each one disposes; however, it should not be less than \$15.00 per month. SO, while we do thank all those who have already done their duty, we address now all the others who may have as yet not come forward – or, if you perhaps have only satisfied a part of your duty, we are inviting them to make some haste to give over their proper quota, either to the members of the Central Committee, or to the Rev. Pastor.

In addition to the above mentioned contribution, each member of the Congregation ought to correspond to the Administration another 50 coins, which united to the special offertories that will be collected, taken up on feast days, or on other occasions, these monies will be deposited in the bank for the building of the rest of the Church. It was decided in the session of the Congregation on the 16th of this present month that for a better ordering of these matters, each member of the Congregation should be able to bring one's own contribution either on the first of third Sunday of the month, bringing it to the Secretary of the Congregation in the Pastor's Office, 949 Scranton St., from 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m., and from 6:30 until 7:30 p.m. Whoever would so choose might hand over the contribution for 6 months at a time.

You have all been very generous in coming to the help of your Church; you will also accomplish a great good for your souls, you will give a religious and moral training to your children, and you will bestow great honor of this city which welcomes us.

The Central Committee



**[IV] FULLER ACCOUNTING regarding Fr. VICTOR GURISATTI
from the *BERTONIANO*
[no date of publication] -
perhaps a General Council view, with Fr. Zaupa's Signature**

...5] Fr. Victor Gurisatti: following the Canonical Visit of the Superior General in 1920, he was assigned by his Superiors to the House of Springfield. On the date of December 23, 1920 the Ordinary Father Visitor for the Houses of America offered to him that, when he would come to Springfield, the office of Pastor for that Italian Parish would be his. Another proposal made to him was that he could attempt to intercede with the Superiors that they might assign him to Scranton, as Pastor, provided that he would accept another Confrere as Director and another one as Economus.

He refused both proposals and on December 28, 1920, he wrote to the Father Visitor: *'...The only solution acceptable to me is that I remain here in Scranton and in the status quo...!'*

On January 14, 1921, the Father Visitor wrote in a letter to Fr. Gurisatti telling him:

'... The first step is to be persuaded that the Superiors cannot accept this solution, and I believe that it is you are the reason, and you, too, can see that such an act would be the suicide of any real authority in not only that of the religious level, but also in the sphere of the profane. You can rationalize as much as you care to but your action, as you yourself have presented it and declared it, is an act of pure rebellion before the legitimate authority of that society from which so far you have not withdrawn.

And again, on January 29, 1921, he insisted:

'... If you persist in your obstinacy, you would put to death all authority morally, as the Bishop of Scranton noted. ... That which the Superiors want of you, as from every other religious, is not the money so much, but the observance of religious discipline, especially in its fundamental points... You yourself have confessed that you possess much at Scranton, which belongs to the Congregation, because it was earned by you while you were a member of this community. If you wish to leave this Institute, the Superiors would still have to insist to have all that which belongs to the Congregation –not for the sake of the vile money – but due to a holy principle. I know that you could bring great harm to the Institute which could not be done in the civil forum... but, in the ecclesiastical forum, it would be quite different: not to mention the internal forum of your own conscience and the external judgment of honest persons.

In an even clearer manner, the Father Visitor expressed himself on February 4, 1921:

'... The Bishop wrote his opinion to me that the House where You presently live belongs to the Stigmatines, but you bring forward your own reasons for considering that it belongs rather to the Parish. Dear Father, please do not play with equivocations! You must know the truth. The House either belongs to our religious institute, because it was

purchased by you, who are a Stigmatine, with your honest earnings [among which there are the customary personal contributions of your parishioners] and in conscience, you have to cede this to the Stigmatines – or, it belongs to the Parish, because it was bought by the special offerings made for this purpose, and you should still hand it over to it. What do you think? It is a matter of conscience and question of justice.

In this second case, though neither I, nor any other Stigmatine, nor would any honest person ever want to take it away, no matter how pious and holy an ultimate person anyone would have, whatever belongs to others. Otherwise, what would 'to steal' mean, if not this? But you, the first time that I met you, after the General Council decisions on the transfer of the personnel, declared to me that therefore, in the current exchange between liquid cash and stable properties [and I made mention explicitly of the very house where you are living] possessed more than a million Italian Liras. You then added that our Congregation would have been able to have all of this if the Superiors had treated you well. Indeed, in that instance you offered me immediately 100,000 *Liras*. Do you remember this?

I remember it, of course, as though it were right now. Now what is the truth? Is it true what you are saying to me at that time, or what the Bishop is now saying? And, continuing along this same path, would you now maintain that all the rest of that money you mentioned now belongs to the Parish? But, in that case what do you wish to contribute to our Institute? What did you promise? Was it something that really was not yours? Was it all something that belonged to others?

No, it is not the sons of Bertoni who now want it. And how can you claim to have worked with greater efficacy also on the financial level more than all other confreres? Just think of this dilemma which allows for no exit, and how you hold it tightly as in a trap, and by so doing morally, you could render your own name dishonored forever.

Do not say that I am evil... I am doing nothing other than applying logic to your own words. No, do not put the blame on anyone else; it is you yourself who is choosing to kill yourself with your own hands, as the Bishop of Scranton once said. The abyss, to which I have referred so many times, is opening wide under your feet – you are already in real danger of falling into it. Step back from all of this, dear Father, while there is still time.... You will find, in me, a true friend ...

These letters of the Father Visitor of the past were certainly received as they were sent as recommended letters, with the receipt of reception sent back to me. It was also hoped that they would have had some salutary effect on the mind of Fr. Gurisatti. In fact, this is what you responded to the Father Visitor: '... I will accept the Director and the Economus... In the administration of the Parish I do ask for a certain freedom and largesse, as there is a number of matters pending. All this was a vain hope, and very shortly this good will was withdrawn by Fr. Gurisatti in a subsequent conversation.

Matters continued on a downward spiral and then the Sacred Congregation of Religious gave for the scope of working this all out, full faculties to the Apostolic Delegate. This latter, on May 27, 1924, wrote to the Superior General:

‘... From the examination of the documents regarding the case of Fr. Gurisatti, the controversial point - and the one of greater importance - seems to be that of determining the true owner of those goods as they appear today: either as the personal property of Fr. Gurisatti, or as belonging to the Parish of St. Lucy. In this question, therefore, the principal interested parties are two: the Diocese, which has to protect the interests of the Parish – and the Congregation of the Stigmatines over which your Reverence now presides. So that there might be reached soon a common agreement in a friendly understanding, on your part. Please choose a Representative of yourself, and have him get in contact with the Chancery Office in Scranton, to which I have already written in this sense. As soon as the Bishop of Scranton will have chosen a priest of his confidence, both should then examine the Accounts presented by Fr. Gurisatti and determine on the base of law which goods belong to the Diocese and which belong to the Congregation, trying to examine the controversial points in a spirit of reconciliation. If as I hope, this first question does reach a good development, it would not then be very difficult to resolve the definitive handling of Fr. Gurisatti, in accord with the principles of equity and justice.’

The Institute chose as its Representative Fr. Balestrazzi and the Diocese Chose Fr. Kelly, the Bishops Secretary. Fr. Gurisatti then refused to present his financial records for to his meeting, adding, as results from a letter from the Fr. Kelly of Scranton these various reasons:

- [1] because his case had already been decided by Bishop Brennan, on whom the Apostolic Delegate had conferred full powers;**
- [2] because, I desire before any meeting takes place, to have an interview myself with the Apostolic Delegate;**
- [3] because I have received instructions from my Lawyer in Rome, and these instructions are contrary to the ultimate decision of the Apostolic Delegate;**
- [4] because in every case, I consider myself free to appealing to Rome.**

As for his first reason, it is to be recalled that His Excellency, the Apostolic Delegate could not approve that solution, because it is excessively unilateral and deprived of every juridical sense; as for the other three reasons advanced by Fr. Gurisatti, all persons of good sense can judge their lack of support for themselves. Fr. Gurisatti simply refused a clear order to show his records to the representatives of the Diocese and those of the Institute, named following a provision of the Apostolic Delegate. His Excellency had this particular case studied by a Professor of Law at the Catholic University in Washington. So, Fr. Gurisatti, due to his inconceivable obstinacy, continues to remain suspended *a Divinis*, by order of the Apostolic Delegate.

Since Fr. Gurisatti does not accept the order, I will be obliged to proceed according to Law. As was written to Fr. Gurisatti earlier: ‘... I am authorized to declare that the Superiors

were disposed to grant to him the Parish of St. Lucy in Scranton, in the case that Fr. Gurisatti would obtain the Indult of Exclaustration, or of Secularization – however, first these superiors demand of Fr. Gurisatti as their lawful subject, these three conditions:

- [1] that he recognize the principle that whatever he has, belongs to the Congregation and is not his own property'
- [2] that he make clear and render an exact accounting of his financial situation;
- [3] that he place at the disposition of the Superiors all that he is doing, and be disposed to accept whatever they might believe to grant, in the eventuality of his temporary or definitive departure from the Congregation.

On June 15, 1921, Fr. Gurisatti sent to the Father Visitor the requested financial report, accompanying it with a letter, in which he stated, among other things, the following: '... I have to make something clear. When you were here in November, I told you that I could realize a beautiful sum of Italian Lira [he therefore confirms here his claim of a million Italian *Liras* at his disposition, as referred to above in Fr. Visitor's letter]. However, according to the exchange in vogue at that time, or a little before it, this would have meant no more than about 30 Lira per dollar, reached also by selling the furniture and everything else. He was speaking at that time, more or less according to a kind of manner of speaking because all that of which he would have been able to dispose of at that time, would go entirely into works of charity, as he claimed that his personal needs were quite limited.

Regarding this matter the Father Visitor pointed out to him on June 17th:

'... no one who knows you could doubt of this good quality and disposition of yours, but the question is whether you in conscience can dispose of your own free volition, whether in works of charity, of that money which in justice pertains to our Congregation...'

In this same letter, the Father Visitor after a few technical observations regarding the financial report of Fr. Gurisatti in conformity to the charge and the faculty that he had received from his Superiors, judges that this same Father can and ought to presently deposit in the central account of our Congregation in America – or, to place it in the name of all, according to the cases, the \$20,000.00 - while keeping from this, the more than \$10,000.00 for current expenses and for those uncertainties to which Fr. Gurisatti refers.

And he goes on:'

... I beg you to note immediately that here we are speaking solely about deposits and legal actions in conformity with the above-quoted Circular Letter, the execution of which I am charged to enact. That which the Superiors will concede to you in the case that you will eventually leave the Congregation is not now the question, nor is it being pre-judged...

In the successive correspondence, the Father Visitor had occasion to clarify this point quite well: these letters, in other words, are speaking of the simple deposit, that in no way

brings any prejudice of the right of ownership, as this right pertains to the Institute, or to the Parish, or to Fr. Gurisatti himself. Nonetheless, Fr. Gurisatti remained obstinate in his refusal. His case was brought before the Sacred Congregation of Religious. The Institute opposed his secularization until he had complied with his clear duties, as a religious, in the matter of finances, toward his own Institute:

Due to his repeated acts of rebellion toward his ecclesiastical and religious superiors, the Institute of the Stigmatine Fathers intends to proceed to his expulsion. In doing this, there would be left unprejudiced the question of the duties of justice which Fr. Gurisatti has towards the Institute. With this act of charity toward a son of hers now in disgrace, has been urged to the extreme. In itself this punishment of expulsion is reduced to its least terms. And so, our Institute brings to a close, from her part, this most protracted and painful matter, that exploded on the scene profoundly disturbing the peace of the Stigmatine family in North America.

In all these questions that brought much harm to our Institute, there was not always found toward us that expected support of the local ecclesiastical authorities. The fact that some of our men had gone outside the normal rules that govern us, and they engaged in their own behalf counselors not worthy of the name and even worse lawyers. However, Divine Providence was not lacking the Divine Providence to procuring for our much tried Institute, most Eminent Patrons, of the rectitude and the fiber of Cardinal DeLai and of Cardinal Bonzano.

My Brothers, for all those who were once our brothers, we extend our compassion and our prayer. But, let us not any of us, lose the taste for the treasure of our religious life, and so let us practice it continuously in fear and the necessary vigilance and prayer: Watch and pray!

Rome, July 28, 1925

**The Superior General
Fr. John B. Zaupa.**

†

[V]

[In this context there is a letter from the Apostolic Delegation, signed by the 'Auditor', Paul Marella. He lived a long life and was a Cardinal in Rome at the time of the IInd Vatican Council. In this letter, Msgr. Paul Marella is thanking Fr. Alfred Balestrazzi for informing him regarding the last dispositions regarding Fr. Victor Gurisatti].

**Apostolic Delegation
United States of America**

**1811 Biltmore Street
Washington DC
January 29, 1926**

No 3029-g

This No. should be prefixed to the Answer.

Very Reverend Alfred Balestrazzi, C.S.F.
554 Lexington Street
Waltham Mass.

Very Reverend and dear Father:

In the absence of His Excellency, the Apostolic Delegate, I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your esteemed communication of the 36th [sic!] of this month, with which you kindly sent the conclusions reached in the case of Father Gurisatti.

I beg to thank you for this report which I shall place before His Excellency on his return to Washington.

With kindest regards and best wishes,

Sincerely yours in Xt.,
Paul Marella, Auditor

†

[VI]

[The next document here in chronological order is one from the Superior General, signed by the Council Secretary at that time, Fr. Carlo DeFerrari – it is in the same print as exhibited in the early editions of the *BERTONIANO*, but the date of its publication is not known. This document is the General Council's formal declaration of dismissal issued against Fr. Victor Gurisatti. Fr. Carlo DeFerrari later was named 'Prince Archbishop' of Trent and was a great personal friend of Pope John 23rd – and in the mid-1950's as Archbishop Ferrari of Trent, he visited *Malosco di Fondo, Val di Non* – within the confines of his Archdiocese, to spend a few days with the North American Stigmatine students. In fact, he was in the area, when the Italian Prime Minister, Alcide DeGasperi died suddenly].

... Fr. Alfred Balestrazzi was the Superior General's delegate in the final stages of this case. Despite the prudent reservations issued by Fr. Balestrazzi, through the good offices of the Bishop of Scranton, Fr. Gurisatti's formal canonical suspension *a Divinis* was lifted. However, the acceptance of the conditions imposed on Fr. Gurisatti manifests the characteristics of a simulation, as he gave to the two delegates only one financial register, one covering the years 1919 until September of 1924. This Register from both internal motives, as well as those external, does not appear to be either genuine nor trustworthy, and seems that it was artificially put together. In this work, Fr. Gurisatti declares that he is unable to present as material can no longer be found that would cover the preceding years. Even though it is now evident that the two appointed Delegates for this matter are unable to come to any definitive conclusion, the Superior General expresses the desire that they would continue with whatever examination of these documents as is possible. All was held in suspension in the

expectancy of Fr. Gurisatti's arrival, persuaded as he was that their studies and their conclusions of the material that had indeed been placed under their scrutiny, that perhaps some further information might be forthcoming regarding the missing monies, in this interminable case. Despite the good will on the part of the Institute, and the complete lack of trustworthiness on the part of Fr. Gurisatti, his former community has not been swayed in the least.

[4] Now, the Superior General, in full accord with his Council, declares that the conditions were not verified, nor are they able to be by the Superior General. In his promise of July 1925, the Institute no longer feels itself bound in any form whatsoever to previous agreements. On the other hand, as there results from the study of the two Delegates that, when in 1921 Fr. Gurisatti was ordered to deposit the nominal sum of twenty thousand dollars [which in reality, though, was only \$16, 948.60], Fr. Gurisatti owes the Institute at least \$16,948.22. As a result, the Superior General, with the unanimous vote of his Council, presents for the approval of the Sacred Congregation of Religious the Decree of Expulsion already emitted against Fr. Victor Gurisatti, dating from 1921, and emanating from his predecessor, Fr. John B. Zaupa.

Rome, March 5, 1926.

Fr. John B. Zaupa, Sup. Gen.

Fr. Carlo De Ferrari, General Secretary.

†

[VII]

[This next document in Latin is from the new Bishop of Scranton who served as Sub-delegate of the Apostolic Delegate in Washington as the reinstatement of Fr. Victor Gurisatti, after his excommunication, he is not incardinated into the Diocese of Scranton PA]:

**CHANCERY OFFICE
315 Wyoming Avenue
Scranton, Pennsylvania**

**Thomas Charles,
By Divine Mercy and the Grace of the Holy Apostolic See,
THE BISHOP OF SCRANTON.**

By the vigor of the Faculties communicated in the Letter no. 1271 –sub-delegated to us, by the Very Reverend Lord, Peter – Fumasoni-Biondi, Apostolic Delegate of His Holiness Pope Pius XIth here in the United States of America we declare that through these Faculties transmitted to us, and having observed all that the Law requires to be observed, about which specific mention was made in the Official Letter, namely: that Fr. Victor Gurisatti properly made a course of the spiritual exercises, the absolution from his canonical censures bestowed on him, the required Profession of Faith was made by this Priest, and his also

having made a public promise of obedience, that he is absolved by these factors. The above mentioned Priest, Fr. Victor Gurisatti, is dispensed from the bond of pertaining to the [Stigmatine] Congregation, and he is incorporated into the Clergy of this Diocese of Scranton.

In faith whereof we order that this present Letter, signed by my hand, be published with our personal seal.

+ Thomas Charles O'Reilly
Bishop of Scranton

Given at Scranton, under the date of the 23rd day of the month of August in the Year of our Lord, 1926. By Mandate of the Very Reverend Ordinary.

†

[VIII]

[The next Document from the Holy See, dated from more than a year after this previous one, is from the Sacred Congregation of Religious, verifying the formal expulsion of Fr. Gurisatti. Here is the Document]:

THE PONTIFICAL CONFIRMATION OF THE DISMISSAL
From the Secretariat of the Sacred Congregation of Religious
To the Very Rev. Fr. John B. Zaupa, Superior General of the Stigmatine Fathers.
No 721/23 Rome, March 18, 1927.

Very Reverend Father,

It is my duty to communicate to Your Reverence, that I, as the under-signed Prefect of this Sacred Congregation referred to the Holy Father, in an Audience with him on this past February 8th, the case of Fr. Victor Gurisatti, of this Institute of the Stigmatine Fathers. He is actually living in the Diocese of Scranton, in the United States.

His Holiness, in accepting the final request presented in this regard by your Reverence, after this long and drawn out case, has confirmed the dismissal of the above-mentioned Father from your Institute. This decree was emanated by his Superiors, on August 10, 1921, and which was up to this present moment left in suspension.

The execution of this dismissal, His Holiness, both as regarding its time and manner, remitted it to His Excellency, His Delegate in the United States, to whom this Sacred Congregation makes this communication.

The financial question remains unresolved.

I take this occasion, etc....

C. Cardinal Laurenti, Prefect

Vinc. La Puma, Secretary.

†

The Execution of the Decree

On September 11, 1928, the Superior General had in Rome a long conversation with the new Bishop of Scranton, His Excellency Thomas O'Reilly, who communicated to him that the sentence of dismissal from our Institute, of the Rev. Victor Gurisatti, was carried out. Furthermore, in conformity with the instructions received by His Excellency, the Apostolic Delegate, and through that authority which had been communicated to him, he, just a little before his departure, had incardinated perpetually into his Diocese of Scranton, the Rev. Gurisatti. This was only after he completed 10 days of the spiritual exercises, was absolved from his censures, and made his profession of faith and promise of obedience to his Diocesan Ordinary. His Excellency also added that Fr. Gurisatti was assigned to an Italian parish outside the city of Scranton.

It is with a sense of profound compassion for one who was once a brother to us in the Institute, and with a kind of vigilant trepidation on our own part, that we see this painful case end in this way after so much time, at least the more important part of this very sad case. As for the money end of this case, this remains without solution. This Congregation of Venerable Bertoni, as a good Mother, can only feel piety toward one who was once her son.

Rome, September 14, 1928

The Superior General
Fr. John B. Zaupa

†

[IX]

[There is still one more document from Fr. Zaupa, still Superior General, after his re-election in 1928 to a second two year term – the letter under the date of Feb. 28, 1929, to the Bishop of Scranton]:

The Institute of the Stigmatine Fathers
General Curia
Via Mazzarino, 16
ROMA [3]

February 28, 1929

To His Excellency, the Most Reverend
Bishop Thomas O'Reilly, D.D.
Bishop of Scranton
315 Wyoming Avenue
Scranton PA

Most Reverend and dear Bishop,

I referred to my General Council and had occasion to speak with His Eminence Ceretti, the Cardinal Protector of our religious institute, concerning the '*pro-memoria*' of December 6, 1928, relative to the case of Fr. Gurisatti, and concerning the conversation I had with Your Most Reverend Excellency, in the presence of Monsignor Kelly and Fr. Balestrazzi.

The proper tone of that *pro-memoria* is recognized by all, and in my view, quite frankly, this could not be placed in doubt by anyone.

As soon as Your Excellency in the above mentioned conversation declared that the 'Statement' and the relative documents presented by the Rev. Gurisatti in October 1925, to the two appointed Delegates of the Diocese and of our Institute [Msgr. Kelly and Fr. Balestrazzi], were entirely a fabrication, and that the monies of the Institute were declared by Fr. Gurisatti as used elsewhere and not for the benefit of the Parish, I immediately declared to accept on my part the statement of Your Excellency. The effect of all this is that now the *pro-memoria* is lacking its fundamental principle – and of my *pro-memoria* which, however, for this reason, it was not totally useless.

I repeat now a similar declaration in the name of my Council, while also in the name of the same, I renew to your Most Reverend Excellency the most sincere expression and profound gratitude for all that that you in your immense goodness, have decided to do in behalf of a poor disgraced man.

I bow to kiss the Sacred Ring of Your Excellency,

Your most devoted and Humble Servant,
J. B. Zaupa

[This is a copy of the original, in total conformity with it]

[There now exists still another document: this one a copied letter apparently in the handwriting of Fr. Alfred Balestrazzi, on White Plains stationary, from the Vatican, bearing the signature of Eugene Cardinal Pacelli, Secretariat of State of His Holiness (Pius XIth) No. 96050, November 14, 1930]:

Stigmatine Fathers
South Lexington Avenue
White Plains
New York

From the Secretariat of State of His Holiness.
No. 96050

From the Vatican. November 14, 1930

Rev. J. B. Tomasi ⁶⁹
Director General
Stigmatine Priests.

Very Reverend Father,

In response to the devout supplication of Your Reverence much humiliated before the Throne of His Holiness, I gladly hasten to inform you that the Holy Father has deigned to grant to the Priest, Fr. Victor Gurisatti, to the extent that this will be necessary for him, a complete pardon for any canonical irregularity that could have accrued to him in the celebration and in the application of Holy Masses.

In communicating to you of what I noted above, I gladly profit by this encounter to confirm to you, my greetings with senses of sincere and distinct esteem.

I am of Your Very Reverend Father,
Yours most affectionately in the Lord.
E. Card. Pacelli

[This copy confirms with the original mailed here to our community at White Plains NY – December 1, 1930

Fr. Alfred Ballestrazzi, C.S.F.]

†

⁶⁹ At the time of his death [January 1954], the retired ex-Father General, Fr. John B. Tomasi, lived at the General House, St. Agatha's, Via Mazzarino, 16 – Rome – at the time the Professed Students of the North American Stigmatine Province came, Nov. 1952, for studies in Rome. Fr. Tomasi served at that time was the Spiritual Director of Chiara Lubich, Foundress of the *Folklorini* – and of Pius XIIth's own sister].

Fr. ENRICO FADANELLI

As was seen above, Fr. John Baptist Tomasi, the Superior General, assigned Frs. Leo Sella, Fr. John Baptist Zaupa and Fr. Henry Fadanelli to the USA. They arrived on the SS. *Stampalia* on September 27, 1915. Fr. Fadanelli was then sent by Fr. Luchi [on what authority, it is not clear] to care for the Italian Parish of Our Lady of Pompeii in Milwaukee WI. He had served with Frs. Zaupa and others in the special seminary of Belluno-Feltre taken over by the Stigmatines on the request of Pius Xth. After serving a year or two there, Frs. Zaupa and Fadanelli came to the United States. In the 1922 Distribution of our Personnel, the names of Fr. William Ludescher and Frs. Raymond Dalla Porta were assigned to Milwaukee – yet, there is no record of this parish in our history.

On February 11, 1917 Fr. Fadanelli wrote to Fr. Lona concerning the mortgage of the property in Milwaukee. He tells Fr. Lona that he has all the documents concerning the mortgage and that he is able to have a new, more favorable mortgage, for an additional \$10,000.00. It would cost the community about \$2,000.00 more dollars. Fr. Fadanelli informs Fr. Lona that ‘you would have to come to an agreement with Fr. Luchi and then we will be able to have the loan in the name of the Institute.’ Fr. Fadanelli expresses profound disagreement with what he judges to be an inconsiderate act by Fr. Luchi, and this only confirms what Fr. Angelo Simeone is spreading about. This is harmful not only to our striving to handle this situation among ourselves, but it is most damaging to the reputation of our Institute. No further comment is necessary here.’

On May 30, 1917, Fr. Lona wrote to Fr. Fadanelli asking him to send an account of all that he has done, because the Promissory Note was due. He listed the items to be accounted for and tells him that the Church accounts are separate from the House expenditures. However, in this case, a cumulative report of both Church and House would be acceptable. There follows here Fr. Fadanelli’s response to this:

... On August 31st, on writing to Fr. Lona, he mentions a student, and I would presume, for the Seminary. There is no difficulty regarding him on his part, for there is ‘nothing like trying, as they say in America!’ Enclosed there is a formula on demand for \$3,000.00 to the Italian Bank. He asked Fr. Lona to send him a signed copy. There was a misunderstanding when he wrote concerning the debt to the Marshall Bank. The only inconvenience was that the sum would be taken out and put in with another loan on one of the Houses. This sum is the only amount that can be sent to the Institute. Somewhat confusing, to say the least, since all the facts are certainly not present here. The investments would have been at the regular 5%. Given the circumstances, Fr. Fadanelli states that he cannot do otherwise.

What the wise old Archbishop had warned Fr. Luchi in 1915 about the purchase of the property now came to life. In the year 1918 all kinds of letters were sent from the Archbishop and his lawyer, and the bank regarding the status of the property and who the

rightful owner truly is. The Archbishop maintained that the Stigmatines should no longer wait for their Superior General to give permission to become incorporated.

However, by the end of the year, the Congregation did indeed become a legal entity, on that September 10th. The legal problems did not end for a while, but the money matter would go on until the end of the Stigmatine 'Milwaukee venture finally dragged on to the end, in 1924.

From the year 1919, there are a few letters that are still extant between Fr. Lona and Fr. Fadanelli, and all of them deal with payments, mortgages and money. As is readily available to the perhaps weary reader. Both Stigmatine attempts at a foundation in Hazleton and in Milwaukee were all bogged down in the slipshod handling of funds. While sympathy often stands with those who do obey, the task of the Administration of a century ago, trying to understand all these vague reports, remains objectively impossible. The comparison might be made that these financial reports are so imprecise, and change so often [usually increasing the need for more money] – that their reports show that the men involved had little will to share their true financial picture – which they may no longer have understood themselves. It was like a letter of recommendation that one has to write for an individual in whom one does not have much confidence, but writes a vague letter, with much profusion – but which says absolutely nothing!

By the year 1920 the World War is over and now will begin shortly the more difficult skirmishes between Fr. Enrico Fadanelli and Fr. John Baptist Zaupa. This latter will first become the Ordinary Visitor and then in 1922, he will be elected Superior General. In this mix must be added the formidable figure of the Archbishop of Milwaukee, + Sebastian Mesmer, the Ordinary over the Parish of Our Lady of Pompeii in the city.

The next few years will be marked for their charges and counter-charges, a few white lies and maybe even a few of a darker variety. Desperation will lead to real anger, and to the loss of another Stigmatine. In 1922, Fr. Zaupa will become [up to that point in our history] our youngest Superior General and will not concede much either to the Archbishop nor to Fr. Fadanelli – as he was wont to do when he, Fr. Zaupa, was the Ordinary Visitor of the North American Stigmatine foundations. Did he come across any other information, or was it just vindictiveness?

Fr. Luchi is no longer in the picture – and he is the one who, on his own, sent Fr. Fadanelli to Milwaukee! By this time, Fr. Luchi has lost interest in Milwaukee in favor of his beloved Hazleton, and is deeply immersed in his own woes and troubles. Fr. Simeone and Fr. Cembran will leave the Congregation, and eventually so, too, will Fr. Fadanelli. Telegrams will be sent back and forth concerning monetary affairs that will no sense to us now a century down the road, since we are incapable of knowing what they meant when they were sent. It is a bit of a question why Fr. Luchi was allowed to continue in the Church, and 'rectorship' in Hazleton, whereas Fr. Cembran and Fr. Fadanelli will not be allowed to join any diocese in the United States and this under pain of suspension. We started very badly in Milwaukee and ended up even worse. We can always ask the question – what if ??? – but we will never know the answer.

In the blinding heat and smoke of the extended battle of words, there also seems to be a bit of confusion in the dating of letters. We have on December 21, 1920, Fr. Zaupa asking Fr. Fadanelli to become Pastor of Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Springfield MA. He also asks if the Archbishop had ever even hinted to him about the Stigmatines giving up the Parish in Milwaukee. On January 4, 1921⁷⁰, he was surprised by the visit of Fr. Anthony Dalla Porta and learned that it would be impossible to visit the Archbishop because he was ill. He would try to visit with His Excellency during the coming week.

