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DOMINUS DET TIBI PACEM

Province of The Most Holy Name
Franciscan Fathers

Sobre
Anapolis ✓
Brazil

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NEW YORK 1, NEW YORK

OFFICE OF THE PROVINCIAL

BIBLIOTECA
EL SOLEGIO DE MEXICO

February, 1961

My dear Confreres:

Monday, December 12, 1960, marked the fruition of two very important projects. On that day the Brazilian division of the Institute of Intercultural Relations held its first session in our headquarters at Anapolis. Among the twelve students at the Institute were five Franciscan Sisters of the Poor (three from the Midwest Province, two from the Eastern Province), who had arrived the previous day.

Monsignor Illich, a priest of the Archdiocese of New York, has set up an Institute for Intercultural Relations at the Catholic University of Puerto Rico. He himself is the Director. Monsignor Illich attended the Mission Meetings in Washington in the Fall of 1959 and I then had several opportunities to talk with him about the Institute. As a result of these talks, six Fathers of Holy Name Province were numbered among the Institute students during the Summer of 1960.

I requested Monsignor Illich's help for the Brazilian Missionaries of Holy Name Province. This meant that Portuguese, instead of Spanish, would have to be the basic language of the Institute. Monsignor informed me that, if I would send him a capable man during the Summer of 1960, he would prepare him to organize a Brazilian Division of the Institute, whose language would be Portuguese. Fr. John Baptist Vogel, Guardian of St. Francis Monastery in Anapolis and Rector of the Colegio there, was chosen. He attended the summer session at the Catholic University of Puerto Rico; came to the States; made the various necessary contacts and arrangements; returned to Brazil; recruited, screened and trained nine normal-school girls as instructors. During this period of preparation, Fr. John informed me that he would be ready to go on December 15th, the beginning of the summer vacation in Brazil. Actually, Father jumped the gun by three days and the Institute got under way with a testing-of-ability period during the morning of December 12th. At this session there were five Franciscan Sisters of the Poor registered in the Institute.

Last May I received a phone call from the Mother Superior of St. Francis Hospital in the Bronx. The burden of Mother's message was that Mother Tarcisia Marie, Mother General of the Franciscan Sisters of the Poor, was at Warwick and would like an appointment to consult with me in New York concerning a Mission in Brazil. This was not completely unexpected. I made arrangements to drive to Warwick to talk over the matter with Mother Tarcisia. At this meeting plans were made for Mother, her secretary, Mother Bathildis, Provincial of the Eastern Province, and Mother Helen, Provincial of the Western Province, to go to Brazil.

Early in September these four Sisters left via Pan American to have a look at the territory. They were interested in doing social service work in Pires do Rio. In less than two weeks they were back in New York, and at a meeting with me at St. Francis Hospital, announced that they would send Sisters, probably six, to Brazil. Having in back of my mind the fact

that we must start school in the Institute no later than December 15th, and having already looked up the airline schedules, I requested full speed ahead with the processing of applications and, later, of applicants, so that the Sisters would be ready to leave New York December 10th. In the beginning, this looked impossible. Mother Tarcisia Marie was to return to Rome; all volunteers were to be informed that if they really wanted to go now they must write again; the choices and the processing of those who would go would have to be completed. The only hitch in the program turned out to be the illness of one of the Sisters, and so, instead of six, five were ready on the 10th.

A session in the Institute is of ten weeks' duration. These are five-day weeks and five-hour days. During the first few weeks only language is taught. After four or five weeks, a series of lectures which aim to equip the student with the historical background of the general and specific area in which he will work as a missionary are begun. Following these, they attend another series that could well be labeled "cultural." These two series, of course, are an attempt to inculcate knowledge of, and sympathy for, the people in the area. The present session will end on February 18th. After that time, the four Fathers recently sent from Holy Name Province will take up their assignments in the Commissariat. Two Allegany Sisters will be ready to open a hospital, and the five Franciscan Sisters of the Poor will report to Pires do Rio to begin the work for which they went to Brazil.

