



UAC NEWSLETTER

July 2012



Dear brothers and sisters in the Union,

we are very happy to present to you in this newsletter a synthesis of the life of **Fr. Francesco M. Vaccari PSM**, adapted by Fr. Jan Kupka SAC principally from the books *San Vincenzo Pallotti, profeta della spiritualità di comunione*, edited by Fr. Franco Todisco SAC and *De sociis beati Vincentii Pallotti* by Joannes Hettenkofer SAC, along with other news from the UAC.

1. EARLY COLLABORATORS OF SAINT VINCENT:

Francesco Maria Vaccari PSM (1814-1856) was one of the companions of Saint Vincent Pallotti for eight years and his first successor in the office of General Superior "of the two institutions of the Servant of God Vincent Pallotti, that is, of the Congregation and of the Pious Society of the Catholic Apostolate" – as it was expressed by Vaccari himself at the informative Process for the beatification.

Francesco Maria Vaccari came to Rome in January 1842. He speaks as follows about his first meeting with Vincent Pallotti: "I heard about the virtues and gifts of the Servant of God Vincent Pallotti from different people; the desire to know him was enkindled within me. I went to seek him several times in the royal church of Spirito Santo dei Napoletani, where he then lived (...). I saw him a number of times and the Lord so directed that we were unable speak then; after many visits I told him that I needed to speak to him and he responded that he was extremely busy, blessed me with an image of Mary Most Holy which he carried with him, and I remained fully satisfied, in such a way that I abandoned the thought of following my former goal, and sought then to unite myself to him, with whom I lived until his death" (Romana beatificationis et canonizationis Servi Dei Vincentii Pallotti, positio super introductione causae, Romae 1886, p. 2).

Francesco Maria Vaccari came from Calabria. His birthplace was Fuscaldo, in the province of Cosenza. The Vaccari family, whose ancestry dates back to 1600, lived initially in a mansion on top of the hill overlooking the area. Then, with the development of roads and the growth in commercial relationships, also by sea, they settled in the plain of Fuscaldo, near the coast. They were one of the ten noble families of the area. Francesco was born to Salvatore Vaccari and Fortunata Mazzaroni on December 17th 1814. His younger brother Luigi, also born in Fuscaldo on April 21 1817, entered the Benedictines in Montecassino in 1862 and was appointed Bishop of Nicotera and Tropea in 1871. It was this same Luigi Vaccari who published an extensive biography of Saint Vincent Pallotti in 1888.

Francesco M. Vaccari did his studies in Naples and was ordained priest in Cosenza on December 22nd 1838. In the early years of his priestly life he continued his studies and was distinguished for his cultural and social engagement. In 1842 he was sent to Rome to continue his studies at the Pontifical Academy of Ecclesiastical Nobles (dedicated to training priests for the Holy See's diplomatic corps and Secretariat of State). In his relationships with Roman priests he heard about the holiness of the priest Vincent Pallotti. He therefore decided to meet him and relate his concerns regarding the future of his life. The meetings with Pallotti overturned his plans and gave new meaning to his life. Thus, during the retreat in the Carmelite monastery in St. Pancrazio in 1843, after hearing the words of Pallotti, "Follow our Lord Jesus Christ", he decided to join the community of priests resident in the rectory of Spirito Santo dei Napoletani, and one year later made his consecration. In 1848 he was appointed by Vincent Pallotti a General Consultor and rector of the community at SS. Salvatore in Onda. In that capacity he administered the last rites to the dying Vincent Pallotti.

After the death of Vincent Pallotti, which took place on January 22nd 1850, Francesco Maria Vaccari was elected his successor. He guided and defended the young community in difficult times. He learned with sorrow of the changing of the original title of the Work of the Catholic Apostolate, decided by Pius IX, to that of the Pious Society of Missions. He dedicated himself greatly to spreading the spirit of the holy Founder among his early followers.