On December 31, 1920, Fr. Fadanelli sent a telegram to Fr. Zaupa: "Everything all right – Springfield tomorrow!" Yet, in Fr. Fadanelli's letter, he makes it quite clear that he will not accept being Pastor of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, in Springfield MA. He maintained that it would be too heavy a burden for him. We have another telegram from Fr. Dalla Porta, sent December 3, 1920 to this effect:

"Milwaukee property already long transferred to the Diocese – money sent to Fr. Luchi – refusing restitution for six months. Fadanelli, pastor Milwaukee.

It is not clear as to whom restitution refers to. Was this before the visit to Fr. Fadanelli? It would mean that Fr. Luchi realized he had no claim over this money – but, that it would take him at least six months to make restitution within the Congregation.

In January of 1921, Fr. Zaupa – still as Visitor of the North American Stigmatine foundations - sent a letter to Fr. Fadanelli, asking him to take over Mount Carmel Church in Springfield MA as Pastor. HE was convinced that Fr. Fadanelli could handle it. Besides this, he would be helped by Fr. Raymond Dalla Porta, who is nearby – and from Fr. Fontana, who was in West Springfield, and who would build a Church in the coming year. The work could be divided, Fr. Zaupa reasoned ... If you do agree, you would be doing me a personal favor. Send a telegram saying 'yes', and you will please us all. Fr. Sella who is here would be very happy. We are but a few, but each of us is necessary. Let me know and then you can write me. We would expect you, at least by the end of February. If you have any problems, just inform me by Special Delivery.

Thus it is that initially Fr. Zaupa makes every move to keep Fr. Fadanelli in the Institute. He offers him what would have been the 'cream' of whatever the Congregation had at that time. Perhaps this would explain that when Fr. Fadanelli eventually wanted to leave, 'the whole book was thrown at him,' as the saying goes. This also might shed some light on his letter of 1916. Was he really sincere in saying that he was sincere in his willingness to give up Milwaukee?

A few days later, Fr. Fadanelli communicated with Fr. Zaupa. He was unable to comply with all, and this was due in part to the fact that the Archbishop was ill. However, Fr. Fadanelli did make it clear that he would seriously consider taking over Mount Carmel in Springfield MA as Pastor. However, he also repeated that it would be much better if someone else would be chosen to accept the offer of the Pastorate of Mount Carmel. In February, Fr. Fadanelli writes again, telling Fr. Zaupa that the Archbishop is now feeling

⁷⁰ The record here has '1920' – with the new year, he may still be accustomed to the previous year.

better and in a short time, he will give his attention to the Church of Our Lady of Pompeii in Milwaukee WI.

In 1921, these questions so argued, were the beginning of the end of the dialogue. In the view of some latter day witnesses, charity seems to have given way to justice. The Archbishop maintains his attitude that Our Lady of Pompeii should remain under the care of the Stigmatines. The Ordinary Visitor, Fr. Zaupa, remains firm in that our men should leave the parish. Fr. Fadanelli now gives some rather clear indications that he wanted to leave the Stigmatine Congregation, as he was already promised the Pastorate of the Milwaukee Parish of Our Lady of Pompeii.

In the interpretation of some, Fr. Zaupa seems frustrated because the Archbishop of Milwaukee fails to answer any of his letters, providing little support in the case. He is further angered by Fr. Fadanelli who will not submit any intelligible accounts about his financial situation and what he is doing with money justifiably belonging to the Stigmatines, and not to him personally. Fr. Zaupa reminds Fr. Fadanelli that the Superior General, Fr. John B. Tomasi, had just issued a Circular Letter to the community in which he is asking for more detailed and clear financial accounts of the various local stewardships with headquarters. Fr. Fadanelli's response to all this is that the Superior General did not have him – Fr. Fadanelli – in mind when he wrote his Circular Letter. He pointedly reminds Fr. Zaupa that Our Lady of Pompeii is very poor and that Fr. Fadanelli is unable even to take his salary – which he used totally to maintain the Church and the Rectory. He tells Fr. Zaupa that he keeps a small amount of cash for personal things. Fr. Fadanelli makes it clear once more to Fr. Zaupa that he has already complied with his superior's asking for an accounting – but, the problem with it is that no one can make any sense out of it, as the parish expenses are all mixed in with house expenses and sums of monies seem not to be accounted for at all. Fr. Zaupa also pointed out that there were real errors in the confused accounting that he submitted.

Fr. Zaupa then brings up the painful matter that he has heard from different sources the rumor/ the fact [?] that Fr. Fadanelli has already spoken publicly of the fact that he was going to leave the Stigmatine Congregation – and he makes it quite clear that as Superior, he [Fr. Zaupa] has every right and duty to demand an understandable accounting of all monies handled by the confreres. Fr. Zaupa becomes quite insistent that Fr. Fadanelli must make a clear account of Fr. Fadanelli's stewardship. Fr. Zaupa warns Fr. Fadanelli must do this, or he will be removed from his post.

The Archbishop apparently has already promised Fr. Fadanelli the parish should he leave the Stigmatine Congregation so Fr. Fadanelli argues his views from a position of some strength. Yet, the Archbishop has not answered Fr. Zaupa's letters – and since the Stigmatines are about to leave Milwaukee altogether, Fr. Zaupa needs a full accounting of the parish and its monies. He needs this information so that he, as Superior of the Stigmatines, might approach the Archbishop with the facts. Fr. Fadanelli shrugs Fr. Zaupa's personal difficulties off, and states that they are of no concern of his.

Finally, on June 16, Fr. Zaupa writes to the Archbishop telling His Excellency that the Stigmatines have decided to change Fr. Fadanelli and suggest to him that he is to be

replaced with Fr. Anthony Dalla Porta. So it is we read in the *BERTONIANO* of this era that Fr. Dalla Porta and Fr. 'Ludescher' were stationed in Milwaukee. It does not seem that this ever really happened.

Meanwhile, this turbulent situation had been submitted to Rome. We have a note written by a certain 'Father Ferrari' - in the service of the Holy See, that the Ordinary Visitor has been given the power to perform certain functions and was empowered to act in some circumstances with full authority. It could very well have been that Fr. Zaupa was not fully cognizant regarding the extent or limitations of his authority. Canon Law had recently been emanated [1917] and there was much 'grey' area for those who were not qualified canonists. Fr. Zaupa acted well within his rights as Ordinary Visitor [before the era of 'Provincials'] – he had clearly asked Fr. Fadanelli, a professed member of the region, to fulfill the demands of the Superior General's recent communications.

Fr. Fadanelli made note of the fact that the Chancellor of the Archdiocese had promised to write to him regarding Fr. Zaupa's request to have Fr. Fadanelli leave Milwaukee. No answer was forthcoming. Though much of this was mentioned earlier, it should be reiterated – as indeed it does seem as though Fr. Zaupa is doing all he can to keep Fr. Fadanelli from leaving the Congregation. Fr. Zaupa informs Fr. Fadanelli that Fr. Alfred Balestrazzi is coming to the United States and that Fr. Anthony Dalla Porta has already been named Pastor in Springfield. Fr. Zaupa pours his soul out to Fr. Fadanelli – he suggests to him to discuss his situation with Fr. Raymond and that in the near future, five more priests were coming over from Italy to the United States in the near future. Fr. Zaupa goes on to say that he truly hoped that Fr. Fadanelli would indeed be a part of all this effort at expansion and that he could write to Fr. Zaupa at any time, and that Fr. Henry should consider him to be his friend and brother. These sentiments indeed reveal that Fr. Zaupa, throughout this heart-felt exchange, was most sincere in trying to reach out to Fr. Fadanelli. Fr. Zaupa had little effect on this oft-repeated approach.

A bit further on, however, the tone changes drastically – Fr. Zaupa tells Fr. Fadanelli, that he is to submit to these options, or the Congregation will remove its support of Fr. Fadanelli before the Diocesan authorities of Milwaukee, and remove him from his pastorate at Our Lady of Pompeii. This would end up in Fr. Fadanelli's expulsion from the Congregation.

The summer rolls on and now it is Fr. Fadanelli who refuses to answer Fr. Zaupa's letters. He is reminded that if he does not answer, then steps would be taken for his removal not only as Pastor but further, as a member of the Stigmatine Institute. During the month of November, a letter was written to Archbishop Mesmer of Milwaukee. This letter recalls for the Archbishop that the ultimate decision, of course, lay in the hands of the Archbishop. Fr. Zaupa also writes to Fr. Fadanelli at this time, saying that he was worried about him, while all the while – based on Fr. Fadanelli's silence – Fr. Zaupa reasons out loud that he must not have any worries over this whole matter.

Fr. Zaupa then makes the offer to give him the Parish in Lynn MA In Fr. Zaupa's mind, this must have been an important assignment because the plan in vogue at that moment was that there would soon be a student house there for formation. The plan was that Fr.

Balestrazzi would take care of the students, and then Fr. Fadanelli as the new pastor could minister to the Italian population there. Fr. Zaupa actually pleads with Fr. Fadanelli in this letter, asking him to write and to consider in his heart how a man could leave his wife, or mother, or family [referring to the Stigmatine Congregation] for whatever motive. He tells him that this is not worthy of a negative reply. Fr. Zaupa states that he truly sympathizes with Fr. Fadanelli and has some understanding of all that he had been through – being sent to Milwaukee by a confrere, who did not have the authority to do so, with all kinds of promises of support. These promises had long melted away, and Fr. Luchi was interested by this time, solely then in Hazleton. The Congregation was unable to meet the promises that Fr. Luchi had made to Fr. Fadanelli.

Fr. Zaupa then makes another trip to Milwaukee but still he is unable to meet with the Archbishop. As a result Fr. Zaupa wrote to His Excellency, telling him all this and repeating to him that whatever decisions would be made would have to go through the Ordinary. And he stated that whenever the Archbishop would be ready to discuss the matter, he, Fr. Zaupa, would be ready to do so. It is not known whether during this visit to Milwaukee, Fr. Zaupa ever met with Fr. Fadanelli, but the fair presumption would be that he did. In a subsequent letter, Fr. Zaupa by-passes the Archbishop, and writes to the Chancellor that Fr. Fadanelli should be removed as Pastor as he does not have the backing of the Stigmatine Congregation. He went on to say that only the Archdiocesan authorities could bring the thorny matter of Fr. Fadanelli as Pastor of Our Lady of Pompeii, to a close. In all of this heated discussion, there is hardly any mention of the parishioners of Our Lady of Pompeii – it is hard to know if they even knew of all these vicissitudes.

In a letter written in the latter part of December 1921, Fr. Fadanelli makes his move to leave the Stigmatine Institute. He wrote to the Archbishop of Milwaukee asking him to incardinate him into the Archdiocese. The Archbishop replies that just as soon as Fr. Henry can be released from the community of the Stigmatine Fathers, he would gladly incardinate him. He expresses the hope that this takes place just as soon as possible.

This written wish – after all that had transpired and all the issues involved [money, property, etc. etc.] – would seem a little ingenuous. This is overly simplistic that Fr. Fadanelli would suddenly receive a favorable letter from the Stigmatines that ‘all is forgiven’ [the debts, the many unanswered questions – was there land speculation going on?] and that the Fr. Fadanelli case would be closed in a very short time.

Fr. Fadanelli then turned to Fr. Zaupa and received a reply from him. He had requested his Ordinary Visitor to let him know what would be required of him so that he could make the formal application for exlaustration, so that he could enter the clergy of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee. Certainly Fr. Fadanelli never could have thought that his case would end in the very near future. This would become a major issue in the reign of the next Superior General [as of August 10, 1922] – who would be none other than the present Stigmatine Ordinary Visitor of the foundations in North America – Fr. John Baptist Zaupa!

Thus, Fr. Fadanelli wrote to Fr. Zaupa on December 21, 1921. He makes it clear that he has an offer from the Archdiocese of Milwaukee to be incardinated into this Diocese and Fr. Fadanelli would like to accept this offer. What steps need to be taken by the Stigmatines

for this to take place? Fr. Fadanelli reasoned that this would put an end to the thorny issue. All the suffering, the work and the in-fighting were over-whelming for all involved. Fr. Fadanelli sincerely expressed his gratitude to Fr. Zaupa for all his concern and friendship, and asked forgiveness for all that troubles that ensued from him. He expresses his recognition that Fr. Zaupa had no intentions of making him suffer and he encloses a copy of this letter to the Archbishop.

From one perspective, one may not fault the Archbishop for standing behind Fr. Fadanelli. After all, he came to Milwaukee when the Archdiocese was suffering an acute need of Italian speaking priests to take care of the many immigrants flooding the Archdiocese. Fr. Fadanelli labored in the parish for five years, even to the point of not talking his justly deserved salary. He seems to have been doing a good job with parishioners, as will be evident from the documentation in the Appendices of this volume.

Certain decisions of the Archbishop made it impossible for the Stigmatines to leave. He simply did not countenance the wishes of the Stigmatine superiors. Yet, he would gladly receive Fr. Fadanelli to be incardinated into his Archdiocese, and would immediately continue him as Pastor of Our Lady of Pompeii. He might have thought that all of this was an easy matter to handle with his authority.

It must have crossed Fr. Fadanelli's mind that his former confrere, Fr. Simeone, did not have such problems when he left – so, why should Fr. Fadanelli? It is clearly apparent that the cases are not [parallel – Fr. Fadanelli did not seem to have before his mind that he repeatedly thwarted the legitimate orders of his superiors – his handling of money needed more than clarification, it should demand restitution. Fr. Fadanelli repeatedly refused to leave Milwaukee. The Stigmatine Institute technically had bought and paid for the land and the buildings. It seemed that the Archbishop expected the Stigmatines simply to hand over everything to Fr. Fadanelli, and that the Stigmatines should leave Milwaukee, leaving Fr. Fadanelli behind, establishing him a Diocesan priest in the process.

Both the Archdiocese of Milwaukee and the major superiors of the Stigmatines appealed to Rome. Both sides claimed a refuge in Canon Law and in the interpretation of the Holy See. Both sides were truly interested in Fr. Fadanelli, as is evidenced by the flood of letters back and forth, the offers and the counter-offers, and Fr. Fadanelli's steadfast refusals to obey. Now, though, it seemed that neither side would give an inch. If somehow, in total calm and tranquility, they were able to sit down and discuss the problem face to face, each side making concessions here and there, perhaps it would not have turned out as it finally did – neither side won, and Fr. Fadanelli gives up his vocation as a Stigmatine. Both sides lost a dedicated priest who was caught in between the original promises foisted upon him illicitly by Fr. Luchi, who then withdrew all support – and the subsequent inability on the part of the Stigmatines to honor these empty promises made by Fr. Luchi, which involved relatively large sums of money, rather scarce in those times - properties apparently purchased with Stigmatine funds. So, in the long run, both sides lost – both sides lost a priest.

It is not known to us whatever eventually happened to Fr. Fadanelli⁷¹ but there is much sympathy for him, as there is for the Archbishop who was earnestly working to find someone to assist the Italian emigrants coming to those shores. Fr. Fadanelli seems to have given every evidence that he loved the Parishioners of Our Lady of Pompeii. He no doubt loved the Institute – was apparently very sincere in his respect for Fr. Zaupa. Yet, he left many painful questions unanswered – was he speculating with properties and monies that were not his own? *Other People's Money* is a case history on embezzlement – the criminal is never wrong, “you will get the check in the mail on Monday” ... but, Monday never comes! People who do this are something like 98% repeats, as it is a non-violent crime and one is not immediately confronted with the consequences of their stealing *other people's money* ... for their own speculations! Fr. Fadanelli had promised years ago to obey legitimate requests – this he failed to do: either because he did not choose to do so, to hide what was going on – or, the situation had become so convoluted that he had no idea where things were any more. Because of his non-compliance, he personally lost everything. The Superiors originally were quite benevolent and patient with him – but, eventually, his refusals began to mount considerably, creating enormous difficulties for the Stigmatines before the Archdiocese of Milwaukee.

The die was now cast: in February of 1922, moves were made by the Stigmatines to remove Fr. Fadanelli from his post as Pastor of Our Lady of Pompeii, Milwaukee WI. Their claim was that the Church was still owned by the Institute – they paid for it! The answer they received for this claim of theirs was that Fr. Fadanelli was forming a new parish corporation so that the Italians could take over the Parish – and then eventually pay the Stigmatines back the money that was justly due to them much needed in their other works. However, unforeseen complications kept blocking this apparent solution. Yet, all during these discussions, Fr. Fadanelli remained very much the Pastor to his flock and he was gradually bringing his Parish into ever better spiritual and financial shape. It remains a very poor Parish – Fr. Fadanelli never took his justifiable salary and lived from hand to mouth, on the alms, donations that he received personally.

He does mention that he has written to Rome for secularization and that he hopes that he will not be removed from his position as Pastor until an answer from Rome arrives. The Archdiocesan authorities seem sure that Fr. Fadanelli will provide a full account for the money he handled and which has disappeared. The Stigmatines, though, maintained that Fr. Fadanelli's request for exlaustation does not change the matter of his being transferred – the Stigmatines wanted him out of Milwaukee. In fact, Fr. Zaupa maintained that he could have ordered Fr. Fadanelli to return to Italy - as financial inequities and land speculation were not isolated cases among the immigrants and their clergy – this was also an embarrassment to the Holy See in that era. However, Fr. Zaupa was merely recalling Fr. Fadanelli to Springfield into a much more stable situation.

When the answer does come back from Rome concerning Fr. Fadanelli, his reaction was that he would either stay in Milwaukee as an incardinated priest of that Archdiocese – or that he would go to Rome to plead his case personally with the Holy See, also with the

⁷¹ Cf. Appendix 5 – he served heroically in similar circumstances a poor Parish of Mount Carmel in Detroit for more than 40 years – and is fondly remembered.

help of his lawyer, in place in Italy. In the meantime, Fr. Zaupa assures the Archdiocesan authorities that a substitute will be sent there to take Fr. Fadanelli's place.

For his part, Archbishop Mesmer makes another intervention personally in behalf of Fr. Fadanelli – whom he clearly wanted to enroll among his Archdiocesan clergy to take care of the burgeoning Italian flock – so, he begs Fr. Zaupa that Fr. Fadanelli not be removed by the Stigmatines from Our Lady of Pompeii parish in Milwaukee for the good of the Church. Arrangements were already underway by Fr. Fadanelli to re-incorporate the Church and to return the five thousand dollars of Stigmatine money that he claimed were invested in it. Once again, the Archbishop refers to the Sicilians – maybe in a bit of a slur - certainly according to modern standards and the suggestion to avoid generalizations - and how careful one has to be with 'them'. If any move is made, that is found to be adversarial, there is a clear possibility that the whole deal might fall through. The Archbishop was convinced that there would be a terrible upheaval if Fr. Fadanelli is forced to leave. He appealed to Fr. Zaupa: 'Let him remain until the transaction is complete! Afterwards you can call him to Rome!' Attempts are being made to have forty or fifty other families join with Fr. Fadanelli – and this careful choice is left to the practical experience Fr. Fadanelli has among his parishioners.

The response to all this was that the property belongs to the Stigmatine Fathers and that Fr. Fadanelli simply has no authority to sell it, or even a part of it – being strapped for cash as he was. The Milwaukee authorities were informed that if Fr. Fadanelli does make the attempt to sell any part of it, the Stigmatines were threatening 'legal steps' to fight it. Ironically, some of the property was still in the name of Fr. Luchi of Scranton while other parts of it were already in the name of the 'Trustees of the Stigmatine Fathers', describing the legal entity of the Institute. The official Stigmatine opinion regarding the staying of Fr. Fadanelli in Milwaukee was quite weak.

Again Fr. Zaupa repeats his insistence that Fr. Fadanelli should come to Springfield. In this letter, he also apologizes to the Archbishop that his actions regarding Fr. Fadanelli have been a sore spot for His Excellency. In another letter, he also asks the Archbishop if he agrees with two points:

- one, that since the House and the Church were the legal property of the Stigmatine Fathers, they would have to be maintained even if this would mean it would be necessary to incur further Stigmatine expenses. However, if improvements were made on the properties, the Stigmatines would be entitled to whatever has been added, or for any improvement done;
- the second is whether it would be better that the two additional Stigmatine priests should proceed right away to Milwaukee, and that Fr. Fadanelli should proceed right away to Springfield as he had been ordered to earlier. If Fr. Fadanelli were to remain in Milwaukee, because of his efforts to re-incorporate the Parish, all would remain on his shoulders. The Stigmatines through Fr. Zaupa made the promise that nothing would be lost if he did leave and obey his superiors and all would remain in place in Milwaukee, at any cost.

The apparent response to all this does not seem clear – but the Milwaukee authorities seem to be saying to Fr. Zaupa that he should come out to Milwaukee himself to see what has taken place. Fr. Zaupa replied saying that there either be clear agreement to what the Stigmatines were asking all along, or the whole matter would be submitted to Rome. The answer to this, then was, that the Milwaukee bank had held the whole matter up until their hope was realized that the Parish return to the corporation status of Our Lady of Pompeii. The authorities in Milwaukee claim that they cannot give any further concern to this matter.

In this exchange of letters, Fr. Zaupa makes very clear what he is willing to do, and nothing further:

- (1) He is willing to sign the extension of the property and to care for the mortgage if the property is indeed legally in our name.
- (2) The Archbishop should allow Fr. Fadanelli to come to Springfield.
- (3) According to Canon Law, it is within the Stigmatines' right to insist that the Ordinary name someone else offered by the religious community. Failure to comply with any of these, and the matter goes to Rome.

Archbishop Mesmer refuses because in his view the property is not in our name and he refuses to let Fr. Fadanelli leave. He makes his own appeal to the Apostolic Delegate, Archbishop John Bonzano. Fr. Zaupa also writes to the Apostolic Delegate sending him all the pertinent correspondence in a document dated June 15, 1922. Fr. Zaupa also notes that he has telegraphed the Archbishop and asked for an appointment. This is the gist of the Archbishop's communication:

'Reverend Zaupa, Superior Stigmatine – 119 William Street – Springfield MA. Delay in signing the extension of the mortgage of the property of the Italian Church here as bank threatens foreclosure which means loss of property and ruin of the parish congregation. Can you prevail to sign and forward at once the papers sent to you a month ago? S. L. Mesmer.'

There is some urgency in all this – the Archbishop was about to leave for Rome, but would be in New York, the following Friday afternoon, at 330 West 23rd Street, New York.

The matter was now in the hands of the Apostolic Delegate. In a visit with him, Fr. Zaupa is told that the Stigmatines were right in this long discussion regarding the affairs of the Our Lady of Pompeii parish. The Archbishop did meet with Fr. Zaupa, and since Archbishop Mesmer was on his way to Rome, he promised that he would discuss the matter with the Stigmatine Superior General in Rome [Fr. John B. Tomasi] and would abide by his decision. Fr. Zaupa readily agreed with this. It is highly possible that this major concession on the part of the Archbishop of Milwaukee to the Stigmatines came about because of His Excellency's personal meeting with the Apostolic Delegate.

However, on June 25, Fr. Zaupa informed the Apostolic Delegate that the Archbishop met with him before he left for Rome and that he confessed that he had never seen any

registered letter that Fr. Zaupa had sent him in May, and that he was surprised to learn that the contested property was still not in the legal name of the Stigmatine Community – even though the Archbishop recalls receiving Fr. Zaupa’s letter of February 16th, in which this matter was disclosed. The Archbishop noted that it was foolish of himself to demand that we sign a mortgage agreement and he was willing to return the papers. He wrote a letter to his Chancellor and that everything would be cleared up in a few weeks! The Archbishop would speak with the Superior General regarding Fr. Fadanelli. Fr. Leo Sella was present at this hearing.

The Apostolic Delegate was very happy to hear this and hoped that indeed the matter would end. One would like to believe that the torment was reaching some sort of a conclusion and that ‘the Milwaukee affair’ would come to an amicable conclusion – the sad fact is, though, that there are still three more full years to go! During all this, it was noted that the Superior General would send a letter regarding the secularization of Fr. Fadanelli – he would be free to leave the Stigmatines. Fr. Zaupa was opposed to this secularization of Fr. Fadanelli at this late date, because the Archbishop was simply going to continue Fr. Fadanelli in his canonical role as pastor of our Lady of Pompeii.

Despite all this, Fr. Fadanelli was granted secularization because of the Archbishop’s desire. Therefore, he stated that Fr. Fadanelli would have the necessary canonical faculties to remain as a Diocesan Priest, here on the USA. Then, on August 10, 1922, another surprising twist in this matter: the Rev. John B. Zaupa was elected as Superior General of the Stigmatines! Less than three weeks later, on August 27th, Fr. Zaupa sent a letter to Fr. Fadanelli. It was sent from Milano. Fr. Zaupa mentions his meeting with the Archbishop – with him was Fr. Anthony Dalla Porta, the new Ordinary Visitor to the Stigmatine foundations in North America. Fr. Dalla Porta enjoyed Fr. Zaupa’s full confidence and would have full powers going forward in handling this matter. The secularization papers in behalf of Fr. Fadanelli were handed over to him. He was also given a Document from the Sacred Consistorial Congregation, in which there was clearly stated that Fr. Fadanelli would have to find a bishop outside the USA. There then ensued a further discussion regarding Milwaukee. Permission was granted for Fr. Fadanelli to remain a little longer as pastor. Fr. Zaupa’s hope in all this was that after further serious consideration, Fr. Fadanelli [to whom the letter was written] would return to the Stigmatines and would accept another priest as Director and a third priest as Ecomus. The Archbishop was fully aware of all this. Now, he would have to make a move. He asks that all rancors be put aside and that all should save their self-respect and well being. He asks Fr. Fadanelli to respond to the Archbishop but before he does this, he should inform Fr. Dalla Porta.

On October 29th, the Archbishop writes that the Archdiocese will take over the property, and five thousand dollars invested by the Stigmatines would be returned to them. The interest of the money that was paid over the years, except this last one, and that would also be remunerated. He tells Fr. Dalla Porta that the Superior General will be informed of this matter. In November, there has still not yet been given a full statement. Fr. Dalla Porta effuses to allow the property to change hands without permission of the Stigmatine Fathers. He asks simply that the money and the interest, long over-due be returned. Thus ends 1922!

On the 15th of January, the Superior General corresponds with Cardinal Gaetano de Lai, Secretary of the Sacred Consistorial Congregation. He refers to a conference he had had with Cardinal de Lai about the Milwaukee matter and how it was placed in the hands of the Apostolic Delegate. He thanks him for his patience in hearing him out. This was all done for the good of souls and the defense of a religious institute. Then he summarizes what is presently going on:

... Fr. Fadanelli was a member of the Stigmatine Institute until this past August, when he received his secularization papers which were requested by the Archbishop of Milwaukee, who would not only welcome him, but really wanted him to become part of his Archdiocese. When Fr. Fadanelli was requested to leave the parish, he sent papers of his secularization and incardination into the Archdiocese and said he would not leave until the Archbishop told him to do so. The Archbishop had met with the Superior General and Fr. Dalla Porta, in Switzerland during the month of August. These papers made clear that Fr. Fadanelli could not minister anywhere in the USA – of, if he wished to enjoy the Decree of Secularization. He repeats the fact that Fr. Fadanelli could remain in the Institute as long as he would accept two other Stigmatines – one as his Director and the other as the local Eкономus. If Fr. Fadanelli would not accept these conditions, then the Stigmatines would present another priest to the Archbishop of Milwaukee so that he would become the Pastor of Our Lady of Pompeii.

It must be noted that this Italian parish in Milwaukee was offered to our Institute – which in turn seems to have entrusted it to Fr. Luchi. He, though, was not legally recognized and yet, took out a personal loan for five thousand dollars to acquire the Church and the House.

In Switzerland, all this was discussed and agreed upon. I had written to Fr. Fadanelli a couple of weeks ago, and have never received any answer. I then wrote to the Archbishop, when, according to our agreement, I would be able to send a priest to take over the Parish. He had answered that Fr. Luchi had returned the property and that now it belonged to the Archdiocese who, therefore, was the legal owner and that the \$5,000.00 would be returned, plus interest as well as the documentation.

Fr. Zaupa then complains that he was opposed to the manner in which the property was handled and the fact that the Archbishop had not sent anything of all that he had promised. The fact that Fr. Fadanelli was still Pastor, he claimed, was illegal for he was forbidden to remain in the USA until his status was rectified.

On February 3rd, Cardinal de Lai sent a letter to the Archbishop of Milwaukee which stated that Fr. Fadanelli had to return to the Stigmatines within 30 days, or face suspension. On July 4, the Superior General sent Cardinal de Lai a short history of all that had taken place in Milwaukee. On August 13th, Fr. Zaupa wrote to Fr. Anthony Dalla Porta that the Fr. Fadanelli problem is a very sore spot and it is about time that we end this Milwaukee saga. He should write to the Archbishop that he sent the \$5,000.00 plus another \$1,500.00 to cover other debts that had accrued – plus the interest. IN return for all this, the Stigmatines would cede the property over to the Archdiocese. Otherwise, the Superior would contact our Cardinal Protector, Cardinal Bonzano. All documents must be submitted.

This detailed Milwaukee affair is necessary to know for an integral understanding of our real history as American Stigmatines, during the 20th century. It is also necessary to go into this matter at length, even though the facts also shed some unfavorable light on the Scranton episode, where the person of Fr. Luchi looms unilaterally quite large. He took no counsel with his Superiors regarding personnel and finances –he was ‘his own –and only – boss!’ Letters to the Archbishop of Milwaukee are answered by the Chancellor to the effect that the Archbishop is often sick, and at some length. On September 8th, a Pontifical College for emigrant Italian Priests requests further information on Fr. Fadanelli.

On September 24, Fr. Anthony Dalla Porta writes to the Archbishop that the Superior General is willing to settle the question on Milwaukee. The Archbishop responds to the fact that he, too, is willing to do so, but not until Fr. Fadanelli can return to Milwaukee. His testimony is quite necessary for the Archbishop. Fr. Dalla Porta responds that we have all the documentation needed to settle all this and Fr. Fadanelli need not be physically present. If this is not agreeable, then the Stigmatine Superior General will seek to have the matter settled in Rome.