The Franciscan Sisters of the Poor were founded, as their title would indicate, to do social work among the poor. They will have ample opportunities to do just that in their first mission field in Brazil. At Pires do Rio, there is a roomy, well-constructed building, most of which has been idle for some years. It appears that it was built as a combination hospital and orphanage. It was never used as a hospital, but is currently in use as an orphanage. About one third of this building is now being renovated as quarters for the Sisters. Another third is being used for the orphanage, and the final third will probably be used as a clinic. The Sisters will operate the orphanage and the clinic. Added to this, they will work in the homes of the poor where this is needed. This will be a very important addition to our work in Brazil. At present we have no definite plans to expand this work, but, if Mother Tarcisia Marie can find it possible to release a few more Sisters, we would be more than anxious to begin a similar contribution in our parish in Catalao.

The trip to Brazil was on Varig Airlines. The jet flight left Idlewild at 6:30 p.m. and arrived in Brasilia about 5:00 a.m. Two hours must be subtracted from the time of this flight to allow for the time change. The friars in Brasilia met us at the airport. All in the group except myself went directly to Anapolis. I went to our residence in Brasilia; offered Mass; took a nap; and was then ready to move again. First, I inspected the large piece of property assigned to us there, on which there is a building in the process of construction. Temporarily, it will serve as auditorium-church-school combination. Very probably it will be in use at the time you receive this Newsletter. After seeing the grounds, we drove through the city of Brasilia. There are spots in which it is as pictured in the magazines. However, there remain about two thirds of the city's plans to be completed. There is a section about five miles from the city's center called "The Free City." This is really squatter's territory, and the living is close to destitution. After the tour of the city, which, by the way, was done in the car of Tom Barrett, an Embassy attache who is friendly with the Fathers, lunch was served by Bro. Denis Clark. After lunch we drove to Anapolis in Mr. Barrett's new Chevrolet.

The following day, Monday the 12th, Fr. Celsus Hayes, Fr. Bede Dauphinee and I left Anapolis by way of a commercial airline for Catalao and Goiandira. We left approximately on time and arrived on time. The drive from the airport to our residence in Catalao is a short one. This residence is new; it had been occupied for only a few days when I arrived. I therefore had the opportunity to bless it. Work on the church in Catalao is progressing slowly, as in the case of most churches in Brazil. The reason is this: we demand that the people themselves finance the building of their churches. When the church is finished, we will have a parochial plant of four buildings, all facing the same street: church, friary, convent and school. The Fathers from Goiandira came over and had lunch with us at Catalao. During the afternoon most of us went to Goiandira for a look-see and short visit. We had supper there. This is the killing part of a Visitation, to have more than one banquet a day. After lunch Frs. Celsus and Bede and I returned to Catalao. We were to leave Catalao and return to Anapolis the next day. This we did, but the flight was some four or five hours late; so instead of leaving in the morning we actually left in the afternoon.

Wednesday was a day free from travel. It was the day on which was scheduled the official opening of the Brazilian division of the Institute of Intercultural Relations.

On Thursday the 15th, we left Anapolis by light plane about noon for Ceres. The plane was a Cessna 190, a single-engined five-passenger aircraft, that flies at about 120 miles per hour. This is a very convenient way to travel because everywhere we wished to go there is an airport of sorts. We arrived at Ceres and did what is the usual flying routine--a low circle around the town twice, then to the airport to land. Evidently others were expected that evening, because three or four taxis came to the airport. It was here that we had a revelation of sorts. One of the taxi drivers made a crack about President-elect Kennedy. It was translated to mean that no more Protestant missionaries would be coming from the States now that Kennedy had been elected! This man was elated, not so much concerning the missionaries, but because he won a bet on the election. His comment was the occasion for a story that is really a side-line on the election. Non-Catholic missionaries have been emphasizing to the Brazilians that America is a Protestant country. Kennedy's election has robbed them of this sales talk.

