

A HISTORICAL STUDY

ON THE CHARISM OF



ST. GASPAR BERTONI

**The Founder of the
Congregation of the Sacred Stigmata**

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Summary

In this historical study on the Charism of St. Gaspar Bertoni, the Author points out the importance of the teaching for the Apostolic Mission of the Congregation.

As the Stigmatines were intended by St. Gaspar Bertoni to be "Apostolic Missionaries for the Assistance of Bishops" – motto of the Congregation – "through any Ministry of the Word of God whatsoever", the Author guides us in a journey through the time, from the early Stigmatine communities, and through the essence of the Bertonian Charism, with its roots in St. Ignatius of Loyola's goals for his Society of Jesus and in St. Gregory, the Great, Pope's writings, on which St. Gaspar based some of his preaching to the Diocesan Seminaries.

St. Gaspar Bertoni, in his life, had a broad Apostolic Mission:

- He was dedicated to the needs of his time, taking care of the ill and wounded people in consequence of the war;
- He rescued the youth from the city's hostile environment, through the devotion to the Virgin Mary and the teaching of Catechism (this work was so fruitful that he was recognized as "The Apostle of the Youth");
- He founded a School for the Youth, and was teacher;
- He rescued the dignity of the Clergy, also affected by the hostile environment of the war, so that the Seminary became an example of order and discipline, and the priests and seminarians models of dedication and work;
- He was spiritual director of the Seminary of Verona;
- He was preacher of the Word of God in the popular missions in Sts. Firmus and Rusticus Parish, in Verona (in reason of that he received from the Holy See the title of "Apostolic Missionary");
- He was notable counselor of the people and of founders of others religious congregations;
- He founded a religious congregation, in spite of all the obstacles of his time, when the religious orders were persecuted and up to suppressed.

Within this broad apostolic life, we can note the importance of **The Ministry of the Word of God**, helping the Clergy and Religious and the Youth, sometimes through of Schools and always through the teaching in his life. His **Charism**, which his Stigmatines are destined to live, is noted in the motto: "**Go Forth and Teach**", meaning: **to evangelize**.

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ABBREVIATIONS, QUOTATIONS AND NOTES USED IN THIS DOCUMENT

Abbreviation or Quotation	Meaning
# (##)	Number(s)
c.	Chapter
cf.	Confer
CF	Constitutions of the Founder
CS	Collectanea Stigmatina - these are 4 volumes [as in: CS I, CS II, CS III and CS IV] - it was compiled by one of the greatest Stigmatine historians, Fr. Joseph Stofella, CSS, beginning around the year of 1952.
CSJ	Constitutions of the Society of Jesus [St. Ignatius' Constitutions]
f. (ff.)	Follow page(s) or verse(s)
Ibi (or "ib")	It is an abbreviation of the Latin " <i>ibidem</i> ", and is an editorial short-cut, which means: there; in the same place.
MssB	Manoscritti Bertoniani - all typed in five volumes by Fr. Luigi Benaglia, CSS - these are all the writings of Fr. Bertoni - they have also been printed out by computer in five volumes with marginal numbers for easy reference.
NB	NOTA BENE [<i>"note well!"</i> - <i>"pay attention!"</i> - usually used in English and Italian manuscripts - from the Latin]
n. (nn,)	Number(s)
o.c.	"opus citatum" – the work already quoted - it usually means a work cited earlier in the work.
p. (pp.)	Page(s)
Ps (Pss)	Psalm(s)
Psalms number	The Psalm number refers always to the Latin Vulgate. When are quoted two numbers, the second one refers to the modern Bibles, where the Psalm 9 was divided into two.
ss.	Follow pages (or verses) [from the Italian <i>seguenti</i>]
v. (vv.)	Verse(s) of the Sacred Scripture

Notes	Meaning
Footnotes	Author's commentaries about outstanding parts in numeral sequence (1, 2, 3...), in the same page, at the bottom.
Endnotes	Author's commentaries about outstanding parts in Roman numeral sequence (i, ii, iii, iv...) at the end of this document.

FOREWORD

On the pages that follow, the benevolent reader will find some reflections on the understanding of the Stigmatine Charism, as presented to the Church by St. Gaspar Bertoni, [1777-1853], the canonized Founder of the Stigmatines. This is an Introduction to a Historical-Theological Study of his ***Original Constitutions***.

A Stigmatine General Chapter was held in Rome during the Jubilee Year of 2000. Among the decisions this Chapter reached, was to establish a Commission made up of Stigmatine Confreres of different Provinces who were to study the *Original Constitutions* of St. Gaspar Bertoni.

Later, an annual meeting of the Stigmatine Council of Superiors was held in Sezano, near Verona, Italy, in September 2003. Their suggestion to the Commission was that each member should make every effort to bring out the more that which unites the Stigmatines, rather than maintain personal opinions that might divide us – and to do all that would be possible to present the results of the research in a language that would be understandable to the confreres.

From October 2 – 12, 2003, this Commission held its third meeting at the Stigmatine Bertoni Hall, in Waltham Massachusetts, USA. After these days of meeting, the Commission submitted this following statement to the General Council in Rome. The author of this present Historical Study has considered that the results of the Commission's work together, might serve as the best Introduction to this first [of many, it is hoped!] study of St. Gaspar's ideal: -

†††

1. The **Apostolic Mission** is, as it was for the **Apostles**, a participation in **the Personal Mission of Jesus Christ**. For every person and for every religious Institute, this Mission constitutes a mandate of unique originality.

2. The concrete translation of this **Mission** on the part of St. Gaspar Bertoni took shape **progressively** through a **series of spiritual, mystical and apostolic experiences**, which culminated in the Parish Mission given in the Church dedicated Sts. Firmus and Rusticus in Verona. However, this development saw its beginnings even in the years of St. Gaspar's personal life as a seminarian, when he expressed his wish *to lead the life of a Religious*; in his teaching Catechism to the young; and later in his establishing the Marian Oratories. This grace took further shape in Fr. Bertoni's life in his work at St. Sebastian's; and in the deep religious experience he had in a religious ceremony of transporting the relics of St. Gualfardo with some other priest friends; in the spiritual direction that he was invited to offer to the community of Religious

Sisters living in St. Joseph's Convent, where he had been assigned Confessor; in his deep spiritual contact with the Lord when he heard within himself from the Crucifix the words: *Look at this, my heart*. His particular form of serving the Church was further clarified in his gathering of priest friends of like mind in meetings for theological discussions; in their coming together for their annual Retreats; in his dedication to the formation of young seminarians preparing for the priesthood; and in his work at the tuition-free schools he established on the Stigmatine property in Verona, that was known popularly as *the Stimate* [an Italian title taken from the name of the Church in Verona where the early Stigmatines officiated, dedicated to "the Stigmata of St. Francis of Assisi."].

4. The particular creativity of **St. Bertoni's ideal of the *Missionary*** in his written plan is given by two distinct elements found in the very first lines of his ***Original Constitutions***: through his particular interpretation of the word ***Apostolic [Missionary]*** and in his expression ***for the assistance of Bishops***¹.

Through St. Gaspar's use of the adjective ***apostolic*** here he makes reference to that commitment of the Stigmatine ***Apostolic Missionaries***² in an organized activity of evangelization [in support of the ordinary ministry of the Church], according to the changing needs of the times and places.

This special commitment to the Church is characterized by Fr. Bertoni in his words, ***in obsequium Episcoporum*** [*for the assistance of Bishops*]. This expresses communion with the local Bishops and the ecclesial service Stigmatines offer to the Church through the needs expressed by the Bishops.

5. ***The Modality*** [this is rendered by the Latin, ***Modus*** in CF 2: ***manner, mode***]: the various *modalities* of this ecclesial service that is to be offered by Stigmatines may be found in a Decree of the Congregation of the Propagation of Faith elevating St. Gaspar to the title of *Apostolic Missionary* for a Parish Mission which he preached at Sts. Firmus and Rusticus. The spirit of this Decree may be found in the under-lined words indicating missionary obedience to the Church³:

¹ The Latin expression here is: ***in obsequium Episcoporum*** - terms that will be explained throughout these studies. [cf. Rom 12:1, ff.; and St. Ignatius Loyola].

² These words indicate those men, specially chosen from among the Stigmatines priests who would be raised to this ***Grade***, and would be known as ***the Professed***. While all Stigmatines would pronounce religious profession, a few men would be invited by the Superior General to assume ***the more difficult*** missions for the Church. These would be raised to the ***Grade*** of ***Solemn Vows*** – they would have the title of ***Apostolic Missionaries***, and would be the specially ***Professed*** members of the Community. This is explained in **Part Nine [CF nn. 158-186]** of St. Gaspar's ***Original Constitutions***.

³ Fr. Bertoni's ultimate Model in this, as will be explained more in detail in these studies, is ***Jesus' own loving relationship to His Father, expressed through obedience***: [cf. Jn 14:31; Rm 5:19; Ph 2:8; Heb 5:8].

The Manner of Stigmatine Service: The Apostolic Missionaries are to obey these Ordinaries in all that pertains to the Apostolic Ministry, by receiving from them beforehand the permission and the necessary faculties. And the Apostolic Missionaries are to observe always the dispositions of these Bishops concerning the place and the time of exercising this ministry [cf. Decree of the Sacred Congregation of the Propagation of the Faith, December 20, 1817].

6. This Apostolic Ministry as noted in this Decree means the particular Stigmatine **manner, modality of serving the Church in Fr. Bertoni's Plan. For the Stigmatine **Apostolic Missionary**, this opens a vast gamut of **ministerial services**: the celebration of the Sacraments [CF 162]; the qualified service to the Christian community, as contained in St. Gaspar's Formula: **any ministry whatsoever of the word of God** [CF 163] ⁴; the formation of seminarians [CF 164] and the Christian education of the youth [CF 165-166]. At the same time, though, in order to maintain his principal inspiration of his **missionary dimension**, contained in the old Stigmatine motto **Euntes Docete** [cf. Mt 28:19], Fr. Bertoni **did not admit of the ordinary [parish, or community] care of souls** [CF 290].**

A particular ministerial service translates St. Gaspar's ideal for the **Apostolic Missionary**, the more it is inserted within the over-all ecclesial dynamism of evangelization, and/or re-evangelization. [This would mean that Stigmatines are called by vocation to further diocesan or national plans regarding Christian community, service to the Clergy, to religious communities and to the youth].

7. St. Gaspar Bertoni, from his years as a young Seminarian, was formed in the Ignatian spirituality - first under the guidance of Fr. Galvani ⁵, and through this, he cultivated an even more profound love and zeal for the Church. As noted above, Fr. Gaspar received the title of **Apostolic Missionary** from the Holy See, for the role he played in the **Parish Mission** of Sts. Firmus and Rusticus. In this sense, St. Gaspar became the **Missionary to the youth, a guide and teacher for the clergy and religious**, and a convinced supporter of the necessity of the **renewal of the entire Christian Community**. **Imbued** by the Word of the Lord, he prophetically noticed the pressing need to offer the most adequate response to the shifting demands of his own time: with his seminarian and priest friends, he deepened his own study of the Theology of St. Thomas Aquinas and the Moral of St. Alphonsus Liguori. In an intensifying increase of mystical and apostolic experiences, the plan for his **Religious Congregation of Apostolic**

⁴ The Latin expression of this, found first in St. Ignatius, is well known to Stigmatines: **Verbi Dei quodcumque ministerium.**

⁵ Fr. Nicholas Galvani was Fr. Bertoni's teacher in the theology – and arranged for Fr. Bertoni to obtain the ownership of the property in Verona, known in Stigmatine history as the *Stimate*.

Missionaries gradually matured. Fr. Bertoni himself remained as long as he lived as **the living rule** for all his sons; in his **Original Constitutions** there is transparent his own **missionary spirit and** his much repeated demand of both **spiritual and doctrinal perfection, toward** which all the Stigmatines are invited to tend.

8. The service **of Bishops** [from the Latin, **in obsequium Episcoporum**] remains, in the very first place, a service and communion offered to the Bishop, an expression of the Stigmatine ecclesial availability and confident abandonment in God: this ideal still remains a commitment toward a preparation that would express itself to the fullest, asking each Stigmatine to tend toward **perfection in the ministry**, called to mind by the formula **Apostolic Missionary**.

9. The Stigmatine Congregation, **throughout its history**, was not always able to live out with equal fullness the wealth of St. Gaspar Bertoni's plan. This was often the result of the social, cultural and religious context, or because of the limited resources of its own available members. As a result of this, sometimes Fr. Bertoni's charism was expressed with greater dedication given to the ministry of the schools and in the Christian education of youth; at other times, to preaching the Holy Parish Missions; to the formation of the Clergy and work in the seminaries; and then even in the ordinary care of souls; and then to the foreign missions. It seems, however, only proper to recognize that the Congregation has conserved, both in its conscious quest, as well as in suffering, the desire for an ever more faithful translation of her charismatic identity.

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The saintly Stigmatine Founder's first successor was Fr. John Mary Marani [1853 - 1871]. He was of the decided opinion that this broad apostolic commitment could only happen **after** what, for him, should be the prime commitment, that of preaching Parish Missions. In fact, he presented a **Compendium of the Constitutions and the Rules of the Venerated Founder** which was compiled in Rome in 1854⁶. Among other phrases, he wrote this one – that is not found any where in the Founder's own writings:

... the principal headings under which the Congregation lends its assistance to bishops, are – in addition to the [Parish] Missions the following...⁷ -

there follows, then, **a list of ten other ministries** which goes from the Administration to the Sacraments to the instruction of youth in their classical education.

⁶ cf. CS II, pp. 161-165.

⁷ ... I principali capi nei quali la Congregazione presta ai Vescovi aiuto, oltre le Missioni, sono i seguenti...

Fr. John Baptist Lenotti, the second Superior General [1871-1875], seems to emphasize more **the broader scope** noted in the *Original Constitutions*. Fr. Lenotti maintains the characteristic lists of Apostolic Services the Stigmatines are to render. He does this in two important documents of his:

[a] A Directory for the Novitiate:

...The End of the Congregation is: to be Apostolic Missionaries for the help, or the assistance of the Bishops. Therefore, its members are to be ready and prepared, day and night, at the slightest hint of their Superior, even at the very instant he should say so, to go anywhere, whether close at hand, or far away, whether within the city, or beyond its confines, to commit themselves any duty or ministry whatsoever: as, to give instructions; sermons; the Spiritual Exercises and the Parish Missions to any class of people; to the hearing of confessions of those detained in prisons, soon to be condemned to death; for supplying here and there to the chairs of Philosophy or Theology; as well as taking on for a time, the administration of a Parish suddenly bereft of its Pastor; and once these, or any other work has been performed, to give their place over to someone else, so that they might take on some other more serious or difficult ministry...the members of this Congregation should be ready for all ministries to which the Superior might send them; and the Superior, in so far as he is able and has men who are prepared, should accede to the needs of Bishops....⁸

[b] Domestic Exhortations to the Novices⁹:

...There is clearly seen that the intention of Fr. Bertoni had to have been that of instituting a Congregation, which - like the Company of Jesus is in a special manner, dedicated, orientated to the service [ossequio] and to

⁸ Finis Sodalitatis est: Missionarii Apostolici in obsequium, sive auxilium Episcoporum. Membra igitur eius semper diu noctuque parata et prompta esse debent ad nutum proprii Superioris, etiam in ipso instanti, quocumque, sive prope sive procul, sive intra civitatem, sive extra, ad quodcumque officium, sive ministerium se conferre: ad instructiones, conciones, Exercitia Spirituality cuicumque hominum coetui Missionesque faciendas, ad confessiones audiendas carceribus detentis et ad mortem damnatis praesto esse, ad supplendum huic vel illi cathedrae Philosophiae aut Theologiae, nec non ad Paroeciam improviso suo viduatam Pastore proprio tempore sustinendam; aliquo munere perfuncto, vel etiam non omnino expleto, alteri locum cedere, ut aliud gravius et difficilius suscipiatur... parati ad omnia ad quae Superior mittat; qui dum necessitatibus Episcopi, composit aut idoneos viros habeat, nihil denagabit... [cf. **Note per servire... Serie VI**, pp. 63, ff.].

⁹ cf. **CS III**, pp. 408, ff.

the dispositions of the Roman Pontiff - was that of having been dedicated and determined in a manner that is totally special and committed to the service and to the assistance of Bishops. However, with this difference: that while the Professed of the Company of Jesus make a vow of obedience to the Pope, Our [Professed] do not make any vow of obedience to the Bishop, but they seek in every way that they can, to help him, and to assist him obsequiously, in a particular manner being dedicated to him. Since it is one thing to be vowed to the Pope who has the sovereignty over the entire Catholic Church – and it would be something quite different to make a vow to a Bishop, as this would limit one to a single diocese, and this would mean restricting also the sphere of our ministry; and we would then be Missionaries for the Assistance of one Bishop, and not of the Bishops: indeed a single Bishop, could in such a case, by sending us here and there, now one member and later on another, he could destroy us and consume **us**. This is, therefore, the essence of our Institute, its end and the manner of obtaining it...