At long last, some kind of an appointment, or meeting was made – Fr. Dalla Porta and Fr. Balestrazzi went to Milwaukee and presented three articles to discuss:

- (1) Transferral of the property, purchased with Stigmatine money;
- (2) Restitution of capital and interest/
- (3) Fr. Fadanelli’s investment in the Church.

The eventual responses to these;

- (1) The property is no longer ours;
- (2) The money had already been sent to Fr. Luchi – the interest will be sent to the Stigmatine community
- (3) No answer about Fr. Fadanelli.

An interesting aside here, of some anecdotal value, is that during this Milwaukee visit, Fr. Balestrazzi wanted to visit the Chapel of St. Rita and when he rang the door bell, an Italian answered and asked him whom he wanted to see. He responded that he wanted to see Fr. Fadanelli and the answer was responded in the negative. Later at the station, Fr. Balestrazzi telephoned and Fr. Fadanelli answered in person.

A telegram was sent to Fr. Luchi about the money – which he never answered.

From our records it is not known how Fr. Fadanelli ended up, or where⁷².

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⁷² He was discovered to have served the Archdiocese of Detroit as a Pastor of an Italian Church for over 40 years - cf. his short biography in Volume VI.

[I] PERTINENT CORRESPONDENCE

**The Stigmatine Regional Superior for the U.S.A.
& later Superior General [as of August 10, 1922]
The Archbishop of Milwaukee – [+ Sebastian Mesmer]
The Apostolic Delegates
[+ Giovanni Bonzano & + Pietro Fumasoni-Biondi]
regarding**

Fr. Enrico FADANELLI

- (1) Letter of Fr. John B. Zaupa, Regional Superior, to His Excellency the Archbishop of Milwaukee - + Sebastian G. Mesmer, dated February 4, 1922:**

His Grace,

+ Sebastian G. Mesmer

Archbishop of Milwaukee

Springfield MA, February 4, 1922

Most Reverend Archbishop,

As the Italian Parish of Milwaukee is still entrusted to our Congregation, the undersigned as a Delegate of the Superior General, notifies Your Grace that, according to the Canon Law # 454, 5, he removes by this letter the Rev. Father Enrico Fadanelli from the post of Rector of said Parish, and presents Your Grace for the same office the Rev. Father Raymond Dalla Porta: a priest of our Institute, 39 years of age, residing since 9 years in the U.S.A., and whom the undersigned may recommend to Your Grace for his priestly piety, zeal and skillfulness. Father Fadanelli has been directed by me to leave Milwaukee before the end of this month. Not receiving any communication from Your Grace before the 24th of this month, I will send there Father Raymond Dalla Porta.

I am sincerely,

Your humble servant in Christ

John B. Zaupa, C.S.F.

†

- (2) The response of His Excellency, the Archbishop of Milwaukee, dated February 6, 1922:**

Very Rev. Father J. B. Zaupa, C.S.F.

**Archbishop's Residence
Milwaukee Wisc.
Feb. 6, 1922**

Dear Father:

In reply to your kind letter, I beg to say that I have tried several times with Rev. Fr. Fadanelli to get the Italians of the Parish here to take the proper steps towards forming a new parish Corporation [as by law required] and to take over the property and refund you the money advanced by your Community. But I presume you probably have some experience yourself how slow these poor people are in such matters. When you think [as I did one time] that everything is ready, some difficulty or objection is raised of which no one thought before. But I shall take the matter up immediately. The first thing shall be to refund you the \$5,000.00; the rest can be arranged after that. Now, regarding Fr. Fadanelli, he has worked hard and, thanks be to God, his work is bearing fruit gradually. There is a great improvement in the parish spiritually, financially, it is still very poor. I know that the poor Father never got his salary and had to live from alms and the mere *manualia*, also poor among our Sicilians. As the improvements made in the Church, they are just the most necessary and he had a hard time to scratch the money from the people. He tells me that he applied to Rome for his Secularization and naturally trusts you will not call him away before an answer has come from Rome. I am sure Rev. Fadanelli will give you a full account of whatever money he got, or spent. I shall see him about the matter next week.

With best wishes,

Yours, sincerely,

S. Mesmer.

†

[3] Fr. Zaupa again to the Excellency the Archbishop. February 11, 1922:

His Grace
+ Sebastian G. Mesmer
Archbishop of Milwaukee

Springfield MA

February 11, 1922

Your Grace:

Sincere thanks for the kind letter Your Grace sent to me on February 6th. I perfectly understand the difficulties with the poor Sicilians of Milwaukee You refer to - as well as I intimately know our Father Fadanelli since his boyhood. If there can be anything startling to me is the fact that only now I was granted an acknowledgment from Your Grace. As to the economical question implied in our cession of the Parish, as I wrote to Your Grace, an agreement shall be easily reached from the accounts of Father Fadanelli. But, I beg Your Grace that this is for our Institute a question rather of a sacred principle than of a stingy itemizing. Such, and much such is the other question regarding Father Fadanelli, wherein the most vital interests of our Institute, approved by the Holy See, are at stake. Should here

some divergence of view arise between our Congregation and Your Grace, I am the first deeply regretting it, but I feel obliged to choose the only way I see, according to Canon Law, to safeguard the decorum and life itself of our Institute here in America. It is plain that Fr. Fadanelli's application to the Holy See for an Indult of Secularization does not suspend any right of the Institute, or any duty of said Father resulting from his religious profession. I could have ordered Fr. Fadanelli to go to Italy; but, In consideration of his special conditions and for a regard to Your Grace, I gave him the order, which I insist upon, to come to Springfield. It is very easy to find out some excuse for his departing. When the answer from the Sacred Congregation will be known, according to the case, Fr. Fadanelli will either come back to Your Diocese, or sail for Rome to be at the disposal of the Superior General. Meanwhile, in order not to embarrass Your Grace, I will send, as I wrote to you, a temporary substitute, who shall remain until Your Grace will be able to make somehow provision. The very grave reasons I believe to have for taking such a step shall be willingly and fully exposed by me to the competent authority, should a recourse *in devolutivo* to the Holy See, have to be forwarded according to Canon 454, V.

Kissing Your Sacred Ring, I am

Your humble servant in Christ,

John B. Zaupa CSF

†

(4) The Response of the Most Excellent Archbishop, dated February 15, 1922:

V. Rev. J. B. Zaupa, C.S.F.

Archbishop's Residence
Milwaukee, Wisc.
Feb. 15, 1922

Dear Sir⁷³:

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your favor of the 11th of this month. But, I must beg of you, for the sake of Holy Church, not to call Rev. Father Fadanelli away at this time. We have just arranged, he and I, to incorporate the Parish again so as to take over the property, the more so as the Bank is making some difficulty regarding the mortgage placed on the property. Fr. Fadanelli has already started on the new organization and we hope by next week to have the work completed. If Fr. Fadanelli leaves at this time, and another priest comes in his place, it will block this whole undertaking. Nor can you wish that the Bank should make any trouble while the property is in your name. With these Italians, I must be as careful as I possibly can. The Bank is also a Sicilian Bank. I know there will be a terrible upheaval if Fr. Fadanelli leaves at this time. Hence, I ask of you to leave him here until these transactions are finished. I shall not object if afterwards you call him to Springfield, although I do not know whether pending his recourse to Rome, you can compel

⁷³ A much different tone???

him sub obedientia. However, be that as it may all I ask is that you give me time to settle the affairs of the Italian Congregation while Rev. Fadanelli is still here. As I know that it should be impossible to do it after he leaves. I am not referring so much to the matter of paying you the \$5,000.00 and any other claims you might have [which can easily be settled afterwards]; but much more to the formation of the new Church, or parish Corporation. We are trying to get some 40 or 50 more families to join him formally as parish members and no one knows better than Rev. Fadanelli what families to approach and in what manner. A stranger or a new man cannot do it. Trusting that I have made the matter clear enough, I remain

Sincerely Yours,

S. G. Mesmer

†

(5) Fr. Zaupa writes again to His Excellency, the Archbishop, on February 16, 1922:

His Grace
Sebastian G. Mesmer
Archbishop of Milwaukee

Springfield Mass. February 16, 1922

Your Grace:

Your esteemed letter of the 15th of this month, received today. I thank Your Grace very sincerely, but permit me openly to say that I cannot understand how the property of the Stigmatine Fathers can possibly be passed to the proposed Corporation You speak of, without their consent, having Father Fadanelli as authority at all therein. It is true that our Superior General communicated to Your Grace the decision of our withdrawing from Milwaukee, as early as November 1920; but, in the very same time he appointed the undersigned as his representative for the execution. I do not understand now such a hurry of coming to a conclusion [and such a conclusion!] almost without the knowledge of the undersigned, who patiently waited for many long months. It seems to me that other things besides the *bonum animarum* are at stake for somebody else but Your Grace. I formally object *in foro ecclesiastico* to the proposed transaction, until all our rights and duties shall be properly cleared. Moreover, I do not think that the property can be rightly transferred *in foro civili* without the signature of our representative as the legal proprietor. I believe he is still Fr. Luchi; and if it is not the Congregation of the Stigmatine Fathers, Inc.' [incorporated since December 1918], Fr. Fadanelli is responsible for it. This, however, does not make any difference, in my opinion. After having given serious consideration to this matter, I insist that Fr. Fadanelli come to Springfield and enable me to present to Your Grace what I shall think to be the rights of our Institute, and upon Your esteemed answer, I shall see if it still be in my power to come to an eventual conclusion without consulting my Superior General, from whom I have authority and instructions. Sorry, very sorry to give Your Grace such a trouble, but glad it is not through my fault,

I remain sincerely

Your humble servant,
John B. Zaupa, C.S.F.

†

(6) Fr. Zaupa writes again to the Archbishop of Milwaukee, on March 21, 1922:

Springfield, Mass. March 21, 1922

Your Grace:

On February 4th, 1922, I wrote to Your Grace that I felt obliged to remove Father Fadanelli to Springfield

On February 6th, Your Grace kindly answered that as Father Fadanelli applied to Rome for Secularization, you trusted that I would not call him away before an answer came from Rome.

On February 11th, I insisted on my order, and Your Grace on February 13th answered: 'We have just arranged, Father Fadanelli and I, to incorporate the parish again so as to take over the property ... Hence, I ask of you to leave here Fr. Fadanelli until these transactions are finished. I shall not object if afterwards you call him to Springfield ... All I ask you is that you give me time to settle the affairs of the Italian Congregation while Rev. Fadanelli is still here, as I know that it will be impossible to do it after he leaves...'

On February 16th, I replied formally objecting to the proposed corporation and transactions until our rights and duties shall be properly cleared. On February 17th, Fr. Fadanelli wrote to me: '... I believe that my duty is to remain here at my post up until that moment in time when the Archbishop should order me to leave it...!' On February 22nd, I wrote to Fr. Fadanelli, acknowledging his refusal to obey my order, and asking of him some necessary accounts and explanations concerning his administration I could never get before.

His answer of March 8th is not satisfactory in my opinion according to Canon 532 of the new Code. I did not decide yet which steps to take, but as Fr. Fadanelli says that he has had an interview with Your Grace before writing to me, I like plainly to state that the way of settling the economic question with Your Grace is different from the way of dealing in the same matter with Fr. Fadanelli; although it is very hard to come to a final agreement with Your Grace before everything shall be cleared with Fr. Fadanelli

At present, however, there are only two things I humbly ask of Your Grace to answer to:

[1] Does Your Grace agree with me in the following principle laid down in my letter of January 27th? As the Church and House belonged to our Institute, we were bound to apply for all the ordinary expenses even if some incomes, that otherwise should belong to the Institute were to be used. But as to any improvement [if any] of the Church or House

and payments of previous loans, our Institute is entitled either to property thereof, or to the reimbursement for the amount contributed by the same Institute.

[2] Does Your Grace agree with me that it is more convenient, in many respects, that Fr. Fadanelli come to Springfield, according to the order of the Superior General in December of 1920, and my recent direction, and wait here for the answer to his application for secularization; and that one or two of our priests to take up the care of the Italians in Milwaukee, until everything shall be settled with common satisfaction of Your Grace, of the parish congregation, and of our Institute? I think our Institute has a right and a duty of doing so. If we knew that Fr. Fadanelli was to leave our Institute, it should be done before. Your Grace entrusted to our Institute the Italian Parish in Milwaukee, and our Institute is responsible for it. If it will be impossible without Fr. Fadanelli to incorporate the parish, or otherwise provide for it, with Your full approval, our Institute shall necessarily hold to it at any cost, and do its best for the good of the souls. The honor of God and its own decorum.

Hoping that I will be honored with an answer by Your Grace, with my best regards, I am

Your humble servant,

John B. Zaupa, C.S.F.

†

(7) The Archbishop of Milwaukee responds to Fr. Zaupa on April 7, 1922:

Rev. John B. Zaupa, C.S.F.

Archbishop's Residence
Milwaukee Wisc. April 7, 1922

Dear Father,

All I can make out from your letters is that you wish to have an exact report of the financial affairs of the Italian Parish of our Lady of Pompeii here. Rev. Fadanelli tells me that he sent to you full reports. If this is not satisfactory the only thing for you to do is to come yourself on the spot, or send someone to act in your name. Here yourself can find out everything much better than by having Fr. Fadanelli go to Springfield. Wishing you the blessings of a joyous Easter, sincerely yours

S. G. Mesmer, Abp.

On account of bad health, I have been away from home for the last 3 weeks.

†

(8) Fr. Zaupa responds to the Archbishop on April 11, 1922:

Most. Rev. Sebastian G. Mesmer

Archbishop of Milwaukee

Springfield Mass. April 11, 1922

Your Grace,

Acknowledging Your answer of April 7th, let me openly say that my letter of March 21st is very simple and plain. So, I beg of Your Grace to read it again and answer to the spirit. Not receiving any proper reply before the 22nd, I shall send the whole matter to Rome, leaving the responsibility thereof on Your Grace.

With my best regards, I am

Your humble servant

John B. Zaupa, C.S.F.

†

(9) The Archbishop responds to Fr. Zaupa on May 5, 1922:

V. Rev. Fr. Zaupa

Archbishop's Residence

Milwaukee, Wisc. May 5, 1922

Dear Sir:

On my return from the Lake Superior regions, I find the enclosed on my desk, and hasten to forward it to you. The Bank writes to me that they held this matter in suspense in the hope that the property would be returned to the Parish as had been proposed – a thing that has been delayed by your strange attitude, quite different from your predecessor. Under the conditions, I have nothing to do with the affair and it rests with you to satisfy the Bank.

Sincerely yours,

S.G. Mesmer

†

(10) Fr. Zaupa responds to the Archbishop on May 9, 1922:

His Grace, Sebastian G. Mesmer

Archbishop of Milwaukee

Springfield, Mass. May 9, 1922

Your Grace:

Not having received any answer to my letter of April 11th, in accordance with the same, I have already sent the whole matter to the Superior General in Rome, leaving the responsibility thereof on Your Grace. This should be the only logical answer to Your communication of May 5th. But aware that the business process is not always logical, and in order to avoid any trouble for Your Grace, I am willing to sign the extension of the mortgage, or in some other way, supply for it, provided that:

[1] the property shall be in our legal name, 'The Trustees of the Stigmatine Fathers, Inc.'

[2] the order for Fr. Fadanelli to come to Springfield shall not be entangled by Your Grace;

[3] Your Grace shall accept, according to Canon Law, another of our Priests to take care of the Parish while entrusted to our Institute as I proposed to You many times.

If any of the above mentioned conditions shall not meet Your approval, I feel it my duty to adhere to my previous statement, for it would seem to me very strange [to say the least] to oblige myself in such circumstances. I wonder for Your remarks on my attitude. If Your Grace will be so kind to read my correspondence and remember what I have stated that I have some serious reasons, unknown to Your Grace, to take some steps according to Canon Law. I am sure that You will not find anything strange on my part. My attitude is fully supported by my predecessor, who is actually my counselor, and justified by the past experience and quite different circumstances. Therefore, I can but keep on my way to be an involuntary occasion of displeasure to Your Grace. I would beg of Your Grace to give to the matter a deeper and broader consideration, hoping that a friendly agreement is always possible with common satisfaction, but I must insist on the principles; and until Your Grace agrees with me in none, it is useless to advance any other proposition.

With my best regards, I am

Your humble servant

John B. Zaupa, C.S.F.

†

[XI]

[This is the translation of a Letter from the Apostolic Delegate in Washington DC, August 5, 1922 – 5 days before the Very Rev. John B. Zaupa – the Stigmatine Ordinary Visitor to North America – would be elected Superior General, 'by Postulation' – he was not at the General Chapter in Rome and was not yet 40 years of age.]

The Apostolic Delegation
United States of America
No. 5546 – f

1811 Biltmore Street
Washington DC
5 August 1922

[This no. should be prefixed to the answer]

Very Reverend Lord,

Fr. John B. Zaupa, C.S.F. – Ordinary Visitor

Very Rev. Father

The other day, on my return to Washington, I found a letter from the Sacred Congregation of Religious, in which there is transmitted to me the Decree of Secularization conceded to Rev. V. Gurisatti, with the charge of executing this on the condition that His Excellency, the Bishop of Scranton would incardinate him right away into his diocese, while safeguarding the right of the Institute of the Stigmatines to repeat to the Rev. Gurisatti, whatever it is that would pertain to them. Therefore, the above-mentioned Sacred Congregation wishes that first, Fr. Gurisatti should declare in writing before two witnesses that he is ready to satisfy all that is recognized by the competent Authority that is owed by him to his own religious community. Furthermore, the Sacred Congregation entrusts me to make in its name a grave and very serious warning to Rev. Gurisatti for his conduct that was judged to be very improper and that was not worthy of a Religious which he manifested toward his own superiors and religious institute.

Before carrying out the above cited Decree, I desire to know from you, Reverend Father, whether the Rev. Gurisatti has persisted in his attempt to obtain a mandate of arrest for Fr. Anthony Dalla Porta, of which he wrote to me last June 30th.

I would also welcome any suggestion from you regarding the Rev. Gurisatti, and which I beseech you to have it sent to me with utmost haste, but not without making you know that my faculties in this case are only to execute the Decree of the Sacred Congregation of Religious, and to be sure that there are verified the conditions placed by it.

I ask you to consider this letter of mine as confidential and reserved. And in the meantime, while awaiting meeting you some day, I remain with distinct recognition of yourself, and declare myself

Of Your Very Reverend self
a most devoted servant,
† John Bonzano
Archbishop of Melitene
Apostolic Delegate

†

[XII]

[There follows here a Document signed by the Superior General, Fr. Zaupa, two months to the day after his election, as Superior General, witnessed by one of his General Counselors, Fr. Alfred Balestrazzi, C.S.F.].

THE SUPERIOR GENERAL
of the Congregation of the Priests of the Stigmata of Our Lord Jesus Christ

elects with full powers the Very Reverend Fr. Alfred Balestrazzi, to treat and to bring to a conclusion – after having heard the opinion of the Very Reverend Father Visitor and the Rev. Fr. Erminio Lona - the situation of the Institute with Fr. Victor Gurisatti and Fr. Lodovico Luchi.

In particular:

- (1) Regarding the Rev. GURISATTI, the Superior General entrusts from Balestrazzi, in harmony with the communication already had from His Excellency, the Apostolic Delegate, whenever the above mentioned Archbishop might have the faculty of resolving the financial matters between the Institute and the Reverend Gurisatti, and to represent the Superior General with full powers.**
- (2) Regarding the Rev. LUCHI, the Superior General entrusts Fr. Balestrazzi to renounce formally and definitively to His Excellency, the Bishop of Scranton, the Church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, entrusted to the Rev. Luchi, and to notify His Excellency that the above mentioned priest is recalled by His Diocese, where he was temporarily released through the desire of the same Excellency, the Bishop.**

The Superior General also further entrusts Fr. Balestrazzi to confirm, if this is necessary to His Excellency, the complete withdrawal of the Institute from the Diocese of Scranton.

Lastly, the Superior General entrusts Fr. Balestrazzi to make known, in the proper time, according to the instructions that he will receive, that the Rev. Luchi should leave Hazleton, warning him that should he refuse to obey this, he would fall under the sanctions of the Code [Can. 644, I].

Rome, October 10, 1922
The Superior General
Fr. John B. Zaupa

To The Most Reverend,
Fr. Alfred Doctor Balestrazzi, C.S.F.

†

[XIII]

[The next Document is a later rendition, from the perspective of Archbishop Mesmer, of these events, dated December 22, 1923]:

Archbishop's Residence
2000 Grand Avenue
Milwaukee Wis.

December 22, 1923

Very Rev. A. Dalla Porta
Springfield Mass.

Dear Sir,

A statement of the controversy between the Stigmatine Fathers and myself must cover the following three points:

1. The giving up of the parish by the Stigmatine Fathers.
 2. The return of the 5,000.00 advanced by them in 1915.
 3. Compensation for any money of the Stigmatine Fathers spent for the parish by the Reverend Father Fadanelli.
-

I.

From the letters of Very Rev. Father Tomasi [27 of November 1920] and Rev. Father Zaupa [November 15, 21, 1921 and December 15, 1920] as well as the letter of Rev. Father DeFerrari [November 23, 1920] to Rev. Father Fadanelli, it is quite clear that the Stigmatine Fathers gave up the Italian Parish in Milwaukee in November 1920. The reasons why a transfer of the property was not made at that time was, first, because we were not as yet decided whether the title to the property should vest in the Archdiocese or, as the people wished it, in a new parish corporation [which corporation was decided upon in 1921, but not effected until the summer of 1922]; and secondly, because we thought that as long as Rev. Father Fadanelli [then still a member of the community] was in actual charge of the parish, it would be better for the welfare of the parish to leave things remain as they were until all was settled. Hence, I asked Father Zaupa kindly to allow Rev. Fadanelli to stay here until this was done and until I would find another priest. He graciously consented and only on December 16, 1921, asked definitively of me, to release Rev. Father Fadanelli from the parish 'which the superior general had already given up in November 1920.' When in August 1922, I expressed to you and Father Zaupa my willingness to consider an arrangement by which the Stigmatine Fathers might resume possession of the Milwaukee parish, I did not know that definite steps for the legal incorporation and the transfer of the property had already been taken.

II.

From the very moment when it was settled that the Stigmatine Fathers were to give up the parish, it was understood that the \$5,000.00 paid by them on the mortgage when taking possession of the parish through Rev. Father Luchi, were to be paid by to them. When the bank demanded the renewal of the mortgage, as required by Law, and no one was there to sign such new mortgage because of the legal entanglement about the title to the property, the lawyers finally decided that the only correct way out of the difficulty was to get a deed from Father Luchi returning the property which had been deeded to him and

in whose name it still vested, and to pay back the \$5,000.00 to him for the Stigmatine Fathers. This was done. Rev. Luchi gave a deed to the Archdiocese on September 13, 1922, [this was done while I was still in Europe]. Immediately after this the parish was definitely incorporated and gave a new mortgage to the bank. Then the bank released the \$5,000.00 which had been deposited there for several months as security for the mortgage, and sent a draft for \$5,000.00 to Rev. Father Luchi, on November 15, 1922, which draft was cashed by Father Luchi on November 16, 1922. This canceled draft is now in our possession.

While the \$5,000.00 were held by the parish, it paid regular interest on it of \$250.00 every year up to April 1921. But as it still held the money for another year, the parish still owes to the Stigmatine Fathers interest for a year, 1921 to 1922, for which I hereby enclose a check of \$2530.00. As the parish was ready to settle up with the Fathers long before April 1922, and had the \$5,000.00 waiting for settlement if anyone of the Fathers had come here for that purpose, as Rev. Father Fadanelli and myself had asked repeatedly, the parish is not willing to pay any interest beyond April 1922.

III.

When the Stigmatine Fathers took possession of the Italian parish and its property in 1915, it was with the clear understanding that they would take over also the debts of the parish and the obligation of taking proper care of the property, meaning repairs and necessary improvements, as is done in other parishes. The Stigmatine Fathers knew of the poor and most discouraging condition of the parish, both spiritually and temporally, and that it would take years before any financial returns could be expected. Such was indeed the case. Whatever repairs and improvements have been made all these years, were paid by moneys collected by Rev. Father Fadanelli from the parishioners and from outside Catholics and Protestants. In fact, the parish was too poor to pay a regular salary and Rev. Fadanelli had to live mostly from the so-called *Manualia* and *Stipends*. This was well known to the Stigmatine Fathers and it was for this reason, undoubtedly, that in all the letters of 1920 and 1921, speaking of the giving up of the parish, there is not a single word said of any compensation due to the Fathers from the parish. It is certainly very strange that this claim was made only since 1922. It would, I suspect, not be difficult to trace the source which led the Fathers to put in this belated claim. We know at least one party that has been spreading exaggerated reports regarding the large and astonishing income of the Pastor of the Italian colony here. We know that in one case it was stated that the income of the parish amounted to \$6,000.00. But, it wasn't stated that this was the income of the parish resulting from extraordinary efforts of raising money for the needs of the parish, and that it was not the income of the Pastor. The fact was that one of the reasons why the Stigmatine Fathers decided to give up the parish was the lack of sufficient revenue for the number of priests that would be required to take proper pastoral charge of the Italian colony here. This was plainly stated to Msgr. Rainer by one of your own Fathers.

In view of all the foregoing facts and considerations, I cannot see where they can be any difficulty in the matter, or where there would be sufficient reason of bringing the case before the Sacred Congregation at Rome. I firmly confess that as far as I am concerned, I have no objections if you desire to do so, although I do not think that when the whole

transaction will thus become known to the American Bishops with your recourse to Rome, it will serve as much as a recommendation of the Institute of the Stigmatine Fathers with the American Hierarchy. I bear no ill will or ill feeling toward the Stigmatine Fathers, and firmly believe in their good intentions; but I do believe that you are misinformed and misled by whatever parties they may be. If there is any further information that you desire to have in this matter, I shall gladly try to get it to you, although I hardly know what more I could furnish you.

I gladly profit by the occasion to wish to yourself, Reverend and dear Father, and to all your community the richest blessings of this Holy Christmas Season.

Committing myself to your pious prayers,

Sincerely yours,
† S. G. Mesmer, Abp.

†

[IV]

[The next document is a letter from the Apostolic Delegate of perhaps two pages – but, the archives only have page 1 page of this letter written to Fr. Balestrazzi, on February 18, 1924, which reads as follows]:

Apostolic Delegation	1811 Biltmore Street
United States of America	Washington DC
	February 18, 1924

No. 10030-f

This No. should be prefixed to the Answer

Don Alfred Balestrazzi
Stigmatine Priest

Very dear Father Balestrazzi,

I respond immediately to your letter of the 15th of this month, and I do not hide from you the satisfaction I experienced in hearing that the matter of Fr. Luchi has taken a good turn. The conditions for the resolution of the matter on both sides are satisfactory, and make it foreseen that there will be a recommended decision. In my opinion, it would be opportune that either you or the Father General should inform the Delegation when the matters have reached their conclusion, if for no other reason than there would be a record in our Archives here; don't you think so?

As for the matter involving Father Gurisatti, you should have no doubt that it is much on His Excellency's mind; and the entire delay has been due to the sickness of Bishop

Brennan. However, I have reason to believe that this matter too is nearing its end; there is still bit of patience that is needed!

Finally, as far as the secularization of Fr. Gurisatti is concerned, without doubt he has seriously misunderstood Bishop Brennan. His Excellency, the Delegate, wrote to him that once the financial matter is concluded, it would have been very easy to obtain the secularization, especially if the Bishop of Scranton would accept him in the Diocese. It pertains then to the Sacred Congregation of Religious ⁷⁴

+

[V]

[This next letter, also from the Apostolic Delegate is sent to Fr. Zaupa – and the Delegate’s name here is Abp. Peter Fumasoni-Blondi – who was seen by our North American students in Rome in the mid 1950’s, living into his mid 90’s. He later became a Cardinal, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of the *Propaganda Fide* – and was instrumental in obtaining for the Stigmatines our present General House, St. Agatha of the Goths – which served as the Irish College, from 1837-1927. This Church was consecrated by St. Pope Gregory the Great in the early years of the Church!]

Apostolic Delegation
United States of America

1811 Biltmore Street
Washington DC
May 27, 1924

No. 10493-f

This No. should be prefixed to the Answer

**To the Most Illustrious and Very Reverend
Fr. John B. Zaupa
Superior General of the Stigmatines**

Very Reverend Father,

From the examination of the documents regarding the case of Fr. Gurisatti, the controversial point and the one of greater importance seems to be that of determining just who is the proper owner of these goods which today appear either as the personal property of Fr. Gurisatti, or as pertaining to the Parish of St. Lucy. In this question, therefore, the principles of interest are two: the Diocese, which has to protect the Parish interests; and the Congregation of the Stigmatines, presently presided over by Your Reverence.

In order that there might very soon be reached an agreement both of common accord and by a friendly understanding, you might want to choose a representative of yourself and get in contact with the Chancery Office of Scranton, to which I have already

⁷⁴ Page two of this letter is not in our file. Furthermore, there was a letter from Fr. Zaupa to His Excellency, Abp. Mesmer, dated **March 15, 1924** – which is not among these readily available papers in the U.S.A. Provincial Archives. Waltham MA

written in this sense. Just as soon as the Bishop of Scranton might have chosen a priest with his confidence, the financial records presented by Fr. Gurisatti must be examined carefully, and to determine on the basis of law which goods belong to the Diocese, and which to the Congregation, making every effort to examine the controversial points with a spirit of reconciliation.

If, as I hope, this very painful matter might come to make a good turn, it would note then be very difficult to resolve the definitive systematization of Father Gurisatti, according to the principles of justice and equity.

