



"Fate risplendere la santità di Dio". "Let the holiness of God shine forth" (cf. Mt 5,16)

ITEM 24

**VOCATION, FORMATION AND MISSION OF BROTHERS:
OPPORTUNITY AND POSSIBILITY IN INDIA**

The following is the introduction to the material sent recently on the vocation of Brothers in the SAC [#9/18]. The context was an International Meeting of Brothers along with Formators and Vocation Promoters at Trivandrum, India. **Fr Antony Dhas sac** explains how the genesis for this meeting arose out of the 20th General Assembly, intended as an attempt to provide an awakening to the potential role for Brother vocations, specifically in India.

Wake-up Call

It all began during the 20th General Assembly held in September-October 2010 in Rome when the participants went through an awakening with regard to the grim reality of Brotherhood in our Society, and to the urgency of the situation to take steps needed to revive vocations to Brotherhood. The report of Br Stephen Buckley was soul-stirring and challenging. Br Steve, as he is fondly called, is an inspiration for all those who are and would become Pallottine Brothers. He began his work of inspiring people even before the above-said Assembly – he went around the world conscientizing members about the vocation and mission of Brothers in the Society. As part of his world tour, he visited India with a hope to rekindle there a fervour for Brotherhood and revive their efforts towards the realization of that dream. He did succeed in doing so in his address to all the three Provincial/Regional Assemblies held in 2010.

As a follow-up to these interventions, the *General Secretariat for Formation* decided to convene an International Meeting of Brothers in India, which was held at Maria Rani Centre in August 2011. To this meeting were invited the formators and vocation promoters of India with the aim of conscientizing those who are directly involved in promoting vocations and formation.

Soul Searching

The participants, circa 30 in total, did some soul searching on the topic. Four interventions helped them in this process: interventions of Rev Fr Jacob Nampudakam, Rector General, Rev Br Stephen Buckley, the Brothers' representative, Rev Fr Bipin Kishore, in charge of formation in Khrist Jyothi Region (now Province), and Rev Fr Antony Dhas, member of the General Secretariat for Formation. It was brought to the attention of the participants the glorious past

of the Brothers in our Society when, for example in Germany, the Brothers outnumbered the Priests, and the present grim situation of the ever dwindling number of Brothers, not to mention that of Priests. A simple statistic would suffice to exemplify the same (here I quote the words of Br Stephen):

At the present time, there are **137 finally-professed Brothers** in our Society. In the whole of the Society there are **17 candidates for the Brotherhood in formation**.

To put a figure like this into perspective, please allow me to compare this figure – **17** – with the formation figures of the smallest of the three entities here in India, namely the Region of Khristi Jyothi – The Light of Christ [now a Province]. According to the statistics for 31.12.2010, there are 49 students in all phases of formation in the Region. That is already almost 3 times the number of Brother candidates that are in formation worldwide. And The Light of Christ Region is just one entity in our Society. In total there are 20 entities worldwide in our Society. Overall, the ratio between candidates in formation for the Brotherhood and candidates in formation for the Priesthood is 1:28. Of the 20 entities in our Society (12 Provinces and 8 Regions), 15 have **no Brother vocations whatsoever**.

This was substantiated by a report on the not-so-encouraging situation of Brothers in India as a whole. In this context, it is not a surprise that there is not even one vocation to Pallottine Brothers in India up to this date.

But the situation can change, as many agreed, if we make even minimum efforts towards the promotion of vocations to Brotherhood, since we see “opportunity” in India. “Opportunity” is an apt expression to describe the fertile environment for promotion of the vocation and mission of Brothers in India.

To quote, once again, the words of Br Stephen:

....so I look at the Theological Faculty in Mysore, or the St Vincent Pallotti College of Engineering and Technology in Nagpur, or the International School in Dongargarh, or the School for the children of the quarry-workers in PILLAR in Madurai and I see.....opportunity (both in teaching and administration)

....I hear about new missionary initiatives in Arunachal Pradesh and Zambia and the Philippines and I think.....opportunity (catechists & parish assistants)

....I note the growth in our Pallottine entities and in the wider Indian society and economy and I think.....opportunity (bursars & IT experts)

Antony Dhas sac – Trivandrum – INDIA
member of General Secretariat for Formation
23.03.12

ITEM 23

The International Centre for Pallottine Formation ("Cenacle")

"We should be always moved by the spirit of God's love. If we are animated by it, we shall treat all with love. We shall look on all with love. We shall think of all with love and speak to all with love".
St Vincent Pallotti

This is what I have experienced in the International Centre for Pallottine Formation - "Cenacle" - where opportunities exist for all of us to enter into the wisdom of God, to become better human persons with spiritual depths, to touch 'Pallottiness', and to imbibe a spirit of universalism to serve humanity under one umbrella of Christ (UAC). Sincere thanks to our General Administration!

The international centre has been created as a life-filled course inspired by an enlightened staff and co-ordinators, where great evolution is taking place; personalities are being carved, polished, and groomed, making everyone of us aware of what we are and enlightening us with the clear knowledge of our founder. It provides a contextual, transformational, integrated and all-encompassing spirituality, formation and religious education. I have personally witnessed here a lifestyle which focuses on the different dimensions of formative, spiritual, psychological, anthropological, social and cultural perspectives. This course enables all of us to become better prospective formators, to "go forth to serve".

The one year program certainly equips young Pallottines for ministry, progressing through study to a broader outlook, a spirit of service, a solid foundation for cenacle experience, a greater spiritual renewal. I have experienced, in a cross-cultural environment, a deeper spirituality, community life, what it means to work as a team etc. I have experienced a knowledgeable and mixed group of mentors - Pallottine Fathers, Sisters, Brothers and laity - trained in Pallottine spirituality, and able to guide and accompany us towards a global outlook into a new way of being Pallottines.

**Joseph Kiran Madanu sac – Rome – ITALY
22.03.12**