...And as for this [sword of the word of God], beloved Brothers, it is necessary to learn how to manage it well, according to the circumstances: in the confessional, in the prisons, from the professor's chair, at the lectern, from the altars, in giving Retreats, preaching Parish Missions, conducting the Oratories for the young, giving Days of Recollection, in participating in familiar and friendly conversations, ... etc., animating it with the Spirit of Lord who ought always to be in our hearts that that the Word might come out from it in a fervent manner, capable of moving and enkindling the hearts of the faithful... ¹⁰

¹⁰ ...Si vede chiaro che l'intendimento del P. Bertoni deve essere stato di istituire una Congregazione, la quale, come la Compagnia di Gesu' 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: per altro con questa differenza, che mentre i Professi della Compagnia di Gesu' fanno voto di obediienza al Papa, i Nostri [Professi] non facciano il voto di obbedienza al Vescovo, ma cerchino in ogni guisa che possano, aiutarlo, assisterlo ossequiosamente, in modo particolare a lui dedicati. Essendo che altro e' votarsi al Papa che ha la reggenza di tutta la Chiesa Cattolica, altro ad un Vescovo, che stringendosi ad una sola diocesi verrebbe a restringere anche la sfera del nostro ministero; e noi saremmo allora 'Missionari in obsequium Episcopij' – e non Episcoporum: anzi il Vescovo potrebbe, in tal caso, mandandoci qua e la', ora l'uno ora l'altro, distruggerci e consumarci. Questa e' l'essenza adunque del nostro Istituto, il suo fine e il modo di ottenerlo...

...E questa [spada della Divina parola], o fratelli, bisogna imparare a maneggiarla bene, cogli studi e con le sante lezioni, e adoperarla secondo le circostanze: nel confessionale, nelle carceri, sul pergamino, sul palco, dagli altari, negli Esercizi, Missioni, Oratori, Ritiri, conversazioni familiari, ecc., animandola dello Spirito del Signore che

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The struggle within the Stigmatine Congregation to understand the **End** and the **Manner, or the Missionary, obsequious Modality of loving obedience** in **servicing the Church through the Bishops**, goes back to these texts. The danger of ***restricting the sphere of our ministry*** - giving primacy to this or that priestly ministry took form in the Stigmatine history in the long debate over the **Schools**. Some thoughts on this struggle are contained in this Introductory reflection which follows here.

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deve essere sempre nello nostro cuore, perche' esca la parola infiammata a commuovere ad accendere I cuori dei fedeli, ecc. ...[cf. CS III, pp. 409, ss.].

The following are some texts from our Stigmatine tradition that seem to present a broad idea of the APOSTOLIC MISSION proper to the PROFESSEDⁱ, and the GRADEⁱⁱ

A. THE SCHOOLS

...Uno dei fini principali della Congragazione...

Introduction

During the early years of the Congregation's life, a series of General Chapters convened to seek to determine which apostolate – for those times and places - would be for the greater glory of God, for the broader benefit of the Church – while remaining within the rather limiting confines of the number of personnel available to carry this out.

In the course of this long debate, the matter of the **Schools** to be conducted by the Congregation was at the center of the discussions. This emerged almost immediately following the death of Fr. Marani [+ July 1, 1871]. He was a prime advocate of insisting more upon the conducting of Parish Missions as the primary apostolate of Stigmatines – motivated, perhaps, by the fact that for so many years, these Parish Missions were forbidden. So, right after Fr. Bertoni's death, Fr. Marani directed the Stigmatines almost unilaterally to the giving of Parish Missions. It seems that his decision was historical in nature, and not juridical – which would determine the Community forever after him.

Within 30 months of Fr. Marani's death, the Chapters from then onward, almost unanimously and consistently decided that **the teaching** of school was ***one of the principal ends of our Congregation***. This was eventually defined in the XIIIth General Chapter of 1890 – but this definition reflected the more common understanding of St. Gaspar Bertoni's ***Original Constitutions***.

††††

1. The XIIIth General Chapter

a. Proposal of Fr. Richard Tabarelli:

**Proposals presented to the XIIIth General Chapter by
Fr. Richard Tabarelli, Capitular¹¹ - Sept. 24, 1890**

¹¹ These last Proposals are those of Fr. Tabarelli. They appear on white, lined paper, 13 and one half by 9 and one fourth inches, folded to make four writing sides, 6 and three-fourths by 9 and one fourth inches. Fr. Tabarelli wrote only on side one. They are dated the opening day of the Chapter.

1. He asks whether the Chapter might wish to examine if it would be better to give up the **Elementary School of Parma**, to adhere to the desire of some who would prefer to be more occupied in the Exercises of the Sacred ¹² Ministry, **without the impediment of the Schools** ¹³.
2. He petitions that there be examined whether it would be better for our Clerics, subject to the draft, to make a year of voluntary service. At least, he would wish that a norm, as clear as possible, be established, suited to maintain the spirit ... in our young members, taken away by the tyranny of military law.
3. He asks, together with the **Decree of Approbation**, the earlier **Decree of Praise** for the Institute, be promulgated. And ordered to be read in all the Houses.
4. ¹⁴ Whether negotiations should be begun to promote the Cause of our Founder.

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b. The XIIIth General Chapter Decision

Chapter Minutes

September 24, 1890

3:00 o'clock in the afternoon

At the beginning of the afternoon Session, the Chapter unanimously declared to accept with gratitude the Decree of Approbation of the Institute, ordering that it be promulgated in all the Houses of the Congregation, and that the promulgation be followed by singing of the ***Te, Deum***, in thanksgiving to the Lord.

¹² This is under-lined in pencil.

¹³ The left hand side of this Proposal is marked with red crayon. Perhaps this is so, and was added later, as **Fr. Tabarelli is always considered as the strong advocate of the Apostolic Mission of the Schools**. And here he is proposing that those in Parma be closed. It is not so much that the concept of the **schools** was offensive – as this concept appeared in every General Chapter since 1874, when they were considered *one of the principal ends of the Congregation*. The problem had shifted – **too many of the Confreres were being assigned to teaching school**, with the heavy burden of study that these demanded, not leaving much time for other aspects of the Ministry of the Apostolic Mission.

¹⁴ This was written in pencil.

Incidentally, however, at the reading of the **Decree of Approbation**, the question arose whether, therefore, from the context of the Decree itself, there was revealed and there ought to be held that **Schools are a Scope of our Congregation equally principal with the Missions, and with the other exercises of the sacred Ministry, especially indicated in the same venerated Decree.**

This question was put to a vote, there being 23 voting, with Fr. Francis Benciolini absent.

The votes were collected, and **21 [twenty-one] had answered Yes; and 1 [one] No – and 1 [one] having abstained from the voting** ¹⁵.

Therefore, it was admitted and **retained**, that the **Schools**, according to the **context of the Decree of Approbation, are a scope of the Institute, equally principal with the Missions, and the other exercises of the Sacred Ministry, especially indicated by the Decree itself.**

With this vote, the First Session was closed.

Fr. Peter Vignola, Sup.
 Fr. Marcus Bassi
 Fr. Joseph Sembianti
 Fr. Louis Morando
 Fr. Bartholomew Perazzani
 Fr. Francis Benciolini
 Fr. Dominic Vicentini
 Fr. Pio Gurisatti
 Fr. James Marini
 Fr. Joseph Marchesini
 Fr. Alexis Magagna
 Fr. Melchiade Vivari
 Fr. Joseph Zandonai
 Fr. Anthony Oss Bals
 Fr. Paul Gradinati
 Fr. Cajetan Pizzighella
 Fr. Louis Gasperotti
 Fr. Joseph Marchesini
 Fr. Louis Tommasi
 Fr. Albano Clemente

¹⁵ This overwhelming and near unanimous vote in favor of the Schools – and implicitly, in favor of a broad understanding of Fr. Bertoni's *Apostolic Mission* – simply reflects the **various General Chapters** through the years, since the unanimous Proposal submitted from the House of the Stimmate, to the **Vth General Chapter [cf. Feb. 24, 1874]**. As will be seen here, **many early confreres, right after Fr. Marani's death**, considered schools as **one of the principal ends of our Institute** - this phrase is very similar to the one codified many months more than 16 years later, in this **XIIth General Chapter** – representing the **consistent interpretation** of many of the early Stigmatine confreres.

Fr. Stephen Rosa
 Fr. Julius Zambiasi
 Fr. Octavian Piccoli
 Fr. Richard Tabarelli, Secretary
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2. Previous General Chapters regarding Schools

a. Vth General Chapter

Proposal from the House of the Stimmate ⁱⁱⁱ, February 24, 1874

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

- Peter Vignola, Director ¹⁶
- 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.

¹⁶ 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.

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:

[1st] **corresponding to one of the principal ends of our Congregation,** that was born and flourished with teaching ¹⁷;

[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 ^v, Feb. 25, 1874.
 Fr. John Rigoni, Secret.**

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b. Vth General Chapter Decision – Feb. 27, 1874

....

Next came the discussion of the 2nd of the three Proposals of the House of the Stimmate, namely, the Proposal of an Elementary and High School, and a Night School, at the Teresians ^{vi}.

¹⁷ Clearly, in the minds of these Confreres, **teaching school 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, according to the changing needs of places and times [*accomodata*] - an essential aspect of the Founder’s ideal of the **APOSTOLIC MISSION.**

The unanimous Congregation, in recognizing the necessity of taking part in public instruction¹⁸, in order to come to something concrete, accepts the following Proposition, and puts it to a vote:

Proposition:

That **two individuals**, to be **designated by the Superior**, are to Prepare themselves, and present themselves to be approved for **High School teaching**.

Then, as for the time and manner of actuating the Schools, this is left to the Superior with his Council.

This was put to a vote:

Voting	8
Yes	7 votes
No	1 vote

IT WAS PASSED.

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c. A Later Proposal for the VIIIth General Chapter from the House of the Stimate, more than an Year and a half later:

In the Name of the Lord. Amen.¹⁹
The Stimate, October 13, 1875

The Chapter, having assembled at the invitation of the Very Rev. Fr. Peter Vignola, Director of the House of the Stimate, and its appendage, that of St. Teresa^{vi}, the following were present:

Fr. Joseph Sembianti
Fr. Joseph Marchesini
Fr. Charles Zara
Fr. Louis Morando

¹⁸ This early General Chapter clearly saw the importance of the **Apostolic Mission of Schools** – this would be specifically formalized in the **XIIth General Chapter of 1890**. Fr. Marani has been of a different opinion – he had presented the schools only as a *palliative* – and that all the other works should be done only *praeter missiones [parrochiali]*.

¹⁹ The first Proposal for this **Chapter of Election** was submitted by the House of the Stimate, on a large piece of unlined paper, 17 and one half, by 12 inches. This was folded to form 4 writing sides, measuring 8 and one half by 12. The Proposals covered pages 1 and 2, and two-thirds of page 3.

Fr. Peter Beltrami
 Fr. Lawrence Pizzini
 Fr. Richard Tabarelli

Having invoked the divine assistance, and it having been declared that in the absence of the Director, Fr. Sembianti, his delegate, would preside over the Chapter. The scope of this Capitular Reunion is that each one will expose what he believes in the Lord, should be brought under the deliberation of the proximate General Congregation, for the greater glory of God, for the increase of the Congregation, and for the greater profit of its members, the following proposals were made:

1. To ask that a beginning be made **for the instruction of the youth, by opening both the Elementary and Evening Schools**²⁰.
2. To petition that there be given a place for a greater number of Aspirants.
3. That they might wish to bring into effect the negotiations with the S. Congregation of the Propagation of the Faith, regarding the **Mission in Sweden...**

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d. The Response given to its own Proposal by the Stimate House Chapter - Oct. 13, 1875: [cf. Verballi of this House Chapter]

...When these Proposals were gathered, they were repeated one by one, they were discussed and formulated, and put to a secret vote.

The First was repeated: It is asked that there **be opened a soon as possible,** and even if this is possible, during this year, the Elementary Schools.

This was discussed, and put to a vote, and the result was:

²⁰ It bears noting again, that so soon after Fr. Marani's death, who held that teaching school was only a *palliative* - until the *proprium* [precise, proper] Apostolic Mission could be engaged in – and a good 15 years before the **XIIth General Chapter** - and long before Fr. Tabarelli could have assumed any dominance over the minds of his confreres - the periodic denial of the teaching aspect of the Apostolic Mission does not seem to have been in accord with so many other confreres – who understood that Fr. Bertoni dedicated so many of the *Original Constitutions* to the instruction and formation of Youth, precisely in **Part IX**, dealing with the **Duties of the Apostolic Missionaries – cf. CF ## 164 - 182**. In his life and Rule, this is a major aspect of the **Apostolic Mission – one of the principal ends the Congregation employed from the beginning of her history.**

Yes 7 votes²¹
No 0 Votes.

The Petition for the Night Classes had a unanimous rebuttal...
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e. The VIIth General Chapter response: October 29, 1875

10. The Congregation proceeded then to the First Proposal. Under N. II of the List, with which it is asked that the Elementary Classes be opened as soon as possible.

The Congregation looks favorably on this, and entrusts this to the Superior.

This proposition was formulated after a brief discussion, and

IT WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY²².
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f. The VIIIth General Chapter – [cf. *Verballi* of October 4, 1876]

Before passing to a decision on this point, a subordinated question was asked:

In the case that it be voted to send them, or not to send them: will there be understood by this that for the coming school year, the Schools will be opened?

On this proposition, a vote was taken, by Yea and Nay^{vii}:

Present	10	
Voting	9	[Fr. Vicentini abstained]
Majority	6	
Yes	9	²³
No	0	

²¹ While 'Elementary' school is no longer included within the **Apostolic Mission for the Assistance of Bishops** – it still was in 19th century Italy, due to *circumstances of time and place* – at least, among many of the Confreres, immediately after Fr. Marani's death. For many, there was expressed vividly, and repeatedly the desire to get back **to some form of instructing the youth, an essential aspect of Fr. Bertoni's charism**. Fr. Marani had opposed this interpretation of the schools as part of the *varia ET propria* [cf. **below, regarding CF # 185**] aspect of the apostolate within the **Apostolic Mission**.

²² Once again, a **unanimous Chapter approval** of the aspect of the **Apostolic Mission** in the teaching of **school, the apostolate with which the Community began** – a good 15 years before this question came to a head once more in the stormy **XIIth General Chapter, of 1890**.

Then, a vote was taken on the principal Proposition:

Whether or not, they will be sent to make the apprenticeship at S. Nicolo' ^{viii}?

This was put to a vote, by Yea and Nay, and the result was:

Present	10	
Voting	8	[Fr. Vicentini abstaining, and also Fr. Rigoni]
Majority	5	
Yes	8	
No	0	

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g. The House of the Stimmate [cf. *Verballi* of this House Chapter], Proposal to Xth General Chapter – January 19, 1881:

Illrd The third Proposal was formulated thus: The Chapter expresses the desire that the Congregation consider whether or not, the time has come, **to actuate one or more of the High School classes for extern students**, in conformity to what was established in the **Vth General Congregation**

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h. Response of the Xth General Chapter – February 23, 1881

... At this point, the 2nd Proposal of the House of the Stimmate, under n. 3 of the List, was taken up, that wishes the Congregation to **give some thought to make provisions for the classes for extern**

²³ There is a generally consistent **near unanimity** whenever the prospect of the **schools** comes up as an **essential element in the Apostolic Mission** – **from the time immediately following Fr. Marani's death** – and before Fr. Tabarelli would ever be able exert such 'total influence' over the minds of the whole XIIth General Chapter here [as some **maintain he did, over the *boni viri***]. Here [1876], though, we are some 14 years before the stormy **XIIth General Chapter**. Fr. Marani, who considered the schools merely as a *palliative*, hiding the real intention of the Community, was less convinced regarding the **schools** as a central aspect of the Apostolic Mission. However, many other confreres, almost immediately after his death, considered the Ministry of the Schools to be an aspect of the **Apostolic Mission, to be judged** according to the changing needs of the Church – the schools, in their view, pertained to the *varia ET propria ministeria* [CF # 185].

students ²⁴, that they be held in our other Houses, so that the teaching body of our own students be not debilitated.

The matter was considered most just and reasonable, and it was recommended to the prudence of the Superior General.

Then, followed the third Proposal of the same House under the same No. of the List, in which the desire is expressed that the Congregation might consider **whether or not the time has arrived, to actuate one, or more High School classes**, in conformity with what was established by the **Vth General Congregation** ²⁵.

After having discussed this for a long time, a vote was taken on this Proposal: Does the General Congregation believe **the time has arrived to actuate the lower High School classes for externs, in the House of the Stimate**, beginning in the meantime with the first lower classes?