With senses of profound esteem and service, I have the please of declaring myself to be

Of your most Reverend self,
Most devotedly in the Lord,
† P. Fumasoni Biondi, Archbishop of Dioclea
Apostolic Delegate

†

[VI]

[A Declaration might be inserted here signed by Archbishop Mesmer, exonerating the Stigmatines for any past malfeasance in dealing with the Archdiocese of Milwaukee – and even if they had some legitimate claims, the Archbishop asks the Stigmatines to renounce them. Abp Mesmer immediately turned to the Scalabrini Fathers who took over the poor Parish of Our Lady of Pompeii. Fr. Fadanelli disappears from this scene but will appear suddenly in Detroit, where he has left a lasting good impression⁷⁵]:

Rome, July 17, 1925

To Whom it may concern:

Having received of the Very Rev. John B. Zaupa, Superior General of the Stigmatine Fathers, a full statement of the affairs of the Italian Parish at Milwaukee, Wisc., I now gladly acknowledge that the Stigmatine Fathers have correctly acted in the proceedings of their withdrawal from the Milwaukee Parish.

Moreover, as it appears that the Stigmatine Fathers have some financial claims on the said Parish, I kindly ask the Fathers to release these claims in favor of the Italian Parish at Milwaukee

Signed:
† S.G. Mesmer, Abp.

†

⁷⁵ cf. below.

Fr. Francis Sogaro

The 'Fr. Francis Sogaro Correspondence' [1874]

To the Very Rev.

Fr. J. Baptist Lenotti,

Most Worthy Superior at the

Stimmate⁷⁶

Viva J.M.J.

Most Venerated Father in Christ,

My poor heart bleeds in sending you this letter, that will certainly grieve Your Very Rev. Paternity, and the other venerable Fathers and Brothers of the Congregation. However, I nevertheless find myself compelled to find a little tranquility for my soul.

Already for a number of years, as I have manifested many times to Your Very Rev. Paternity, I have been struggling with a great perplexity on the matter of my vocation. Having been repeatedly exhorted to prayer, and to constancy, out of love for my soul, and affection for my venerable confreres, repeatedly I have complied with this. At long last, however, I had to convince myself that I would have to do violence to myself, until dying from it, but as far as finding happiness in this manner of life, it was always for naught. So it is, therefore, my most venerated Father, I have come to the resolution of asking your Very Rev. Paternity, and at the same time, the Rev. Frs. Who make up the Congregation, to dispense me from the obligations that I have taken on in this Congregation.

While I take this step, I ask all the Rev. Fathers and Brothers, not to be scandalized by me, nor to attribute this, my most serious decision, to blindness, but to a vivid need of my poor soul; and I hope in the mercy of the Lord, that supported by His grace, I will never forget this most esteemed institution of the *Stimmate*, that I have always loved so much, nor will I ever forget the great debts of gratitude that bind me to the venerable Congregation of the Apostolic Missionaries.

Imploring your paternal blessing, with most profound esteem and gratitude that I profess,

From the House of the Deleretti

31 74

3

Your most humble, obliging and respectful

Servant

Fr. Francis Sogaro

§§§

To the Very Rev. Father, John Baptist Lenotti,

⁷⁶ Fr. Sogaro's Letter of March 31, 1874, appears on lined paper, 10 by 8 and one half, folded to make four sides, measuring 5 by 8 and one half inches. Fr. Sogaro wrote on pages 1 & 2. The paper was folded again, the long way, then the top down over the back. It was placed in an envelope, that appears with it, measuring 4 and one half by 2 and one half inches, the inside of which is pink.

**Superior General of the
Apostolic Missionaries for the Assistance
of Bishops ⁷⁷**

V.J.M.J.

Very Reverend Father in Christ,

Enclosed herein is my request to the Fathers of the Gen. Congregation.

I did not feel that I should attend, and I ask you to hold me excused: first, because I am very busy, and then, because since I am so sensitive, certainly it would bother me, and not a little.

I kiss your sacred hand, and I am, with profound veneration,

**A most humble, devoted and respectful
Servant and son of you,
Rev. Father,
Fr. Francis Sogaro**

**To the Very Rev. Fathers, Apostolic Missionaries,
Assembled in the General Congregation ⁷⁸**

V.J.M.J.

Very Rev. Fathers in Christ,

From the first years that I entered into this Holy Institute, I immediately felt that I seemed to be oppressed with the need for another life. Therefore, I began from that time to open my soul to the Very Rev. Fr. Master of Novices, making known to him my earnest desire of dedicating myself to the Foreign Missions.

He comforted me, by telling me that I was still young; and that meanwhile, I should apply myself to a diligent undertaking of virtue and my studies, and that the Lord Himself would think of the time for opening the door to me. With this thought, I went on, comforting myself, and persevered until the beginning of 1866.

At that time, after many times exposing my desire to the Very Rev. Superior, Fr. Marani, and having found him constantly firm in his refusal, and on seeing that my days were spent with a disturbed spirit, and that my health was poor, I asked the above-

⁷⁷ Fr. Sogaro's brief note addressed to Fr. Lenotti, without a date, was written on un-lined paper, 10 and one half by 8 and one fourth. This was folded to make four writing sides, 5 and one fourth, by 8 and one fourth inches. Fr. Sogaro wrote only on the first side. This was folded twice again, for insertion into an envelope, measuring five and one half by 3 inches.

⁷⁸ Fr. Sogaro's Letter to the Capitulars, dated August 5, 1875, is written on paper 10 and one half by 8 and one fourth; this was folded to make four writing sides, 5 and one quarter by eight and one quarter inches. Fr. Sogaro wrote on sides one and three. It was then folded again, for insertion into an envelope, 4 and one quarter by 2 and three quarters. It seems that this envelope was included within the one described in Note # 4.

mentioned Fr. Superior, if I could get advice from Rev. Fr. Viscardini ⁷⁹, of venerated memory. He refused me permission, telling me that if I ever set foot out of the door, with the intention of going there, he would no longer be obliged to consider me as belonging to the Institute. Can you, Rev. Fathers, think how I felt!

In this state of affairs, there dawned the very unhappy period of the most unfortunate confiscation of Fr. Benciolini's holdings. At such a time, a time of sorrowful trial, I felt it was my sacred duty not to add, with my departure, to the sorrow in the life that was already trying in and of itself.

After the unexpected and most consoling triumph, in the Gen. Congregation, providently convoked by the Very Rev. Superior, I was invited as were all the others, to make those proposals that I considered opportune for the greater glory of God, for the good of souls, and also for the development of the Institute. For the last time, I proposed that common need, expressed by many, and felt by all, that we take on, although in limited proportions, the matter of the Foreign Missions: a matter that would give life in a two-fold way to the Institute, both for its members, and also before the world.

But, also this time, I saw myself disappointed. Then it was that I definitively resolved to request my release, so that I could embrace another way of life, before I became too old.

For these reasons, I directed my Petition to the Very Rev. Superior, and which I now renew to him, and to all of you, of being released from the obligations I assumed with the Congregation of Apostolic Missionaries for the Assistance of Bishops.

Before bringing this to a close, however, I feel myself to be in extreme need of your pardon, and of the pardon of the entire Institute, for all that I may have done that was displeasing to you, and to all of my most beloved confreres.

I declare to you that I will retain an eternal memory for the immense blessings with which I have been overwhelmed from the *Stimate*; and finally, I ask you to be convinced that I am not taking this step in cold calculation of an egotist, nor with light-hotheadedness of one who is fickle, but with the pure desire of finding peace for my soul.

This 5th day of August, 1874

Your most humbly, devotedly and submissively in Christ,

Fr. Francis Sogaro

†††

The Chapter Response [1874]

These letters are in connection with the 6th General Chapter [August 5, 1874] – which decided this matter decisively. The Minutes of this Chapter read as follows:

⁷⁹ Fr. Viscardini was the much revered Jesuit Novice Master – much appreciated by Fr. Bertoni, who often sent people to him for counsel. Fr. Sogaro's 'isolation' might be noted in the previous **Vith General Chapter** – even though he was one of the 9 Fathers with the **Grade**, his Proposal to open a House in Rome was defeated 7 to 1 – and he withdrew two other proposals he had made – one for Regional Seminary.

...2nd The matter to be treated in the second place was repeated, namely, the resignation of the Rev. Fr. Francis Sogaro.

The discussion was opened with the Very Rev. Superior's reading of the first letter sent to him by the same Rev. Fr. Sogaro, and bearing the day of March 31st, of this year, with which he made the request of being released: and then, another letter, with today's date, and sent to this Congregation, with which, after justifying his absence, he repeated this same request, urging in it, new reasons for his request. These letters have been placed in the *Acts*.

It was proposed to write a letter to the above mentioned Fr. Sogaro concerning this matter. The proposal was put to a vote.

The Scrutiny was conducted according to Yea and Nay, with the following result:

For Yes, there were 2 votes.

For No, there were 4 votes.

Thus, writing to Fr. Sogaro was excluded.

When this had been completed, a vote was taken on the request of the same Fr. Sogaro for his release.

The Scrutiny was conducted, according to Yea and Nay, with the following result:

For Yes, there were 5 votes.

For No, there was 1 vote.

THE REQUEST WAS GRANTED, AND Fr. SOGARO WAS RELEASED.

A vote was taken, even though nothing had been listed, on the following proposals now added by the Very Rev. Superior.

1st How much time should be granted to Fr. Sogaro to leave the House.

2nd Whether summer and winter clothes should be given to him, how many shirts, etc.

3rd Concerning the word of order to be maintained after his departure.

A Vote was taken on the Proposition that the Rev. Fr. Sogaro should be allowed to remain in the House, until the 15th of this present month, and the results were as follows:

Yes 6 votes

No 0 votes.

THIS PROPOSITION WAS ADMITTED.

The **Second Proposal** was taken up, whether summer and winter clothes should be given to him, etc.

It was **unanimously decided** that, following the request of the Rev. Fr. Sogaro, the Rev. Superior should grant him that little which he should deem fitting, according to the suggestions expressed verbally by the Congregation.

Finally, the **Third Question** was taken up, namely the word of order to be maintained after his departure.

It was decided to adhere to this formula:

He wanted to leave, and the Congregation let him go, since our Association is a free one. ⁸⁰

△△△

**Following this sole Session of the VIth General Congregation, it was declared closed.
Thus, it was done, read, and signed.**

Fr. J. Bapt. Lenotti, Sup. Gen.

Fr. John Rigoni

Fr. Peter Vignola

Fr. Francis Benciolini

Fr. Joseph Sembianti ⁸¹

Fr. Mark Bassi

⁸⁰ It should be noted that this same heavy cross was still felt by confreres at the time of the **XIIth General Chapter** in 1890. Anyone familiar with the Constitutions of the Founder would be impressed by its Foreign Missionary openness, *quocumque in Diocesi et in mundo – CF ## 5; 193* - charity toward confreres of other nations. From the time of its relatively late inception, it has been a glorious aspect of Stigmatine history. Stigmatines who left the Congregation were then instrumental in obtaining for the Congregation missions in Brazil and in the USA.

Fr. Francis Sogaro went on to a very competent ecclesial service; he became associated with Msgr. Daniel Comboni, Apostolic Delegate to Africa – who was succeeded by Fr. Sogaro – who was ordained a Bishop in the Church of St. Agatha's of the Goths in Rome [some 40 years before this became the General Curia (in 1927) of the Stigmatine Congregation he left], the seat of the Irish College in Rome – after competent service in the diplomatic corps for the Vatican, His Excellency, + Francis Sogaro succeeded Cardinal Merry del Val, in 1903 [who had become Pius X's Secretary of state] as 'President of the Accademy of Noble Ecclesiastics' in Rome.

⁸¹ Fr. Sembianti, after many years of distinguished service to the Congregation [he had been chosen General Councilor to take the place of the deceased Fr. Richard DaPrato], but, he, too, would be one of those who would leave the Congregation during the **XIIth General Chapter** of 1890. Eventually, the Congregation would accept Foreign Missions as an essential part of the Founder's *Apostolic Mission for the service of Bishops*.

Fr. Joseph Sembianti

‘The Fr. Joseph Sembianti Correspondence’ – a letter from Local Pastor, Fr. Gobbi [Chapter Response] [1879 – 1890]

Fr. Joseph Sembianti: was indeed a most valued member of the early community. He left with Fr. Dominic Vicentini, and joined the Scalabrini Fathers – and they became the Vicar General and the Superior General of the Scalabrini Fathers - providing later on our first foundation in Brazil, **TIBAGY!** He manifests a long record of some dissatisfaction:

A MISCELLANEOUS DOCUMENT

[A Letter of Crisis?]

VV. J.M. J.⁸²

PN 321⁸³

Very Rev. and dear Father,

I received yesterday your most gracious letter, with the date of October 31st, and I am grateful again, one more time, for the most kind understanding of your Very Reverend Paternity. I am most sorry for having opened this wound, of which your Paternity speaks to me, and your grief only increases mine all the more. But, how could this be helped, my most loving Father, that these two wounds be opened when the most imperative reasons imposed them on me? ... And what are these reasons? They are not at all secret, nor will I try to cover them, or hide them. I accept the invitation that Your Paternity extends to me; I will be obedient to my Superior at the *Stimate*, and I will be open and sincere, also on this occasion, as I always have been in every encounter with my Superiors. By this, I believe I will give to Your Paternity, and to all my Confreres, an evident proof of the rectitude of my intentions, and of the maturity of my resolutions.

I believe that I should point out to Your Paternity, that up until now in this matter, I have not forgotten at all, the 48th Rule of the Common Rules: No one will take counsel from externs, without the permission of the Superior – and in my own case, I am without fear of

⁸² This is a Letter, addressed to the Superior General [?], from **Fr. Joseph Sembianti**, expressing some kind of personal vocational crisis [?], is dated **November 5, 1879**, just three months before the opening of this **IXth General Chapter** in **February 1880**. The Letter has nothing to do with the previous **VIIIth General Chapter**, concluded three and one half years earlier [October 1876], of which Fr. Sembianti was Secretary – he was also General Councilor and Director of the House of the *Stimate*. For this **IXth General Chapter**, Fr. Sembianti is listed as **Director of the House of Bassano**. **Fr. Vicentini**, however, would be elected Secretary of this **IXth General Chapter**, to take Fr. V. Vignola's place, who found he work too difficult for his health.

This unusual Letter was found by the translator in the Folder of the **XIVth General Chapter [September 1891]**. The Letter is also mentioned in the stormy **XIIth General Chapter [September 1890]**.

It was written on faintly lined paper, measuring 10 x 8 inches, folded to make 4 writing sides, measuring 5 x 8 inches. Fr. Sembianti wrote on two and one half sides.

⁸³ “PN” – does this mean ‘Postal Number’?

having broken it. The formalities of being absolved from the vows, I do not recall; I remember only that for Fr. Sogaro, there was not employed much solemnity, and that the *Appendix* existed then, as now. I do not remember exactly what the late Fr. Lenotti said to me, even though I was a Councilor, on the reason why Fr. Sogaro asked his release from the vows, as certainly he did not say it publicly in the Council, where he only exposed that all the means had been employed, and that they had all come to naught, to have him change his decision, and in insisting in asking to be released, he asked those in the meeting, what should be done. But, this makes no difference; the prescribed formalities, I repeat, I do not remember them, nor do I pretend that they should be omitted for me. The motives for my request, I will expose to Your Very Reverend Paternity, and to the entire Congregation.

I therefore, will be at the *Stimmate* on next Wednesday, the 12th of this month, on the first coach, bringing with me young Tomasi⁸⁴, and I hope to be able to return the same day. And therefore, I do not think it is necessary for you to substitute for me.

I would be most obliged if our Paternity will continue to recommend this matter with me, and that all be done with holy charity, and in conformity to His divine good pleasure.

With the greatest respect, I am

Of your Very Reverend Paternity

Bassano, Nov. 5, 1879

A most humble son and devoted Servant,

Fr. Joseph Sembianti.

†
†††
†

This situation was acted upon by the Chapter on after Fr. Sembianti offers his support of education as part of the Stigmatine Charism. He is his proposal submitted with a letter from a Fr. John Baptist Gobbi, 'Mitered Arch-Priest. All this is a good ten years before the story Chapter of 1890:

⁸⁴ This would be John Baptist Tomasi, who would eventually be the **Vth Superior General**, of the Congregation, who would be elected during the **XVIIIth General Chapter**, September 1911. When the North American students arrived in Rome in mid October 1952, Fr. Tomasi was still living in retirement at the **Generalate, Via Mazzarino, 16 – in Rome, St. Agatha of the Goths**. On the Feast of John the Evangelist, Dec. 27, 1954, while he was offering his customary 8:00 a.m. Mass in the Church for the **beate**, he repeated the Creed four times. The Superiors were called, and he was brought upstairs to an empty room [where the local Superiors would live for years later]. It was found he had suffered a stroke. He passed away about one week later, on January 2, 1954, at the age of almost 87. He was mourned by the American students, due to his friendliness – and even help in their studies that he offered. At that time, he was also the Spiritual Director of some of the *Folklorini*, frequent visitors to St. Agatha's in those times. Therefore, in 1880, 'young Tomasi', from Bassano, would have been 13 years old, being born Jan. 24, 1866.

... The House of Bassano ⁸⁵

Having seen that a Community comprised of only three members, does not favor the maintenance of the religious spirit, and the full observance of what is demanded by our Rules,

Having seen, after the experience of three years, that only the *Patronato*, as it has been up to now offers the least recompense for our troubles and fatigue, and that **in the field of education that has been offered to us, there is a hope that we could do more and better** ⁸⁶,

The under-signed, also in the name of his companion, Fr. Julius Zanini, who authorizes him to do so by letter, that has been read by the Very Rev. Superior General,

Proposes

That the Congregation might wish to study the manner with which the foundation made at Bassano, might be able to facilitate better, which it has not done up to now, the regular observance and the conservation of the religious spirit, in the individuals who reside here, and that it provide for them, the manner of bringing about the greater glory of God, and the greater advantage of the town.

From the *Stimmate*, February 15, 1880.

Fr. Joseph Sembianti,
Dir. of the House of Bassano.

†††

V. J..M.J. ⁸⁷

Very Reverend Father Superior,

Fr. Joseph ⁸⁸ will have already presented you with my humble respects and cordial best wishes. He will also have spoken to you of my great desire that there be founded here the regular classes for the young boys, who, at the same time, would be received into a boarding-type College. This was my first idea, which is manifested to Your Reverence, when I visited this past January. You know, partly from your own observations, and partly from

⁸⁵ The Proposals for the House of Bassano were written in Verona, by Fr. Sembianti. They appear on one side of white, un-lined paper, like drawing paper, 8 and one half by 12 inches.

⁸⁶ Once again, **education** is considered as a viable option for the living of the **Apostolic Mission**.

⁸⁷ This Letter of the mitered Arch-Priest, John Baptist Gobbi, of Bassano, is written on what appears to be paper, torn from an accountant's notebook, 8 and one fourth by 10 and three fourths inches. This letter covers one full side, and half of the reverse side.

⁸⁸ Sembianti.

the most dear, above-mentioned Father, the circumstances of the place and of the house that this project can be realized.

It would be my desire that by next November, the four elementary classes might be opened the rooms for the Fathers, and for the classes, will be readied. I, then, would be obliged to give the Rev. Fathers 200 [two hundred] Lira every year for each Father. It is most clear, that I do not know of anyone else, who has done as much, and that it is known sufficiently, that the sole desire to do good, moves this rev. Congregation, to undertake with such effort and so many sacrifices, such unpleasant tasks.

I know from the much esteemed Rev. Fr. Joseph, that presently Your Reverence is to hold a special meeting. I beseech your well known goodness and kindness, that you will make clear this desire of mine to the Rev. Frs., who in these days, will be gathered together. To tell you that if this idea becomes a reality, it would be for me an inexplicable satisfaction, which makes it useless to write it. I have before my eyes the great good that these excellent Fathers are doing in my parish, and the even greater good that they will do when the boarding-type College will be opened for the elementary and high school students.

I present to Your reverence, the great sense of indebtedness by which I feel bound. I ask you to give my respectful wishes to Fathers Rigoni, Morando and Tabarelli.

I am, with profound respect

Of Your Reverence.

Bassano, February 17, 1880

Your most devoted Servant

John Baptist Gobbi,
Mitered Arch-Priest

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†

Fr. Sembianti's malaise seems to have continued through the years as is evident from his later letter:

... IInd Session
25th of September 1890

This morning, all the Capitulars were assembled, among them Fr. Francis Benciolini. First there was read the Italian translation of the Decree of Approbation that is to be communicated to all the Houses; the translation was unanimously approved.

Then, there was taken up the matter of proposing this request, contained in the second motive for the Convocation of the Chapter, as exposed by the Superior: namely,

whether the Chapter intends and declares that there ought to be in force from now on, those legitimate Constitutions of ours, that most recently the Holy See studied, and which are to be corrected following the study of the established Commission, and the special decision of the Chapter, according to the observations made and communicated to us, by the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars.

While this point was being discussed, there arose an unpleasant incident, where two Members withdrew from the Chapter, namely, Fr. Dominic Vicentini⁸⁹ and Fr. Joseph Marocchi, who presented to the Chapter, their formal requests: the first, to be released from his vows, and the second, to have the faculty of providing for himself.

Note was taken of these requests, and they will be examined in the afternoon Session.

In the meantime, the Proposal had been made concerning the intention of the Chapter, to adopt as its legitimate Constitutions from now on, those recently studied by the Holy See with the Modifications that were introduced, following the most recent observations.

Voting 21
19 responded Yes [nineteen]
2 [two] responded No.

THEREFORE, THE CONSTITUTIONS, AS EXPOSED ABOVE, WERE ADOPTED.

Afternoon Session 3:00 p.m.

This morning's incident was taken up first of all, in which Fr. Dominic Vicentini and Fr. Joseph Marocchi withdrew; it was decided to give them time to reflect, putting off their request until the end of the Chapter, and meanwhile, entrusting the Superior to employ every argument to bring these subjects to better sentiments.

There was taken up the Election of another Member of the Commission, to substitute for Fr. Joseph Marocchi. Fr. Paul Gradinati was elected.

Following this, it was decided to suspend the Session to give time to the Commission to draw up the List of matters to be treated.

⁸⁹ Fr. D. Vicentini's Letter of seeking Dispensation from his Vows here cannot be found.

Verona, September 25, 1890 ⁹⁰

Venerable General Chapter of the Priests of the Stigmata
Verona

Toward the end of 1879, I presented a request to the Very Rev. Peter Vignola, Superior General of the *Stimate*⁹¹, to be released from the Vows that I made in the Congregation, over which he presides. This request shortly thereafter, I suspended, but I did not withdraw, as results from the Minutes that were taken on that occasion. Now, today, I renew that same request, for reasons that I do not think it opportune to manifest here, to this Ven. General Chapter, and I ask to be released from the obligations of my Vows, in the manner established in the old Constitutions of this Congregation.

It grieved me so very much to see myself driven to this determination, and it bothers more today, eleven years later.

I thank the Very Rev. Superior for the benevolence and kindness that he always manifested toward me, and with him, all the members of the Congregation, with all of whom, I intend to remain united with bonds, if not of family, then with un-changeable charity.

Your most humbly,
Fr. Joseph Sembianti

The 12th Chapter responded in these words:

... IVth Session
October 2nd 10:00 o'clock in the morning

After the Capitulars had been assembled, the Chapter proceeded to the treatment and decision on the Fifth Proposal, regarding the separation of the Studentate. The Chapter, recognizing the necessity of this separation, prescribed by the Sacred Canons, and by our Constitutions, adopts this project to comply with them, that is, that the house of St. Teresa be considered as the house of Novitiate, and the Studentate, and as, such, it is to be separated from the *Stimate*, in such a way that the Superior General be also the Director of the Mother House of the *Stimate*, and that a special Director will reside at St. Teresa's, who with the other Fathers and Officials, especially assigned to this House, will attend, according to our Constitutions, to the religious education of our students. For the rest, it leaves to the Superior General, and to his Council, to choose in practice, the opportune means, to bring this project, described above, to reality.

⁹⁰ Fr. Sembianti's Letter is dated this 2nd Day of the assembled General Chapter. It, too, is found in the **XIVth General Chapter** folder, but by date and content seems to belong to this **XIIth General Chapter**. It was written on a faintly lined paper, 10 and one half by 8 and one fourth inches, folded to make 4 writing sides, 5 and one quarter by 8 and one quarter inches. Fr. Sembianti wrote on every other line, and used only the front side of the paper.

⁹¹ Cf. Documentation preceding the **IXth General Chapter**, February 1880.

Next on the Agenda, was the Sixth Proposal of Fr. Louis Gasperotti – in which there is asked if there can be granted to each Priest, more than three Masses a year, to be celebrated according to his own intentions?

Fr. Gasperotti, after hearing the reasons given in the discussion, withdrew his Proposal, and trusted, together with the Chapter, in the charity of the Directors, and Superiors, who will use due regard in particular cases.

The Seventh Proposal followed, in which there was asked when a genuine need becomes known, under which the parents of a Priest member of the Congregation are laboring, whether it can be established that in his favor, the alms for one or months may be granted?

The question was exposed in the sense of a similar one made last year by Fr. Paul Gradinati to the XIth General Chapter, namely, whether it would be better to make some provision to assist parents, who are truly needy, of the members of our Congregation, to whom they have recourse for help. In the discussion, this provision was proposed and adopted, that in the case that some members of our Institute have needy parents, who have recourse to them for help, the question of the obligation that these members have to assist them, and the manner of accomplishing this, be taken up by a Commission composed of the Superior General, or two General Councilors, and the Director of the House to which the said members pertain, and another priest, chosen by the Petitioner.

This Commission, even using if necessary, a secret ballot, must decide whether and to what degree this need truly exists, and what means of assistance might be proposed to the said members, who then can, and should acquiesce, in conscience, to this decision.

It would now have been the time to take up the Seventh Proposal, concerning the Schools, but it seemed better to all the Capitulars to treat first of the Eight Proposal, that is, the request of the release from the vows of some members of the Institute, and the matter of the dismissal of another Member.

And the discussion arose first on the request of Fr. Joseph Marocchi. It was decided to send, in the name of the Chapter, to the above-mentioned, Fr. Joseph Marocchi, two Priests, Fr. James Marini and Fr. Nicholas Tomasi, that they might seek in the best manner, to persuade the said Fr. J. Marocchi, to withdraw his request, and to manifest his decision.

Fr. Superior, also asked by the same Fr. Marocchi, went with them. Fr. Superior and the two other Fathers who were sent to hear out Fr. Marocchi reported back that he remains bitter in his request which has been presented; however, he asks for time, to reflect until tomorrow.

The Chapter, therefore, deliberated unanimously to grant until tomorrow morning to Fr. Marocchi the time that he might make his ultimate resolve.

Then, there was taken up the request of Fr. Dominic Vicentini. There were also sent to him in the name of the Chapters, Frs. Mark Bassi and Louis Morando, to hear him out, relative to his request.

They reported back that Fr. Dominic Vicentini intends to present tomorrow another letter, in which will be contained his ultimate decision. The Chapter unanimously agreed to this Petition.

Then, the Chapter came to the same matter, relative to Fr. Joseph Sembianti. It was discussed whether it was necessary also to send to him a Commission of the Chapter, and the decision was 'no', because the request that he now makes to be released from his vows, is but a representation of one made eleven years ago, and which he declares now that this had only been suspended, and not withdrawn.

Therefore, the Chapter, believing that it still has the faculty of releasing from the Vows made in our Institute, according to the old Constitutions, to which the said Fr. Joseph Sembianti made reference, before the new ones had been promulgated, the following Proposal was admitted to a secret vote:

Does the Chapter agree to release Fr. Joseph Sembianti as he asks in his letter of September 25th of this year, from the Vows made by him in this Institute, according to the old Constitutions, which explicitly grant to the General Chapter, the faculty of dispensing from them?

Voting	22
Yes	21 [twenty-one]
No	1 [one]

The Chapter, therefore, in so far as it is able, releases Fr. Joseph Sembianti from the Vows emitted by him, in this Institute, in so far as there might also be saved the rights of the Holy See.

Fr. Dominic Vicentini

Here is one of his letters submitted to the 9th General Chapter [Feb. 17th-25th, 1880]:

The 'Fr. Dominic Vicentini Correspondence' – Chapter Secretary – Resignation as Procurator General [1890]

N. 8 ⁹²

To the General Congregation of Apostolic Missionaries
Verona, the 17th of February 1880

Fr. Dominic Vicentini proposes that the Congregation establish a Commission of some of its members, whose task it will be to review accurately, the *Appendix to Part XII* of our Constitutions, to observe if, having regard to the brevity of time in which it was drawn up, there has not perhaps passed into it, some matters not sufficiently pondered, or in less conformity with our Constitutions. This Commission, then, will report to the next General Congregation.

The same Fr. Vicentini also proposes that the conferral of the Grade in our Congregation, be done with some solemnity of Rite, as, for example, with the imposition of the Crucifix of a Missionary, accompanied by fitting prayers, either from the hand of the Superior General, or by another delegated by him.

Fr. Dom. Vicentini

Then, as Secretary to the IXth General Chapter, Fr. Vicentini signed the final document:

PRINCIPAL DISPOSITIONS of the IXth General Congregation, February 1880, to be communicated to the various Houses ⁹³

1. First of all, it was warmly recommended to the Capitulars to maintain secrecy on all that is said in the General Congregation.
2. It was decided that the Election of the Procurator General is to be the competence of the Superior General alone.
3. The powers of the Superior General were extended to him, until February 1881, when there will be held the General Congregation for the Election of the new Superior General.

⁹² Fr. Vicentini's Proposals were first numbered "6", but on the reverse side this was changed to "7" – and then finally to "8".

⁹³ There are two identical copies of the Decisions of this Chapter, that appear on large, unlined, white drawing paper, 16 and three-fourths, by 12, inches, folded to make 4 writing sides, 12 by 8 and one fourth. Fr. Vicentini wrote only on side one, and half of side two.