It had been raining heavily in Ceres, the airport of course was not paved, and so we really picked up mud on our shoes. I don't know just how long it took Bro. Gerard to clean my shoes, but he did a good job. At Ceres there is one new building, the Sisters' convent. It is roomy, airy, nicely located and was very much needed. The next project in Ceres is the building of a new church. We stayed overnight at Ceres, and on the next day, Friday, went to Cristalândia.

The flight to Cristalândia took four to four-and-a-half hours. We interrupted it at Gurupi, one of the fueling stations in the area. It takes approximately forty-five minutes to refuel an airplane. They have two methods: if a drum is nearly full, they can, by their little power pump, pump gas from the drum into the wing of the airplane; when the drum is nearly empty, they must pump the gas into a container, and then pour it into the airplane. With a full load of gas we took off for Cristalândia, the seat of the prelaty.

The procedure there was as usual--circle the town twice; then land. Cristalândia is one of the towns in which there is a really active Franciscan building program. The school is built, but additions are already needed. The friary and the convent are presently native buildings, but

construction has begun for new ones. Work has also begun on what will be Dom Jaime's cathedral. Because there is a lack of sleeping facilities at Araguacema, we flew there on Saturday and returned the same evening. We really spent two nights in Cristalândia.

Araguacema is at the top of our prelacy, which means that it is the place most remote from Anápolis. We have here a church and a residence, both of native construction. They are on a cliff overlooking the Araguaya River. This town has neither doctor nor nurse--the Mennonites have set up a dispensary. Very probably Bro. Rosario will also set up a dispensary and, I hope, a soup kitchen. It was during the round trip to Araguacema that we found the airplane, although set up for five persons, carries only four comfortably.

On Sunday morning we left Cristalândia for Porangatu. On this trip we again stopped at Gurupi for gas. At Porangatu we have the original church; native houses are used for the rectory and convent. Here, as in Cristalândia, a school has been built and now needs additional space. A Sister's convent is being built. We visited here through Sunday. On Monday morning we took off for Pires do Rio. The trip from Goiânia to Pires do Rio consumed just about an hour. We circled the town as usual; the Fathers came out; picked us up; and we went into the residence there.

Pires do Rio is one of our larger installations. The church is finished. There is a very large auditorium surrounded by classrooms, which also is just about completed. The interest in Pires, however, is focused on the building that is being reconditioned to house the Franciscan Sisters of the Poor. They will conduct the affairs of the orphanage and clinic, and will do social work in the area. All in Brazil look at this as a very important work, and hope that it can be expanded to a few of our other installations, such as Catalao and San Antonio in Anápolis.

On Tuesday morning we left Pires and flew to Goiânia. Here Fr. John Granahan has what is probably our most intimate contact with the poor. I presume that Fr. John and Fr. Colman Sullivan could argue for quite a while on the relative poverty of their two parishes. Fr. Colman has San Antonio in Anápolis. Both are very poor. Fr. John lives in a native building, and has formulated plans in his mind, but nothing on paper, for a new church and rectory. At Goiânia we visited the Archbishop, who is very interested in securing more American priests. After this visit, we drove to Anápolis.

The next four days were spent in and around Anápolis. I visited St. Anne's, San Antonio, a chapel on the outskirts of town, the seminary, Fr. Winfred Wiseman's grave, the Allegany Sisters' Motherhouse, and the hospital. This hospital, to be conducted by the Allegany Sisters, is almost ready for occupancy and operation. The two Sisters who are nurses, and who will conduct the business of this hospital, are in Language School. Probably within a couple of weeks after they finish school, February 18th, they will open--at least for maternity cases.

Organized social work had its beginning a few years ago under the direction of Fr. Bernard Trainor. There was a pre-natal and post-natal clinic not far from Santa Anna in Anápolis. Doctors, nurses and others contributed services, and much good was done. The same group organized the distribution of food and other presents at Christmastime. Later, the need became so great that soup kitchens began operation, first in Anápolis and then at other installations. The word "soup" is not accurate. What is given to these people is a thick stew. We have the orphanage, which has been opened; and the dispensary, which will open in the very near future in Pires do Rio; and the hospital in Anápolis.

