



UAC NEWSLETTER

July 2010

Dear brothers and sisters in the Union

This month brings biographical material on the cause for beatification of **Heinrich VIETER** SAC, prepared by Fr. Jan Korycki, SAC, Postulator General of the Society of the Catholic Apostolate, as well as other UAC news.

1. CAUSES FOR BEATIFICATION OF MEMBERS OF THE UAC AT DIOCESAN LEVEL (continued)

Heinrich VIETER, a Pallottine and member of the Holy Trinity Province, was born in Kappenberg, Germany, on 13-02-1853, was ordained priest on 8-05-1887, and consecrated the first bishop in Cameroon on 22-01-1905. He died in Yaoundé on 7-11-1914. His cause for beatification was initiated in Cameroon by the present Bishop of Yaoundé, Msg. Victor Tonye Bakot, in 2005. Fr. Norbert Hannappel SAC, has been appointed by the Pallottines to the role of temporary vice-postulator at the diocesan level.

Heinrich Vieter completed his elementary school education between 1860 and 1867, after this he learnt the trade of carpenter, in 1873 he became a member of the Kolping Association and in this capacity he travelled through Europe (Germany, Switzerland and Italy). In Rome he came to know the Pallottines and entered the Society. He studied Theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University and was ordained priest on the 8th of May 1887. While a newly ordained priest he was appointed Rector of the Pallottine Missionary College at Masio, in northern Italy and he spent two years there. In 1889 he departed for Brazil and became parish priest of an Italian community at Caixas do Sul.

The following year, on July 20th 1890, he was named first Apostolic Prefect and superior of the Missions in Cameroon, he travelled to Cameroon in October of the same year together with a group of confreres, Fr. Georg Walter, five brothers and one seminarian. On October 25th 1890 the Pallottines started a mission in Douala, Cameroon, and on December 8th of the same year Mass was celebrated in a simple church adjoining the first Pallottine house at Marienberg (Our Lady's mountain), which they themselves had constructed. On that occasion Fr. Vieter consecrated Cameroon to our Lady and placed it under the protection of Mary, Queen of Apostles.

The beginning of this missionary service in the tropical climate of Cameroon was very difficult. Several of the missionaries contracted malaria which was often fatal. However, the missionary spirit and the desire to bring the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the people there was even stronger. The Pallottine Missionary Sisters arrived in Cameroon to join the missionary effort in 1892.

Fr. Vieter was named first bishop of Cameroon on December 22nd 1904 and ordained bishop in the Cathedral of Limburg, in Germany, on January 22nd 1905. The Apostolic Prefecture in Cameroon was elevated to an Apostolic Vicariate.

Bishop Vieter was a energetic Pastor with an boundless source of energy and untiring zeal. He was also very forward looking. In 1906 he organized the first Pastoral Synod in Cameroon, he founded a school for catechists and another for teachers for the elementary schools. He also prepared the foundation of a seminary for the candidates to the priesthood. He died on November 7th 1914 in Yaoundé and was buried there. Cardinal Girolamo Maria Gotti, Prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, wrote to the General Curia of the Society on December 4th 1914. In this letter he said that in the course of the twenty four years of fruitful missionary ministry which Msg Vieter had exercised in Cameroon, the Pallottines had baptised 30.000 persons and that there were 18.000 catechumens in Cameroon in 1914. He concluded saying that the mission mourned its founding father. (Analecta PSM, I, 566).

During the First World War, the Pallottines, who were German, had to leave Cameroon in 1915 and 1916. The Congregation of the Holy Spirit came to Cameroon as missionaries in 1922. In the six year gap in which there were no missionaries in Cameroon the Catholic faith was preserved thanks to the catechists who had been formed by Bishop Vieter and thanks to the pastoral ground work of the Pallottines. The figure of the first Bishop was, and continues to be, fundamental for the history of the evangelization of Cameroon.

The centenary of the Episcopal ordination of the first Bishop was celebrated in 2005 and on that occasion the present Archbishop of Yaoundé informed the participants of the initiation of the preparatory work for the process of the beatification of Bishop Heinrich Vieter.

2. Meeting of the persons who are responsible for Pallottine formation in the UAC

The first gathering of the persons with responsibility for ensuring the initial and on-going Pallottine formation of the members of the UAC took place in the Cenacle Centre, Via G. Ferrari 1, from July 15th to 22nd this year. A total of 11 appointed persons took part in the meeting representing the National Coordination Councils in Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, India, Ireland, Italy, Poland, Rwanda-Congo, the USA and Uruguay, apologies were received from those appointed in Belize, Germany and Switzerland. The Ecclesiastical Assistant, Fr. Fritz Kretz, SAC, the President of the UAC, Fr. Derry Murphy SAC, Sr. Ignes Burin, Vicar-general of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Catholic Apostolate, Sr. Stella Holisz SAC, General consulter of the Congregation of the Missionary Sisters of the Catholic Apostolate, Fr. Hubert Socha, juridical assessor of the General Coordination Council and members of the General Secretariat of the UAC, took part in the gathering.

The purpose of the gathering was to clarify the nature of the appointment, to review the formation programmes operating within the confines of each National Coordination Council, and to plan further development in the area of formation.

3. ISEP in Santa Maria, Brazil

The VI gathering of ISEP, a three to four week live-in course of Pallottine studies and shared reflection, took place at the Colegio Maximo Palotino, from July 5th. The ISEP, 'Instituto Sudamericano di Estudios Palotinos (South American Institute of Pallottine Studies)' gatherings have taken place each year since 1992 during the month of July. This year 23 persons from different parts of Latin America took part. This course is considered to be an integral part of Pallottine formation for the Union, it is guided and animated by a team of members and is coordinated by Fr. Angelo Londero.

4. Australia: the IV "Walter Silvester Memorial Lecture" took place at the Catholic University of Australia, in Melbourne, on July 20th. The guest speaker this year was Professor Donna Orsuto, Director the 'Lay Centre at Foyer Unitas', professor at the Institute of Spirituality at the Pontifical Gregorian University, who has an in-depth knowledge of St. Vincent Pallotti.

The members of the Union in Australia celebrated recently the 60th anniversary of ordination of Frs. Kevin McKelson and John Lümman.

5. The XX General Assembly of the Society of the Catholic Apostolate will take place at Ariccia (Rome) from September 20th to October 15th this year. The theme of the Assembly is "Revive faith and re-ignite charity: Apostles of Jesus in a changing world." We pray that the Holy Spirit may prepare the hearts and minds of all the participants in this important event in the life of the Society.

There will not be a Newsletter in the month of August, the next number will be sent in September.

To all those for whom the month of August is a time of renewal and recreation we wish you happy holidays.

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