Voting	14	[Fr. Marini being absent; and the Superior General having two votes].
Yes	14	
No	1	

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Conclusion

It is evident from this rapid survey of some of the early Stigmatine General Chapters – up to and including the XIIth General Chapter – that the rather **broad interpretation** regarding the realization of the **Apostolic Mission** would have included the equality of the school ministry within this plan. This equality of the schools remained the more common opinion among the early Stigmatine Confreres. This broader scope of the **Apostolic Mission** may be considered also from another aspect of the Chapter legislation: the manner in which the early Chapters tried to verbalize the specific scope of the Congregation.

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²⁴ These early Chapters continue to think of the schools as a “just and reasonable” exercise of the Apostolic Mission.

²⁵ This remains consistent with the **Vth General Congregation**, which responded favorably to a like proposal moved by the House of the Stimate [Feb. 24, 1874] – the first reason for which was: *1st, corresponding to one of the principal ends of our Congregation, that was born and flourished with teaching.*

B. BROADER INTERPRETATION OF THE APOSTOLIC MISSION
Introduction

As will be seen especially from **Part IX** of the *Original Constitutions*, the principal duties of the *Professed Apostolic Missionaries* are broad and multiple, as both *varied and proper* - a gradated approach to assuming the *more difficult, more challenging [graviora^{ix}] services* of the Church.

This will be seen also in the early General Chapters – which prepared a Code of new Constitutions to fill in some of the gaps which the *Original Constitutions* labored to some extent. When this new Code spoke of the *end*, or the *scope* of the Community – it presented a **very broad sweep of apostolic services** that the Stigmatines traditionally had offered in accord with the guidelines of the *Original Constitutions*.

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1. The Xth General Chapter [Feb. 1881] Commission^x 1881-1889

Broad Scope of the Apostolic Mission:

THE CONSTITUTIONS
 Of the SODALITY^{xi} FOUNDED by the Rev. Fr. GASPAR BERTONI in
 the VERONESE DIOCESE
 under the Protection of the BLESSED VIRGIN MARY, ESPOUSED
 to St. JOSEPH: The TITLE of which IS
 APOSTOLIC MISSIONARIES in the SERVICE OF BISHOPS

First Part

**Concerning the End which the Sodality of Apostolic Missionaries
 for the Assistance of Bishops proposes
 for itself, and by what Means it strives to achieve that End.**

1. This Sodality is composed of Priests, Clerics and Lay Brothers; it tends to this, that is, that the members at the same time they are striving for Christian Perfection they give aid to Bishops of the Catholic Church for the salvation of their fellow man, through any works whatsoever of the ecclesiastical ministry and promoting the spiritual works of

charity, excluding however, both the ordinary ^{xii} and perpetual care of souls ^{xiii}, as well as of nuns ²⁶.

2. Hence, the Members of this Institute propose for themselves to give as much assistance as possible to the Bishop of the Diocese in which they are living, but maintaining the Institution of the Sodality, either in those areas about which there is no mention in our Constitutions, especially where it is a question of giving the **Spiritual Exercises, or the Sacred Missions, of instructing the faithful by Catechism lessons and sermons: the education of youth, either in the Oratories, and Catechism lessons, even in private, and promoting to the best of their ability their Christian instruction, either in Seminaries, and in our domestic schools, and by assisting their piety and studies** ²⁷.

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2. Constitutions approved by XIIth General Chapter

CONSTITUTIONS of the SODALITY of the PRIESTS of the SACRED STIGMATA OF O.L.J.C. ²⁸

Part I

**Concerning the End which the Sodality proposes for itself,
and by what means it strives to achieve this Same End.**

²⁶ This proposed text of **The Constitutions of the Congregation 1881-1889** to be submitted for approval to the Holy See, after Chapter acceptance - also offers a kind of picture of the understanding of the **Founder's central ideas** in this time prior to the stormy **XIIth General Chapter**. [This document needs to be compared with the *Constitutions 1890*, which follows in this series on the USA Founder's website: www.st-bertoni.com, under '**Constitutions**']. In this present Document (which title in the website is *Const. 1881-1889*), there is the very broad interpretation of the **Apostolic Mission**, which has been the one in vogue for so much of the Stigmatine History – both **preceding the stormy XIIth General Chapter**, which comes next – and most consistently ever after it.

²⁷ And again, the proposed text is remarkable in its simplicity, and breadth of its understanding of the Founder's *varia et propria* [synonyms here?], *accomodata* munera. These *ministeria* are all placed on the same level of importance in the Apostolic Mission *depending on changing needs, times and circumstances*.

²⁸ It is necessary to compare this Printed Edition of the Constitutions of 1890, with the immediately preceding edition, *CONSTS. 1881-1889* to note the changes introduced by the Observations of the Holy See, as well as the emendations brought by the **XIIth General Chapter, 1890**.

1. This Sodality is made up of Priests and Lay Brothers, and tends to this, that the members, while striving for their own perfection, will give assistance to the Holy Apostolic See, and to the Bishops of the Catholic Church, for the salvation of their fellow man, through promoting **any endeavors of the ecclesiastical ministry**, and the spiritual works of charity, excluding, however, the ordinary and perpetual care of souls and of nuns.

2. Hence, the Members of the Institute propose for themselves to expend their energies so that they might lend their assistance, in so far as they are able, to the Bishop of the Diocese in which they are living, while safeguarding the Institute of the Sodality, that is, in **those apostolates about which there is mention in our Constitutions**, especially where it is a question of giving **sacred Missions**²⁹, or the **Spiritual Exercises**; of **instructing the faithful in Catechism lessons and sermons**; of the **Education of youth**, both in the **Oratories**, and in **catechism lessons**, even in private, by promoting to the best of their ability their Christian instruction, both in **seminaries** and in **schools**, that are conducted in our Houses, and by **assisting their piety and studies**.

3. In all that pertains to the exercise of the Apostolic endeavor, the members will obey absolutely the ordinaries of the places in which Missions are to be given, and will receive from them beforehand, permission with the faculties.

If however, the Lord should call our members to propagate the faith in mission lands, permission with the faculties will be humbly sought beforehand.

4. The Sodality does all these duties gratuitously, demanding nothing in compensation for its ministries; it can, however, accept whatever is spontaneously offered, on the occasion of the Sacred Ministry.

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²⁹ Different from the proposed Constitutions submitted by the Commission, immediately preceding, *Parish Missions* in the minds of many of these early confreres enjoyed an historical primacy, but **not a juridical** primacy, in the Founder's *Constitutions*.

Conclusion

The early Confreres had been rather consistent in their broad view of apostolic duties that they understood as constituting Fr. Bertoni's ideal for the ***Apostolic Mission***. This same reality can also be sustained by reflecting on what the early Stigmatine communities thought would be necessary for one to be promoted to the ***Grade of Apostolic Missionary***. This will appear in the segment that follows.



C. QUALITIES REQUIRED FOR THE PROMOTION TO THE GRADE OF APOSTOLIC MISSIONARY:

Introduction

As may have been noticed, Fr. Bertoni was named an **Apostolic Missionary**, by the Holy See, with a Document dated December 20, 1817. Fr. Bertoni inserted this in the **Original Constitutions** as the **Missionary Modality** for the entire Stigmatine Community [cf. CF # 2].

Therefore, the conferral of this title was actually reserved to the Holy See – so when the revamped Stigmatine Constitutions came to be approved by the Holy See, the **Grade of Apostolic Missionary** - was not accepted by the Church authorities for insertion into the Stigmatine Code.

Nonetheless, from an historical point of view, it is interesting to see the opinion formulated by the early General Chapters, regarding what would be required of these specially **Professed** Stigmatine confreres, into whose hands were entrusted the government of the Community, as well as the **more difficult** Apostolic **Missions** were reserved to them. Once again, in order to be promoted to be one of the specially **Professed** confreres, both experience and some excellence in **different apostolic** services offered to the Church within the **varied and proper ministries** were a pre-requisite – along with on-going learning and holiness of life.

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1. XIth General Chapter Capitular Commission Text – Proposed Constitutions [Part IV, c. III, n. 4]

This text was developed by the XIth General Chapter Capitular Commission - 1881-1889, for the **Proposed Text of the renewed Constitutions**, Part IV, c. III, n. 4 - prepared for the XIIth General Chapter:

Chapter IV

Concerning those to be promoted to the Sacerdotal Office ³⁰,

³⁰ This would seem to reflect what St. Gaspar Bertoni meant in the ordinary promotion of students to the Priesthood - **CF # 7**. The section that follows here and which is underlined, would fulfill that which the Stigmatine Founder meant by the **perfectum opus Sacerdotum, assumentes apostolicam missionem** – this was not any one ministry in the minds of so many of these early Fathers, but would include the **graviora ministeria** [CF # 158] - *the varia et propria suae vocationis* [**arduae et difficilis**] *munera* [CF # 185] –

And to the Grade of Apostolic Missionary in our Society ³¹ ...

4. At length, after a Priest member has spent some years in the ecclesiastical ministries, he could be **elevated to the Grade of Apostolic Missionary**. But, no one is to be endowed with this Grade unless he has completed his thirty-fifth year ^{xiv}, and ten years of vows in our Sodality.

Moreover, there are required in him besides outstanding piety, love for regular discipline, and zeal for the salvation of souls, that he be endowed with suitable doctrine, i.e., that he has passed with praise his last exams, after having completed the entire curriculum of theology; also, that he be of great merit to the Institute,

Either because he was **engaged in giving the Sacred Missions** ³²; or, **the Spiritual Exercises** ³³; or, for a full three years, he had been the **Director of some House of ours**; or, had been **teacher of the sacred disciplines for four years** ³⁴; or was **dedicated for many years in instructing the youth**; or, lastly, **he had performed well some other office, or duty for the good of the Sodality**. ³⁵

The judgment of this merit is absolutely up to the Superior and the General Councilors, who, by a plurality of secret votes, will promote those to the **Grade of Apostolic Missionary**, who are **endowed with**

also called the *ministeria accomodata* to achieve the *finis* of the Sodality, the salvation of souls [CF # 262].

³¹ This number 4, Chapter IV, and its title were eliminated, as may be noted from the “List of the Proposals made by the Deputed Commission” because the Holy See did not allow the use of the title *Apostolic Missionary*. This list of qualifications found here in n. 4, however, does reflect the mentality of many of the confreres of this time - however, **this broad interpretation of the Apostolic Mission** is what many early confreres understood as the *perfectum opus... graviora ministeria ... varia et propria munera* of the Stigmatine Apostolic Mission.

³² There is a certain historical primacy here, as the Founder was inspired to establish the Community from this kind of **Apostolic Mission** - the *modus operandi* of preaching Parish Missions is to obtain the full authorization of the local ordinary – in the spirit of the *Fourth Vow of the Society of Jesus*.

³³ The whole area of **Clergy retreats** was also a privileged form of service of the early Community as part of its **Apostolic Mission** – the early Community also banded together by the theological discussions held among priests under Fr. Bertoni’s direction. [It would help if someone could make a detailed study on the **Apostolic Mission to the Clergy, and to Consecrated Life** - like the brilliant study of Fr. De Paoli on the Parish Missions.

³⁴ As has been noted, serving in Seminary teaching was much revered by the early Community’s **Apostolic Mission**.

³⁵ There is noted, then, the very broad sweep of ministries considered central [both *varia ET PROPRIA*] to the understanding of Fr. Bertoni’s concept of **Apostolic Mission** in the interpretation of so many of the early Fathers.

these qualities we have noted above: they will then announce, by Decree, their promotion to the entire Sodality ³⁶...

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2. Rejected by the Holy See – Feb. 20, 1889 – *Modification of the Grade*

However, **the Holy See did not accept the title *Apostolic Missionary* as the prerogative of any Congregation.** Here is the official notice of the elimination of this number is found among the papers of this Document, among the documents in the folder for the XIth General Chapter:

Modification of the Grade ³⁷

There is proposed the following - for **Chapter IV, Part IV. Chapter Title: “Concerning the Promotion to the Priestly Office ^{xv}” [only]**
Then: n. 4: to be omitted ^{38 xvi}

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³⁶ It needs to be noted that this # 4, *Modification for the Grade*, was not admitted into the printed edition of these Constitutions of the following year [cf. separate translation, *CONSTITUTIONS 1890*] – due to the intervention of the Holy See - as will be seen, in the *Phase III of the Constitutions*, by Fr. Joseph Stofella, in his **Introduction and Notes** [pp. 30, ff.] to the printed edition of the *Original Constitutions*. There does not, however, seem to have been any difficulty from the Capitulars regarding the **broad scope** of Apostolic services that would qualify one for the **Grade of Apostolic Missionary**.

³⁷ These refer to the Rules discussed in the Chapter, which would be published in 1890.

³⁸ This **n. 4** of the adapted Rules provides a very **broad scope** of Ministries to qualify for the conferral of the **Grade**. It seems to be a “photograph” of the many services a confrere could offer for a number of years, in order to qualify for the **Grade of Apostolic Missionary**, as it was conferred during these times of the Stigmatine History. However, **the Deputed Commission eliminates it here.** This was, as has been noted, because the proposed Constitutions had been **submitted to the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, Feb. 20, 1889** – and the title *Apostolic Missionary* was considered the prerogative of the Holy See alone and should not be given by any religious Community. Furthermore, **the** title of this Chap. IV, of Part IV, had read: *Concerning those to be promoted to the Sacerdotal Office, and to the Grade of Apostolic Missionary in our Sodality.* The underlined part of this title is eliminated by the Deputed Commission, and does not appear in the final copy approved by the General Chapter [cf. **Fr. Stofella, Historical Introduction to the Booklet of the Original Constitutions, Terza Fase, pp. 30-32**]. At any rate, there was no discussion of the many services included within the **Apostolic Mission** in order to be considered for promotion to the **Grade of Apostolic Missionary**.

3. Xlth General Chapter's Decision [Chapter IV, Part IV]

It is known that the title *Apostolic Missionary* was **not approved by the Holy See** – the statement is found in the documents in the **Xlth General Chapter folder**]:

Modification of the Grade ³⁹

There is proposed the following - for **Chapter IV, Part IV. Chapter Title**: "Concerning the Promotion to the **Priestly Office**" [only]
Then: n. 4: to be omitted ⁴⁰

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Conclusion

The Professed, those elevated to the *Grade of Apostolic Missionary*, needed to be men endowed with spiritual blessings, intellectual competence and a broad apostolic experience [CF # 7]. It is from this rather restricted group of men that the governing body of the Congregation would be drawn.

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³⁹ These refer to the Rules discussed in the Chapter, which would be published in 1890.

⁴⁰ This **n. 4** of the adapted Rules provides a very broad sweep of Ministries to qualify for the conferral of the **Grade**. It seems to be a "photograph" of the way it was conferred during these times of the Stigmatine History. Furthermore, **the** title of this Chap. IV, of Part IV, had read: *Concerning those to be promoted to the Sacerdotal Office, and to the Grade of Apostolic Missionary in our Sodality*. The underlined part of this title is eliminated by the Deputed Commission, and does not appear in the final copy approved by the General Chapter [cf. **Fr. Stofella, Historical Introduction to the Booklet of the Original Constitutions, Terza Fase, pp. 30-32**].

D. CATECHISM: A BROADER INTERPRETATION OF THE APOSTOLIC MISSION

Introduction

Among the ‘treasures’ of the Stigmatines today, are the actual hand-written manuscripts of the **Catechism** lessons St. Gaspar Bertoni himself wrote for his actual teaching of two centuries ago. These have been translated ⁴¹ in two sections:

***His Catechism Lessons taught as a Seminarian [1798];
Catechism Instructions as a Priest [1807].***

In addition to his own valued experience, Fr. Bertoni included this ministry repeatedly in his ***Original Constitutions*** ⁴².

In the early Congregation, Stigmatines were much committed to the catechetical aspects of the ***Apostolic Mission*** - so much so that many of the early Confreres thought that this ministry, too, was an essential aspect of the ecclesial service the Community would render to the Church, in obedience to the Bishops.

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Fr. Gaspar Bertoni’s Challenge of the Catechism in his *Apostolic Mission*

At The Beginning

Fr. Gaspar Bertoni understood his Congregation of the Sacred Stigmata of our Lord Jesus Christ as being inspired by the Holy Spirit, as ‘***Apostolic Missionaries for the assistance of Bishops***’, ***through any Ministry of the Word of God whatsoever*** ^{xvii} - through preaching, the assistance of priests and the consecrated life in general, and the youth.

In his plan, as outlined for us in his incomplete Constitutions, we find great emphasis placed upon the ***Catechism***, upon its study and teaching. The Catechism, or catechetics, is mentioned in ***8 different Constitutions [cf. ## 37; 51; 55; 72; 163; 165; 170; 182].***

⁴¹ cf. www.st.bertoni.com

⁴² cf. CF 37; 51; 55; 72; 163; 165; 170; 182.