Having visited the Brazilian Mission periodically during eight years, I think I can see steady progress there. One of the signs would be that we now have chapel centers erected in the outlying areas. All in our area give credit for the educational progress made. A child answering a questionnaire is for about the first time, now able to say that both his parents had a secondary school education. The Masons in the government have taken cognizance of our educational progress, to the extent that they are now attempting to take advantage of our primary education by putting in free secondary schools.

Flying in a light plane sometimes has its bad moments. We had two of these in our trip around the Commissariat. When we arrived in Brazil, we were told about the airliner that had gone down in the semi-jungle and had not been found. Later it was seen from helicopters, but the helicopter pilots were afraid to land because Indians were parading around the airplane. Just before we started our tour of the Commissariat in the light plane, we heard of the accident in the New York area.

We left Cristalândia for Araguacema at about eight o'clock in the morning. It was a beautiful day with thin cumulus clouds in the sky. After flying for about a half hour, approximately half-way to Araguacema, we encountered rain. As we progressed, visibility became worse, and the ceiling continued to lower until finally we were down to within two hundred feet of the treetops. There were many places where the airplane could have landed, but the thought kept recurring: after landing, what? Would there be five of us standing on the wings of an airplane in some swamp? Shortly after this, we saw the wide Araguaya River--a welcome sight. We soon located the house and the airfield.

A somewhat similar instance happened while flying from Porangatu to Goiania near the end of our trip. During the rainy season most of the precipitation is in showers, both heavy and light, which quite frequently pass over quickly. Pilots become accustomed to flying through them and into the sunshine again. On this trip we didn't fly through; we kept flying further into a heavy, widespread area of rain. There is always the possibility of another airplane in a similar situation, in the same place, at the same time--a situation of this type causes some concern. Actually, after five or ten minutes, which seemed like much more than that, the pilot decided he had had it, turned, flew back out of the area; ducked beneath it; circled a few times to get his bearings; and flew into Goiania.

The Sacred Congregation for Religious Affairs indicated to the Executive Committees of both the Men's and the Women's Conferences its desire that a Religious Congress be held during the summer of 1961. It was decided immediately that Notre Dame would be the only place large enough to house the delegates. There have been several meetings in preparation for this Congress.

We began with a group of about thirty-five, but, at the second meeting, reduced the planning group to four. The plans for the Congress will be formulated and executed by the Presidents and General Secretaries of the two Conferences. The invitations to the Congress will go to all Major Religious Superiors and to three members of each Council. The limitations are set by housing and other similar facilities. As General Secretary of the Men's Conference, I was requested to collect and suggest plans for a full, two-day, six-session agenda. In all, I was able to have six plans prepared. One was chosen, that of Fr. Alban Maguire. A team of friars from Holy Name Province will conduct these sessions with the help of Doctor Ayd, of Baltimore. It is our hope to have one session (dry run) at the Allegany Motherhouse before going to Notre Dame. Fr. Alban Maguire,

Fr. Reginald Redlon, Doctor Ayd and I will comprise the team that will make the presentation, as well as lead the discussion, at the Congress.

For the past two or three years, negotiations have been in progress to have a Poor Clare Community establish a monastery in the Gumma Missions. At one point money was sent to purchase the land and to build. Some months ago the Japanese Community, with whom the Fathers were negotiating, reluctantly said that they would not be able to go to Gumma. Divine Providence was in our corner as usual--the Poor Clares from Jamaica Plain have decided to go. The usual preliminaries are done; a petition has been sent to the Holy See for three Sisters to go to Japan to prepare to establish a monastery in Gumma. Arrangements are in progress for these Sisters to live with a community of the Franciscan Sisters of Mary while they learn Japanese, and make other arrangements. The time of departure depends upon word from Rome, and a few other circumstances. It is my intention to go with them.