4. Regarding the decisive judgment attributed in some cases by the *Appendix to Part XII* of our *Constitutions*, to the General Councilors, a Commission was established, of five members, which is to study the matter and refer back to the next General Congregation.

5. It was asked by some of the Chapters of the various Houses whether the Superior General was to be elected for life, and not for a limited term, as though the *Appendix* had disposed otherwise, and it was answered that both the *Constitutions* of the Founder, as well as the *Appendix*, speak clearly, and that he was elected for a time, only because of special circumstances, that required an exception.

6. In the place of the General Councilor, Rev. Fr. John Rigoni, who resigned, Fr. Mark Bassi was substituted.

7. The examiners, both for the First and Second Scrutiny, were increased to the number of six. The examiners of the First Scrutiny are: Fr. Richard Tabarelli, Fr. Alexis Magagna, Fr. Andrew Sterza, Fr. Melchiade Vivari, Fr. Pio Gurisatti and Fr. Peter Beltrami. The examiners of the Second Scrutiny are; Fr. Francis Benciolini, Fr. Joseph Sembianti, Fr. John Rigoni, Fr. Vincent Vignola, Fr. Louis Morando, Fr. Dominic Vicentini.

8. It was proposed by the Chapter of the House, that there be a review of the Rules of the particular Offices – the Congregation remitted the care of this to the Very Rev. Superior, to be made, either by himself, or by others of his choice, with the revision of the said rules to be submitted, then, to the approbation of the Congregation.

9. It was established that the Novices, in the first year of Novitiate, be absolutely free from the regular course of studies⁹⁴.

10. It was proposed that the holy vows be renewed every once in a while, with some solemnity. The Proposal was received with satisfaction by the Chapter, which expressed its desire that this be adopted as the practice to be carried out on the occasion of the holy Annual Retreat, in the manner that would seem the most discreet.

[[Green oval SEAL:
APOSTOLIC MISSIONARIES]]

Fr. Dominic Vicentini
Secretary of the IXth General Congregation
+++++

Fr. Vicentini's troubles seem to be increasing:

[Letter of Resignation of Fr. Dominic Vicentini from the Office of Procurator General]
J. M. J. ⁹⁵

⁹⁴ Fr. Vicentini first wrote: ... *from every literary exercise* ... - but crossed it out – these corrections may have caused the 2nd copy of the same “Principal Dispositions” – but, more simply, they may have been intended for separate Stigmatine Communities.

⁹⁵ This is the usual place for the customary Proposals. First, though, there is this Letter from Fr. D. Vicentini, as he did not want to continue as Procurator General, written to the Superior General, 5 months prior to the General Chapter. It appears on white, lined paper, 8 by 10 and one half inches.

Verona, the 17th of April, 1890

Very Reverend Fr. Superior,

When I was entrusted by Your Reverence to assume the Office of Procurator and Administrator, I accepted it rather unwillingly, and to take your Reverence out of an embarrassing situation, in which it seemed to me, you were in, because of the insistence of Fr. Marini to resign. Now, however, I am becoming all the more aware of the mistake that I made in accepting this, as I realize ever more clearly that this Office is not for me.

First of all, I have no understanding of the country, and there would be needed some time to become experienced in this work. Therefore, to avoid serious mistakes, I would have to dedicate myself almost exclusively to it, which for me, would be difficult, as, I confess, I find it hard to go here and there, through the country, for this purpose. I would not want to tell you the other reasons, which I also have, but I petition Your Reverence to speak of this to your Council, to see if this Office might be transferred to someone else, before I take over, so to speak, the complete exercise of it. It would be much better to make the change now, rather than after one or two years. It seems to me that this would not be impossible, even when Fr. Marini did not wish to resume the Office, which, so to speak, he managed very well, and in which he could very well have continued.

These things which I could have told you verbally, I preferred to write them to you, so that you might speak of them with your Councilors.

With profound respect, and my humble protestations, that I have for your Paternity, I am

Your most humble and Obedient son in the Lord,

Fr. Dominic Vicentini

By the stormy 12th General Chapter in the Fall of that year [Sept. 24th - Oct. 3rd, 1890] Fr. Vicentini's problems were full blown – and Fr. Marrocchi, too, was ill at ease, as were others:

... October 3rd 10:00 o'clock in the Morning

J.M.J. ⁹⁶

From the *Stimate*, the 3rd of October 1890

Very Reverend Fr. Superior:

God alone knows how much it costs me to have to insist on my request to be released from the Congregation; I have cried over it day and night, and believe me, that I am not without feeling, as I have thought especially of the bitterness that I have caused you, after all the benevolence and deference you have manifested toward me: if human reasons could make me withdraw this request, this reason would be the

⁹⁶ Here appears Fr. D. Vicentini's personal letter to the Superior General. It appears on squared paper, 5 and one fourth by 8 inches.

strongest of all; if, during these days, I have not approached you, to speak to you, it is because I felt that I just could not do it. Now, though, it seems to me that I would be unhappy remaining in the Congregation, and that I could become a source of malcontents; while I desire, with all my heart, and I pray the Lord, that, with the approbation of the Institute, there will be opened a new era of consolations for Your Very Reverend Paternity – I thank you for the great good you have done me, but please, also do this for me, by pardoning this act, that in conscience, I feel I must do.

I withdraw my first request that I made to the Congregation, protesting that I did not have the intention of offending anyone, and at the same time, I ask you to present this other one, enclosed in this letter. Please pardon me, and bless me. I am, of Your Paternity.

A most unworthy son,

Fr. Dominic Vicentini

+++++

Venerable Congregation of the Priests of the Stigmata of our Lord Jesus Christ⁹⁷,

No longer finding in the Congregation my tranquility of spirit, and this, for various reasons, that I prefer not to expose in public Chapter, and fearing that this state of my soul might be harmful to my soul, and to the Congregation herself, were I to remain in it, after serious consideration on the step I am about to take, I ask and petition this Ven. Congregation to release me from my vows and obligations that bind me to it, according to the old Constitutions.

I implore and beseech my Confreres not to take any scandal from this resolution of mine, but rather to take this occasion to be encouraged to remain firm in their own good resolves, and to pray for me.

I ask, then, that the following declarations, which I believe I can make with a sure conscience, be accepted:

1st. That the idea of leaving the Congregation did not come to me in Africa, nor on my return from Africa, because of any illusions that I had; if my reason really is that of having been in Africa, God knows, but I do not.

2nd That no one, either Confreres, or externs, put this decision into my mind, not initiated, nor much less, with promises, and that up to this moment, I have not taken a single step or attempted to seek for myself any position whatsoever, and this, so that I would not compromise my resolution.

⁹⁷ This is Fr. D. Vicentini's Letter to the assembled Chapter which appears on the same kind of paper, but measuring 8 by 10 and one half inches. This letter covers one and one third sides.

3rd I have the conviction of never having betrayed, neither here, nor anywhere else, neither near, nor far away, the confidence placed in me, by my Superiors.

4th Finally, I declare that I have no bad feelings toward anyone in the Congregation, no matter how different his way of thinking is from mine, and I ask pardon of all, if in any manner, I have offended him.

I thank the Congregation from my heart, for all the good it has done for me [and this is not a little], and in a special way, the Very Rev. Fr. Superior, to whom, I am painfully aware, how much bitterness this decision of mine is to cause.

I will try to hold on high the honor of the Congregation [as I always sought to do], and I will not spread gossip concerning its private affairs; but, I also ask my Confreres to have a little regard by not attributing to me intentions that I do not have, or could not possibly have.

Verona, at the *Stimmate*, the 3rd of October 1890

Fr. Dominic Vicentini

+++++

The Session then got underway, with the reading of a Letter from Fr. Dominic Vicentini, in which he renews, or maintains his request of being released from the Vows taken in the Institute, asking that his first request, in abrupt form, be withdrawn, and that this one he now presents, be accepted. The following Proposal was put to a vote:

Does the Chapter believe it will release Fr. Dominic Vicentini from the Vows he took in the Institute, according to the old Constitutions?

There were 21 Voting, with Fr. Mark Bassi absent, because of an indisposition.

Yes	19 [nineteen]
No	2 [two]

The Chapter understands as above, that it is authorized by the old Constitutions to release Fr. Dominic Vicentini from his Vows, and declares that he is released from them, in so far as it is able, saving always, in so far as there is need of it, the rights of the Holy See.

ΔΔΔ

Frs. J. Marrocchi and J. Baptist Cavinato**Frs. J. Marrocchi and J. Baptist Cavinato – need for regular observance [1890]**

Verona, October 3, 1890 ⁹⁸

Venerable General Chapter of the Priests of the Stigmata,

With this letter, the under-signed thanks the Venerable Chapter for its unmerited patience and affection, that it has shown to him, in these terrible moments. But, he must confess, that he does not find himself fully decided, even now, on a determined resolution, neither for one side, or for the other. Trusting in the goodness of his Confreres, the under-signed implores them, to condescend to give him a little further trial, according to the understanding reached with the Very Rev. Superior. Hoping for compassion and thanking all for their loving care in his behalf, he signs with all esteem and gratitude

Fr. Joseph Marocchi

At this point, Fr. Superior presented a letter of Fr. Joseph Marocchi, in which he asks the Chapter that a little further trial be given to him, before making any resolution in his regard. The Chapter, interpreting this request, especially having regard to the form in which it was drawn up, as a happy indication of reconfirmation in his vocation, that temporarily was lessened, and very willingly grants to Fr. Marocchi the time he requests.

3:00 o'clock in the afternoon

The Session got underway by discussing the matter of the dismissal of J. Baptist Cavinato; and it seemed better that Fr. Superior and Fr. Mark Bassi might in the best and most efficacious manner possible, make the last appeals with the above-named, that in their judgment, might return him to regular observance, leaving, then, the decision on this matter to Fr. Superior and his Council.

Finally, there was taken up the question of the Schools. The Chapter, having heard the discussion and the long report, of one of the members on this matter, manifested it desire to see the Schools presently existing, maintained - in so far as this is possible without detriment to the health of the teachers, or of disciples and, in a special way, those of the Mother House of the *Stimate*. For the rest, the Chapter entrusts to the Superior and his

⁹⁸ Fr. Marocchi's letter appears in the **XIVth General Chapter folder**. It is written on blue, lined paper, 10 and one half by 8 and one fourth inches, folded to make four writing sides, 5 and one fourth by 8 and one fourth inches. Fr. Marocchi wrote only on one side.

Council, to make the judgment, after hearing the reasons of the faculty, with decisive authority, whether the scarcity of the personnel ⁹⁹, or other reasons, might counsel, or demand the suppression of one or more of the classes, now existing.

At the end, it was unanimously decided that the [///new///] * Constitutions, as soon as they are copied over, according to the corrections made on them by the Chapter, in accord with the observations of the sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, by the established Commission, and reviewed by the Superior and his Council, they will be printed, and then immediately, they will be promulgated by the Superior, in the name of the entire Chapter, and communicated to all the Directors and Superiors of the Houses, who will have the responsibility of making them known to all of their subjects.

[* this cancellation was approved – R. Tabarelli] ¹⁰⁰.

Before closing, the Chapter unanimously established that there will be commemorated every year, on the day on which the Holy Father, Leo XIII approved our Institute, that is, the 5th ¹⁰¹ of September, with the singing of the *Te, Deum* in all our Houses.

When the Minutes had been read and signed, in this Fourth and last Session, the XIIth General Chapter was declared closed.

Verona, from the House of the *Stimmate* – October 3, 1890

Fr. Peter Vignola, Sup. Gen.
 Fr. Louis Morando, G.C.
 Fr. James Marini, id.
 Fr. Bartholomew Perazzani, id.
 Fr. Alexis Magagna, id.
 Fr. Francis Benciolini
 Fr. Pio Gurisatti
 Fr. Joseph Marchesini
 Fr. Angelo M. Graziani
 Fr. Melchiade Vivari

⁹⁹ Hence, the question of the Schools emerged in these Chapters [beginning with the **Vth Chapter, in February 1874**] not long after 'Fr. Marani's death. The 'concept' of the Schools was consistently admitted as a most valid aspect of the **Apostolic Mission** - the complaint here seems to have been in 1890 the number of schools and classes had become taxing on the available personnel, and was 'consuming' the available personnel resources, on this one aspect of the *graviora, varia et propria, accomodata ministeria* of the **Apostolic Mission**

¹⁰⁰ The adjective *new* was crossed out in the original text as noted in the margin of the Original Minutes. These Constitutions of the last Chapter had been reviewed by Rome – and meticulously studied by this **XIIth General Chapter** - these are the Constitutions that will be printed and distributed. In this Series, the translation of the Printed Constitutions appear as **CONSTITUTIONS 1890**.

¹⁰¹ Fr. Tabarelli wrote September 5th as the date, but ordinarily the Stigmatines remember **September 15th, 1890**, as the date of the conferral of the **Decree of Approbation**.

Fr. Joseph Zandonai
Fr. Cajetan Pizzighella
Fr. Anthony Oss Bals
Fr. Louis Gasperotti
Fr. Paul Gradinati
Fr. Louis Tommasi
Fr. Albano Clementi
Fr. Stephen Rosa
Fr. Julius Zambiasi
Fr. Joseph Bertapelle

[The signature of *Fr. Octavian Piccoli* is missing, because he, a few minutes, before concluding the Minutes, had to leave on an urgent matter.]

((Large Green Seal,
oval shaped:
SODALITY OF THE
PRIESTS OF THE
SACRED STIGMATA,
VERONA))

So it is, Praised be Jesus Christ.
Fr. Richard Tabarelli, Secretary

In the Name of the Lord. Amen. ¹⁰²

†

¹⁰² Following the **Chapter Minutes**, there also appears this disciplinary Decree, signed by the Capitulars, dated the last day of the Chapter. It appears on white, lined paper, 16 and one half by 12 inches, folded to make 4 writing sides, 8 and one fourth by 12 inches. Only the front side was written on.

Brother Emil Giuliani

Verona, this Friday, the 3rd day of October 1890, in the full and General Chapter, assembled by Convocation of the 15th of September last, there being presented the request for the release from his Vows, by the fugitive, Emil Giuliani, Professed Brother of the Congregation of the Priests of the Sacred Stigmata, who has already been outside the Congregation for two years, and now desires this requested declaration, to be able to enter another Institute; his request was thus formulated:

Does the Chapter intend to release the above-mentioned Emil Giuliani from his vows?

The question was put to a vote, and there were 19 [nineteen] votes for Yes, and 1 [one] for No, and 1 abstained, there being 21 [twenty-one] voting.

Therefore, it is decided that he is released from the obligation of his Vows, the Chapter availing itself of the faculties that the old Constitutions granted, always preserving the rights of the Holy See, if this is necessary.

Fr. Peter Vignola, Sup. Gen.	Fr. Octavian Piccoli
Fr. Louis Morando	Fr. Louis Gasperotti
Fr. James Marini	Fr. Melchiade Vivari
Fr. Alexis Magagna	Fr. Antony Oss Bals
Fr. Bartholomew Perazzani	Fr. Joseph Bertapelle
Fr. Pio Gurisatti	Fr. Richard Tabarelli
Fr. Joseph Marchesini	Fr. Albano Clementi
Fr. Angelo M. Graziani	Fr. Stephen Rosa
Fr. Paul Gradinati	Fr. Julius Zambiasi
Fr. Cajetan Pizzighella	Fr. Louis Tomasi
Fr. Joseph Zandonai	

Fr. Andrew Sterza**[Inner turmoil] [1880 - 1891]**

Even the great Fr. Andrea Sterza, **preacher *extraordinaire* of the Parish Missions**, who would die at the young age of just 50, after perhaps more than three hundred parish Missions – seems to have suffered some malaise: for the 9th General Chapter [Feb. 17-25, 1880], he wrote as follows:

**Proposals of Fr. Andrew Sterza
to the General Congregation**

At the time in which the Domestic Chapter was held, because of a legitimate reason, I was absent, and was unable to expose a number of proposals to be submitted to the consideration of the General Congregation. Therefore, that which I could not do at the time, I do now, by presenting in this, my letter, that which seems to me as best before God. Therefore, as I sincerely hope, that in our very small Congregation, there flourish unchanged the observance of the Constitutions, left to us by the Venerable Founder, I propose what follows:

Ist That it be studied to see if, by now, there has ceased to exist those present circumstances, that suggested the election of the Superior General for a time, with a sad departure from the Fundamental Constitutions.

IInd That it be studied to see whether the creation of the Superior General, with his relative duties, as exist in the *Appendix*, is in conformity with the intention of the Ven. Founder, as indicated in his Constitutions.

IIIrd That it be studied to see whether for the good religious life of the Apostolic Missionary, the rules of the Ven. Founder suffice with the good customs that our first Fathers left us, without the addition of those new rules, which were inserted among the Common Rules of the *Appendix*.

IVth That there be studied whether it is possible and would be better for the Superior General, residing at the House of the *Stimmate*, to be for now, also the Director of the same House, with the assistance, in so far as he is Director, of the Vicar of his choice, who could be Econumus and Master of Exterior Discipline.

Vth And also the Councilors, assigned to each Director, not be an empty name, but that they be heard in those matters of greater account, as when it is a question of expenses, acquisition, repairs and similar extraordinary matters; and especially, when it is a question of assigning the Prefect of the Aspirants to other Students. Very grave reasons urge me to make this Proposal, which I reserve to expose verbally.

VIth That for the conservation of good order, and beautiful regular observance, certain times be fixed for the Officials in which they must give an account of their Office, to the

respective Superiors: and whenever there is any abuse, or disorder, the Superiors will see to it with prudent kindness, that a remedy be made, so that the spirit and regular observance might not fail.

VIIth That regarding the Novices, that they be made to observe the Rule of the Ven. Founder, who wanted them assigned to *humble tasks*¹⁰³, and not to positions and prefectures; 'so that they might not fall into pride, into the judgment of the devil', as St. Paul would say – also, it is asked if, and what conditions are imposed and proposed to them, when they are professed. The reason for this question will be given vocally.

VIIIth That it be studied to see whether it would be better to modify the pious Evening exercise of Fridays, in the Church of the *Stimmate*, so that it might be rendered more fruitful: and whether it would be better to suppress in the said Church, the mass assigned for 9:15 on Ferial Days, and 11:15 on Feast Days.

Verona, the 14th day of February, 1880.

†

Later on, though, Fr. Sterza experienced real bitterness of soul, as is evident on the final page of the 13th General Chapter [April 23-24th, 1891]:

Having completed the treatment of the Proposals, there was given by the Secretary a general resume' of a complaint by Fr. Andrew Sterza¹⁰⁴. Since the matter is of a private and most delicate nature, the Chapter decided, after diligent discussion, to delegate Fr. Melchiade Vivari to pacify Fr. Sterza, and to implore him in the name of the entire Chapter, to return to sentiments of edifying humility, and of subjection to the decisions of preceding Chapters, and to wish, out of love for Jesus Christ, to make a generous sacrifice of all the displeasures, that certainly not through any malice, nor for any bad purpose, but because of the circumstances of the Houses, and because of human weakness, he has to endure.

The Congregation, having compassion as a Mother for the bitterness of Fr. Sterza's soul, holds it as certain that his generosity and his religious spirit, will know how to triumph over himself. The above-mentioned Fr. Melchiade Vivari will give a report to Fr. Superior, and his Council, on the outcome of his efforts.

The Chapter, then, to be in conformity, in so far as it is necessary to the dispositions in n. 21, Chap. I, Part V, of our Constitutions, unanimously confirms the examiners of the First and Second Scrutiny, elected in the preceding XIIth Chapter.

When the Minutes had been read and signed, it was declared in this Second and last Session, that the XIIIth Chapter was closed.

Verona, from the House of the *Stimmate* – April 24, 1891.

¹⁰³ cf. CF # 36.

¹⁰⁴ Fr. Andrew Sterza would die prematurely on +January 26, 1898 at the age of 50.

Fr. Peter Vignola, Superior General
Fr. Louis Morando, General Councilor
Fr. James Marini, Procurator general
Fr. Alexis Magagna, General Councilor
Fr. Bartholomew Perazzani
Fr. Mark Bassi
Fr. Joseph Marchesini
Fr. Peter Beltrami
Fr. Melchiade Vivari
Fr. Anthony Oss Bals
Fr. Octavian Piccoli
Fr. Richard Tabarelli, Secretary

((Large, oval Seal –with two lilies
SODALITY OF THE PRIESTS
OF THE SACRED STIGMATA
VERONA)).

†

Fr. Michael Lanaro

[health reasons] [1880 - 1891]

Fr. Michael Lanaro - health reasons, asking to return home to breathe native air

Fr. Michael Lanaro asked to be released from his Community obligations due to health reasons – his letter was considered in the 7th General Chapter [Oct. 26-30, 1875]:

A.M.D.G. ¹⁰⁵

Venerable Congregation!

After mature consideration, and having repeatedly consulted my conscience, and not without prudent counsel, I make bold to present myself by this letter, to the General Congregation, and to make known to it the following: that for some time, finding myself in rather poor health, and that I have repeatedly spit up blood during these last years, and have fallen into such a weakness of my chest, that I am not able to keep down the little bit of food that I take, in that almost every time, I am forced to vomit it: After having tried so many remedies, suggested to me by the doctor, with little, or rather little advantage, on his advice, I have come to the decision to try one more indicated to me by him, and which he considers efficacious, namely, that of going back to breathe the air of my native town – Doctor Rung, who visited me at Robbi, under the assistance of the Rev. Fr. Lenotti, said that I am afflicted with pericarditis, accompanied by palpitation of the heart, that demands rest and quiet; and added that after the cure of the waters, I should try the climate near the sea; and hearing that I was from Vicenza, he responded that the Vicentine climate would be rather helpful to me – And this is the reason for the request that I humbly place before this Congregation, that of allowing me to go, for an indefinite period, to my home town, where I might, if it is pleasing to the Lord, regain a little strength, so that on returning to my assignment, I, too, might occupy myself for the good of souls, as I vividly desire.

Should the Congregation believe that it will not grant me this permission, I judge that having considered the state of my lack of energy, and my physical and moral turpitude, in which I have been for so long, while in taking from me that certain temperament of joviality and happiness, which adds to my habitual discomforts, without silencing my conscience [which I manifested to a certain one, and was reassured], I would ask to be released. This should not cause in anyone, any surprise, and much less, scandal, when the just motives that induce me to this are known, and when it is considered that even the Jesuits, for reasons of health, have no difficulty in releasing from the Company, those subjects who even have vows, as is known to more than one, and also to me.

And all the more confidently, I bring forward this request, in so far as it does not seem to me that I am being moved by the desire of freedom, by caprice, by resentment,

¹⁰⁵ There follows here a Letter without date, from Fr. Michael Lanaro, to the **General Congregation**, on a piece of lined paper, 11 by 8 and three fourths inches. It is folded in half to form 4 writing sides, 5 and one half by 8 and three fourths inches. Fr. Lanaro's letter covers three sides.

discontent, or for any detachment from the Congregation; nor has the reason anything to do with ties of flesh and blood, nor any other motive alleged under the pretext of health; I want, and this is my sole desire, to restore my poor health, if it might please the Lord. These are the reasons because of which it pleases me to hope that God, who believes hearts and Who judges intentions, might grant the restoration of my health, and that He, in His Mercy, might open to me again the doors of the *Stimma*; or, through the mouth of His lieutenants, He will have me see where and how He wishes to be served by me.

I believe that the Congregation might judge these reasons as good, and considering my request as legitimate, it might dispatch this matter, which the most unworthy of the Congregation, first brought up.

Fr. Michael Lanaro

†

The two Fathers LUCHI [Fr. Lodovico, Uncle – Fr. Henry, Nephew]

PASTORS OF OUR LADY OF MONTH CARMEL [1905-1944; 1944-1971]

a. Synopsis

Father Lodovico Luchi

- 1859:** August 25th – Birth, Romallo, Tyrol
- 1883:** October 3rd: Ordination as a Stigmatine in Parma, Italy
- 1883-1892:** Director of the '*Oratori Stimmadini*' in Verona; served as a Faculty Member and Vice-Rector of St. Louis College.
- 1892-1905:** Served as a Stigmatine Missionary and teacher in Rome, Parma and Trent.
- 1905:** September 26th; Departed Trent with Fr. Anthony Dalla Porta; Arrived in Hazleton on October 7th.
- 1907:** February 22nd: Dedication of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church
- [1914]** [Stigmatines withdrew from Hazleton – leaving all to the Diocese of Scranton PA.
- 1915:** Founded the Holy Rosary Church, as a Mission to Our Lady of Mount Carmel
- 1915-1922:** Leader of the Italian Communities of Hazleton and Scranton; Granted administrative authority over the four Italian Churches of Hazleton.
- 1933:** October 7th – Gold Priestly Jubilee.
- 1944:** May 8th – Died – buried in the parish cemetery Chapel.

†

†††

†

[Memorial Card]

Rev. Lewis LUCHI

Born: August 25, 1859 in Romallo [Trento]

Ordained: October 3, 1883

Died May 8, 1944

Prayer

O God, Who amongst Thy Apostolic priests, didst adorn Thy Servant, LEWIS, with the priestly dignity, grant we beseech Thee, that he may also be associated with them in everlasting fellowship. Amen.

Father LEWIS LUCHI

From Romallo, Trento

[1859-1944]

Stigmatine, Missionary and Pastor,

Kind and Affable in manner,

Noble in character

By effective word,

With paternal care

For over 60¹⁰⁶ years

Guided his Flock

In the path of faith to eternal bliss. Wherever his ministry called him:

Verona – Parma – Hazleton

†

The relatives, friends, parishioners,

Those who surrounded him with

loving care,

Implore Thee, o Lord,

Grant unto him the beatitude

Promised to the Faithful Servant

†

¹⁰⁶ This seems to be a misprint – Fr. Lewis was Pastor from 1905-1944, 39 years – while Fr. Henry Luchi was Pastor from 1944-1971.

REV. FATHER HENRY I. LUCHI

- 1895:** November 26th: Birth: Cordova, Argentina
- 1900:** Migrated with Family to Romallo, Tyrol.
- 1918:** May 12th: Ordained a Priest – Bressanone, Tyrol
- 1918:** September 1st. Assistant Pastor at Fondo¹⁰⁷, Tyrol
- 1923:** June 25th – arrived in Hazleton; Assistant Pastor at Holy Rosary Mission.
- 1925:** January 6th – first Pastor of Holy Rosary Church, Hazleton.
- 1944:** June 7th – Pastor, our Lady of Mount Carmel Church
- 1968:** Gold Jubilee as a Priest.
- 1971:** September 8th. Retired: ‘Pastor Emeritus’ of our Lady of Mount Carmel Church
- 1978;** July 1th; celebrated 60 years in the Priesthood.

†

b. Fr. Lodovico’s Golden Jubilee [October 7, 1933]**1883-1933****GOLDEN JUBILEE****Rev. Father Lodovico Pastor of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church****HAZLETON PENNSYLVANIA****October 7, 1933****To My Parishioners, Relatives and Friends,****This remembrance****Of MY GOLDEN JUBILEE****Is dedicated****With Gratitude and Love****Reverend LEWIS LUCHI****OCTOBER 7TH 1883 ----- OCTOBER 7TH 1933****My dear Parishioners, Relatives and Friends:**

Fifty years a priest! In pronouncing these words, my heart swells. In writing them, my hand trembles.

¹⁰⁷ The North American Stigmatine Professed Students spent their summers at the Stigmatine House, Val di Non, **Fondo** ITALY

When I look back, turning my eyes to the long course of my sacerdotal life, and make a review of the many years passed in the sacred tasks of a priest of Christ; having had such great and so many privileges, so many graces, so many responsibilities, a sacred phrase comes to my lips – *MISERERE DEUS – TE DEUM LAUDAMUS – MISERERE MEI DEUS!* – because I see the long way sown with those moral shadows and deficiencies, from which even the most holy and venerable priests are not free. '*Te Deum laudamus*', because taking in, in a glance mentally, the fifty past years, a hundred reasons, a hundred motives occur to me for humble gratitude and praise to God who is so good and provident, for so many kindnesses, and the extraordinary graces which He gave me in the long course of my priesthood, and even before, in the fervid years of my childhood; of my youth in preparing for the religious life, in the holy sacerdotal ministry, to which God called me with a paternal voice.

So, today, on this my Sacerdotal Jubilee, it will be easy for you to catch on my lips, the song of sorrow and confession, as well as Eucharistic hymn of praise and gratitude. It is not my duty today, during this jubilee celebration, to remind you, [or show openly to the friends, to the colleagues of the priesthood], what God wanted and permitted to be done by me, with the cooperation of my good will in the many works of my sacerdotal ministry; in the many towns of Italy; and especially here, among you in the city of Hazleton, which I love and accept as my second home and country; here in the bosom of the St. Vigilius congregation, my very dear spiritual family, beloved field of my apostolic works. It is not my duty to recall, nor to illustrate this long period of my life as a priest and educator of the youth, especially in Italy. For me, it is enough today, to withdraw myself in spirit, to cover myself with confusion, and leave free, the course to the effects, to the sense of my paternal love for you, of thanksgiving to Providence and of gratitude to my parishioners, who, in these last years of my sacred ministry, gave me many demonstrations of the most devoted affection, of the most docile deference, and of that dear, and for me, only inspired serene correspondence, which must bind together, the hearts and the souls of sons, to the hearts and souls of the father.

Fifty years a priest! I repeat. My eyes fill with tears and my voice trembles in saying and writing these words. No, it is not my duty this day to speak to you of myself. It will be my duty to speak of you, in the silence of the spirit, in the humility of prayer, to speak of you who wanted me here in this dear Congregation of St. Vigilius, as father of your souls and those of your children, since friend of your families, comforter in your troubles, sharer of your joys, brother in the common misfortunes, in the sorrowful occasions of life; to speak of our church, the pupil of my eyes, my care and yours, my glory and yours; to speak of our cemetery, the sacred ground of hope and tears, where many of our dear ones are waiting for us, where soon, I, also, shall lie, under the shadow of the Cross, piteous guardian of the poor mortal remains of your deceased father and pastor who also wants you.