As was true with St. Ignatius, St. Gaspar Bertoni legislated diffusely throughout his Constitutions from a life of grace that he personally lived. From the originals of his own catechetical instructions of almost two centuries ago, we read these words from the heading of his Instructions on the Lord's Prayer, young Bertoni placed in his own hand:

From the 7th of May to the 20th of September 1807, Feasts within which 'Doctrine' is taught [73]. [These following notes are from an earlier text – these Notes, may be found in this text up ahead, on pp. 20-24]

In his introduction to the typed Manuscripts, Fr. Louis Benaglia, CSS ^{xviii} noted the following:

...Their Origin: concerning the origins of these pages, we might very well use Fr. Bertoni's own 'Conclusion' to them as our 'Introduction':

"... I undertook this little project for the greater glory of God and the edification of my brothers, under obedience to him, who has been placed over me..." [74].

As is true in the Jesuit Constitutions and the Commentary of Suarez ^{xix} on them, Fr. Bertoni proposes the Catechism both as a tool for formation, and also a most important part of his Apostolic Mission.

1. For Formation [CF ## 37; 51; 55]:

a. For Novices:

37: [Under the procedure for testing the Novices]: "Also, each one shall be trained, according to his ability and the needs and places and the times, in explaining Christian Doctrine to the youth and the uneducated. For this purpose, each one after his entrance into the Novitiate, shall apply himself to the study of Christian Doctrine, unless he already knows it well enough" [75] – [The notes following this section are found of pages 18-23].

b. Progress in Ecclesiastical Studies:

51: [Chapter II: The Branches of Knowledge]: "Since the Apostle says: 'For I am determined not to know anything among you, except Jesus Christ and Him crucified' [I Co 2:2] - and since Christ said of Himself: 'I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End' [Ap 1:8] - therefore, all the confreres shall start here: that is, to learn by heart, if possible, the Christian Doctrine as set forth for everyone's understanding in the Catechism of Cardinal Bellarmine. Moreover, those who devote themselves to study shall constantly return to the

Roman Catechism, profiting by their study and obtaining an ever deeper knowledge of it.” [77]

First of all it is necessary to show the difference between the Catechism of Cardinal Bellarmine and ‘the return to the Roman Catechism’. The Roman Catechism, which is also the Catechism of Trent, because it was mandated by that Universal Council of the Church - like the present day Catechism of the Catholic Church - are called General Catechisms - that of Cardinal Bellarmine, as that of the Council of Baltimore in the USA (1884) are called Particular Catechisms, intended for a given area.

Fr. Stofella ^{xx} compiled his magisterial commentary on the Founder’s Constitutions almost a half a century ago. He noted for this Part IV, c. 2 - treating of the progress in studies for the members, following Fr. Bertoni’s challenge for their progress in perfection of themselves, that the Founder followed here St. Thomas’ ideal of only handing on to others, what one has first contemplated himself [78]. This idea is presented by Fr. Bertoni in his CF # 49, which is taken almost *verbatim* from Suarez [79].

c. The Branches of Knowledge whose aid and embellish Theology

55: “Lastly, they will study sacred Eloquence and the art of teaching Christian Doctrine...” [80]

2. Promotion to the Priestly Office [CF# 72]:

72: “Without giving up the particular study of those sciences in which they already excel to a greater degree, or which are the more necessary, they shall gradually train themselves in preaching in our churches, in teaching catechism to children and the uneducated, and in hearing the confessions of children and adolescents”. [81]

The promotion of candidates to the ministeria graviora ... sacerdotale officium ... is also considered in Jesuit studies by the late Father General, Fr. Pedro Arrupe [82] and by Fr. Antonio M. Aldama, SJ, long time Secretary of the Jesuit Curia [83].

3. Promotion to the ‘Grade’ of the ‘PROFESSED’ [the *Apostolic Missionaries*] [CF ## 163; 165; 170; 182]

Part IX ^{xxi} of Fr. Bertoni’s Original Constitutions corresponds to Suarez’ ^{xix} Book IX, of his Commentary on Part VII of St. Ignatius’ Constitutions “**Concerning the Missions**”. This Part is **the heart of the Jesuit Rule, and**

also of the Charism of Fr. Bertoni - and would need its own special study. Fr. Bertoni speaks of the Catechism in the following Chapters of this Part IX:

- Chapter II: Any Ministry of the Word of God whatsoever [# 163]
- Chapter III: Regarding the instruction given to children and the young [# 165]
- Chapter IV: Regarding the Means to be employed for maintaining a moral life in the young [# 170]
- Chapter VI: The Tasks of the 'Professed' [# 182] - i.e., those raised to the Grade of Apostolic Missionary.

These four original Constitutions need their own special reflection - as they are found almost copied from the earlier work of Suarez ^{xix}, who was commenting on the **Mission of the Jesuit Professed**. Fr. Bertoni wanted this same idea lived 'for the assistance of Bishops':

- a. **Ministry to the Young, the Unlettered** ^{xxii}: this aspect of the Stigmatine Apostolic Mission pertains to the very purpose of the community, and **is one of the special tasks** in which the '**Professed**' are meant to be experts:

165: Our members shall undertake the Christian education of children and of youth, also of the uneducated, in every possible way, by means of the oratories, by teaching catechism, and even through private instructions. [84]

170: Concern above all must be had that the young be well instructed in Christian Doctrine. They shall be taught it once a week; they shall learn it well and be able to recite it [85].

- b. **The Catechism: A Ministry of the Stigmatines: 'The Means by which Congregation promotes the Salvation of Others'**:

163: The Ministry of the Word of God under any aspect whatsoever: Preaching publicly, or instructing the people by public and private catechism lessons... [86]

182: Special Duties of the 'Professed' Fathers:

Their duty is to teach not only by preaching, by giving the Spiritual Exercises, and by lecturing on the truths which are useful and necessary to know for the attainment of eternal life, but also by explaining the rudiments of faith and morals, especially to the uneducated and to children, in public and private catechetical instructions, and in the oratories. This also is highly beneficial to the Church, and is to be highly recommended to them. [87]

Fr. Stofella had already pointed out that this entire section, as compiled by Fr. Bertoni, follows Suarez' commentary quite closely for these various chapters for the '**Professed**' of the Stigmatine Congregation [88]. Some of Fr. Stofella's citations might have suffered a misprint - but, at any event, Fr. Bertoni follows Suarez here most closely.

In his **Book I**, Suarez treats of the introductory question regarding the Society of Jesus in general. In **Chapter 3**, he brings up the matter of those means by which the Company of Jesus reaches its goal. In **number 10 of this Chapter 3**⁴³, he treats of the 'Positive Means, those "formally spiritual". He makes the central point that will be repeated by Fr. Bertoni in **CF # 185**, viz. that the means are **both proper and varied**^{xxiii}. Suarez notes that the order of those means that are directly concerned with the reaching out to other human beings^{xxiv}, are both **varied and multiple**^{xxv}. Some of these 'means' might be thought of as consisting in action - and other means are privations - and then, there are those means that refer to the disposition of the entire Society, regarding its very reason of living.

The first emphasis is that this way of life asks the members of the Company of Jesus to live in carrying out the tasks of the clerical state. Therefore, the first 'means' is the assumption of the clerical state of life. In this manner, the Society is to offer assistance to its fellow human beings. Thus, each member is called to live every disposition that would be necessary for assuming such a state in a worthy manner. This is especially so in taking on the responsibility of living that manner of perfection [89].

The second series of 'means' are all those sacred ministries that are useful for the cleansing, the illuminating and perfecting others. The primary means in this category would be the administration of the Sacraments, especially that of Confession and the Eucharist, and these are supremely proper ministries for this Society. This is evident from the various papal documents, and Suarez notes those of Paul III, Julius III, and Gregory XIII. The very 'form' of the Institute is explained in these documents. Much emphasis is also given to those sacrifices [of Masses] that greatly assist the Church, help in the conversion of infidels, the correction of heresies - and bring great profit to the faithful asking that they be offered. Suarez develops the sacramental aspect of the apostolate more fully when he develops his commentary on Ignatius' idea of the Apostolic Mission, in Book IX, Chapters 2 & 3. [90]

The third series are those principal means, as Suarez calls them - these would be included under the expression taken from the Formula of St. Ignatius, # **1: Verbi Dei quodcumque**^{xxvi} **ministerium**. This is carried out

⁴³ Suarez, p. 572 a.

in various ways, that are **proper** [i.e. **maxime propria**] to this Institute,⁴⁴ as the administration of the Sacraments. Suarez then offers a list of seven - Fr. Bertonni has made use of the first six: these are the means by which the Community is to work for the salvation of their neighbors^{xxvii}.

- **first**, through public **sermons, or sacred lectures**^{xxviii} **to the people** [cf. Book 9, c. 1 of Suarez];
- **secondly**, by communicating **the very rudiments of the faith to the young and to the uneducated** - in this sense the divine word is most useful not only as it is preached in the Churches, but also in public ways and squares it should be publicly disseminated;
- **thirdly**, by assisting one's neighbors through **private colloquies**^{xxix} **and holy conversations**, either by fraternally correcting their vices, or by exhorting them to frequenting the sacraments - by instructing them in the works of perfection, and encouraging them to follow these [Suarez develops this further in Book 9, chapter 8];
- **fourthly**, to these is joined the giving of the **spiritual exercises**. In these Spiritual Exercises, believers are able to change their lives for the better; they are able to come to know themselves more deeply, and seriously to ponder the eternal truths. They also learn in these Exercises to work out with God the grave matter of their own salvation, and to ask His assistance in this;
- **fifthly**, there can be enumerated the various congregations that have been set up under the direction of the Society - and which have been endowed with the Indults of the Pontiffs, where in so many different ways, and **in a very informal manner, the matter of one's eternal salvation might be promoted**;
- **sixthly**, here also pertains **the assistance of our neighbors at the point of death**, that they might meet it in a pious and holy manner.

All these are the means for reaching out to our fellow human beings, and they are discussed throughout **Book IX** of the Commentary of Suarez. Fr. Bertonni's **Constitution 163** ends here, whereas Suarez adds a further paragraph:

- in the **seventh** place, there might be added here **all those means** that are assumed in the Society for the **conversion** of any unbelievers whatsoever, whether among the gentiles or living

⁴⁴ Suarez, p. 572 a. – *administratio Sacramentorum*.

among heretics. This would include all that pertains to the Fourth Solemn Vow of obeying the Supreme Pontiff in the matter of the Missions, even the most difficult, and anywhere whatsoever in the world - even to the most remote regions, and even among the most hostile nations. We are to do this without receiving any money for the journey. The only reward we await is the salvation of souls [91].

This is **one** of the descriptions of the Apostolic Mission with its varied and proper ministries - to be agreed upon, accomodata to the changing circumstances of time and place, between the ecclesiastical superiors and the religious community.

From his own early teaching of the Catechism, Fr. Bertoni offers a real challenge today. In his Introduction to the Creed, he cites the qualities of humility, diligence, firmness and simplicity [92].

§§§

Summary

From his earliest writings, right up through the compilation ^{xxx} of his Constitutions, **one of Fr. Bertoni's traits was that of relying on what he felt was a 'superior' text**, or authority. Fr. Benaglia put it this way in his Introduction to the five typed volumes of the *Manoscritti Bertoniani* [93]:

... he followed the Catechismus ex Decreto Concilii Tridentini ad parrochos...In these catechetical instructions, there is **a meticulous adherence to the 'Catechism.'** This indicates a tendency that places in bold relief **a psychological trait of the Founder**, which manifests itself on various occasions. It was always his concern, or perhaps a need he experienced, of having **solid support in his statements**. His use of a document of incontestable guarantee, was this both for himself and for those he instructed. He lived and taught in an era that our own civilization is in the process of radically changing. **He spared no effort in basing himself on those intellectual and social tenets, most in adherence with the development then in vogue, staunchly defending the valued conquests of the past.**

As an educator and teacher, he manifested a readiness to accept revised programs and the more current approach, when facing problems connected with methodology. However, he was an instructor to whom was entrusted the exposition of a doctrine that is essentially immutable. Thus, he entrenched himself within the confines of a tradition from which he derived not on concepts, but also its precise order, and not

infrequently the **identical expressions, cited precisely - and at length.**

^{xxx} As is true of so many other human phenomena, so, too, is this compliance open to a varied interpretation....

Nonetheless, it does constitute a characteristic in the make-up of our Founder that cannot be neglected by anyone desirous of penetrating his soul.

He taught some of these catechism lessons that have come down to us in the year 1807, from May 7th to September 20th, and notes that in this time there were 24 Sunday and Feast Day lessons [94]. This custom was continued throughout the history of the Stigmatine community.

We conclude these initial reflections with quotes from the **Chronicles of Fr. Charles Zara, from the years 1875 - 1884**, the year of his death. **Fr. Zara had a very broad idea of the Apostolic Mission** - in preparing for the General Chapter of February 1874, a few years after Fr. Marani's death, Fr. Zara was assigned to the House of the Stimate in Verona. The House submitted a proposal to the General Chapter [already discussed above], signed by Frs. P. Vignola, J. Marchesini, T. Vicentini, L. Morando, P. Beltrami, L. Pizzini, L. Rigatti, **along with Fr. Charles Zara**, with this wording [found in **Note n. 95, below, on p. 24**, from the **Verbali** of the **Vth General Chapter**]:

§§§

CRONACA ZARA
Fr. Charles ZARA⁴⁵

Throughout the years that Fr. Zara kept the house Chronicles, he much admired the ministry of the **Fourth Class**, the summer teaching of the Catechism throughout Verona, by so many of the early Stigmatines [96]:

a. The Texts

May 6, 1875: Ascension Thursday. Today, consecrated to the memory of Jesus Christ, ascended into heaven: after dinner, our Fathers fanned out through our city, to teach the so-called **Quarta Classe**^{xxxii}: or, catechism to the faithful... Five of our priests are thus employed each Sunday for the advantage of souls, to break for them the bread of the divine word, to instruct them in the maxims and the truths of our Religion. What a beautiful experience this is! **And what an important mission!**

⁴⁵ **Cronaca Zara 1875-1889** [2 volumes], Archivio Storico Bertoniato. Serie I: Cronache, N° 2, 1875-1877. Provincia 'Sacro Cuore' degli Stigmatini, Verona 1991: p. 43

This is perhaps the most useful and necessary among all the missions!

May 7, 1877: Sunday. Today our Fathers began the so-called Fourth Class of Christian Doctrine. ...**This is the life of the Missionary**: To be all things to all.

May 6, 1880: Feast of the Ascension. Today the so-called Fourth Classes of Christian Doctrine began... **This is the Summer Mission: to catechize the people....**

b. Italian Text: An Outstanding Witness for the *QUARTA CLASSE* ^{xxxii}

6 maggio 1875: Oggi, giovedì', giorno consacrato alla memoria di Gesu' Cristo ascenso in cielo, il dopo pranzo i nostri padri si divisero per la nostra citta' per fare le cosi dette Quarte Classi: ossia catechismi ai fedeli... Sicche' ecco 5 dei nostri missionari ogni domenica impiegati a vantaggio delle anime, a spezzar loro il pane della divina parola, ad istruirli nelle massime e verita' della nostra Religione. Oh che bella cosa e' mai questa! **Che missione importante! Questa forse tra le missioni e' la piu' utile e necessaria.**

6 maggio 1877: Domenica. Oggi i nostri Padri incominciarono le cosi dette Quarte Classi della Dottrina Cristiana... A questo punto noto altresì che due Padri vanno ogni domenica per tutto l'anno alle Carceri in Tribunale per insegnar la Dottrina Cristiana due o tre altri alle Carceri agli Scalzi. **Ecco la vita del Missionario: *Omnia omnibus!***

6 maggio 1880 ⁴⁶: Giovedì' Festa dell'Ascensione. Oggi cominciano le cosi' dette Quarte Classi della Dottrina Cristiana...**ecco la Missione dell'estate: catechizzare il popolo.** *Costa fatica e sudori - euntes ibant et flebant mittentes semina sua* - verra' poi il tempo della mietitura. Alleluja!

§§§

⁴⁶ Cronaca Zara II [1878-1889], Verona 1993, pp.107, 108:

NOTES FOR THIS CHAPTER

73. Manoscritti Bertoniiani, I, # 276:1807: dal 7 di maggio a' 20 di Settembre, feste di Dottrina: 24. Dell'orazione in genere, istruzioni 8; e del Pater Noster, istruzioni 16.

74. Fr. Luigi Benaglia, CSS, in: Mss B I.,p. i: Introduzione all'Istruzione del Modo di ricevere degnamente il Sacramento della Confessione o Penitenza, Verona, l'anno 1798: Origine: - Sull'origine di questo lavoro, in una conclusione che starebbe bene come prefazione, il Padre si esprime così: - *Intrapresa quest'operetta a maggior gloria di Dio ad edificazione dei miei fratelli, per comando di chi mi presiedeva...*

75. CF # 37: In tradenda pueris et rudioribus Christiana doctrina unusquisque pro captu ac temporum et locorum opportunitate exercebitur.

[NB: for almost the same wording, compare with Note # 42 above: , Suarez II, c. 5, n. 9, pp. 644b - 645 a: Quintum experimentum est, ut in doctrina Christiana pueris et rudioribus hominibus docenda, pro singulorum captu, et temporum et locorum opportunitate, exerceantur...]