You will be interested and happy to hear that a new monastery, complete with two chapels, has been dedicated in New Bedford, Mass. There is a basement chapel, seating approximately four hundred, and a first floor chapel, seating about four hundred and fifty. The second floor contains offices, meeting rooms, and, in the cloistered part, dining room, kitchen, and a small chapel for visits to the Blessed Sacrament. The third floor contains living quarters. On the fourth floor there are some additional living quarters, a library, a recreation room, and a terrace. The choir chapel will be behind the main altar on the first floor chapel. The dedication took place on Sunday, February 5th.

Another building project that is well advanced is the new monastery at St. Bonaventure University. This building consists of four wings surrounding an open courtyard. The west, or residence, wing has four stories with accommodations for some 92 friars. The first floor of this residence will contain complete quarters, with recreation room and small chapel, for retired and infirm friars. The south wing contains the kitchen, the dining room and the recreation room. The east wing is the chapel. The north wing will contain suites and offices. There is a basement under the entire building. It is hoped that this building will be ready for dedication in early summer.

The Administration of Holy Name Province uses this means of congratulating not only those who will be ordained to the priesthood on February 25th, and on May 31st, but also all the Fathers and Brothers who will celebrate their Silver or Golden Jubilees during 1961--AD MULTOS ANNOS.

Archbishop Vagnozzi will ordain the class of 1961 on Saturday, February 25th, in the Monastery Church of the Commissariat of the Holy Land in Washington, D. C.

On Wednesday May 31st, at St. Anne's in Anapolis, Brazil, Dom Jaime will ordain our first Brazilian cleric, Francisco da Silva. Dom Fernando, the Archbishop of Goiania will preach. Fr. Bertrand Campbell has been appointed to represent the Provincial Office.

Among the highlights of the past year for me was a pilgrimage to Cape de Madeline, arranged and conducted by the Franciscan Family Circle. The Cape is in the care of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate. It has been chosen as the location for an International Marian Congress in 1962. Frs. Lambert Valentine and Arnold Brown are to be complimented for the help they rendered to the Family Circle in the arrangement of their tours.

Briefs:

The Butler Monastery will be renovated as the new home for "Friar." Frs. Aurelian Scharf, Amadeus Fiore and Hilary Scott have finished their studies. The first two are back in the Province. Fr. Hilary is secretary pro tem to Father General. Fr. Damian McElrath has his degree. It was planned to have him take another year in Europe, but Fr. Victor Mills' death necessitated his return to Holy Name. We are planning to place a chaplain at the high school of the Immaculate Heart Sisters in Lima. Next Fall, three priests of the Province will join Fr. John Lambert Rowan in the administration of the Buffalo diocesan seminary. This Buffalo seminary, and the new seminary of the Vincentians at Albany will further the training of more than three hundred seminarians not now provided for. The diocesan authorities in Syracuse have requested a co-institutional high school instead of just a boys' school. This will be recommended to the new administration. Fr. Dunstan Dooling has a printing press in Goiandira. There is an island in the Araguaya River opposite, and about two hundred yards from our house at Araguacema with a lovely sandy beach. Swimmers in the Araguaya are cautioned to keep moving. There are fish that will attack and destroy motionless bodies. Fr. Bede Dauphinee met a Conventual priest in Goiania whom he had taught in Siena. Frs. Roy Corrigan wrote Admiral Burke to obtain a submarine ride for a Brooklyn baker. It worked. Brother Gabriel handles the soup kitchen in Pires do Rio, and doctors indicate a fifty percent decline of out-patients due to soup kitchens. Malnutrition is the cause of many ills. They were bothered with pigs in the garden at Porangatu until Fr. Joseph B. Wider ordered one shot. Goats have been eating altar cloths at Cristalândia--no solution yet.

I offered Midnight Mass at the Sisters' Motherhouse in Anapolis. Was scheduled to leave Brasilia at one p.m. on Christmas, but the flight was canceled. Fr. Celsus and I went to Rio, attempted to return from there that evening. Finally made arrangements for the morning of the 27th and went to the home of the Syracuse Conventuals. We arrived just in time for their Christmas Party.

Sincerely and fraternally,

Celsus Wheeler of.m.

Minister Provincial