O Temple of God, house of the Father, who is in Heaven, permanent abode of God in the Holy Eucharist, under the shadow of the Tabernacle, receive today, in odor of suavity, the sacrifice of my golden Sacerdotal Jubilee, hear the sighs and the prayers which I raise for myself, my fellow priests, my parishioners, my friends of Italy and America, for all in this city and nearby towns for the living and the dead. O, our dear dead, who are sleeping in the

blessed ground, with faces turned toward Heaven, to the immortal country under the eyes of the merciful God, for you, also, my Eucharistic sacrifice, my propitiatory prayers, all my sacerdotal pity is offered.

Soon, I will come to you, I will come to you, to keep you company, to remain and rest with you, near to you, always your father and guardian; and the pity, which, today, moves me for you, I hope and pray my faithful parishioners, my dear friends, not only of Hazleton, but of the community, will feel for me when I have gone to join you.

With these thoughts, directed by the greatest of paternal grateful love borne toward you, I invoke from God, all graces, all blessings, over you, over your families, and over the future of the youth I love so well.

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In HOMAGE
Of Rev. Henry LUCHI

To
His dearest Uncle, the Rev. Lewis LUCHI
On the celebration of his
Golden Jubilee

A Jubilee! Fifty years of Priesthood, that is to say, of spiritual ascensions, of apostolic endeavors of trepid anxiety in the vineyard of the Lord, for his glory, for the extension of His kingdom among men, for the peace and sanctification of the souls on earth, for their salvation and glorification in heaven.

A long formidable course of years, that frightens, if it is true that the dignity of the priesthood carries a tremendous responsibility that would even make one endowed with Angelic virtues, tremble. A path that is almost lost in vicissitudes, in memories, in glad and sad events of life of such an admirable man.

This certainly is a most happy occasion that recalls two holy events, October 7, 1883 and October 8th, 1933; they bind the activities and labors of a minister of God in one long glorious day. His first Mass - the dawn, and his Jubilee Mass – not the twilight which may be confused with the shadow of the night, but with flaming sunset which envelops and inflames the golden harvest of his glorious and devoted career. Thus we come to the significance of this solemn celebration in honor of the Rev. Father Lewis Luchi, Pastor of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church in Hazleton, Pennsylvania.

Long before the author of this first saw the light of day, Deacon Lewis Luchi, for the first time ascended the altar of the *Stimmate*, in Parma, Italy. It was in the year of our Lord 1883, in the presence of his confreres, that he, for the first time, offered the holy Sacrifice of the Mass, immolating the Host of Peace and love in an emotion of heavenly bliss, a sacred communion of hearts never forgotten by those who, after preparing with an arduous routine of a religious life, and aspiring by long years of study and self sacrifice, have arrived at their coveted goal.

That was the radiant beginning of his mission, of his public life as an apostle, teacher, and priest. How many still behold his presence not only among his confreres but also among his numerous disciples! When the young priest, vigorous, ardent, labored in the schools, or among groups of vivacious children on the sportive field, guided, and animated their youthful games, or in the beautiful church of the *Stimmate*, led the prayers and songs of innocent hearts. From the altar and pulpit he imparted his love and teachings in that well known and robust voice, with sculptoric phrases, ever convincing ever so kind. Who in literary and musical academies showed himself an instructor, an organizer, an expert. Who, when animated by so much apostolic spirit, on the streets, in the parishes, and in the '*Oratori Mariani*' displayed his zeal or when often on Sundays and feast days, he delivered those ardent sermons and panegyrics in the Churches of the Dioceses of Verona and Mantua.

Who in Verona between 1883 and 1892 did not know, approach, admire and love Father Luchi? Wherever he goes he finds a pupil whom he taught at the *Stimmate* College. Some of whom at present occupy enviable positions, and have nothing but love and gratitude for him; never did he deviate from his course of activity, giving of his best in his field of labor. He spent his earliest and most vigorous years in Verona, Rome, Parma and Trento. In all these cities his name is still remembered and blessed with kind words of gratitude and admiration, for the good that he has so widely and benevolently imparted to all those whose good fortune brought them within the radius of his ministrations.

Later, called by his faithful countrymen, he comes to America, the classic land of liberty, of riches and of industrial progress. All the handicaps, including his age, failed to stop him. His coming to America at a rather advanced age, without knowledge of the English language, a quarter of a century ago, was not an easy task when migration was still in its infancy.

But, our dear Father Luchi, fully confident in the Divine Providence that never forsakes its own, came to bring even to this land, the fire of his zeal. He then started by consolidating the Congregation of St. Vigilius, which, at that time, was like a flock of sheep without a shepherd, and founded a new church, the first Tyrolean Church in America, and a new parish, the Parish of our Lady of Mount Carmel.

How could I recount all the sacrifices and ceaseless efforts of this zealous pastor and minister of God in seeking and fathering all the sheep given to his care?

It will suffice to say that the narrow confines of his Parish did not satisfy his aspirations. He extended the field of his pastoral and apostolic activities to nearby villages, valleys and farms.

His zeal caused him to found the Church of the Holy Rosary, to take care of another section of Italians, residents of the southern part of this city, who up to that time, were without a spiritual leader, was because of his zeal also that all Italian Churches of Hazleton were placed for a time under his administration.

Later he devoted himself entirely to his own congregation, a faithful, conscientious, hard working class of people, mostly Tyrolean. In his twenty years of ceaseless work and care, he was able to magnificently organize and form a united solidarity of understanding, action and opinion of the people of the flourishing Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish. Within this parish flourish and prosper all those Church Societies and activities that go under the name of 'Catholic Action' with so much firmness and apostolic spirit issued by Pope Pius XIth and warmly sponsored by our Rt. Rev. Bishop. I, myself, on occasions have been able to see the success of his work. During the Holy Missions held in the parish Church I was deeply moved by the piety of this people, their love and devotion to Church, priest and God. So, on other events, I have seen the people all press around their beloved pastor to congratulate him at happy recurrences and to show him their esteem, their affection and their attachment.

In a heart animated by so much zeal there had to bloom another virtue – charity. In these long years of his residence in our city, the Rev. Fr. Lewis Luchi has been not only a pastor to his flock, but also a father solicitous for the material and spiritual good of his people, always ready to bring the comfort of his fatherly word and generous help whenever sorrow or misfortune had visited a home. But even here, it will be sufficient to say that the name of Fr. Luchi is too well known everywhere without speaking of his acts of charity.

I deem it a great blessing to be the nephew of such a God-like priest, and so I could not close this little tribute in homage of his Golden Jubilee without declaring the extent of my affections.

Dearest Uncle, in this day that forms the official acknowledgment of your Day in the vineyard of the Lord, to the sentiments of admiration and veneration, I want to pass the expression of the affectionate feelings of my heart, which I would like to summarize in the biblical phrase of Joshua: *Move not, o Sun!* That is: May the days of your service be prolonged for many years so that new success and merits may be added to the present golden harvest. May you see the complete realization of your plans and wishes, for the good of souls and the glory of God. May we all, nephew, relatives and friends enjoy the fruit of your wisdom, experience and love for a long time to come, at least for another quarter of century.

The Nephew, Rev. Henry Luchi

c. Fr. Henry's Golden Jubilee [June 23, 1968]**SOUVENIR OF****GOLDEN JUBILEE****of****REV. HENRY I. LUCHI****June 23, 1968****Hazleton PA****To Father****HENRY I. LUCHI****OUR LADY OF MT. CARMEL CHURCH****Hazleton Pennsylvania****On the Occasion of His****GOLDEN JUBILEE****1918 JUNE 23 1968****Commemorated with a****CONCELEBRATED MASS****Presiding****THE MOST REVEREND J. CARROLL McCORMICK, DD****Bishop of Scranton****Sermon by****Rev. ARTHUR FERRARI, STL****In loving Homage****The Compilers****Dedication****Apostolic Delegation****United States of America****3339 Massachusetts Avenue****Washington D.C. 20008****May 17, 1968****Reverend and Dear Father,**

I am pleased to inform you that on the happy occasion of the Golden Jubilee of your Ordination to the Sacred Priesthood, our Most Holy Father, Pope Paul VIth, has graciously deigned to bestow upon you his Apostolic Benediction. It is the Wish of His Holiness that this Blessing be shared by the clergy and religious associated with you, your parishioners, and by the relatives and friends who join with you in celebrating this memorable event.

May this Blessing serve as a reward for a life of dedication to the service of God and as a pledge of divine favor for the years to come. To this Benediction granted to you with paternal affection by the Sovereign Pontiff, I join my personal congratulations and sincere best wishes.

With renewed felicitations and sentiments of esteem, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ Luigi Raimondi
Apostolic Delegate

Rev. Henry I. Luchi
Pastor
Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church
Hazleton PA

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Diocese of Scranton
390 Wyoming Avenue
Scranton Pennsylvania 18503

Reverend Henry I. Luchi
Our Lady of Mount Carmel Rectory
212 West Walnut Street
Hazleton Pennsylvania 18201

Dear Father Luchi,

Having learned that you are to celebrate the Fiftieth Anniversary of your Ordination to the Sacred Priesthood on Sunday, Jun 23rd, I wish to send you my congratulations and best wishes.

This observance brings to mind that relatively few of our clergy have ever had the distinction you enjoy in the way of years of service to the Divine Master in his Priesthood.

It is my hope and prayer that God will grant you abundance of joy and many consolations on the occasion of this celebration, and still many years to continue in His service.

Asking God to bless you, I am, with every good wish,

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ J. Carroll McCormick
Bishop of Scranton

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d. Fr. Henry's 1st Assignment - Holy Rosary Church

When he began at Holy Rosary, the little Church was rarely more than half full, but attendance increased annually, by parishioners who were brought back to the practice of their religion. This was really a truly difficult apostolate, for he was hampered by a lack of facilities, language barrier, and environment of the new land. During this pioneering period of 17 years, Father received invaluable assistance from his parents, who resided with him and shared in his joys, sorrows and sacrifices. A period of development followed, wherein the Junior Holy Name Society was organized and social activities for the youth of the parish were initiated, such as dramatic productions, tennis courts and parish picnics. Finally, in 1939, the Church was remodeled, when a new sanctuary and two wings were erected. This work was completed on January 6, of the following later.

During his stay at Holy Rosary, Father Luchi won the respect of the parishioners, and even today they often express their feelings of respect and gratitude to him. In 1943, the debt contracted for the remodeling of the Church was repaid and then, after 21 years at the parish, a sudden event determined another development in his life. The priest receives his mission from heaven: *You have not chosen Me, Our Lord said to the apostles, but I have chosen you ... as the Father sent Me, so I send you...* and He guides the apostolate of the priest in the wonderful ways of His Divine Providence.

e. Fr. Henry's new Mission

On May 8th, 1944, Fr. Lewis Luchi, first pastor and founder of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, died and Father Henry was appointed his successor, by Bishop Hafey. Father Lewis had developed a splendid apostolate in the founding and cultivating of the parish and he was known by his acquaintances for his kindness, generosity and charity. Since he was 84 years of age when he died, he could not do the work of a young man during his last years. Consequently, there was much to be done when Father Henry arrived. There were debts to be aid, societies to be reorganized, and a scattered parish to be reunited.

Soon the debt if \$30,000.00 on the Parish House and Social Club was removed. The parish societies, including the Holy Name, were reorganized, and the cooperation of the parishioners increased in vigor and sincerity. A 'Tyrolean Day' was initiated to unite the parishioners.

The hardships of these trying first years were brightened by the First Masses of two sons of the parish: Father Joseph Fellin celebrated his First Mass on June 12, 1945, and on December 21, 1945, Fr. Arthur P. Ferrari ascended the altar. The former is a

member of the Stigmatine Fathers, and the latter is the present Pastor of Holy Rosary Church.

During the following years the first of a number of improvements to the physical plant began. A new electric organ was purchased in 1947 and the first decoration of the interior of the Church was completed. Much of the interior Church was completed. Much of this artistry exists still today – namely the illustrations of the Annunciation, Our Lady of the Scapular, Mary, queen of Purgatory, and the symbolic representations that adorn the ceiling of the nave.

An awareness of the importance of a Catholic education has always been foremost in Father Luchi's mind and his life's dream was a Parochial School for the parish. The Parochial school comes next to the Church in importance and necessity. 20 or 30 years from now, the school children of today direct the affairs of State, will hold offices of trust, will be at the head of our country's industrial enterprises, will enact and administer the country's laws and the Catholic school tries to prepare not only learned men, but also honest men, pure men, conscientious and God-fearing men. The Pastor credits the realization of his dream to the fervent prayers of the members of the Legion of Mary, which he organized on December 8, 1955.

The first step toward the formation of a school had been taken earlier that year, when the parish house was adapted for the first Convent, after the Daughters of Mercy agreed to establish one there on September 6, 1955, with Sister Francis as the first Superior. For 30 years catechetical classes were conducted by Mrs. Carr, whose death had stressed a pressing need for the Sisters. It was then that the Most Reverend Jerome Hannan considered the parish situation favorable for the establishment of a school and approved its construction. Ground was broken on January 29, 1956 and in September the doors were opening for first and second grade. One grade was added annually until the school consisted of eight grades. At the beginning of construction, the sum of \$50,000.00 was available in the school treasury. An additional \$10,000.00 was to be raised through a parish drive, which readily went over the top to complete the financing of the school.

On October 7, 1956 the parish celebrated its Golden Anniversary with a solemn Mass of Thanksgiving, a banquet in the school hall, and the publication of a booklet containing a history of the parish to date. On that memorable occasion the Pastor recorded in the Sunday Bulletin:

... On this golden day, that completes the majestic number of days that constitute the fifty years of existence of our Church, two sentiments should arise in our hearts: one of joy and gratitude to the all-holy and all-good God for the many graces and favors granted to us during the course of these many years.... yes, my eyes fill with tears and my voice trembles when I think of the Sacraments we received here in this house of God, the children that were baptized, the divine

friendships that were formed with our Lord in Holy Communion , the matrimonial unions contracted at the foot of the altar. Our Lord's constant presence in our midst, the vocations to the priesthood and sisterhood, the unfailing protection of our Heavenly Mother, Our Lady of Mount Carmel, and the brotherly assistance of our holy Advocates, the Saints ... We will never thank God enough for all of this! But another sentiment should blend in with such grateful rejoicing, namely one of sorrow, because at times, we also see our negligence and poor correspondence to the Divine Goodness...

The erection of the school marked the beginning of a three-step building program which was completed in the time span of eight years. The second step was the building of a new Convent in 1962, the construction of which was marked by a providential event. There had been no property available near the Church, but as the need for a new Convent began to become apparent, the property on the corner of the Church and Chapel streets appeared for sale. The Convent was dedicated by Right Reverend Francis Molino, on September 1st. Finally a new Rectory was built on the site of the parish house. The preexisting structure, originally moved from St. Gabriel's, was 105 years old. The dedication ceremony was performed by Most Reverend Bishop Henry T. Klonowski on November 8, 1964. A School library was also added to the building during its construction.

The building program was always secondary and complementary to the spiritual development of the parish. During this time Father Henry had established two confraternities to facilitate this development. One, the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament to promote greater devotion to our Eucharistic Lord, and the other, the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, to promote the study of religion among them children and the high school students in the public schools. In addition, he cultivated the Church societies, especially the Holy Name, which began to flourish in membership and participation in monthly Communion. He was one of the first pastors in the area to introduce the New Liturgy. These changes were initiated with the Dialogue Mass in 1958. This was followed by the major changes in March 1965, full participation by the Laity in December of that year, and finally, an altar facing the congregation in August 1966.

One last point that cannot be overlooked was his untiring efforts to install a tender devotion to the patroness of the Church in the hearts of the parishioners. In addition to celebrating the Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel with special solemnity he always stressed the May devotions and preceded the feast of the Assumption with a *triduum* for vocations, that caused them to flourish again in the parish. When a Bishop ordains a young man to the holy Priesthood, he only fulfills the promise God made to men from most ancient times. To Abraham He promised He would give him a descendance, that would never end - God's People. To the Patriarch, that the Messiah would form a Kingdom that would last forever – the Church. He asked the prophets to

announce that His worship, through an Immaculate Victim [Jesus in the Mass] would become universal and continue through all times. As He promised to Abraham, our Fathers and His Seed for all centuries, His word will never fail and it is being fulfilled in vocations to the priesthood in the new priests who will continue the work of Christ and His Kingdom here on earth.

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[Back page]

**OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL
Patroness of Our Church
MOTHER OF GOD AND OURS**

**O Mary, Who have been my inspiration
In becoming a Priest, and my
Guide in the service of the
Lords vineyard, be also my
comfort in the evening
of my life.**

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A Published Parish History

**A PARISH HISTORY
OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL CHURCH**

by

Christopher J. Zahay

Foreword

‘Eighty-five’ seems like an insignificant number when viewed in the scope of history’s years. But when we refer to Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church and her people, it embodies far more than years. It speaks of memories and families and work and faith from 1905-1990. We know that numbers lend only an emphasis; that beneath the numbers there is greater and deeper truth.

Our ancestors came from the land of the Dolomites; a land which boasted of majestic mountain ranges, flowing streams, glaciers, and superb forests. Life there was never easy; it was a continuous struggle amidst poverty and hardship but they had faith and courage. Forced to turn their eyes toward more promising shores, countless numbers made the journey to ‘the land of the free and the home of the brave.’ Our area boasted of ever so many families who now called America and Hazleton their home. Together they built the only Tyrolean Church in the United States under the steady hand of their beloved Pastor, Father Lodovico Luchi, who assumed the pastoral care for these hard working and well meaning sons and daughters of the Tyrol. In 1990, our Church still stands as a memorial to our forefathers, the symbol of all that is good and meaningful in the history of our people in these United States.

We wish to pay tribute to the efforts, time and hard work of on August L. Pilati, who almost single-handedly produced the information and the compilation of this memory-bound publication.

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY, OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL PARISH!

The Heritage COMMITTEE
Of the
PARISH ADVISORY COUNCIL



INTRODUCTION

In the Fall of 1989, mainly through the efforts of our Pastor, Father Homer, a Parish Historical Society was formed. This group was chaired by Dorothy Endrizzi, who then appointed various members of the Parish Council to various committees to prepare for our 85th anniversary in July 1990 and also in conjunction with the celebration of the Feast of Mount Carmel on July 16, 1990. Many things were accomplished. The name given to the basement area of the Church was the 'Tyrolean Heritage Room' and was appropriately decorated throughout with plaques, memorabilia of our Tyrolean People, etc. All of you here today have surely noticed all of the big improvements in our Church property.

To prepare a Parish History of our 85th, Ms. Endrizzi appointed Gus Pilati as parish historian. Mr. Pilati had at his convenience much material from previous anniversaries. For instance pages 1 & 3 were prepared by Mr. Zahay. It seemed foolish not to use Mr. Zahay's entire booklet from 1905 – 1980. This booklet was expertly done and due credit was given to him in our Parish History Narrative.

On Page 24, 'A New Era' was begun and continued until Page 28 and contained most of the information of our Parish to the present. Page 29 to 35, depicts the history of the Tyrolean people from information gathered over the years.

The balance of the Narrative shows various pictures and photographs dating back many years, they are self-explanatory. Included in this Narrative are complete histories of our present and former Pastors.

We feel that this is the most complete history of our Parish from its beginning in 1905, to the present years. There should be one copy in every household. Your Historian has utilized all of the information in his possession and some of the other parishioners and friends.



DEDICATION

It is difficult to dedicate this Narrative to any one person, or group of persons who are, or were involved in Church activities from 1905 – 1990. Many, many people were involved. Again, we do not want to single out any particular person who served our parish faithfully and well over the years. We know who they are in many respects. The writer is more fortunate than others in naming personalities, as he was involved from the time he was a youngster of nine and over the years observed literally hundreds of faithful members of our parish who gave hours and hours of time to the Church and its societies. We are referring to those both living and dead.

So, it is fitting, therefore, to finally make a decision. We dedicate this Parish History to all present and former and deceased members of our Tyrolean Parish Community. No organization, Religious or others, can exist or grow without the constant cooperation of all concerned.

The writer expresses his deepest thanks to the members of the Historical and Heritage Society, for its untiring work in fulfilling a life long dream.

We invite everyone to inspect our Heritage Room at any time.

Also, a complete reading of this Parish History is a must. Please be a good Parishioner and do justice to those who spent many hours in doing so.

Gus Pilati, Historian
Josephine Trettel
Dorothy Endrizzi
Denise Chocolas, Typist.

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1905 - 1930

Why write a history of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church? It is not important to write just a series of facts about the key dates surrounding 75 years of this parish. A history such as this should be about people--individuals who contributed to the health and well being of the congregation. The history of the people and the events of this parish not only apply to the parishioners of this Church but also to the city of Hazleton as a whole. The social history of Hazleton and the area in general, is made up of immigrants from Europe seeking a better way of life for themselves and their families. The history of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, combined with the other ten Roman Catholic Congregations of Hazleton [three Italian, two Slovak, one Irish, one German, one Polish, one Lithuanian and one Magyar], and the other congregations [Greek

Catholic rite, Protestant denominations and Jewish], combine to create a social history unique to Northeastern Pennsylvania.”

The History of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church must begin with the Reverend Father Lodovico Luchi. He was sent by his superiors of the Diocese of Trent to America to work among the immigrants from Trent living in the Hazleton area.

Father Lodovico Luchi was a Stigmatine Father, or a priest sent out by the Order to do missionary work and to teach at Catholic schools and universities. Father Luchi did both and with important credentials to show for it. He was Director of the '*Oratori Stimmadini*' in Verona, Italy and while there, he also served as Vice-Rector of St. Louis College. He later served in similar capacities in Rome, Parma and Trento. He was in Trento when he was chosen, along with another Stigmatine Father, the Reverend Father Anthony Dalla Porta, to go to Hazleton, Pennsylvania, to work with the Tyrolean immigrants. A Tyrolean resident of White Haven, Pennsylvania, Peter Magagna, was assigned the task of meeting the Fathers in Trento and accompanying them to the Hazleton Area.

After a Private Audience with Pope Pius Xth in Rome, Father Luchi, with Father Dalla Porta, and Mr. Magagna, set out from Trento on September 26th, 1905, and arrived in Hazleton on October 7th. Upon their arrival, Mr. Magagna introduced the Reverend Fathers to Bishop Michael Hoban of the Scranton Diocese. Bishop Hoban gave the two Stigmatine Fathers permission to establish a congregation for the growing Tyrolean population of the Hazleton area.

They immediately set out to collect the Tyroleans of the area and establish them into a congregation. Thus the Congregation of Saint Vigilius was born. In effect it was a congregation without a parish. The Bishop initially granted the use of St. Peter and Paul's Lithuanian Church, then located at Laurel and Oak Streets, for Church services. The Congregation of Saint Vigilius had a home, at least temporarily. While at the Lithuanian Church, the first baptism of the Congregation of Saint Vigilius was performed on one Angelina Fellin, November 17, 1905, by Father Dalla Porta. The first marriage of the Congregation, also at Saint Peter and Paul's was that of one Luigi Miorelli to Maria Bonan, on December 2, 1905. This ceremony was performed by Father Luchi.

Due to the necessity of a growing congregation, Bishop Hoban granted permission to Fathers Luchi and Dalla Porta to establish a chapel in the Liberty Hotel, located at Laurel and Chestnut streets in January 1906. The new location provided space for the congregation until the winter months were over and a permanent parish could be built. The owner of the Liberty Hotel, Annibale Rossi, was also a Tyrolean and the first President of the congregation.

Fathers Luchi and Dalla Porta acted immediately to make the long sought dream a reality. On January 21, 1906, within a few days of moving the congregation into the Liberty Hotel, a plot of ground was purchased on South Church Street, on which to build a permanent Church. Construction of the Church began in May.

The first funeral of the congregation occurred while at the Liberty Hotel. It was that of Peter Martini on February 17, 1906. He was buried in the Most Precious Blood Cemetery. Since no cemetery existed for the Congregation of Saint Vigilius, the Most Precious Blood and Saint Gabriel's Cemeteries were mainly utilized by the Congregation at that time.

Work continued on the construction of the Church and in February 22, 1907, Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church was officially dedicated and blessed by Bishop Hoban. This was the permanent home of the Congregation of Saint Vigilius [although the name for the congregation is no longer in common usage, it still remains as the official name for the Our Lady of Mount Carmel membership]. That marked the establishment of the first Tyrolean Church in the United States. Also, on the same day as the Church dedication, the first religious act of the Congregation in the new Church took place. The Sacrament of Confirmation was administered by Bishop Hoban upon a large group of children and young adults.

The task in which Fathers Luchi and Dalla Porta were sent out to accomplish was complete. However, other tasks still needed attention in order for the Congregation to function properly. A parish rectory was still lacking. In the Autumn of 1906, the old Rectory of Saint Gabriel's was purchased and transported to the rear of the Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church. After extensive renovation, Fathers Luchi and Dalla Porta occupied it on March 15, 1907.

Shortly afterwards, Father Dalla Porta was summoned by the Superior General of the Stigmatine Fathers to go to Springfield Massachusetts and continue his pioneering work as spiritual leader of the growing Italian colony of immigrants numbering over 20,000. He died in Waltham Massachusetts on March 22, 1931. It should not be forgotten that Father Dalla Porta, with great courage, helped Father Luchi in the task of establishing a congregation and church in a foreign country without knowledge of the native language.

Father Lodovico Luchi was granted permission, by his superiors in the Stigmatines to remain as spiritual leader of our Lady of Mount Carmel Church and at the same time, to direct the work of the Stigmatine Fathers and Brothers within the Diocese of Scranton. Father Luchi was truly a pioneer, in that he was the first Stigmatine Father in America and the first to serve as a parish priest. As Director of the Stigmatines in the Diocese, he was responsible for bringing over other Stigmatine Fathers from Italy, to the Diocese to act as parish priests. He brought here Father Francis Molino, among others, who served many years as Pastor of the Most Precious

Blood in Hazleton. Also as Director of the Stigmatines in the Diocese, he was given charge of the Italian Parishes in Hazleton for seven years, until 1922, when Father Luchi optioned out of the order. He was taken in by the Diocese of Scranton to devote his full time to the needs of his church and congregation. He was not a young man anymore.

In his capacity, Father Luchi was also responsible for the founding of Holy Rosary Church of Hazleton which was a 'Mission Church' to Our Lady of Mount Carmel for ten years until it was granted parish status in 1925. In 1920, he brought from Europe the first group of the Daughters of our Lady of Mercy, for the instruction of the school children of the Diocese. Father Lodovico Luchi had done many good works not only for his own parish, but throughout the Diocese of Scranton. His influence was great as he had numerous invitations to leave the Diocese for other posts. Among them was an invitation from Archbishop Mesmer of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, who offered him a property of \$50,000 to serve that Diocese. Bishop Shannon of the Diocese of Harrisburg wanted him to head of all the Italians within that Diocese, but Father Luchi declined all invitations because his heart was here, in Hazleton, and with all his parishioners at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, and here is where he wished to remain.

Returning to the History of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church itself, Father Luchi was responsible for the organization of the early Church societies. The first President of the Congregation of Saint Vigilius was Annibale Rossi, who gave much help to the early years of the Parish. He was succeeded by Louis Ferrari, who served in that capacity into the 1920's, when the Diocese made it universal for anyone, but the parish priest to serve as president of a congregation, Bortolo Fellin, was the first Secretary of the Congregation. The first Sexton of the parish was Antonio Pancheri. Other early parish organizations included the Christian Mothers of which Giuditta Martini was the first President; Our Lady of Lourdes Sodality for young ladies with Emma Asson serving as an early President; the Saint Vigilius Young Men's Club led by Charles Matuella; the Church Choir led by Luigi Visintainer; the Altar Boys by Herman Marcani; and Saint Stephen's Society led by Matteo Betta.

A few years after the establishment of the Church Societies, Father Luchi built a Society Hall, a two-story brick building adjoining the rectory, and established the Parish House on the corner of Church and Walnut Streets.

The Church basement was also utilized as a meeting place for the class rooms. Adolph Marcolina taught English classes to the Tyrolean emigrants in the basement of the Church in 1922 and 1923.

The basement was also used as theatrical productions for the congregation to participate in and attend for the benefit of the Church and entertainment of the congregation. Father Luchi strongly supported the youth of the Church to participate in

those productions. The first production was the drama 'Bianca and Fernando' for the benefit of the Church. In those early years, the parish conducted a procession each year on the Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. That tradition continued into the 1920's.

Also, it should not be forgotten that many of the parish men and women served in both world Wars and their services were greatly appreciated.

After the organization of the early Church and its societies, Father Luchi then concentrated his efforts on the liquidation of the Church debt. He was successful, as the congregation contributed generously to the financial aspects of the Church. However, as parish problems appeared minimized tragedy struck on the night of May 10, 1924. A fire gutted the interior of the Church. The damages were repaired and again the generous nature of the congregation was seen as the contributions made by them paid for the redecoration of the interior. The walls were redecorated with beautiful sacred paintings, new furnishings added, and new vestments were purchased. By 1926, all of those debts had been paid and the congregation was back to normal.