[cf. also CSJ # 410 {Part IV, c. 8}: Studium etiam congruum in modo tradendae doctrinae christianae, qui sit captui puerorum ac rudium accomodatus, adhibeatur.]

77. CF # 51: Cum dicat Apostolus: non enim iudicavit me scire aliquid inter vos, nisi Iesum Christum, et hunc crucifixum {I Co 2:2}; Christus autem de seipso dixerit: Ego sum Alpha et Omega, Principium et Finis {Apoc 1:8}, hinc omnes prorsus ab addiscenda Doctrina Christiana, etiam memoriter, ubi fieri potest, prout expositam ad captum omnium habemus a Card. Bellarmino, incipiant. Qui vero studiis operam dabunt, postmodum huc revertentur, ut addiscant et conquiescant in Catechismo Romano.

78. P. Giuseppe Stofella, CSS, Note, p. 70, s. delle Costituzioni Originali del Fondatore: - N. 49: Vien di nuovo ricordato quale e' il fine della Congregazione: contemplativo e insieme attivo. Il Fondatore e' qui ricorso a S. Tommaso [II-II, q. 188, a. 6] per esprimere il suo pensiero...

79. CF # 49: In hac religiosa Clericali Sodalitate, cujus finis est non solum contemplari, sed etiam contemplata aliis tradere, necessaria est non vulgaris scientia, sed perfecta rerum omnium, quae ad fidem et mores pertinent, ac proinde necessarium est etiam, ut religiosi clerici huiusmodi scientiae perfecte acquirendae, in tali statu religioso incumbant.

[NB: Questo paragrafo, e il numero seguente, **CF # 50**, sono stati copiati da **Suarez, Lib. V, c. I, n. 6, p. 803 a**: 6. Secunda assertio bipartita. - Prior pars ostenditur. - Dico secondo: in statu religioso, cujus finis est non solum contemplari, sed etiam contemplata aliis tradere, necessaria est non vulgaris scientia, sed perfecta rerum omnium, quae ad fidem et mores pertinent ac proinde necessarium etiam religiosi hujusmodi scientiae perfecte acquirendae in tali statu religioso incumbant.

Prior pars adeo est evidens, ut non egeat probatione. Quia nemo potest alios docere, si ipse ignorans sit; quomodo enim poterit mentes illuminare, qui in tenebris versatur, aut haereticis resistere, aut rationem ejus, quae in nobis est, fidei rendere, aut morales difficultates occurrentes dissolvere, et omnibus satisfacere, nis in utraque Theologica doctrina, positiva et scholastica, speculativa et morali, satis instructus sit?

- 80. CF # 55:** Demum Concionatoriae et Catechisticae Sacrae.
- 81. CF # 72:** Non omittentes aliquod studium eorum, in quibus magis proficiunt, aut quae magis necessaria sunt; paulatim se exercent in concionibus in propriis ecclesiis, in catechizandis pueris et rudibus^{xxxiii}, in audiendis confessionibus puerorum et adolescentium.
- 82. Pedro Arrupe SJ,** La 'Missione Apostolica' , chiave del carisma Ignaziano.
- 83. Antonio M. de Aldama, SJ,** La 'Missio' - centro focale delle Costituzioni Ignaziane.
- 84. CF # 165:** Institutio christiana puerorum et juvenum, aliarumve rudium personarum, oratoriis, catechesibus, privatis etiam instructionibus, pro virili promoveatur a nostris.
- 85. CF # 170:** Curandum est maxime, ut in iis, quae ad Christianam doctrinam pertinent, bene instituantur: semel praelegatur Doctrina Christiana, quam etiam addiscant et recitent.
- 86. CF # 163:** Verbi Dei quodcumque^{xxvi} ministerium:
1. Publice concionando vel instruendo populum catechismis tum publicis, tum privatis.
 2. Colloquiis piis et sanctis conversationibus, vitia fraterne corrigendo, nunc ad virtutum exercitium et sacramentorum frequentiam hortando.
 3. Nunc ad perfectionem instruendo et excitando.
 4. Spiritualium exercitiorum usus.

5. Congregationum promotio.
6. Infirmorum et maxime morientium devota cura.

87. CF # 182: Caput VI. De munere Professorum Sodalitatis. Eorum munus est docere non solum in concionibus, exercitiis, lectionibus, quae ad vitam aeternam consequendam necessaria vel utilia sunt, sed etiam rudimenta fidei et morum, praesertim rudibus, et pueris explanare, in oratoriis, in catechismis publicis et privatis; hoc etiam maxime Ecclesiae utile est, et ideo maxime iis commendatum sit.

88. cf. Pars IX, delle Costituzioni del Fondatore, p. 113: - nota di P. Stofella: "Parte IX, Capo I: La Profesionone, di cui qui si parla, e' la Professione Solenne, alla quale nella Compagnia di Gesu' corrisponde la Professione dei quattro voti: essa e' la sola che costituisce i Professi propriamente detti ai quali appartenga il regime principale dell'Istituto. Fonte: Suarez, Lib. VI, c. 1."

89. Suarez, De Religione Societatis Iesu, Lib. I, c. 3, n. 10, pp. 572, a: De mediis positivis, ac formaliter spiritualibus. - Super est dicendum de alio ordine mediorum, quae circa proximum directe versantur, vel ad illum proxime referuntur, quae varia sunt et multiplicia.

Partim enim in actione consistunt, partim in privatione, partim vero in ipsomet modo, seu dispositione totius Societatis, et rationis vivendi illius.

Nam imprimis ex illo fine juvandi proximos ortum est, ut haec religio, et habitu et munere Clericorum instituta est, ut in c. 5, declarabimus.

Unde hoc potest constitui tamquam primum medium, scilicet assumptio status Clericalis, quo possint proximis inservire, et consequenter omnis dispositio, quae ad talem statum digne assumendum necessaria est, maxime in his hominibus qui perfectionis viam profitentur.

[NB: per S. Gaspare Bertoni, questo e' numero # 161 delle sue Costituzioni].

90. ib, p. 572 a & b: Secundo, inter haec media numeranda sunt omnia ministeria sacra, quae ad purgandos, illuminandos et perficiendos alios utilia sunt, inter quae primaria locum tenet sacramentorum administratio, praesertim Confessionis et Eucharistiae, qua hujus Instituti maxime propria est, ut ex Bullis Pauli III et Julii III, et Gregorii XIII, et ex forma Instituti, quae in eis refertur, et ex omnibus Constitutionibus satis notum est, et huc etiam spectat sacrificiis satis notum est.

Et hoc etiam spectat sacrificiis suis Ecclesiam juvare, pro conversione infidelium, et correctione haereticorum et fructu ac profectu ipsorum fidelium ea frequenter offerendo. [cf. also Suarez, lib. IX, cc. 2 & 3]

[NB: per s. Gaspare Bertoni, questo e' numero 162 delle sue Costituzioni].

91. ib, p. 572 b: Tertio, principaliter ad hoc genus mediorum spectat quodcumque ^{xxvi} ministerium verbi Dei, quod variis modis, et magna ex parte propriis, in hac religione exercetur:

primo, per publicas conciones, vel lectiones sacras ad populum {cf. Lib. IX, c. 1};

secondo, rudimenta fidei pueris et rudioribus hominibus tradendo, qua occasione, ad communis vulgi utilitatem divinum verbum, non tantum in ecclesiis, sed etiam in vicis et plateis publice disseminant;

tertio, privatis colloquiis et sacris conversationibus proximos juvando, nunc eorum vitia fraterne corrigendo, nunc ad virtutem opera et sacramentorum frequentiam eos exhortando, nunc etiam in operibus perfectionis eos instruendo, vel excitando {cf. Lib. IX, c. 9};

quarto, his adjungitur spiritualium exercitiorum communicatio, et usus, quo homines et vitam in melius mutare, et se ipsos congoscere incupiunt, et de rebus aeternis serio cogitare, ac negotium propriae salutis cum Deo tractare, et ab ipso postulare addiscunt {cf. Lib IX, cc. 5 & 8};

quinto, annumerari possunt congregationes cujuscumque status virorum sub regimine Societatis creatae, ac Pontificum Indultis munitae, ubi plerisque modis familiarius ad aeternam salutem promoventur;

sexto, huc etiam spectat tempore mortis juvare proximos ad pie sancteque moriendum.

Atque haec fere media sunt, quae circa fideles ipsos exercentur, quaeque Lib. 9 sigillatim tradentur.

[NB: per S. Gaspare Bertoni, questo numero e' n. 163 delle sue Costituzioni originali].

septimo, hic adjungi possunt omnia illa quae ad conversionem infidelium quorumcuque in Societate assumuntur, sive inter gentiles, sive inter haereticos. Quo praecipue spectat quartum solemne votum obediendi Summo Pontifici in Missionibus, etiam difficillimis, et ad quascumque orbis partes, etiam remotissimas, et inter barbaras nationes, etiam sine viatico peregrinando ex elemosunis, si necesse sit, nullum aliud emolumentum nisi salutem animarum inde expectando. [Fr. Bertoni did not include this n. 7°]

92. Mss B I, ## 150-154: Umilta' ... Diligenza ...Fermezza ... Semplicita'.

93. Mss B I, P. L. Benaglia, Introduzione, p. vi: ... il Padre {Fondatore} procede sulle orme fedelmente seguite dal *Catechismus ex Decreto Concilii Tridentini ad parrochos, S. Pii Pont. Max. iussu editus* - che ho sotto occhio in una edizione romana {Officina Typographica Senatus - Ioannis Bardis} del 1920. E' una aderenza che non va sorvolata, perche' indica una tendenza che si innesta **nella psicologia del Padre {Fondatore}**, quale si manifesta in varie occasioni: **la**

premura cioè, si direbbe il bisogno, di avere dietro alle spalle, garanzia sicura a se' e agli altri, un documento di indiscussa autorità. Trovatosi a vivere e ad insegnare in un momento nel quale la nostra civiltà sta attraversando una profonda trasformazione, e cerca a fatica di attestarci su posizioni intellettuali e sociali più aderenti allo sviluppo raggiunto, il Padre {Fondatore} si schiera decisamente a difesa di quanto il passato ha conquistato il valido. Non che egli sia uno spirito chiuso, o che si sforzi di sbarrare il passo all'avvenire; ma, quando egli, educatore e pedagogo, dimostra aperto a programmi e forme aggiornate o addirittura precorritrici, poiché si trova a risolvere un problema che in sostanza è di metodo, altrettanto da istruttore, cui è affidata l'ispirazione di una dottrina immutabile nei suoi elementi essenziali, si riscontra trincerato nei confini della tradizione, da cui desume non solo i concetti, ma il loro ordine preciso, e non di rado ampiamente ed esattamente le identiche espressioni. Come tante altre cose umane, anche questo atteggiamento si presta a diverse valutazioni, **ma costituisce un lineamento della fisionomia del Padre {Fondatore}, che non va trascurato da chi desideri conoscerne l'anima.**

94. ib., # 276

95. Atti del Capitolo Generale, febbraio 1874:

Radunati dietro invito del P. Direttore, i Vocali dei Missionari Apostolici della Casa delle Stimate di Verona, per esprimere Capitolarmente quello che desiderebbero fare trattare nella Congregazione Generale che deve prossimamente tenersi, si trovano presenti i Rev. Padri: P. Pietro Vignola, Direttore; Marchesini Giuseppe, Zara Carlo, Vicentini Thomas; Morando Luigi, Beltrame Pietro; Pizzini Lorenzo; Rigatti Lorenzo.

Invocato il divino aiuto, spiego' il Direttore il motivo della riunione, ed invito' gli interventi per ordine d'anzianità a proporre quello che in Domino credessero spediente di proporre alla Congregazione Generale, a maggior gloria di Dio, ad inserimento della Congregazione, e a maggior profitto dei membri di essa.

Discusse le varie proposte, e formulate, indi sottoposte a scrutinio secreto, risultarono siccome 3a proporre alla Generale Congregazione, le tre seguenti:

1. Si prega la Congregazione di rivedere le regole degli Uffici speciali dei singoli Superiori a fine di evitare il pericolo di qualche collisione.
2. Si prega di aprire una Scuola Elementare e Ginnasiale - e se questo non fosse attualmente possibile, sollecitare l'apertura di una Scuola serale; affinché:

1° di corrispondere ad uno dei principali fini della nostra Congregazione, che nacque e si fece amare colla istruzione;

2° di corrispondere al desiderio del pubblico, che nelle presenti circostanze, l'aspetta;

3° di ovviare allo scandalo di tenere un locale sì vasto senza uno scopo di pubblica beneficenza, memori di quella sentenza del N.S. Padre Pio IX: *Per l'istruzione della gioventu' andate fino al peccato.*

3. Si esprime un vivo desiderio che possa essere accettato un numero maggiore d'Aspiranti.

Chiuso quest'atto, tutti passarono alle firme.

{Ricevuta oggi, 25 febbraio 1874. P. Rigoni Segretario}

[Poi, dagli **Atti della Congregazione Generale Va**, si legge:

3. Si passa alla discussione della 2a fra le tre proposte della Casa Stimata, cioè d'una scuola elementare e Ginnasiale, o serale alle Teresie.

La Congregazione unanime nel riconoscere la necessita' di prender parte alla pubblica istruzione, per venire a qualche cosa di concreto accetta la seguente proposizione, e la sottopone ai voti.

Proposizione: Che due individui da designarsi dal Superiore si preparino e si presentino per essere abilitati all' insegnamento ginnasiale. Quanto poi al tempo o al modo di attuare le scuole, si rimette al Superiore col suo Consiglio.

Messa ai Voti; Votanti ,n. 8 - Pel sì', voti 7 - pel no, l. Amessa].

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Conclusion

A clear result of this rather rapid survey of the early records of the Stigmatine community is the fact that many of the early Confreres maintained in different ways, and all through the years, that St. Gaspar Bertoni provided a very broad Apostolic Mission with which Stigmatines would serve the Church.

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E. ST. GREGORY THE GREAT: *IN PRIMUM REGUM*

Introduction

Early in November 1810, Fr. Bertoni was assigned to the spiritual care of the local Diocesan Seminary of Verona. At that time there were 97 students on the College level, and 46 students in the major Seminary. On **Sunday, November 18, 1810, the Feast of the Patronage of Mary Most Holy**, very early in the morning, he offered his First Meditation that would be continued then for several years. He began – as did Gregory – with a *Prologue*, called **First Prelude**, in which he announced the themes that he would develop during the year. He began:

Since it is my duty to offer these meditations to Clerics, who are already initiated into the various levels of Holy Order, it is only right that the material should be proper to them. The Church, to which they dedicate themselves to serve, is a House of God. **And the purpose of these reflections is so that they will know how they should conduct themselves in the House of God** ⁴⁷.

‘These things I write to you...so that you may know how you ought to behave yourself in the House of God...’[1 Tm 3:14, f.] ⁴⁸

First it is necessary to know just what kind of a house this is, where it is, and so on, and who the Master of this Household is; **secondly**, the vocation to this house; and **thirdly**, guilty in fleeing from it; and good to pursue it. [MssB 4853].

St. Gaspar was able to see developed in this *Expositio in I Reg.*, a central idea applicable in his own age to the renewal of the priestly ministry, based on the precedence to be given to contemplation with respect to activity, and on the

⁴⁷ It can be noted that Fr. Bertoni often made use of various forms of the Latin: *obsequi*; *obsequium*, ‘*ossequioso*’ [cf. CF ## 1; 7; 57; 62; 125; 172; 185; 195; 237; 296; 304 – this is from St. Ignatius who wrote his Constitutions in Spanish – his Secretary, Fr. Polanco translated these into Latin, and varied the more than 1,000 appearances of the Spanish: *servire-servicio-servo* – as: *obsequi-obsequium/ auxiliari-auxilium; servire-servitium* – the most common being the *obsequi - obsequium*.

⁴⁸ This Scripture passage in emphasized in *Italic print* to be differentiated of Fr. Bertoni’s own words.

real need of embracing poverty and the self-renunciation lived by the Apostles, in order to pursue the salvation of their neighbors. Fr. Gaspar approved profoundly this program, because he realized its urgency for his own days. However, in presenting to the seminarians of Verona the necessity of preparing themselves for the priesthood, with a renewed spirit – he looked beyond the immediacy for what he was actually doing. In this, he pondered for the future to establish a group of priests and religious who would be closely united with him in order to constitute a kind of advance squadron of highly trained operatives for the restoration of priestly ministry.