The memory of Francesco Maria Vaccari handed down over the generations was of his particular admiration for the Catholic Apostolate, his innate sense of charity and his service to the needy. His profound Christian feeling stemmed from the relationship with the Lord which he continuously sought in prayer, in order also to face with the strength of faith all of the physical sufferings to which his dedication exposed him. His

choice of life whereby, after meeting Vincent Pallotti in Rome, he resolved without hesitation and with great fervour to follow the apostolic ideal which Pallotti himself lived, is very noteworthy. The commendable activity of Francesco Maria can be compared to that of Saint Vincent, who wanted him present at his deathbed, assigning him the task of leading his companions in faith, continuing the promotion of the work which had united them fraternally.

Francesco Maria Vaccari died on January 20, 1856 in Fuscaldo at forty one years of age. His death occurred in his homeland, in a holy manner, in the evening hours, as he had predicted to members of his family some time before, not in the prestigious family home, but in a bare, cold room which he chose as his dwelling while waiting to return to God. His mortal remains rest in the church of san Giacomo in Fuscaldo.

2. New International Commission for Formation in the Union:

During the annual meeting of the General Coordination Council of the Union in May, a decision was taken to constitute a new international Commission for Formation in the Union. It is composed of the following members: Fr. Frank Donio SAC (President), Sr. Jolanta Krasinska SAC, Sr. Stella Marotta CSAC, Maria Domke and Corrado Montaldo. The Commission is an auxiliary body of the GCC whose responsibilities include researching, developing, coordinating and promoting in the Union formation in all of its dimensions and collating available formation material, liaising with NCCs and organising meetings for National Formation Promoters in the UAC.

3. Meeting of the President, General Secretary and General Bursar of the Union with the General Councils of the Three Core Communities:

On May 31st 2012 the President of the Union, Fr. Derry Murphy SAC, the General Secretary, Fr. Rory Hanly SAC and the newly-appointed General Bursar of the Union (also the Assistant of the General Bursar of the Society), Fr. Norbert Sequeira SAC were invited to the meeting of the General Councils of the three Core Communities of the Union which took place in Hotel Ponte Sisto, the hotel owned by and attached to the Generalate of the Society. The agenda included evaluations of the UAC General Assembly in January and of the GCC meeting in May.

The growth of the Union into a global phenomenon in the Church was noted with satisfaction. At the same time, such growth gives rise to new challenges. The need for care in the use of language when speaking about the Union was noted: the Union is not a separate, distinct reality from the Core Communities as our use of language sometimes misleadingly may suggest but, rather, Core Community members are equally part of the Union with all of the other members – all of us together constitute the Union. The Core Communities do have a particular responsibility to promote it and ensure its good functioning from within. It was also noted that the proper growth of the Union also demands sound initial and ongoing formation, transparent financial management and adequate structures. The decisions of the GCC to constitute a new International Formation Commission and to appoint a new General Bursar and the members of the International Financial Commission to support him will contribute greatly to the good functioning and growth of the Union. This meeting, moderated by the Rector General, Fr. Jacob Nampudakam, was a real experience of Pallottine communion as well as an expression of the willingness of all with particular responsibility for leadership in the Union to commit themselves even more intensely to the propagation of the charismatic vision and spirituality of St. Vincent Pallotti, beginning afresh especially in this Jubilee Year.

3. The First National Congress of the Union in the United States of America:

The First National Congress of the Union in the USA took place at Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin from July 13-15. It was attended by about 50 participants from various parts of the U.S. along with visitors from Canada, India and Rome. The Congress was marked by a wonderful spirit of hospitality and communion. It was opened by a word of welcome from Bob Gay, US NCC President, and talks included the following themes: an historical overview of UAC national gatherings in the US (Sr. Carmel Therese Favazzo CSAC), a welcome by local Auxiliary Bishop, Don Hying, personal experience of the Union (Maria Domke, Canada), the UAC and engagement in service (Linda Barikmo, local UAC member), the UAC, the Year of Faith and the New Evangelisation (Maureen and John Rotramel, local UAC members). On Saturday 16th, there was a tour of the Pallottine parishes in the area, the day concluding with a barbecue. The final Mass was led by Fr. Rory Hanly SAC, General Secretary of the Union. Some of the photos from the Congress can be seen at <http://my.opera.com/gpserwa/albums/show.dml?id=12249002> Some of the talks and material will also be posted on this web site as well.