The Parish Cemetery, located at the Laurel Hill Terrace section of Hazleton was acquired through a generous land donation from Mrs. Sofia Coxe, an early and dear friend of Father Luchi. Father Luchi later divided up much of the land to other religious congregations in Hazleton and utilized a small part of the land for his own congregation. The land was rocky and, through much sacrifice, it was improved year after year until it was usable for burying the dead. The original mortuary chapel was a fine tribute to Father Luchi as the Founder of the Parish Cemetery and was his final resting place following his own death. [The original Chapel, recently dismantled will make way for a new and larger Chapel to meet the needs of the parish]. For many years, Joseph Facinelli, Sr., of Stockton, was thought to have been the first person buried in the Parish Cemetery in 1910, but new evidence shows that Gabriele Fellin of Stockton, and Atheda Luchi, infant daughter of Angelo and Minie Luchi, were both buried there in 1907.

In reference to Mrs. Sofia Coxe, she remained a faithful friend to Father Luchi, until her death in 1926. She was one of the area's great philanthropists and most of her money went to the poor. She gave much to charity, of which Father Luchi acquired a great deal to distribute to the poor of the parish, and the area. In a letter to Father Luchi, Mrs. Coxe wrote: '... not only am I satisfied with your help, but I must thank you because you are working for the poor, and, after all, that is everything...'

To commemorate the first 25 years of the history of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, a Silver Jubilee was held on October 12, 1930, which also marked the 25th anniversary of Father Luchi's pastoral work. The occasion was met by the celebration of a Mass of Jubilee led by the Rt. Reverend Monsignor Fagan, Pastor of St. Gabriel's Church. Also,

a procession marked the occasion which was composed of the Hazleton Liberty Band and the Societies of the Congregation of St. Vigilius. A booklet containing the history of the Church was given to all in attendance.

During that first Quarter century, the parish was blessed as Rev. Guerrino Rauzi was ordained to the priesthood on July 21, 1918.

†

1930 - 1956

As the second quarter of a century of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church history progressed through the 1930's, most of the parish work had become routine. The existing debts were paid off, the Church and Society buildings needed no major repairs, and the Church and Sodalities thrived. However, Father Lodovico was now in his advanced years. He celebrated his Golden Jubilee in the priesthood on October 7, 1933. He was 78 years old in 1937, and the time had come in which he needed an assistant to help and administer the Church affairs. In that year, Fr. Leo Sella was assigned to the Parish. He served Father Luchi faithfully until he was reassigned in 1943. He was succeeded as assistant Pastor, by Father James T. Clarke,¹⁰⁸ at that time and remained until the death of Father Luchi in 1944. Both assistant pastors gave strength to the Congregation during Father Luchi's waning years.

Three members of the congregation also gave strength to Father Luchi during his pastorship at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church. Their service to the Pastor and the Congregation was long and they contributed to serve the new Pastor, Father Henry Luchi for many years. Camillo Ramus, at one time served a Brother in the Stigmatine Community, devoted most of his life to the Parish as Sexton and as Collector of the Church dues. He walked many miles throughout the Hazleton area to collect the Church dues from parishioners and continued to do so until old age forced him to retire. To many youngsters in the parish, Camillo was a welcome guest for he loved children and always had 'goodies' for them. Upon his retirement, he was honored by the congregation with a reception and he was given a purse.

Annunziata Gentilini also contributed greatly to the Church. She served as housekeeper for both Father Lodovico Luchi and for Father Henry Luchi for over 50 years. She worked hard to keep the rectory a comfortable home for the Pastors and also as an office in which to conduct parish business from 1909 until illness forced her to retire and return to her native land in 1968. She also did a great deal of work for the Church societies during her many years with the parish.

¹⁰⁸ A priest of the Diocese of Scranton.

The third person of note was Mrs. Mary Carr who served as the Parish Secretary for the two Fathers Luchi. She also acted as organizer and teacher of the Catechism classes, and as play producer for the Parish theatrical productions in the parish basement. These three individuals will always be remembered for their contributions to the well being of Our Lady of Mount Carmel.

In his last years, Father Lodovico Luchi had the assistance of Father Francis Molino of Most Precious Blood Church, a life-long friend and frequent visitor to the Rectory, who kept his spirits up until the end, and also Father Joseph Berardi¹⁰⁹ of the Immaculate Conception Church of Kelayres, who assisted Father Luchi in the confessional.

On August 29, 1940, the parishioners of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church expressed their esteem for Father Luchi upon the occasion of his 81st birthday. Bishop Hafey was in attendance as were most of parishioners, friends and clergy of the Hazleton area. In his remarks on that day, Fr. Luchi noted:

‘... My dearest friends, I, your Pastor and father of your souls, embracing you with paternal tenderness and raising my hands, bless you. Perhaps this is the most solemn blessing of my whole life; perhaps it is the seal to the varied course of my years, partly lived with you and for you. Perhaps it is the prelude to the peaceful sunset of my long day. I almost feel the cold breeze of the final Vesper-hours. Now, at the end of my 81st year, humbly reconciled, I raise my voice to God and sincerely utter the word of Simeon:

‘Call in peace Thy Servant, O Lord, because my eyes have seen Thy salvation ...’

Father Luchi lived to perform one more great task. In 1942, the Church was completely renovated. The existing structure was lengthened twelve feet to accommodate another 75 people. The height of the Sanctuary was later raised about five feet and the edifice was re-bricked to add new beauty to it. New pews were also installed. It was dedicated on October 4, 1942. Many civic and religious leaders of the Hazleton area sent letters of appreciation to Father Luchi, upon His achievement, which were incorporated into a booklet to commemorate the occasion.

Time, however, was running out for Father Lodovico Luchi. His health continued to deteriorate since 1941, and he succumbed at Mercy Hospital in Wilkes-Barre, on May 8, 1944, after 39 years as the first Pastor of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church. His funeral served as yet another tribute by the parishioners to the Founder of the Church and the Congregation of Saint Vigilius. He was buried in the Chapel of the parish cemetery which stands as a tribute to his memory. While he was a great leader of religious affairs, he was also a leader of cultural affairs, in Hazleton. In Europe as a

¹⁰⁹ Both Fathers, Francis Molino and Joseph Berardi, were priests of the Diocese of Scranton PA.

Teacher, he met many leaders of the arts, taught them, and later brought them to Hazleton to perform. An example of his influence, Father Lodovico Luchi, had his former pupil, Giovanni Zenatello, at the time Caruso's greatest rival appear at the Palace Theater in Hazleton on June 6, 1916.

Upon Father Luchi's death, the assistant pastor, Father James T. Clarke, was appointed Administrator of the Parish for the period of one month. On June 7, 1944, Rev. Father Henry Luchi, Pastor of the Holy Rosary Church of Hazleton, and nephew of Father Lodovico, was appointed second Pastor of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church. Upon his arrival, Father Luchi said:

'... My mission in your midst will be to help you to save your souls. I wish, at the end, to be able to say in all truth and honesty: I have loved you and have given you the best of my mind, the best of my heart, the best of my strength ...'

Father Henry Luchi's background was also distinguished as was that of his Uncle. He was ordained into the priesthood on May 12, 1918, in Bressanone, Tyrol, in the midst of World War I. He served as assistant pastor at Fondo, Tyrol, from 1918-1923. While there, he built a hall for the parish choir and one of the parish boys. On February 27, 1923, the Bishop of Trento gives Fr. Luchi permission to join his family in Hazleton, Pennsylvania. He arrived in Hazleton on June 25, and was immediately assigned to Holy Rosary Church, then a 'Mission Church' [Filial] to Our Lady of Mount Carmel, under the care of his Uncle, Fr. Lodovico Luchi. He served as his Uncle's assistant. He built a rectory for the Church in 1924, gathered a large congregation, and, on January 6, 1925, Bishop Hoban declared Holy Rosary a parish, with Father Henry Luchi as first pastor. He organized the first classes in religion there and founded the Church societies. He remodeled the Church in 1939 and soon paid off the debt. On June 7, 1944, he was officially transferred to Our Lady of Mount Carmel where he succeeded his Uncle.

The first years of Fr. Henry Luchi's pastorate were years of adjustment for the Pastor as well as for his congregation. Father Luchi proved successful in that endeavor as he won over the hearts of the congregation in rapid time. His first major task was to liquidate the existing debts of the parish. He succeeded by liquidating the \$24,000.00 debt by 1947.

Shortly thereafter, Father Luchi started a weekly Novena to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and another to Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal. On September 21, 1947, the first issue of the Church Bulletin appeared and was dedicated to Our Lady of Mount Carmel.

Fr. Luchi also continued the practice of conducting 'Bingo' parties for the congregation and encouraged the continuation of the Tyrolean Day reunions begun by

Fr. Lodovico Luchi. Those reunions were held at various times at Landmesser's Grove, West Hazleton; Evergreen Park, Saint John's; Martini's Grove, Weston. These reunions were held to provide an opportunity for the parishioners to meet socially and to get to know each other a little better. Most parishioners overcame distance to attend the reunions. The annual Tyrolean Day celebrations still stir found memories for many of the present parishioners.

As time progressed, Father Luchi repaired and renovated the old rectory and did the same for the Society Hall. In 1953, following the death of Mrs. Mary Carr, Father Luchi received permission to open a Convent for the Daughters of Mercy to teach Catechism. The old Parish House, next to the Church, was utilized for the Convent. Sister Frances became the first Mother Superior in 1955. At the same time, Father Luchi organized a new Church Society, the Legion of Mary.

Throughout the early 1950's, the Church societies were strengthened as smokers and social reunions were organized, and Communion Breakfasts continued with greater attendance. The Holy Name Society and Our Lady of Lourdes Sodality increased in membership. The Social Club was organized to provide recreation for the Holy Name Society members. The Boy Scouts, organized by Robert DeFant and Raymond Rossi in 1950, provided recreation for the many boys of the parish.

The Church Choir was also a major asset to the Parish as it is today. Many Directors have served over the years, including John Dalfovo and, at present, Albert Donati, Jr. One must not forget the Church organist for so many years, Ms. Josephine Trettel, who has dedicated herself to the Church and still gives a great deal of her time for the congregation. Also, we should not forget the various men of the parish continued as Church Collectors succeeding Camillo Ramus¹¹⁰, until the due collection was put into the envelope system. It is impossible to include everyone who contributed to the advancement of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. There have been many and in this publication it is very unfortunate that they cannot all be included. However, we must recognize Charles Matuella who was an organizer of many of the early Church societies and Chairman for many parish functions. Also, Henry Recla has been a dedicated worker for many parish activities and served as an organizer and leader of the Parish Cemetery Association. And, we recognize all the many hard working women of the Parish who have given so much of their time and talents for these many years to contribute to the success of the Church activities

Surely, these devoted parishioners are an inspiration to all. At various times, Father Luchi had been assisted by numerous Pastors whose services were greatly appreciated: Rev. James Morelli, Rev. John Ferguson, Rev. John Kaslaskas, Rev. Gaspar Langella, and Rev. Luke Sylvestri.

¹¹⁰ A former Stigmatine Brother.

A great event occurred in the life of the parish on July 16, 1955. Bishop Jerome Hannan gave his approval for Father Luchi to build a Parish School. Ground was broken on January 29, 1956, and on September 4, the first classes began. The School cost \$ 60,000.00 and a strong parish drive for funds was successful. The Society Hall was dismantled to make room for the School property.

The second 25 years of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church History ended as the Golden Jubilee of the Parish was held on October 7, 1956. A Solemn Mass of Thanksgiving and a banquet were held in the new School Hall. Again, the publication of a Memorial Booklet commemorating the first 50 years of the Parish was distributed.

During the second 25 years of Parish History, the Parish was blessed by the ordination of eight men from our congregation: Rev. Louis Bonan and Rev. Louis Ecker, both on September 12, 1935; Rev. Lewis Pilati on May 22, 1937, late Pastor of Holy Rosary Church in Hazleton; Rev. George Ecker on July 3, 1937; Rev. Adolph Ferrari, on July 9, 1939; Rev. Guy Rossi, on June 18th, 1944; Rev. Joseph Fellin on June 12, 1945; and Rev. Arthur Ferrari on December 21, 1945, late Pastor of Holy Rosary Church in Hazleton and Sister Rose M. Kershbaumer, R.N., M.S., who entered the Society of Medical Mission Sisters in 1954.



1956 - 1980

As the 1950'S progressed, as feeling of confidence for Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church activities existed. The school membership grew as the new parochial school expanded to a full eight grades between 19546 and 1962. To accommodate that expansion, Father Luchi began the second part of his Building program. He purchased the lot at the corner of Church and Chapel streets for the construction of a new and larger Convent. It was completed and dedicated on September 1, 1962, by Rt. Rev. Monsignor Francis Molino. The new Convent allowed additional members of the Daughters of Mercy to take up residence for teaching of the parish school children.

The former Convent and Parish house became vacant as the new Convent was utilized. This allowed for the third and final step in the parish building program of Father Luchi. The existing Rectory, 105 years old, originally the Rectory for Saint Gabriel's, was no longer a structurally safe building and new quarters had to be found. Father Luchi had the vacant Convent dismantled and a new, modern Rectory built in its place. The new rectory was dedicated on November 8, 1964, by Auxiliary Bishop Henry T. Klonowski. A school library was later added to the Rectory connecting it with the school building. The old Rectory was then dismantled to provide parking space behind the Church for parishioners attending Mass.

Despite the vast building program and the growing confidence of the parishioners, unforeseen tragedy struck again. During one of the Sunday Masses, on May 26, 1963, smoke began to pour into the Church from the heating ducts. Mass was stopped as a fire was detected in the Church basement. The heating system was the probable cause since the fire gutted the basement, but fortunately, the Church itself suffered minor damage. The basement was soon repaired and redecorated and the Church repainted. However, after those repairs were made, the interior of the Church and the interior of the steeple were soon repaired.

Throughout the 1960's, the spiritual development of the parish continued. Father Luchi organized the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine to promote religious study among students of the public schools. Also, the Holy Name Society continued to grow rapidly through participation in monthly Communion. Father Luchi was also one of the first Pastors of the area to introduce the New Liturgy in March 1965, and the new altar, facing the Congregation, in August 1966.

Two more blessed events occurred in the history of the parish. On June 23, 1968, the parishioners of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church celebrated the Golden Jubilee of Father Luchi. It was a glorious occasion, as it was for his Uncle 35 years before. As both reached their golden years in life, the parishioners wished to show their esteem for them. Also, on November 22, 1957, the congregation again showed tribute to Father Luchi on the occasion of his 75th birthday. The congregation presented to him an oil painting of himself, which is displayed in the Tyrolean Heritage Room.

The Congregation knew that the occasion of Fr. Luchi's 75th birthday would be one of the last celebrations of the parish while he served as Pastor. He retired as Pastor Our Lady of Mount Carmel after serving 27 years, because the new Church rules are that a parish priest shall retire at the age of 75. Father Luchi at that time, became *Pastor Emeritus*, but continued to offer Mass until advanced age. On the same day that Father Luchi retired, September 8, 1971, the parish was blessed with its third Pastor in 66 years. The new Pastor, Rt. Rev. Monsignor Mark A. Mecca, had been familiar with the Hazleton area for many years and knew many members of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church. He had served as an assistant Pastor at both Our Lady of Grace Church and Most Precious Blood Church. He later succeeded Father Henry Luchi as Pastor of Holy rosary Church in 1944. L He was Pastor of Most Precious Blood Church when he was assigned to Our Lady of Mount Carmel.

Again, as with Father Henry Luchi, a period of adjustment took place until Msgr. Mecca became acquainted with the members of the Congregation. He succeeded easily in this. In the past nine years, Msgr. Mecca has established a comfortable relationship with the Congregation.

Soon after his arrival Msgr. Mecca began a parish improvement program which made the Church, its properties and surrounding area, a beautiful showcase for the community. The Church building itself received a new face-lift when several sets of new doors replaced the existing ones which were in disrepair. The Church was completely redecorated and an air conditioning system was installed. The Church basement was also completely renovated and carpeted, to accommodate the various social functions of the Parish. The steeple was renovated and painted to enhance the outward appearance of the Church. A new rook was later added. The interior of the Rectory was redecorated to accommodate the business of the Congregation with the Pastor. An annual summer block party was initiated for the benefit of the parish and the community.

To culminate that vast improvement program, the congregation wished to show its esteem for Msgr. Mecca, by celebrating the 40th Jubilee of his ordination to the priesthood in 1976.

Now, October 1980, the third period of 25 years is at an end. There are about 400 households within the Congregation of Saint Vigilius of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church. The Church societies continue to flourish and four additional men of the parish have entered the priesthood since the Golden Jubilee: Robert Yori, on May 27, 1961; Rev. Louis Battisti, on April 14, 1962; Rev. Richard Albertini, on June 19, 1966; and most recently, Rev. Peter Menghini on August 30, 1980.

On this, the occasion of the Diamond Jubilee of Our lady of Mount Carmel church, let us pray that our children will receive a firm religious foundation at our parish and that they can look back on the next 25 years, and say 'thank you' to those who are celebrating today.

The above narrative was copied verbatim from the 75th Anniversary Booklet, prepared by Christopher J. Zahay, in 1980. This contains a complete history of our Parish from its founding in 1905, to the completion of 75 years in 1980, and there is no necessity of duplicating any happenings contained therein succeeding narratives.

1980 -

We will attempt to continue the fine and detailed history of our first 75 years, as prepared by Mr. Zahay.

Also, we will try to show events concerning our parish of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, in order of chronology and importance. Not much was mentioned in the previous narrative of the Canon Law changes in the Catholic Church envisioned by Vatican II. We will attempt to bring you up to date on these changes.

First of all, structural changes in the sanctuary: The celebrant recited, or sung Mass on a separate altar facing the congregation. Latin was discontinued and in its place, the vernacular¹¹¹ [In our case, English]. Lay persons were deeply involved in all Liturgy functions. In most parishes, Eucharistic Ministers were chosen [after special training] to distribute Holy Communion.

As a result, our Church Choir, due to many reasons, began to be of lesser importance. Lectors were chosen to read the Scriptures and to lead the Congregation in the appropriate Liturgical hymns. Missalettes were used by everyone participating, and the Liturgy was followed, and hymns were sung by the Congregation. As a result, our Church Choir, due to many reasons, began to be of lesser importance in the Liturgy functions. Members were difficult to obtain, and as a result almost went out of existence altogether.

Church attendance slowly but gradually seemed to fall in numbers. Our weekend Masses, which were in number of 4, were cut to 3. [This was mandated by our Bishop]. All area churches were required to eliminate one week end Mass. The eventual Mass hours were as follows: 5:15 p.m., Saturday evening; 8:30 and 10:30 Sunday morning. This schedule continued until 1988.

Church societies, more or less, held their own for about 5 years, until old age, deaths finally reached serious proportions. Marriage and Baptism became a rarity.

Many of our younger, college educated young people, deserted our community after graduation. Our parish was no exception. As a result, although our latest parish count remained constant, our average age continued to rise. Many older persons, not of our heritage, when living in our high rise apartments, joined our parish. But, our youth group continued to decline. As a result, as of the current date, our Church census would show about 50% of our people are from 70 to 100 years of age.

No major structural changes were made to our Church Building. The Church was completely painted, new ceiling lights were installed. The Church basement was vastly improved. Our Church Cemetery was [as usual] kept in 100% condition. This was due mainly to the efforts of Henry Recla, Frank Zorzi and Carlo Matarelli. All this labor was performed free of any remuneration, and strictly voluntary. Our thanks should go out to them.

A Note of Sadness

Father Henry Luchi, who had been ill health for a number of years, and who resided at Little Flower Manor, Wilkes-Barre, died on November 8, 1980. He was buried in Our Lady of Mount Carmel Cemetery. He lived a very fruitful and spiritual life,

¹¹¹ And why not Italian – as it was founded an Italian Parish??

and his accomplishments in our Parish will not soon be forgotten. May he rest in peace!

A Note of Joy

Our Pastor Emeritus, Msgr. Mecca celebrated his Golden Jubilee in the Priesthood in October 1986. Appropriate ceremonies were held in Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church with a Con-celebrated Mass, and a very impressive social affair and Banquet at Genetti's Best Western Mall. He was at this time 74 years of age.

On reaching the age of 75 on June 6, 1987, Msgr. Mecca submitted his resignation as Pastor of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, to the Most Rev. James C. Timlin, our Bishop. This action was required under provisions of Church Canon Law. Msgr. Mecca was asked to stay on a period of time, but he decided, due partially for health reasons, to retire gracefully, to the Home for Retired Diocesan Priests at Villa St. Joseph in Dunmore. To the best of our knowledge, he is still in fairly good health and enjoying somewhat a peaceful and happy life at the Villa.

A NEW ERA

On September 5, 1987, our Most Reverend Bishop, James C. Timlin, appointed as Pastor of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, the Reverend P. Lawrence Homer. Father Homer was at that time and is still to this day, Pastor of Holy Trinity German Catholic Church on N. Laurel Street.

One may wonder why the Bishop would appoint a Pastor who would serve two parishes. We will try to explain. Due to the critical shortage of priests and nuns in our Diocese, and for that matter throughout the whole country, it was necessary as it were, to 'double-up', so to speak, our smaller parishes. So, long before this assignment, about 13 parishes had to share its Pastor with another Church.

Very fortunately, Father Homer had at his availability, a priest in residence at Holy Trinity. We all knew him as 'Father Joe'¹¹². Without this arrangement, there could be no possibility of Father Homer accepting this assignment at Our Lady of Mount Carmel. In fact, there was a definite possibility of our Church closing, as it was considered one of the smaller Parishes in the Diocese. Fortunately events turned out for the best.

Father Homer, in looking over our parish properties and financial conditions, decided many things could be done in the line of improvements.

First of all, he organized a Church Parish Council to assist in the Parish Administration. The Council, composed of a cross section of our Church membership, had a full complement of 24 persons. A Charter was drawn up with the assistance of

¹¹² His full name: Fr. Joseph J. Ferrara

Attorney Henry Giuliani. Various Committees were appointed and work assignments were given to each. The following major improvements were discussed, voted on and approved by the Council:

- our Sanctuary was to be completely renovated – i.e., the Main Altar raised a step and enlarged’
- Altar railings removed to allow expansion of the Sanctuary;
- the Sanctuary enlarged and contours changed;
- new carpeting in the Sanctuary;
- Angels removed from the side of the Main Altar and placed in the Church vestibule;
- the small Altars were removed and replaced by a more compact Altar, with more modern décor;
- the Sacred Heart Statue location changed to allow room for location of the Blessed Sacrament and main repository. This required another altar to house the Above;
- Shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes removed to rear of Church in its own Lourdes setting;
- Baptistry placed in the former location of Our Lady of Lourdes;
- the old confessional was removed and a new room created for a new confessional room, and which could be used as a ‘cry room’, dressing room for celebrants for Mass, and other purposes. This was a major improvement;
- new Church carpeting;
- the front pews were cut down to allow more access for funerals, etc.
- pews completely varnished and cleaned;
- Stations of the Cross were enlarged;
- the Church was completely re-painted.

Financing for all of the above projects was made from Parish Funds. No borrowing was necessary. While these improvements were taking place in November and December 1988, Masses were conducted in the Church Basement. Two funerals also took place during this period. All improvements were completed in time for Christmas 1988.

In addition to all of these major projects, Father Homer started a custom of keeping our parishioners fully informed of all actions taken by the Parish Council. A

series of Parish News Letters was mailed to all parishioners several times yearly. Also, a complete Financial Accounting, of all the transactions was available to all.

To keep our financial conditions on a sound footing, steps were taken to have individual contributions increased. Too many of our parishioners were lax in their Church giving. Even though our financial condition was sound, it was obvious that too many persons were not fulfilling their Church obligation. This has now been greatly alleviated.

Up to this point, three Masses were conducted on weekends, although attendance at each did not warrant continuance of this arrangement.

It was decided again to eliminate one Mass. The end result was as follows: Saturday at 5:15 p.m., and Sunday 9:30 a.m. There was a slight shrinkage in attendance, but this was to be expected. Everyone now has accepted this new schedule. Holy Day Mass schedules were also re-arranged.

A plea was made constantly during the year, for additional Lectors, Ushers, Altar Boys, and Eucharistic Ministers with limited success. At the present time, three of our Parishioners are participating in a Eucharistic Minister Program at St. Gabriel's. It is hopeful that our Parish will finally accept the participation of the laity in this very important Liturgy function.

As of this writing, many outside improvements are being made. New side and front sidewalks are being installed. Front steps and the whole contour of the front entrance were changed to allow entrance from both sides of the entrance. The rear parking was finally paved and lined. Main Parking Lot is being improved and entrance and exit properly noted. Planters on both sides of the lot in front will enhance the beauty of the entire surface area.

Finally in this narrative summary, the Church Council, through its various committees, are in the process of designating the Church basement, or part of it, as a Historical, or 'Heritage Room.' Various pictures, portraits and artifacts of our past Tyrolean Heritage will be properly displayed. New plaques on the walls will depict various aspects of our shared Tyrolean background. The end result will surprise many people, but we are not sure that many happy memories will be invoked as it unfolds before our eyes.

This will, we are sure, be a culmination of our close to 85 years as a Tyrolean Parish. There are still many parishioners, who, although well up in years, will appreciate the efforts of those who want to perpetuate our heritage. In this way, we can truly say, yes, we are the first and only Tyrolean Parish Church in the United States.

This narrative concludes our historical era from 1905 to the present. The following narrative will depict this history of our European ancestry in its many and varied land and ethnic movements from one era to another.

Gus Pilati, Historian
Josephine Trettel
Dorothy Endrizzi
Denise Chocolas, Typist.

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Diocese of Scranton, PA Background

In the background of the Diocese of Scranton of all these happenings, there has been noted that when the Rt. Rev. William O'Hara, DD, came to Scranton in 1868, as its first Bishop, he found the city in its infancy of life. Its city charter was received in April 1866, and Mr. E. S. Hill, lawyer and editor, was elected its first Mayor for the term of Office of three years. There were two Catholic Churches of Scranton, one Irish and the other German, constituted the only two places of worship, where the other nationalities also had to resort to for their spiritual comfort. The scattered communities represented by them were the Polish, Italian, Magyars, Maronites, Slovaks, Slovenians, Melchites, and Tyroleans. The two Churches were manned by three priests who covered their field of activity in a vast area, comprising what is now Scranton proper, Taylor, Bellevue, Hyde Park, Providence, Green Ridge, South Scranton and Minooka.

The first attempt to organize a purely Italian parish was in 1874. Bishop O'Hara was undoubtedly aware of his particular Mission among the Italians, when he received the Papal Rescript of his Appointment. His experience as Vicar General of the Philadelphia Archdiocese and as Pastor of old St. Patrick's in that city enabled him to understand their problem. The Italians were, indeed numerous around St. Patrick's and in coming to Scranton he saw the need of some one to take care of them.

In the summer of 1874, Bishop O'Hara, therefore, invited several priests and a Bishop from outside his Diocese to officiate in the celebration he had in view, namely to consecrate the Diocese to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. To make the celebration an appropriate one, he ordered the first priests' retreat be held in May of that year as a prelude to the solemnity. Rt. Rev. William Helder, Bishop of Natchez, directed the retreat, and later preached at the Mass of Consecration, where Bishop O'Hara pontificated. Presumably the presence of a Father Cicatara in these ceremonies was a response to a call for Italian Confessions to be heard at the Cathedral. He remained at the Cathedral for a while, and later attended a reception given at St. Cecilia's Convent on August 14, 1874. After these religious ceremonies, he went back to his former duties elsewhere.

There was a lapse of almost 13 years, before the appearance of another Italian Priest in the Diocese. In 1887, Bishop O'Hara brought to Scranton an Italian priest named Father Joseph [?] who labored among the Italians in Newark NJ. Father Joseph resided at the Cathedral rectory, as did his successor, Father Dominic Landro. All of these priests recorded Baptisms and Marriages, as 'Pastors of the Italian Colony of Scranton.' Fr. Landro was still in Scranton as of June 2, 1901.

On the very next day, June 3, 1901, the old No. 16 Public School on what was then Chestnut Street [now known as St. Francis Cabrini Avenue], was purchased by the late Bishop Hoban from the Scranton School District. The building was used both as a Church and School, and classes were conducted by the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart, founded by Mother Cabrini, who had been in Scranton previously for the purpose of beginning an Italian Mission.

During the new few years, the priests in charge at the new parish were Father Ferdinand Sbrocca, Father Dominick Landro and Father Raffaele Bellini. In August 1908, Father Victor Gurisatti began his Pastorate at St. Lucy's, serving the Parish until 1927. During that period he was assisted successively by Fr. Joseph Nardon, Father Joseph Rosa¹¹³ and Father Peter Cantino. Father Gurisatti in 1913 built the foundation for the new Church, at its present location, and this building served for all religious functions until the year 1928, when the upper Church was complete.

Father Francis Boland succeeded Father Gurisatti as Administrator of St. Lucy's, remaining there until the appointment of Father Francis Valverde, then Pastor of St. Anthony's Dunmore PA, in September 1928.

Assisting the new Pastor, later invested as a Papal Chamberlain by the late Bishop O'Reilly at St. Lucy's Church, were Father [later Monsignor] Hubert Rocchi, Father Gerald Canivan, the present Pastor of Blossburg, Father Joseph O'Brien, now Pastor at the Immaculate Conception, West Pittston PA. Following Msgr. Valverde's leave of absence because of illness, Father O'Brien served as Administrator until the appointment on September 8, 1938, of the present Pastor, Very Rev. Msgr. Salvatore J. Florey.

The assistants to Msgr. Florey have included Rev. Peter Monleon, now stationed in the Philippine Islands; Very Rev. Msgr. Joseph A. Madden present Vice-Chancellor of the Diocese of Scranton; Rev. Paschal Trozzolillo, Pastor of St. Mary's Lattimer PA; Rev. Donald Deuel, of St. Mary's of Wilkes-Barre; Rev. Myron F. Florey, Holy Rosary, Wilkes-Barre PA; Rev. Hugh Lenahan, St. Patrick's in Scranton; and Rev. Joseph Ferrese, recently appointed Pastor of St. Rocco's, Dunmore PA.