[Fr. John Ceresatto, CSS^{xxxiv}, in his work, noted that the secondary motive of Fr. Bertoni's plan for the Stigmatines, was to bring about the renewal of Church life, also through renewal of the priestly and consecrated way of life – and for this, among the central aspects of his Apostolic Mission, there is insistence in the Founder's **Original Constitutions**, especially among the **Means by which this Institute is to promote the Salvation of its neighbors**⁴⁹ – and emphasized very much in the early ministries of the Community^{50 xxxv}. Furthermore, some questions would arise: would Fr. Bertoni's consummate prudence have him speak about his own future plan for his own personal vocation to prepare for a future Community of men to the already committed Diocesan Seminarians? A further question readily comes to mind: if it is legitimate to apply St. Gregory's emphasis on the Risen Christ also to Fr. Bertoni's thoughts on the Stigmata^{51?}]

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Qualche dubbio ('Some doubts'): Some special reflections are warranted here – is it a convincing point of discussion, to use the Pontiff's writings as a description of Fr. Bertoni's preaching to **Diocesan Seminarians** about **his own future hopes for his OWN Community**???. And if one does use St. Gregory's writings of more than a millennium earlier, is it not necessary to know a little bit about the context of his writing – before applying his ideas to those of Fr. Bertoni? The context of St. Gregory can be gleaned from the following:

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⁴⁹ cf. **CF ## 67; 164**

⁵⁰ cf. the Early Chronicles of the Community. It should be noted that with the problems facing him as Roman Pontiff, St. Gregory the Great had concerns about the basic need of preaching in every age for dedicated priests: cf. G.R. Evans, *The Thought of Gregory the Great*. Cambridge University Press 1986. 'The Art of Preaching' – 'The Preacher', pp. 75-86.

⁵¹ For this question, cf. this website: www.st-bertoni.com - under "**Life & Spirituality**": *Stimate Integre*.

1. Two Major Themes

St. Gregory had Two Major Themes in mind for his Commentary on *Primum Regum*⁵²: these reflections into the *Exposition* on Kings allow one to see that the two great themes are not developed in an equal fashion.

a. Monastic Life⁵³

The text as a basis of interpretation for the monastic life is only presented as in the background here. The parents of Samuel, Elcana and Anna, are called into play here - Elcana represents **the solitary life chosen by the Monk**, the “**one**”^{xxxvi} man. His preferred wife, Anna, emerges here and there, as symbol of the **contemplative life**. Samuel as a young man, serving the Temple, in obedience to the Priest, offers witness value for the contemplative way of life. Other minor personalities seem to stand for religious communities:

- the inhabitants of Bethsames who receive the Ark, the city of Masphat, visited by Samuel [1 S 6];
- the young women going to the fountain [1 S 9: 11, ff];
- the three men on their way toward Bethel [1 S 10:3];
- the Israelites who abandon, or rally to the army of Saul, the soldiers recruited by the King [1 S 13:5, ff.].^{xxxvii}

Some of the texts applicable to the Monastic, Religious Life, are as follows:

- **I, 61 – Lines 1302, ff**: here Gregory comments on the passage: **So likewise, everyone of you that does not renounce all that he possesses, cannot be My disciple** [cf. Lk 14:33]. He applies to himself the words of renouncing this world, that he had gone to seek out the **retired life**^{xxxviii}, and that is why he might be called a **Monk**. The Greek word **monos** in Latin means ‘one’. This is the title he bears – this represents a sublime dignity, leading one’s soul to be boldly raised up to the vision of the Creator. This sublime light ought to remain shining without interruption.

⁵² cf. Adalbert deVOGUE, “Deux themes majeurs”, in: *Gregoire le Grand. Commentaire sur le Premier Livre des Rois. I*. Paris: du Cerf 1989. Sources Chretiennes 351, pp. 83- 102 *passim*.

⁵³ It would be very rewarding to study this article: Adalbert deVogue, “Les vues de Gregoire le Grand sur la vie religieuse dans son Commentaire des Rois”, in: *Studia Monastica* 20 [1978], pp. 17-63. The following points on the consecrated life are based on that article.

- Gregory goes on to maintain that there is furthermore a **spiritual unity** toward which the monk tends for a lifetime. A 'monk' is one for a lifetime wishes to seek out the habit of sacred conversation^{xxxix}. There is in this a kind of **contemplative/eschatological** nuance.
- **II, 61 – Lines 1742, f.:** Samuel represents those who live **the common life** in the sacred places – these are the **cenobites** in their monasteries, with the fervor of Novices.
- **II, 127 – Lines 2615, ff:** each religious on entering to become a fervent religious will encounter a holy emulation – for Gregory, the competition should be for the ever more committed obedience – this appears in the **Benedictine Rule**.
- **III, 121, ff. – Lines 2435, ff.:** this story of the arrival of the Ark at **Bethsames** [the House of the Sun], and placing the Ark on the **Great Stone** [cf. 1 S 6:14, ff.], this is Christ Himself. This 'retired life' demands great efforts. Here the **holocausts** will be offered.
- **IV, 72 – Lines 1360, ff.:** here Gregory speaks of some of the basic structures of religious life: such as **Novices**, those Israelites asking for a king^{xi} – and they submit themselves outright, asking for the habit of religious life. This is a kind of **engagement** - and the **Novices** are called to respond before God. There seems to be a hint here of the **Ritual of Religious Profession** – the Abbot presides over the ceremony^{xii} and interrogates the Novice, and the Profession is made in the form of a response.
- **IV 162 – Lines 3211, ff.:** monasticism might be described as a **secret conversation** demanding abstention from the exterior works of the active life, in order to defend one's balance through Fear of the Lord, and in order to receive light from on high. It is described as a **more secret life**, one that is **more remote** [cf. **IV, 164-166**]
- **V 187 – Lines 4598-4600]:** Gregory even takes up the "Entrance Policies" – much discretion is needed. This recalls Samuel's 'right of royalty'^{xlii}. The formation needs to be severe, with the acceptance of **dura et aspera**^{xliii} aspects of the Postulant Formation. There have always been those mediocre Monks who find the common observance to be too severe [cf. above, **II, 86**]. Fervent initiatives seem too much for the weaker brethren^{xliiv} – which eventually compromises **the obedience of the Monastery**.
- **VI, 30 – Lines 658, ff.:** for Gregory, this way of life is comparable to the **holocausts** – this flows from this line of First Kings: ... **Does the Lord desire holocausts and victims, and not rather that the voice**

of the Lord be obeyed...?^{xlv} [cf. 1 K 15:22^{xlv}]. For Gregory, the contemplative way is superior to the common life, even when this is intensified by the *victims* of personal asceticism. There is a comparison made between *sacrifices* and *holocausts*.

b. Priesthood – the dominant theme in his *Expositio*

That which dominates by far, however, for St. Gregory in this *Expositio in Primum Regum*^{xlvii}, is his concern for the Priesthood^{xlviii}. The **Monastic Life** appears only here and there, briefly, but remarkably to the point and important. Since **First Kings** itself centers around the **Priesthood of Heli** – and then **Samuel is given special duties by the High Priest**. All of this is designated to prefigure the Christian shepherd. The anointing of Saul and David lead one Jesus Christ, and to those who represent Him here below.

Concerning the Priesthood: Gregory sees above all in the Christian shepherd a “preacher,” “rector.” He emphasizes these sacraments [**Penance, Eucharist, Holy Order**], rather than offer a manual of asceticism^{xlix}.

- 1] **Penance:** Gregory develops the general doctrine of penance, and a proportionate penance for sin committed. In this sacramental administration, the challenge is to come to know the Will of God in this matter, in this very delicate role of the “judge of souls. It is with regard to the faults of Saul that Gregory concerns himself with Penance. His final Book in his *Exposition on Kings* abounds in observations on this point. Absolution is imparted by the priest’s “apostolic authority”. It is necessary also to be purified by penance. Very often, the fault needs to be expiated conjointly by the tears of the penitent and those of the priest.
- 2] **The Eucharist:** Gregory is appalled by priests and other “ministers” who would ever dare to consecrate, to touch, or to receive unworthily the Body and Blood of the Lord. Priests need to exhort believers to approach these mysteries in a state of purity – so, it only stands to reason, that they themselves need to be even more pure when they offer the sacrifice. The case of sacrilegious communions leads to distinguishing between the Sacrament received in an exterior manner only, and its interior “effect” which is not produced in any soul communicating in a sacrilegious manner [*sacramentum et res*].
- 3] **The Priesthood:** This Sacrament is the one about which the *Expositio on Kings* speaks the most. The context is provided by the sacred text, mentioning both the sons of Samuel, as well as those of

the two Kings, Saul and David, anointed by the Prophet. Some points emerge:

Episcopal Qualities and Notable Defects^l: The anointing of David provides Gregory with the possibility of providing something of a list of qualities which the Episcopacy requires:

- The **Horn** [cf. 1 K 2:10: ^{xlvi}... *the King shall exalt the horn of his Christ!*]^{li} this serves to anoint the new King, combining authority and goodness, severity and mercy [*suaviter et fortiter* ^{liii}] that must be found in him. These paradoxical qualities form in a single whole called **charity**.
- To charity in the Bishop must be added “**instruction**”, as the priest need **knowledge** that can be communicated ^{liiii}. He must be able to teach and command, he *must live what he preaches*. “**Wisdom**”, or “**knowledge**”, interior “**contemplation**” are somewhat synonymous: and they need to be joined with an exemplary exterior conduct [“**good works**”, *conversatio* ^{liv}]: this **binome** appears endlessly under different forms. Furthermore, Gregory insists on these elements as his work unfolds: discerning commands – flowing from contemplation, produce an ardent and clarifying word. His is not merely some practical ‘know-how’, but rather the depths of the wisdom of the Tradition ⁵⁴.
- Gregory’s continual recommendation is for **humility**. This is not only in accord with Jesus Christ Himself. The Pontiff’s consuming concern is the **adverse temptations** which assail all leaders, but especially those of the Church. One reason for this is that once Christianity was legitimized’ by the Edict of Milan [313 A. D.], the priesthood became more highly considered in the minds of the flock ^{lv}.
- **A gradated** ^{lvi} **approach**: Carefully chosen and formed, the future Bishop should also have passed through all the inferior orders of the Clergy, and the Prelate who ordains him, has to be assured of his suitability ^{lvii}. The entire matter of naming and ordaining needs to be accomplished with several colleagues. In the ritual, the new Bishop will receive instructions regarding his charge.

⁵⁴ There is noted in St. Gaspar Bertoni’s *Original Constitutions* his insistence on **Progress** [cf. **Ph 1:6**] not only in the **spiritual** life [cf. Part IV, c. I, CF ## 47 - 48] – but also **intellectual** progress [ib, CF ## 49 - 68] - a *more than ordinary, not common* - cf. CF ## 49, 50, 159 – *juridically* [cf. the ‘Grade’ – and *apostolically* [CF # 76].

- **Episcopal life-style:** The *Exposition on Kings* is full of complaints in the matter of the **“preachers” of the contemporary Church**. Sometimes the ordained subjects were **simply not worthy**, due to their **woeful lack of a spiritual life**. Some start off well, but eventually fail ^{lviii}, in the course of their ministry, submitting to harsh temptation. There is always the risk of being **attached to temporary advantages**, suffocating much of their care for the good of souls. Churchmen throughout life will experience the need to be more committed to the word of God. His reproach is often repeated endlessly. One can indeed succumb to “getting old” in the Christian priesthood – Samuel’s last years serve as a point of reference.
- **Pride of Power:** even sinful Prelates yearn to stay in power - so often these have **lost the real sense of the interior riches of a dedicated contemplative life**. Defects in chastity are best avoided by the ‘secret, retired’ contemplative life. The sleeping Samuel in the Temple is the image of one committed to this hidden retreat to the sanctuary.
- **Need of Some Respite in the Apostolic Mission:** when these Prelates cannot be totally ‘monastic’, they need to retire with some regularity from the pastoral mission to look to their own salvation.
- **The Contemplative Life is the source of sublime joy:** for there, Gregory insists greatly on custody of the senses ^{lix} – this constant surveillance is the basis of every authentic contemplative experience.
- **Contemplation is the primordial task** – and the members ought to take care of each other ⁵⁵ ^{lx}. Gregory even suggests that the stronger in the community moderate their asceticism so that they will not discourage the weaker members.

[St. Gregory was also trying to renew, inspire, the Clergy of his own time – as was Fr. Bertoni – their concerns were similar].

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⁵⁵ In this connection, it is interesting to note Fr. Bertoni’s *most ordered charity* – the members are to be committed to *accommodated ministries*, and to give greater care and commitment to the salvation of the members of their own community – cf. **CF # 262** *verbatim* from **Suarez, *De Religione Societatis Iesu***, Bk VIII, c. 8, n. 22, p. 962 a.

2. The *INTEGRAL PASCHAL MYSTERY*

A few quotes from some of Fr. Bertoni's text of the earlier **Meditations on Primum Regum** are translated here:

4899: The fourth means: ^{lxi}

He governs her with the gifts of His grace and glory. *The charity of God is poured forth...* [Rm 5:5]. - *For we are saved by hope.* [Rm 8:24].

Such gifts had been merited with the Passion, communicated in the Resurrection and Ascension ⁵⁶. *Ascending on high, He held captivity captive; He gave gifts to men.* [Ep 4:8].

This is an internal government and realm. *The kingdom of God is within you.* [Lk 17:21]. *For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but justice and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit* [Rm 14:17]. "In the Holy Spirit": *For whosoever are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God* [Rm 8:14]. *He Who is the Head, even Christ: from Whom the whole body, being compacted and fitly joined together, by what every joint supplies to the operation in the measure, makes increase the body, unto the edifying itself in charity.* [Ep 4:15, f.]....

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4957: How can it be understood concerning Anna and her Husband, Elcana, as a type of Christ and His Church, that together they got up in the morning and went together to return to their own town: **Wherever the Church goes, Christ goes with her with His grace.**

They returned and came into their house at Ramatha. v. 19.

Ramatha is the heavenly homeland, as we have said. So how does the Church arrive there, which had just ceased in her preaching of the Jews, and has not ascended into the heavenly homeland? ^{lxii}

It is true that **when the Lord arose from the dead, she spoke through the doctors who were sent in preaching**, saying, [Mt 28:20]: *And behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the earth.* Hence, **it is not absurd that holy Church would consider herself having risen and returned with Him** ⁵⁷. He would never desert

⁵⁶ Here St. Gregory maintains the **integral** aspects of the **Paschal Mystery** – as Fr. Bertoni often does – cf. the website: www.st-bertoni.com, under **Life & Spirituality: Stimate Integre.**

⁵⁷ St. Gregory the Great has a strong sense of the Church having already risen with Christ – **the integral dimensions of the Paschal Mystery** [cf. the website www.st-bertoni.com, under **Life & Spirituality: Stimate Integre.**

His chosen ones through a spiritual presence, and He remains with those still here, and withdraws from those who leave her

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4984: *To offer the solemn sacrifice. ibi.*

Then it happened that when he manifested Himself in heaven to His Father through the matter of **His glorified flesh**^{58 lxiii}, and the nature of the Angels, as well as our redemption, so also He rejoiced in their reparation.

To fulfill his vow. v. 21.

In the head of the book it is written of me: that I should do your will...then I said: I have desired it... [Ps 39:6, ff.]^{59 lxiv}.

To offer: ibi. Then, he made the offering when He made it possible for us to take our place in the heavenly realms.^{lxv}

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4991: Regarding prayer, she feeds him having him meditate on the mysteries of His humanity^{lxvi}; she feeds **him making him meditate on His Passion**; she brings him to the temple, **making him meditate on the mysteries of the resurrection and the divinity, so that he can then preach with unction**^{lxvii}, etc⁶⁰.

We should correspond also in action, progressing from virtue to virtue, [Ps 83:8], from the moral virtues to the religious, to the divine; and in prayer **seeking to profit from the life of Christ, to His Passion and to His Resurrection.** Accomplishing all this methodically, and not by fits and starts. All is based on the divine Scriptures, from which one derives precepts for action, and knowledge for prayer. *All prayer: All scripture, inspired of God, is profitable to teach, to reprove, to correct, to instruct in justice....* [2 Tm 3:16, f.].

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⁵⁸**Translator's Note:** the recurring interest in the Risen Lord.

⁵⁹**Translators' Note:** Biblical abandonment? Ps 39 {40} is the 'Disciples' Prayer' [cf. Heb. 10:5-7].

⁶⁰**Translator's Note:** the need to **meditate on the resurrection**, in order to **preach with more unction**. In Fr. Bertoni's retreat for young priests [September 13-22, 1810], Fr. Bertoni developed both aspects of the Stigmata: *Imagine that you see Him with the scars of his wounds... inviting you, too, to heaven... Christ has entered new life with the scars of His wounds...* [cf. MssB ## 2632; 2635-2647, passim.] [cf. also the website www.st-bertoni.com, under, "Life & Spirituality": *Stimmate Integre*].

4999: Confidence in Christ.

And I pray that the Lord might fulfill His word. v. 23.

We have an advocate with the Father, and He is the propitiation for us [1 Jn 2:1].

His Word, v. 23, is to be carried out as the conversion of the gentility is predestined.^{lxviii}

And I pray that the Lord might fulfill His word, v. 23. Because through His blood we are reconciled to God, He is beseeched for the carrying out of His word, and when this is obtained our salvation is perfected.

And I pray, v. 23.

Christ is beseeched when in His assumed humanity, **He continuously exhibits to the eternal Father for our salvation; since then He does not give up offering Himself**⁶¹, He opens up the entrance to life for our reception.

To act according to what is known.

So the woman stayed at home, and gave her son suck, till she weaned him v. 23.

The reason is she perfected the counsel of his disposition by instruction.^{lxix}

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5004: Prelude 3. *Draw me after You [Ct 1:3] You draw, O Lord, Your **Spouse** by Your right hand, and we will run after You to the odor of Your ointments: ibi, and the teachings of the Church in words and deeds and disciplines: in the odor of Your ointments” this is the fruit of Your grace. To the odor of Your ointments Ct 1:3.*

And if we cannot follow you with a strong love of a Spouse already adult in the school of holy love⁶² ^{lxx}, **draw me ibi. We will follow you with the first-fruits of the most tender, nascent and youthful fervor.**

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⁶¹ **Translator’s Note:** Eternal *obsequium* of the glorified Christ?

⁶² Fr. Bertoni uses this same expression in his **gradated Espousals Principle** - cf. his **Panegyric on St. Francis of Assisi, perhaps the morning of the Feast, October 4, 1808 [cf. MssB ## 1844-1874, especially cf. MssB 1868].**

Conclusion:

St. Gregory the Great in St. Gaspar Bertoni's *Original Constitutions*

There are two direct quotes and both of which fall in that area which St. Gaspar found in his favorite author for these Constitutions, Francis Suarez, SJ and his *De Religione Societatis Iesu*:

CF # 186: *Furthermore, no one will contrive to be sent in one place rather than in another, but each will allow himself to be transferred, although it is not wrong to show oneself prepared for some undertaking. For Isaiah [6:6, ff] offered himself, and Jeremiah [1:6] excused himself. However, Jeremiah did not resist God sending him, nor did Isaiah presume to go before being purified by the coal of the altar. As Gregory has said, no one should dare to undertake the sacred ministries without first being purified, nor should anyone chosen by a superior grace, proudly refuse to go, under the pretext of humility.*

This Constitution is actually the Conclusion of the very central Part IX of St. Gaspar's Constitutions, in its Chapter 7: **Concerning the Principal Scope of the 'Professed' Fathers**. This Constitution is taken *verbatim* from Fr. Suarez' Book VI [*De Professione quae in Societate fit...*], regarding the Jesuit Fourth Vow, Chapter 4⁶³.

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The other Constitution is taken from Part XI, Chapter IV of St. Gaspar's **Original Constitutions # 288** - 'Concerning the two conditions through which the means of Conversation might be an accommodated ministry of the Religious State':

CF # 288: There are two principles by which there can be ascertained the decency of such familiar conversation, or the lack of decency for the whole matter.

The first principle would be if this activity was already prohibited, either because of itself it is evil, or because it is prohibited to clerics by common law, and religious are comparable to them in this matter [cf. II-II, q. 187, a. 2^{lxxi}], or, if it is forbidden by one's own institute and special law.

Another principle is whether this endeavor is of such a nature that it could hardly be undertaken without danger of sin, as St. Gregory has said [Hom. 24, in Evangelia]. This same principle holds

⁶³ cf. Suarez, p. 862 a & b.

with due proportion if the undertaking would excessively occupy the spirit with the care and solicitude of temporal matters.

However, since there can be such latitude in this matter, therefore, having put aside any legislation in this regard, obedience to the Superior, no certain rule can be prescribed. There has to be employed here prudent judgment, and the custom of the observant and respectful religious is to be observed, as well as the common sense of those rightly considering and judging what this whole enterprise is, and that it is not in their view, alien to the religious state.

This Constitution # 288 is taken practically *verbatim* from Suarez' Book IX, Chapter VIII [*De Medio iuvandi proximos, conversando familiariter, etc.*], n. 13: [*Quibus regulis dignoscatur dicta indecentia.*]. St. Gregory's **Forty Gospel Homilies** have been translated into English⁶⁴. Homily 24 is a reflection on Jn 21:1-14, 'Jesus Standing on the Shore'. Jesus' tribulations lead to comparing Him as a broiled fish^{lxxii} to be consumed! Gregory concludes:

*Jesus ate the honeycomb and the broiled fish because those who endure affliction for the sake of the truth are satisfied there with true delight...Act upon these things, my friends...*⁶⁵

Fr. Bertoni often used what he copied for the instruction of others, and was more at ease using other people's words than his own. This phenomenon has been noted by Fr. Nello Dalle Vedove, CSS^{lxxiii}, the Stigmatine Founder's most important biographer:

... [Fr. Cesari] gave to Fr. Bertoni a copy of the *Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius of Loyola. He studied them night and day, and indeed, even copied them entirely in his very neat handwriting. He would then preach these retreats to the Clergy with such enthusiasm and unction of piety, that this produced extraordinary fruit in those who heard them...⁶⁶

... [For his continuing meditations to the Clerics of the seminary, Fr. Bertoni] ... transcribed St. John Chrysostom's Commentaries on Matthew, without adding any of his own reflections. He delivered 41 such meditations, which correspond to the 28 Homilies of the Holy

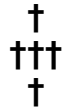
⁶⁴ Cistercian Publication. Kalamazoo MI. Homily 24 is on pages 179 – 186.

⁶⁵ o.c. pp. 184, f.

⁶⁶ cf. Nello Dalle Vedove, *Vita e pensiero del Beato Gaspare Bertoni agli albori dell'800 veronese*. Roma Stigmatini 1977, p. 108. [It is worthwhile noting here that clergy formation was long a privileged Stigmatine Ministry, legislated by the Founder – cf. CF # 164 - where Fr. Bertoni considers the 'Grade' of the 'Professed Apostolic Missionaries'.

Doctor of the Church. Thus he felt much more secure in nourishing his clerics with a totally heavenly doctrine without mixing into it anything of himself...⁶⁷

...After these 73 Meditations on the First Book of Kings, and the 41 Meditations on St. Matthew, Fr. Bertoni believed that his seminarians were now ready to take on a deepening of their understanding of Genesis [and once more, from St. John Chrysostom's Commentary]...⁶⁸



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Gregoire le Grand,

- ***Commentaire sur le Premier Livre des Rois. I [Preface- II, 28].*** Adalbert de Vogue. Paris: du Cerf 1989. *Sources Chretiennes* # 351.
- ***Commentaire sur le Premier Livre des Rois, II [II, 29 – III, 37].*** Christophe Vuillaume, OSB. Paris: du Cerf 1993. *Sources Chretiennes* # 391.
- ***Commentaire dur le Premier Livre des Rois, III [III, 38 – IV, 78].*** Adalbert de Vogue. Paris: du Cerf 1998. *Sources Chretiennes* # 432.

⁶⁷ cf. Nello, o.c., p. 391.

⁶⁸ cf. Nello, o.c., pp. 606, f.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

The Charism that St. Gaspar Bertoni left for the Church through his Stigmatine Community will be understood better also with a biblical reflection on some of the basic terminology employed by the holy Founder. There are also several recent documents from the Holy See that would help to make an ever more committed application of St. Gaspar Bertoni's basic Charism which may be described:

A Holy Abandonment to God, and Availability to the Church

through an ever-increasingly progressive and Competent

Missionary Service

in a broad range of *Varied and Proper Ministries* –

a **Contemplation toward Hope**, manifested in a

Missionary Commitment,

under the Patronage of the

Holy Spouses, Mary and Joseph.

Some of its essential elements might be described as follows:

Apostolic Missionaries in the service of Bishops.

[1] Apostolic: basically, St. Gaspar Bertoni – like some many other Founders/Foundresses of religious Community, maintained the ideal of the early Church as his model. The Apostolic Circle, around Jesus Christ, being in union with Him, continuing His work after His Resurrection⁶⁹. Scripture helps us here:

⁶⁹ Cf. M.-H. Vicaire, OP, *L'imitation des Apotres*. Paris: du Cerf 1963; Hans Urs Von Balthasar, "The Christological Constellation", in: *The Office of Peter and the Structure of the Church*. San Francisco: Ignatius 1986, pp. 131-182; John P. Meier, *A Marginal Jew. Companions and Competitors*. Vol. III. Doubleday 2001, especially Chapters 26 & 27, pp. 125-185

... Jesus now went up into the hills and summoned those he wanted. So they came to him, and he appointed twelve; they were to be his companions and to be sent out to preach... [cf. Mk 3: 13, ff.].

...Jesus came and stood among them. He said to them: 'Peace be with you,' and showed them his hands and his side.... And he said to them: ... As the Father sent me, so I am sending you... [cf. Jn 20:20, ff.]

[2] **Mission:** the old philosophical principle was that all *goodness is diffusive of itself*. Theology could apply this principle to Creation, Redemption and Sanctification – to the Church, to the Sacraments. It can be applied to the **Mystery of the Trinity**, and to the **Personal Mission of Jesus Christ**. This became the Mission of the **Apostles** - it is that of continuing the **Personal Mission** that **Jesus received from His Father, in the Holy Spirit**, in a particular *modality, manner*:

... For God sent His Son into the world, not to condemn the world but so that, through Him, the world might be saved... [cf. Jn 3:17]

... My teaching is not from Myself: it comes from Him Who sent Me... [cf. Jn 3:16, f.]

... Yet, you say to Someone the Father has consecrated and sent into the world...you will know for sure that the Father is in Me, and I am in the Father... [cf. Jn 10:36, ff.]

... I tell you most solemnly, whoever welcomes the one I send, welcomes Me, and whoever welcomes Me welcomes the One Who sent me... [cf. Jn 13:20].

... I have said these things to you while still with you; but the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, Whom the Father will send in My name, will teach you everything and remind you of all I have said to you... [cf. Jn 14:24, ff.].

... When the Advocate comes, Whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of Truth Who issues from the Father, He will be my witness. And you will be my witnesses, because you have been with Me from the beginning... [cf. Jn 15:26, .f].

[3] **Apostolic Missionaries:** St. Gaspar's *Original Constitutions* are not a speculative treatise on how to work for the Church. They are more like a **Manual of Operations**, a **Code describing the *Modus Agendi***, or **Directive** presenting a **Missionary Manner of Loving Obedience, in Service to the Church**. The prophetic vocation helps to understand this to a degree:

... then I heard the voice of the Lord saying: Whom shall I send? Who will be our messenger? I answered; 'Here I am, Send me' he said... [cf. Is 6:8. f.].

... But Yahweh replied: Do not say, 'I am a child'. Go now to those whom I send you and say whatever I command you. Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you to protect you – it is Yahweh who speaks... [cf. Jr 1:7.f.]

It is helpful, too, to ponder on the ***Apostolic Mission***, conferred on the ***Apostles*** of all times:

...Now the Kingdom of Heaven is like a landowner going out at daybreak to hire workers for his vineyard...He sent workers into His vineyard...You go to My vineyard, too...Why have you been standing here idle all the day? ... You go into My vineyard... [cf. Mt 20:1-5].

...All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. 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 give you. And know that I am with you always; yes, to the end of time... [cf. Mt 28:18, ff.].

...Jesus went up into the hills and summoned those He wanted... He appointed twelve; they were to be His companions and to be sent out to preach... [cf. Mk 3:13, ff.].

...go out into the whole world; proclaim the Good News to all creation... [cf. Mk 16:15, ff.].

... He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures and He said to them: ...so that in His Name repentance for the forgiveness of sins would be preached to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses to this... Stay in the city then, until you are clothed with power from on high. [cf. Lk 24: 44, ff.].

... Jesus came and stood among them. He said to them: 'Peace be with you', and showed them His hands and His side. The disciples were filled with joy when they saw the Lord, and He said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent Me, so am I sending you. 'After saying this, He breathed upon them and said: 'receive the Holy Spirit. For those whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven; for those whose sins you retain, they are retained... [cf. Jn 20:20, ff.; cf. also Ph 3:17; 2 Th 3:7-9; 1 P 5:1-4].

[4] In obsequium: these words, or their equivalence, from Rm 12:1, ff., introduce a ***Mysticism of Service*** [cf. **Ac 20:19; 16:18; Col 3:24**] - a main ideal also of St. Ignatius of Loyola – and the expression is often found in the Latin version of the ***Jesuit Constitutions***. This includes a life-long effort at on-going conversion, permanent formation, for an ever more qualified, competent service of the Church through the Bishops. There can be noted ***expressions of progression*** throughout Fr. Bertoni's ***Original Constitutions***, such as: ***De***

Profectu... Promotione... ad graviora, accomodata et propria munera, according to the **changing needs** of seasons, times and places, as proposed to the Stigmatines by the Bishops of the world. The biblical text reads:

...Thank of God's Mercy, my brothers, and worship him, I beg you, in a way that is worthy of thinking beings, by offering you living bodies as a holy sacrifice, pleasing to God... [cf. Rm 12:1, ff.]⁷⁰

This **obsequium** of **CF 1** is then developed in **CF 2**, where St. Gaspar describes his **Missionary Obedience**, his unique **Modality of Apostolic Service**: ***... sub directione et dependentia... quibus omnino parere debeant... licentiam prius cum facultatibus... servata eorundem... circa loca et tempus eiusmodi munus exercendi moderatione...***

[a] As Christ was related to His Father: [cf. Jn 3:17; 4:34; 5:24, 30, 34-38; 6:38,57; 7:16, 18, 28, 33, ff. etc.]

[b] And as the Apostles toward Jesus Christ: [cf. Jn 3:34; 4:38; 11:20; 20:21 and the *Acts of the Apostles*].

This **obsequium** is presented by Paul in the midst of a **Liturgical Encouragement** that he offers the Church of all times:

...May the God of Hope bring you such joy and peace in your faith that the Power of the Holy Spirit will remove all bounds to hope... [cf. Rm 15:13].

[c] St. Ignatius [with his *obsequium Romani Pontificis*], the Jesuits, serve as the Model: Fr. Bertoni emphasized this repeatedly in his writings:

... to choose a saint of the same vocation to serve as a mirror (Feast of St. Ignatius, 1808)... In a visit today to the Altar of St. Ignatius with my companions [on the Priests' retreat, September 1808] ... it seems that he was inviting us to promote the greater glory of God, just as he had done, and by the same ways, even though not in all those modes that he was able to employ [but at least in some of these, through the *varia et propria munera* [CF 185]. The Stigmatines are to use as a model the conduct of that great Servant of God, St. Ignatius... Pius VIIth...such is the will of the holy father, St. Ignatius...Fr. Galvani, who is totally imbued with St. Ignatius.... Has offered me the Stimmate, as an opportune place to establish a Congregation to live under the rules of St. Ignatius...

⁷⁰ ...*Obsecro itaque vos, fratres, per misericordiam Dei, ut exhibeatis corpora [vitas] vestra hostiam viventem, sanctam, Deo placentem, rationabile *obsequium* vestrum ... [Rm 12:1].*

Fr. John Perrone, SJ, [circa 1885] [one of the Roman Professors of Cardinal Newman] described Fr. Bertoni's ideal as ***una copia della Compagnia...*** Fr. Jurado, SJ [in 2002], a more recent 'expert' in the writings of St. Ignatius, on studying Fr. Bertoni's ***Original Constitutions*** concluded that this was ***non un ministero particolare.... Ma, una spiritualita' missionaria.***

[d] ***Fr. Bertoni's Missionary Modality, Obedience:*** this is described through the words of the Decree of the Propagation of the Faith, Dec. 20, 1817 – this loving obedience remains the ideal: as **Christ served His Father [cf. Jn 3:17; 4:34; 5:24, 34-38; 7:28, etc.], and as the Apostles [cf. Jn 3:34; 4:38; 11:20; 20:21, ff. – and the Acts of the Apostles] were sent to serve Jesus Christ,** this is the ideal of Stigmatine life:

...sub directione et dependentia... quibus omnino parere debeant...licentiam prius cum facultatibus... servata semper eorundem... circa loca et tempus eiusmodi munus exercendi moderatione...

[5] ***Episcoporum:*** the ***Acts of the Apostles*** sets the ideal here:

...You know... How I have served the Lord in all humility...Be on your guard for yourselves and for all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you the overseers to feed the Church of God, which He bought with His own blood... [cf. Ac 20:19, 24] [cf. CF 185].

Stigmatine love for God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – is manifested through prayer, Community life, and through an ever-increasing competent service of His Will, 'incarnate' in the needs of the Church, proposed by **Bishops.**

[6] ***Superior Values that shape the Stigmatine Ecclesial Service through the Apostolic Mission:***

- **CF 3: Gratis Omnino** - a prime **Missionary Quality** [cf. Mt 10:8; 2 Co 11:7].

- **CF 4: Immunitas** - **Missionary, Apostolic - Availability.**

- **CF 5: Quocumque** - **Missionary, Apostolic Mobility – Geographical Abandonment.**

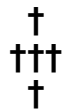
- **CF 6: Profectus [Ph 1:6 ⁷¹] Spiritualis et Intellectualis** - Progress [cf. Ps 118:66: ... **Bonitatem et disciplinam et scientiam doce me...CF 127**] – [1 Tm 4:16: ... **attende tibi et doctrinae...**].