The present assistant pastors are Rev. Salvatore P. Oliveira and Rev. Anthony Tombasco, who are assisting in the plans for the Golden Jubilee celebration.

The Golden Jubilee of the parish was fittingly observed on Sunday, October 14th [?], with a Solemn Pontifical Mass to be offered by His Excellency, Most Reverend William J. Hafey, DD, Bishop of Scranton. Assisting the Bishop were Priests of the Diocese who were stationed at St. Lucy's with the present Pastor. The sermon for the

¹¹³ These first two mentioned: Fathers Nardon and Joseph Rosa – were Stigmatines.

occasion was preached by the Rt. Rev. Msgr. Francis J. Furey, rector of St. Charles Seminary, Overbrook Philadelphia PA.

The cooperation of the Parishioners of St. Lucy's has made possible over the past several years a program of extensive repairs and improvement. A Golden Jubilee Campaign resulted in the final payment of an indebtedness which only a few years ago, was well over \$100,000.00. The loyalty and generosity of St. Lucy's parishioners augurs well for their spiritual and material progress as they embark on the beginning of another half century of steady devotion to their parish.



A Later Appeal from the Pastor

The Italian Catholics of Scranton PA and its vicinity should be proud to learn that St. Lucy's, their oldest church in Scranton, will soon celebrate its Golden Jubilee as a parish Church. The history we are now compiling is an initial step toward making that celebration a most happy one. To assemble now all the historical data would mean a gigantic task. We would appreciate, therefore, any collaboration of historical record or document pertaining to St. Lucy's Church by any individual or institution that could furnish us with the necessary assistance. We would assure them of our appreciation, for they will be our best informers about the early Italian settlers of this region.

The writer has begun his research in this connection and he now places before his readers a few historical sketches thus far acquired within his reach. The 47th year of life that now marks the steady stride of St. Lucy's Church and its sphere of influence in the community is a matter of record. Its life and vital importance as a factor and an agency of good will never be forgotten. We now live in hopes and aspirations for the happy days ahead of us, and for that purpose, we are now making an appeal to our parishioners, far and near, past or present, the hearty or the lukewarm, to come home and be joyful with us in this happy medium of meeting old friends through our annual Bazaar. The present program is presented to them with the feeling of gratitude of our part, namely, what we have is theirs in the sense that St. Lucy's Church stands as a monument of the faith of their forbears who built it and made it our true heritage today.

Historical Sketch

... The unique honor, however, of having established St. Lucy as a parish must go to Father Rosario Nasca and Father Peter Bondy. Our parish registers show their names as the pioneers in the work of the parish as early as 1881. It seems that they paved the way to the buying of a property in a site where now stands the Mother Cabrini school. Father Landro held services there later in a small frame building which

gave way to the present completion of this Church is well known to all. Despite the ravages of times and the debt that it is now carrying, one outstanding fact remains, and that is it stands as a glorious work of the Italian architectural genius. Its construction was designed, directed and completed by the Italian mind, hand and heart. The Romanesque style that prevails in its columns, arches, dome, naves, and the display of sculpture in marble give it a rich setting, worthy of the cause it stands for, namely, the true House of God above the hills.

Father Monleon

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An Excerpt of

The History of the Stigmatines in Brazil¹¹⁴

Originally written in Portuguese by

Fr. Benedito A. Bettini, CSS

Historian of the Province of the Holy Cross

Last revised in 2005

INTRODUCTION

JESUS said:

“Go, therefore, make disciples of all nations; baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all the commands I gave you. And look, I am with you always; yes, to the end of time.” [Mt 28: 19-20]

Saint Gaspar Bertoni said:

“Go forth and teach – anywhere in the diocese and the world”.

¹¹⁴ Translation from Portuguese by this co-author.

REMOTE PREPARATION

As it is latent in all religious orders, the ideal of founding missions abroad has always been alive in the Stigmatine Congregation.

The presence of missionaries, who would go forth to bring the Word of God throughout the world, who in the Sacred Stigmata would seek advice and guidance from the Holy Founder, was gradually developing the ideal and desire, especially among younger members.

Let us see below some excerpts from the *Breve Cronaca* that shed light on this matter:

“In the course of the year 1857, after the entrance into the Novitiate of the Most Holy Trinity, we do not find news of great interest. The Fathers were continuously occupied in preaching Parish Missions or Spiritual Exercises, and always drew from these, abundant fruit. This can be seen from the letters of gratitude which poured in from every side to the Superior, Fr. Marani at the end of the various Missions. Many of these are still conserved in the Archives of the Institute.” [B.C. - n. 100]

“On August, 1874 Fr. Francisco Sogaro (Stigmatine) asks his exclaustation of the Institute. “He brought forward as his reason the vocation that he deeply felt, and which he had always had, for the Foreign Missions.” [B. C. - n. 135]

“In October 1881, Bishop Daniel Comboni died, as Vicar Apostolic of Central Africa. His successor was our old confrere, now Bishop Francis Sogaro. ... Fr. Sembianti ... had asked our Superior, Fr. Peter Vignola, to go as a companion to Bishop Sogaro, and also Fr. Dominic Vicentini, who aspired to the same mission.” [B. C. - n. 162]

“From June 1884, the Vicar Apostolic, Bishop Francis Sogaro, had written from Central Africa to the Superior General for our Congregation to fuse our Institute with that for Black Africa.” [B. C. - n. 170]

“While Fr. D. Vicentini with repeated requests did obtain permission to leave for the Missions in Africa, Fr. Vivari had repeatedly asked permission to go to that Mission, or even to place himself at the disposition of the Sacred Congregation of the Propagation of the Faith.” [B. C. - n. 170 - footnote]

“Meanwhile, Bishop Sogaro once more asked the Superior General for the services of Fr. Vicentini for Africa, and when he did not get him, the Bishop appealed to the Sacred Congregation of the Propagation of the Faith which asked for his services for two years, March 13, 1888. The Superior General, therefore, acquiesced – and so, Fr. Vicentini left in the month of August...” [B.C. – n. 177]

“In passing, then, on the modifications to be introduced into the Constitutions, two Priests, Frs. Dominic Vicentini and Joseph Marocchi, withdrew disgusted from the Chapter Hall, and after a while, they presented the formal request to be absolved from the bond of their vows.” [B. C. – n. 182]

PROXIMATE PREPARATION

“Evidently, the time and circumstances of the Institute were not yet ready to receive the great idea that was growing in everyone's heart, and the Venerable, the sky, still believed they had reached the time to give ... the divine sign to the new path.” [N. M. – p.1]

The idea had continued. America became the target.

For the first time the name of Brazil appears in the Congregation:

“Already in 1866, through Cardinal Louis di Canossa, the Inter-Nunzio of Brazil had presented a request for a House of our in Cuiabá in the State of Mato Grosso, offering the direction and teaching in a Seminary.” [B.C. – n. 7 – footnote]

Only in 1986 the Stigmatines went to Saint Felix of Araguaia, state of Mato Grosso.

In 1896 there was also another request. The Bishop of Porto Alegre, capital of the state of Rio Grande do Sul, asked the opening of a house for religious assistance to 200,000 Italians, who were in that city and diocese. The name of our Congregation was suggested by Fr. Dominic Vicentini.

“Finally, the idea caught on in 1905, when two Stigmatines, Fr. Anthony Dalla Porta and Fr. Lodovico Luchi arrived in the United States on October 8th, and established themselves in Scranton, PA. The local bishop received them with great cordiality, and gave them all the necessary faculties to exercise the priestly ministry for the good of the Italians, and to acquire a piece of property and to construct a Church.” [B.C. – n. 18]

As far as for Brazil, the requests had continued.

In 1905, the Bishop of São Paulo, Most Rev. José de Barros, through the Scalabrinians, requested three priests for a foundation in his diocese, and offered a convenient place. It seemed, in a first moment, that this invitation would be accepted, but later on this thought was abandoned, with great displeasure of the Bishop.

(1) - "Through a letter from Fr. Louis Capra, Scalabrinian, there was known that our priests were eagerly anticipated, from one day to the next. Later on (March 16, 1914), Fr. Ferruccio Zanetti wrote that the place offered by the Bishop, in that occasion, was the city of Campinas, that at that time belonged to the Diocese of São Paulo. The Clergy of Campinas said, in 1914: Campinas should be entirely of the Stigmatines. There was said also that Amparo would be one of the options.

The bonds of the Stigmatines with the Scalabrinians, or Missionaries of St. Charles, were always very strong. Fr. Dominic Vicentini, leaving the Congregation, entered to the Scalabrinians, where he became Superior General, and continued always a very good friend of ours. Fr. Louis Capra was Stigmatine novice and colleague of Novitiate of Fr. Albino Sella. Fr. Faustino Consoni was, at the same time, the father and the greater benefactor of the first who arrived here."

In 1906, Most Rev. José de Barros went to Italy and had a conversation with the Superior General in Milano, where he lamented that the promise had not been kept, and renewed the request. It was established that in that same year the foundation would be made, but, in the return trip, the Bishop perished in the wreck of the Sirius, and so once again the Superiors felt relieved of their given word.

The successor of the deceased Bishop was his secretary, who had accompanied him in his trip to Italy, the Most Rev. Duarte Leopoldo e Silva. In 1907 he wrote to the Superior General in order to get the foundation that had been promised, and offered a charming city, one of the best of his diocese. Also this time it seemed that it would be accepted, but after the session of February, 1908, the General Council decided to decline the offer. At that same year of 1908, the new Bishop went to Italy and met with his Superior General, insisting in the foundation, and offering the city of Amparo. The General Council, in view of the shortage of staff, declared impossible, at that moment, to accept a stable foundation. However, he let it free to the Superior General, if he considered opportune, to send there some priests, on a special mission and without obligation. In fact nothing was done.

The difficulty in accepting the foundation in Brazil depended on the need to strengthen the foundation of North America.

FINALLY, IN 1910 WE FACED WITH THE FIRST STIGMATINE FOUNDATION IN BRAZIL, OCCURRED IN STRANGE AND PRECIPITATE CIRCUMSTANCES.

There introduced himself in Trento a certain priest named Anthony Sanson, who said he was sent by the Bishop of Mariana, state of Minas Gerais, to conduct an Italian colony in the city of Sete Lagoas, and that he was acting in perfect agreement with the Brazilian government. He required some Stigmatine priests who should take care of the colony and of a small seminary that was been intended to open. For this finality, he had spread throughout Trentino a letter bearing the Bishop approval. To tell the truth, the appearance of that priest was not arousing much confidence, and was leaving doubts about its veracity.

Fr. Balestrazzi, entrusted by the Superior General, headed to seek more information and eventually some help for the trip into the Secretary of State, but had as response from the Commissariat that “since 1902 the free emigration to Brazil was prohibited, due to the very poor situation of the Italian settlers in that country; and that this same Commissariat was in obligation of to denounce to the Judicial authorities the ones who helped the free emigration to that country”.

Even though all of this, the General Council decided to accept the invitation, and assigned to that foundation Fathers ALEXANDER GRIGOLLI and HENRY ADAMI, and Brother DOMINIC VALZACCHI.



From the left, at front: Rev. Henry Adami, Rev. Alexander Grigolli and Bro. Dominic Valzacchi; behind: Rev. John Baptist Pelanda and Rev. Ferruccio Zanetti.

They could not departure from any Italian port as they were coming without the approval from the Italian government. In addition to, the police was already hunting Fr. A. Sansón. So, they had to departure from Trieste, Austria. That time, there was not required passport, so Fr. Alexander presented as document a letter he had received from his superiors.

It would be important, for a greater knowledge of all the preparation and consequent problems related to the departure and journey, to read "THE TRUE STORY OF THE FOUNDATION AND FIRST PROGRESSES OF THE STIGMATINE MISSION IN BRAZIL – 1910 - 1925", by Fr. Adami – and "THE CHRONICLE OF THE STIGMATINE LIFE IN SOUTH AMERICA – 1910 – 1922". They are published in "OUR MEMORY", Volume I, issue I.

After all the preparation and farewells, when leaving Italy, they were met with the police. After many questions and threats, as they were not with Fr. Sansón, they could pass.

There embarked for Brazil: Fr. Alexander Grigolli (age 29), Fr. Henry Adami (27) and Bro. Dominic Valzacchi (42), on November 8, 1910, at 9:00 pm, boarding at "ATLANTA", a single-class 82 yards long and 11 knots per hour ship. (Fr. Ferruccio Zanetti said that this ship was the "SOFIA" of the Austrian-American society).

After 22 days of harsh trip, in middle of simple people, suitcases, trunks, packages, live stock and everything else, they landed in Rio de Janeiro. Fr. Adami said: "That was the sensation remaining after twenty-two days of travel, that we spent from Trieste to Rio de Janeiro. "It was precisely DECEMBER 2, 1910".

ARRIVAL:

Fr. Adami writes: "We headed immediately to the Flores Island, that is the island of the immigrants. ... we took care of our suitcases, and afterwards, along with Fr. Sansón and his three nephews, soon we freed ourselves from the immigration people and went to the city, staying in the Italia Hotel."

Next day morning, the two priests departure by train to Sete Lagoas, with the suitcases in Belo Horizonte. They only met with Fr. Grigolli in Sete Lagoas four days later.

FULL AND TOTAL DISILLUSIONMENT

In Sete Lagoas they went out seeking the settlement and the seminary. After three hours on horseback they arrived in middle of a wild wood – a small bungalow wooden house, with two bedrooms, newly constructed, and a mud house, old and falling. That is all!

Fr. Alexander, after having said 'good' words to Fr. Sansón, went to Mariana with Fr. Adami, in order to talk to the Bishop, Most Rev. Silvério Gomes Pimenta, black and cult, two qualities that deeply impressed the newcomers.

"We opened our hearts to the Bishop, and told him our whole story, and the one of all those families who came with us from Italy. For listening to us, he got

amazed and shed some tears; not for us, as it would be easy to help us, but for those families! He did not know anything; all was done by Fr. Sansón, without any notice to him”.

“Fr. Grigolli was sent by the Bishop as “vicar” of Sete Lagoas. I stayed alone in Mariana, and Fr. Alexander in Sete Lagoas, but about Brother Dominic, nothing. Later on I got words saying Fr. Alexander and Bro. Dominic were together in Sete Lagoas. The families were quite spread out. There remained only the three nephews of Fr. Sansón, and Bro. Dominic had opportunity to see and experiment what means to clean a house where children dirty, litter, shout and cry day and night.”

Alone in Mariana, Fr. Henry, age 27, unburdens his suffering and shows the motivation that brought them to Brazil to do reliable and durable things.

“What terrible days! What terrible hours! Alone in my little room, as one hard sentenced to prison; away days on the train from my companions, I used to look at the twilight, through the window; there was nothing that could cheer me up. Before of me a huge pasture, deep down two black boys playing; far, a cistern where someone came to fetch water ... not a sound, not even a corner ... a little joy ... sad ... sad ... with my thoughts in Italy, Brazil ... in my dear ones, so distant ... an uncertain, confused future ... I cried, and I did it many times! However, not a moment of regret, nor a desire to return to Italy. NO, GOD WANTED IT THIS WAY, THE SUPERIORS HAVE CHOSEN US, TWO YOUNG MEN, TO START A FOUNDATION IN BRAZIL, AND THIS SHOULD BECOME TRUE. GOD WAS WITH US! ”

Fr Alexander left Sete Lagoas without talking to the Bishop - what displeased him - and went to São Paulo. Through the Scalabrinians (Fr. Luiz Capra), he expected to find somewhere to settle. "We found ourselves even more divided and distant from one another. Fr. Alexander was in São Paulo, I was in Mariana and Bro. Dominic in Sete Lagoas; a wonder of three days journey from one another."

“I was fearful” - writes Fr Adami – “that Fr. Alexander, tired and disappointed, would want to return to Italy. Then he wrote: "Dear Father Alexander. You are now in São Paulo; so, ask the Superior of the Scalabrinians if he has some beans for me too, and then I'm going there. Together, and with four eyes, we will be able to better discern what to do. "Soon I received the answer: Come, you too. Brother Dominic is here with me, and if you need any money, send me a telegram”.

I said goodbye to the Bishop and boarded to São Paulo.

Fr Alexander was in a Scalabrinian orphanage nearby Ipiranga. I arrived at night and was received by him and Fr Faustino Consoni, who, even until late night, had waited me, to know me, and what we needed, and so on.

- If we owe many things to the Scalabrini Fathers, in a very special way it is to FATHER FAUSTINO CONSONI, who for a long time was our guide and counselor.

Fr. Alexander vainly sought a place to settle us down. In vain! He was even in BARRETOS, after a talk with the Bishop of São Carlos. Thus he writes: Barretos is "in finibus Terrea" (in the far corner of the world), and if not for the big Refrigerating Chamber that provides meat to half of Brazil, there is nothing else there. There is certainly NOT a place TO FOUND A MISSION. (Here's the insistence of why they were in Brazil.)

Finally, a day comes that there arrived in São Paulo the Superior General of the Scalabrinians, who was on a visit to their houses: Fr. DOMINIC VICENTINI.

Yet in Italy, he had said to us: "Soon I will go to Brazil, in order to visit our houses; and then, if you had not happened to FOUND A MISSION YET, I WILL HELP YOU".

He offered to us a parish in Florianópolis. However... we thought we should not accept it, for several reasons.

Some days later, he told us: "And then, you can go to Tibagy, in Southern Paraná. My priests are there, but I shall call them back and leave that place, as there are not Italians there, and we are missionaries for the emigrant Italians. In Tibagy you will have a mission-parish; it is county seat; inhabitants are numerous, though distant and scattered in the woods, and there are Indians belonging to three or four different tribes. Consider and give me an answer soon."



Most Rev. John Braga

Fr. Vicentini and Fr. Alexander left for Curitiba, in order to arrange everything with the Bishop, His Excellency the Most Rev. John Braga. "At dawn - writes Fr Adami – both left, and we in the church, asking the good Lord, Our Lady, our Venerable, the Ven. Anchieta and all the saints of heaven, so that everything went well and that MISSION were entrusted to us by the Bishop. "

Finally, after two or three days - I do not remember well (writes Fr Adami) - a telegram arrives from Curitiba. I took it with trembling hands ... My heart leapt in his chest ... I opened the sheet in the presence of Brother Dominic, and read: "TIBAGY IS OURS" signed Fr Alexander. A shout of joy resounded in our room! We have not seen anything else, and ran to the church to thank the good Lord and all Paradise, for the benefit received.

Finally, we no longer lived more in doubt! We had established our destination!

- Here you need to take a break. We saw Jesus and Bertoni sending us to evangelize the world. We follow all the preparation within the congregation so that one day we could leave Italy and depart to other shores. After many hopes and waits, arrived the day of departure to Brazil. After so many good and secure offers, there was accepted a deceiving one. The arrival was frustrating but very evangelical. Upon arrival "there was no place for them." But the "three musketeers" of God came ready to "come, see and conquer." They trusted in God, lived in obedience and were not afraid of poverty.

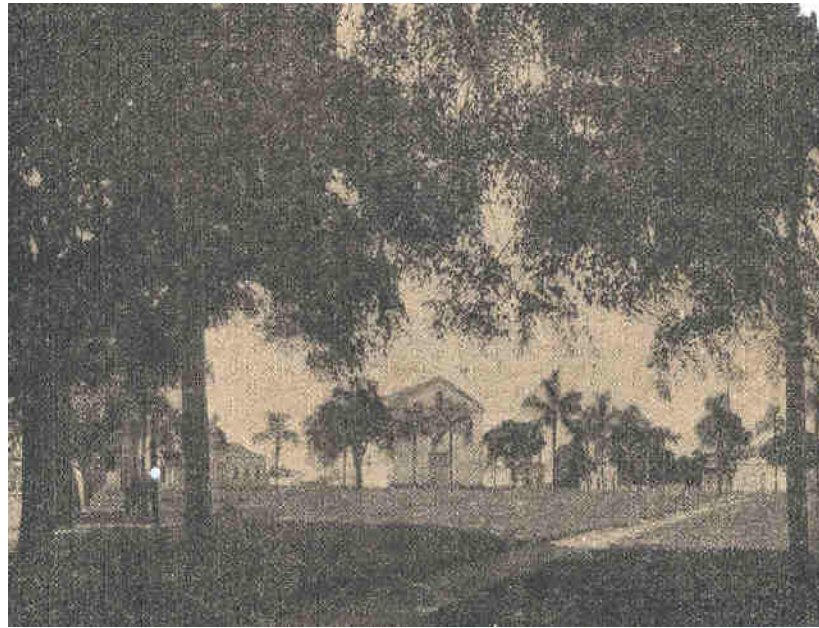
Despite being here at their own home, the suffering was not over, and tenacity, faith, perseverance, trust in God would have to continue for a long time, so we could be what we are today. Our responsibility is very great, when we think of what was our beginning.

- Says St. Gaspar: "To start an undertaking it is necessary to have already achieved great and heroic virtues. One thing is primordial: the poverty; and after that, all the other virtues". (MP. 7.23.1809).

1911 - T I B A G Y

March 28, 1911. One-thirty in the afternoon. The three pilgrims knock at the door of the rectory of Tibagy, that within a few days would be theirs, and they are received. They were at home.

"TIBAGY is located in the state of Paraná, Brazil. It is the seat of the county of the same name and has 42,000 inhabitants, of which about a thousand live in the city; the others are scattered in villages and districts in the woods. There are 18,000 Indians from tribes Kainganghen, Crowthorne and Cajuhá. The Mission has 32,000 square kilometers. The weather from September to March is hot, reaching sometimes 40° C, while in other months is very pleasant; rarely reaches 0° C, and only in the early hours of the morning. The vegetation is lush; there are all kinds of fruits, and leaves and flowers remain year-round."



Tibagy

"There is in the city a church that is not very big, made of clay and slave labor in a very distant time; the houses (two hundred, perhaps) are distributed in a large square, cut by beautiful streets, though not paved, and in downtown a beautiful square adorned with beautiful cinnamon trees. The church is surrounded by tall palm trees, and has three bells in one side with a wonderful sound. In Tibagy there are half a dozen warehouses with all kinds of merchandise. In our time, the mail arrived every eight days, and brought letters and everything else in a wagon pulled by an old horse and a donkey; they came from Castro. There is no electricity, but only gas lighting, and lamps should be turned off in moonlight. There is no running water, only some public and some private wells. There is a public jail for common cases; more severe cases are taken to Ponta Grossa or even to Curitiba, the state capital. A half dozen soldiers do their best to maintain order; a very beautiful and conserved building serves as elementary school through fifth grade. A simple and dirty house hosts the mayor of the county, who is also state assemblyman. Nearby there is a lawyer; and the most knowledgeable one is also doctor and pharmacist. The Fathers live in a house situated on the left of the church. It is a wooden house with four bedrooms, a dining room, a kitchen with pantry; it is a single story house and has a beautiful garden leading down to the river; it has a stable for horses and other domestic animals "(NM p. 1141).

After a month, before retiring, the Scalabrinians dealt with the sale of everything that was theirs to us. We bought the house with everything inside, plus the saddle and domestic animals. "We had no money, only that blessed lira and a half and the 6,000 'réis' of the baptism, but there was given to us free term to pay, and so it was all arranged."



The Church in Tibagy

The inventory was started. It was all written down up to the last cup and the last fork. We did not go into minutiae, as the desire to finally stay alone and owners of our house, in OUR MISSION, made us go over many things. All encompassed, also the horse and the donkey, chickens and turkeys, empty bottles, a few bags of cassava flour and guinea pigs, the total was 3 '*contos*' and five hundred thousand '*réis*', which corresponds to 10,500. Term to pay: at our will!

The papers were accepted and signed by both contracting parties; within two or three days, we will go to Curitiba to authenticate the contract with the Scalabrinian Provincial, Father Martini, who lives in Santa Felicidade, nearby the capital, and with the governmental authorities. "A bottle of wine that tastes like bedbug sealed all that work."

The work, which was parochial in the city and missionary in the interior, was immediately started. One of the priests served in the city and the other as a spin missionary. Later on, a reversal was made. The Brother usually stayed with the town priest.

The mission trips were made according to the region in route. They used to last from 15 to 40 days. They were always on horseback. The priest was always accompanied by the rural sacristan. This is very remembered in the It is remembered in the early chronicles: Boniface, "the sacristan of the Mission."

Fr. Adami says: "We used to make nine trips per year and each one lasted a month or longer. We made them by turns so that, one who had returned tired and

downcast, had a chance to rest while the other departed. The missions were divided according to the cardinal points. A month before departure we should send letters to the leaders of the place, announcing the arrival of the Mission. They were in charge of to announce to the nearby personnel for everyone gather such a day at such a place..."

"We also visited two or three camps of Caynhã and Kaigangen Indians, bringing them gifts to make them more friends; we also gave them " *goifá* "(drips)."

"Visitamos também, dois ou três acampamentos de índios Caynhã e Kaigangen, levando-lhes presentes para fazê-los mais amigos, demos também *pinga* (cane liquor)."

THE FIRST REINFORCEMENT

The daily routine of mission was continuing. The community efforts were great and they were pleased fulfilling their obligation. But... until when?

One day... on December 12, 1912, we received great news: a new and powerful reinforcement arrived in the person of FR. Ferruccio ZANETTI, who would be one of the greatest and strenuous missionaries in Tibagy. He was 32 years old.

During one of the trips in 1913, Fr. Alexander fell sick. His illness was long and painful. The medical benefits were reduced in those confines of backwoods.

At the end of 1913, at the end of the illness of Father Alexander, came good news: "Father John Baptist Pelanda shall leave Italy soon to come join us. Soon we shall be four priests."

That idea that this coming to Brazil was to bring about reliable and important things gained new insights.

Fr. Adami writes: "Seeing how difficult it was for us to face a illness or any other health issues, I proposed to Father Alexander to found a new home in the state of São Paulo, where we would be in a more civilized world; we could, in case of illness, have there better treatment, and afterwards to expand our mission, as there shall come from Italy other missionaries, and we could settle ourselves better and do great good. Some difficulties would happen, but not insoluble: could we be split for a few days? Then what? Would it be possible? But considering that, if all went well it would be great, and otherwise would not be bad, since we had our work (and what work!) In Tibagy, it was decided affirmatively. Then I departed to São Paulo. "

In São Paulo nothing could be accomplished, even with the help of the Scalabrinians. The current Bishop was the former secretary of the deceased Bishop, and still had the broken promise hurting. So, Fr. Adami and a Scalabrinian priest went

to Campinas. The Bishop (the Most Rev. John Neri) offered them a chaplaincy in the Church of Our Lady of the Good Death in Limeira.

From the Scalabrinian History:

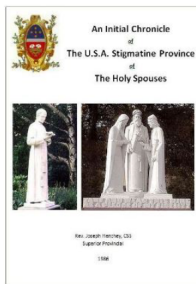
From the moment it was said that it was improbable that the Scalabrini Community, in their accepting the Brazilian parish of Tibagy, distanced themselves somewhat from that initial pastoral plan that they had of responding to contingent realities – as for example, their ‘nostalgia’ for Foreign Missions, or the understanding that they had with Pius Xth regarding the Indians. With this, we cannot deny that a certain adaptation was going on to their concrete situations in accepting the territorial Parish of Tibagy, in the northern part of Paraná, with a population of about 20,000 inhabitants almost all of whom were Brazilians, and of which about 3,000 were Indians. In a letter to the Founder, Fr. Mark Simoni, the first Missionary who took care of this parish, he exposed the difficulty of the Brazilians’ living in peace with the Indians. These latter complain all the time that the Portuguese occupy their lands, that these people mistreat the Indians, that they put the Indians to death, and they take their children, and giving the Indians nothing in return. These, Your Excellency, are very sad matters, but unfortunately they are all true; the Brazilians would like to see these Indians destroyed.

The fact that with Tibagy it is a matter of a Brazilian Parish, and we have full confirmation of this, when in 1911, the Scalabrini withdrew from there because their apostolic labors found no response from the faithful there, while the Catechesis taught to the Indians demanded an adequate psychological and linguistic preparation, which the Italian Missionaries did not have at their disposal. Fr. Charles Pedrazzani, the last Scalabrinian at Tibagy, wrote to Bishop Bonomelli in 1911, immediately after the handing over of the Parish to the Stigmatine Fathers, he noted: ‘That parish is constituted in its totality of Brazilians; therefore, this parish, according to the purpose of the Congregation of St. Charles Borromeo, could not be directed by me.’

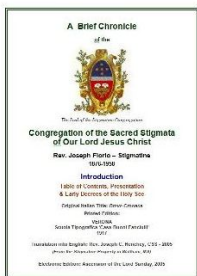
Scalabrini himself, however, wanted to have this parish, even though he realized that it did not correspond to the specific purpose of his Congregation. He had accepted the suggestion of Cardinal Simeoni because the Bishop of Piacenza felt very deeply ‘a care for all the Churches’, and also to move forward and to make up for the great injustice committed over the centuries towards these Indians ‘abandoned by all, and also by the Church.’

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Besides the sources already quoted along this document, the following ones were fundamental sources of information:



- (1) **An Initial Chronicle of the U.S.A. Stigmatine Province of the Holy Spouses** – by Rev. Joseph Henchey, C.S.S., Superior Provincial – 1986 (“Typed Book”)



- (1) **A Brief Chronicle of the Congregation of the Sacred Stigmata of Our Lord Jesus Christ** – translated from Italian by Rev. Joseph Henchey, C.S.S. – 2005.

Original Title: *Breve Cronaca* – by Rev. Giuseppe Fiorio, Stigmatine (1876 - † 1958). Originally printed by *Verona Scuola Tipografica “Casa Buoni Fanciulli”* – 1917.



- [a] **Confrades.com** – website created and updated by Rev. Silvano Zanella, C.S.S., with general Stigmatine information, including short biographies of the Deceased Stigmatines (under the menu *Persone*).

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THE END
(of this volume)

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