⁷¹ cf. Ph 1:6: ... *confidens hoc ipsum, quia, qui coepit in vobis opus bonum, perficiet usque in diem Christi...!*

- **CF 7 a: *Profectus Juridicus*** – a gradual promotion, to the point of receiving the ***Grade of the Apostolic Missionary*** [cf. **CF 158**].

- **CF 7 b: *Profectus Apostolicus*** - this is a gradually assigned ***experiment, experience*** until one reaches the **perfect sacerdotal work [*usque ad perfectum opus sacerdotale*]** - this was planned by the Stigmatine Founder to come to a man, when he had perhaps reached 50 years of age!⁷²

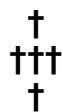
- **CF 8: *Obedientia corporativa, interna*** - this runs the daily living of the Stigmatine Community.



For Further Reading on the Missionary Charism

Pope John Paul II

- Apostolic Letter, ***Euntes in Mundum – Go into the World*** - January 25, 1988.
- Encyclical Letter, ***Redemptoris Missio – The Mission of the Redeemer*** - December 7, 1990
- Post Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, ***Ecclesia in Africa*** - September 14, 1990.
- Post Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, ***Ecclesia in America*** - January 22, 1999.
- Post Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, ***Ecclesia in Asia*** - November 6, 1999.



⁷² Cf. MssB 9867. cf. also Faciotti text, for CF 75]. These were the stages of promotion: *De Promovendis ad Sacerdotale Officium* [Pars V – Priestly Ordination; then, the *Schola Affectus* PARS VIII - then, finally at perhaps age 50, promotion to *De Gradu Professorum*, PARS IX

FINAL REMARKS

My efforts are an initial attempt to draw up a spiritual theology of Fr. Bertoni - mine is but a first step, and hopefully will be followed by other Stigmatines through the years - in a life-long effort to pray over his biblical-theological-spiritual and Missionary Charism. It has been a privilege - all of my Roman courses taught for over 25 years - took inspiration from the writings of St. Gaspar. Priestly and religious formation would be high on the list of Fr. Bertoni's idea of ecclesial service in his Apostolic Mission.

Rev. Joseph Charles Henchey, CSS

Waltham, USA, December 31st, 2003.

ENDNOTES

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- ⁱ **Professed** - these would be the Stigmatines promoted to Solemn vows.
- ⁱⁱ **Grade** - is another way of saying the same thing ("Professed"): in the early Community, only specially chosen men would be chosen to be *Professed*, or to have the *Grade* - this is all studied in the Founder's Constitutions 161, ff. and 185. - the entire Part IX of the Founder's Constitutions talk about the special duties of the *Professed*.
- ⁱⁱⁱ **The House of the Stimate**: I leave it in the Italian - just to distinguish it from the "Stigmata" of Jesus - for me, the "Stimate" usually means the House in Verona - and the "Stigmata" are the sorrowful and glorious wounds of Jesus.
- ^{iv} **"General Congregation"** means the same as "General Chapter" as they are called now - these men meet every six years now, and they are peopled by elected delegates from among the membership. The General Congregations/Chapters are the supreme authority in a religious community - they are empowered to make changes in the legislation and policies and they elect the Superiors General and the General Councilors.
- ^v **"Acts"** means the **Minutes** [in Italian *Verbale* (singular) or *Verbali* (plural)] of the Chapter meetings and the all the documents that might be appended to it - it means that which goes on in a Chapter.
- ^{vi} **St. Teresa's Convent** - when Fr. Galvani gave the land of the "Stimate" on it there was a Church [of the Stigmata of St. Francis], a small residence [and this House came to be known as the "Stimate"] - a Garden - and across the way, the Convent of St. Teresa - where contemplative used to live. Fr. Bertoni accepted all this - and St. Teresa's became the main Convent of the Sisters of the Holy Family, of Mother Leopoldina Naudet.
- ^{vii} **"Yea" and 'Nay"** are antiquated English for Yes and No - used maybe still be the U.S. Congress.
- ^{viii} **St. Nicolo**: The name would be in English **St. Nicholas**. The apprenticeship of which they speak would seem to be a school for training new teachers. Once one had the degree, he became an **apprentice** - then a **teacher** - and finally, a **professor**, the highest rank.
- ^{ix} **Graviora** is a Latin comparative adjective, found in CF 158 - where Fr. Bertoni begins to describe the specific duties of the Apostolic Missionaries - those few men with the Grade of Solemn Vows - it means: *more important, more delicate, more serious - those tasks demanding greater spirituality and knowledge.*
- ^x **The Chapter [or, 'Capitular'] Commissions**: these can be instituted: before/during/ and for work after Chapters - so the Capitular Commission of 1881 for example, had the huge job of re-writing a book of Constitutions for the Community - and the work took

almost ten years - so the 'Capitular Commission' has a life until the next General Chapter, or until its work is completed.

^{xi} **Sodality** - it always means the 'Religious Congregation' when the Founder uses the term. It is an old Latin term and it simply means the Stigmatine Congregation. It is a word that is used - admittedly, there is some difficulty with; precise terminology. But "Sodality" means 'the Congregation' - meaning the Stigmatine Community, as founded by Fr. Bertoni.

^{xii} **'Ordinary'** - means those tasks for which we were primarily ordained: the assistance of youth; the formation of clergy and spiritual direction of Sisters [not living in their Communities, though, as resident chaplains] - and any ministry of the word of God whatsoever - all of these take serious preparation and specialization.

^{xiii} **The 'ordinary and perpetual care of souls'** was excluded in our Founder's time - because it would absorb the members of the Congregation. In my view, it could be that too many of our resources were wrapped up in parish ministry - largely, because that was all the Bishops wanted. There is a far greater need of experts in catechetics - and men capable of forming the priests of the future. This is what the Founder really wanted - and we lost that scope.

^{xiv} **The thirty-fifth year:** this was the promotion of a Stigmatine priest to the highest grade of Apostolic Missionary. Originally, the Founder wanted the men to be at least 50! Anyway, this was not approved.

^{xv} The *Priestly Office* – it has the same meaning of ‘Sacerdotal Office’, used before, and is a translation of the Latin: *Officium Sacerdotale*.

^{xvi} **About Footnote 28: "Congregation of Bishops and Regulars"** - means the Congregation of Bishops [which still exists separately today] and the **Congregation of Religious [Regulars]** also a separate Vatican entity today - in those days, these were united under one Sacred Congregation.

^{xvii} **Whatever** is all embracing - and is the usual English translation of the Latin 'quodcumque' - meaning: any ministry of the Word of God whatsoever. It is antiquated English for “whatever”.

^{xviii} **Fr. Louis Benaglia, CSS** [Verona, 1900 – Verona, 1988], wrote the five typed volumes of the *Manoscritti Bertoni*. **Gino** is his nickname, familiar name. I worked with him in 1966-1967 - as he transcribed all of the spiritual writings of the Founder. It was a terribly painstaking work - which he accomplished for the most part at our old Novitiate at Grottaferata, outside of Rome. He, too, was a most accomplished musician. He was preceded in death by an uncle, Fr. Cesare Benaglia, who lived into his 90's - one of the oldest Stigmatines ever. Fr. Gino was about 88 when he died. We can find more information about the Deceased Stigmatine Confreres in www.confrades.com.

^{xix} **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. The Book IX talks about the Apostolic Missions, and this is the heart of the Jesuit Rule, and also of the Charism of Fr. Bertoni. In the Jesuit Constitutions, it is **Part Seven**, which is on the Missions. For St. Gaspar, it is **Part Nine - where he emphasizes the special duties of the Apostolic Missionaries**.

Fr. Suarez wrote under the leadership of the long-time Superior General [February 19, 1581–January 31, 1615], Fr. Claudio Acquaviva, a generation or so later. As will be seen, Fr. Suarez' work is a most orderly apologetic, more defensive reflection on the Jesuit Constitutions, defending this 'new' way of life in the Church, which had found opposition even in high Church circles. For example, the Fourth Vow of special obedience to the Roman Pontiff – was not understood as something unique in that in faith, all believers are placed under the magisterial and spiritual direction of the Vicar of Christ.

The corner stones of the Jesuit Constitutions as these were understood first by Fr. Jerome Nadal, SJ and later, by Fr. Francis Suarez.

Fr. Jerome Nadal [1507-1580], whose name is rendered in Latin is Hieronymus Natalis, was a well-known personality in the early History of the Society of Jesus. Five full substantial volumes are dedicated to his writings of Conferences in the well-known Series, Momumentis Historicis Societatis Iesu. For our purposes here, there are three volumes of central interest, that are available, and they are formational, ascetical commentaries on St. Ignatius' [1491-1556] Constitutions:

- P. Hieronymi NADAL. Commentarii de Instituto Societatis Iesu, edidit Michael Nicolau, SI. Romae: apud Monumenta Historica Soc. Iesu. 1962.
- P. Hieronymi NADAL, Scholia in Constitutiones S.I., Edicion Critica, prologo y notas, de Manuel Ruiz Jurado, S.I., Granada: Facultad de Teologia 1976.

Another good source has appeared in French translation, summarizing these volumes, is:

- Jerome Nadal, "Contemplatif dans l'action. Ecrits Spirituels Ignatiens [1535-1575]". Presentation par François Evain, SJ. Traduction du Journal Spirituel, par Antoine Lauras, SJ. Collection Christus n° 81. Paris: Desclee 1994.

Then, the applications will be made regarding these Jesuit theological and spiritual interpreters of the Rule of St. Ignatius – as this appealed to Fr. Gaspar Bertoni, Stigmatine Founder. In the booklet of the Stigmatine Founder's Rule, prepared during the Holy Year of 1950, Fr. Joseph Stofella has noted that a large majority of the Original Constitutions come from Fr. Francis Suarez, SJ – and many of these, *verbatim* (from the Latin, that means "literally").

^{xx} **Fr. Joseph Stofella**, CSS [Aldeno, Province of Trento, Italy, 1885 – Verona, 1966] – He was certainly one of the greatest Stigmatine Historians. Endowed of sharp intelligence, he always worked in the historical field and especially in favor of the cause of our Founder. At the end of his youth, he revealed a remarkable musical talent. He is author of great masterpieces, like the "Collectanea Stigmatina", "Vita del Fondatore", and the editor of the Founder's "Epistolario" and "Pagine di Vita Cristiana". He passed

away nine years before to see realized the more beautiful fruit of his work: the Beatification of our Founder. We can find more information about the Deceased Stigmatine Confreres in www.confrades.com.

^{xxi} **Part Nine** is the heart of St. Gaspar's Rule - as Part Seven is for St. Ignatius in the Jesuit Constitutions. This is because it is in these Parts that the two saints describe more fully what is the particular, distinguishing service the Jesuits and the Stigmatines offer to the Church.

^{xxii} **Unlettered:** these would be individuals who had not been to school - without education. In our Founder's time, there were many - and he hoped the Stigmatines would help them.

^{xxiii} **Proper and varied** are Fr. Bertoni's words found in his CF # 185: "...scopus eiusdem Sodalitatis sit, ecclesiae sub Episcoporum directine, obsequium praestare per varia et propria suae vocationis munera...". This means: "Since the scope of this same Congregation is to offer its assistance to the Church under the direction of the Bishops through the varied and proper ministries of its vocation...". Most religious communities have one proper ministry, e.g., teaching, nursing care. The Stigmatines are meant to be abandoned to God, available to the Church, according to her needs in time and different places. This is unique to Fr. Bertoni - imitating the Jesuit service to the Church through Pope.

^{xxiv} **"Reaching out to other human beings"** - this is a general way of trying to be of assistance to other human beings. The tendency in the Romance Languages is to emphasize "men" - but, English is particular about "men, women and children." - so, it is a substitute for the repetition of "men."

^{xxv} **Varied and Multiple** - are meant to be synonymous of **proper and varied**. Just a variation on the same theme.

^{xxvi} **Quodcumque** is a Latin adjective that is translated any [ministry] of the Word of God whatsoever - it means each and every. It is found in St. Gaspar's Constitutions, CF # 163.

^{xxvii} **Neighbors:** all those who the Stigmatines are called to reach out toward - instead of repeating *men, women and children*.

^{xxviii} **Sacred lectures:** these are sacred conferences on holy matters - to which the audience simply listens and meditates.

^{xxix} **Colloquies:** these would be like private conferences, or spiritual direction talks - to which one may respond after listening for a while - it is not a simple conversation - it is a bit more 'formal.'

^{xxx} **Compilation** - this would mean a kind of copying - but, sifting through a variety of sources - taking some material from Scripture - some from the Fathers of the Church, and some from the Jesuit Fr. Suarez. It is not just copying - but **sifting through - organizing the material** for his specific purposes. *Compilation* is from the Latin *compilare* - it seems to mean in this context: **to copy from multiple sources.**

^{xxxii} "He entrenched himself within the confines of a tradition from which *he derived not ONLY concepts*, but *also* its precise order, *and not infrequently the identical expressions, cited precisely - and at length*": first of all, after *he derived not ON [this should be ONLY]* - and the whole text means: **that for the most part, Fr. Bertoni copied these pages word for word from the Latin** - he was very hesitant to say things in his own words - therefore: he kept texts just as they were.

^{xxxiii} The **Quarta Classe** was a form of teaching Catechism in between the two Feasts of the Holy Cross, in the old Liturgy: the one in **May** and the other one in **September**. Once the regular school classes let out in the old days, priests and religious would organize summer classes on the Catechism and it was known as the **Quarta Classe, the Fourth Class.**

^{xxxiii} **Rudibus** means **the unlettered, the uneducated.** St. Augustine wrote a work on how to bring the Catechism to those who have no education - this ideal was followed by St. Ignatius, and by St. Gaspar.

^{xxxiv} **Fr. John Ceresatto**, CSS [Concordia Sagittaria, Veneto, Italy, 1916] - he is a Stigmatine Priest who first served in China - but, when Communism expelled the Catholic Church, **Fr. Ceresatto is one of the founding missionaries of our Province in Thailand.** He spent most of his life in Formation work of young Stigmatines - has mastered the difficult language - and is an accomplished musician.

^{xxxv} **About footnote 4: Dedicated Priests:** Since one of Fr. Bertoni's purposes was to infiltrate in missionary work - and also to renew the priesthood - as far as religious habit goes, and external forms of life, he encouraged us to imitate the better priests among whom we live. In his time [and maybe in ours!] there was a great division among priests and hierarchy - after the wars with Napoleon, who put Pius VIIth in prison. So, Fr. Bertoni wanted us to take the better priests as our model.

^{xxxvi} The etymology of the Latin word [derived from Greek] **Monachus** - would be the **"One" man, person [Mono].**

^{xxxvii} **About Israel's army:** this would be the story found in the First Book of Samuel, c. 13, vv. 5, ff.: there were 30,000 Philistines - and some of the Israelites ran away. In St. Gregory's allegorical reading of this biblical passage, he is applying it to the sorry state of the priesthood and monastic life in his time - and he was trying, as Pope, to work about a renewal. St. Gaspar took his Commentary and used it to preach weekly to the

Seminarians of Verona - as I am here (Spiritual Director of the Seminary of Weston), he was Spiritual Director of the Seminary of Verona for some years.

^{xxxviii} **The retired Life** is a monastic expression: which means the contemplative life - a life continuously on retreat.

^{xxxix} **Sacred Conversation** in the Benedictine tradition means **Mental Prayer**.

^{xl} **Asking for a King** - this is the theme of the Biblical story here - the Israelites did not yet have a king - and there was a faction among the people who wanted them to organize a royal form of government.

^{xli} **The abbot presides over** - this is a Liturgical term - whenever one pronounces his religious vows, it is necessary that he (she) should kneel before some ecclesial authority [Abbot, Bishop, Superior] representing the Church.

^{xlii} **Right of royalty** - in the secular world, there are certain *rights* that are inherent in the new king, the royal family, officials, etc. As the Church is something of a *Monarchy*, **in the Monastic life, there are certain 'rights' inherent in ecclesiastical authority.**

^{xliii} **Dura et aspera** - the technical translation would be hard and difficult - the words are synonymous, but repeated to bring emphasis.

^{xliv} The **Weaker brethren** - St. Paul also mentions *those weaker in the faith*. - In the monastic tradition, this would imply those living in the monastery, but not living the rules - or praying according to the Rule, as much, as well as they should.

^{xlv} Religious life is meant to be a *holocaust, an oblation offered to God through the Vows*. This is a rhetorical question that is being asked: Do you think the Lord just wants liturgical sacrifices, *rather than* that the voice of the Lord be obeyed - and the answer is that it is evident that God wants His voice obeyed. The implication here is theological - religious obedience is better than ceremonial holocausts offered on the altar.

^{xlvi} The Biblical citations: “**1 K**” are according to the Latin Vulgate - and the English Douay translation: instead of two books of Samuel and two books of Kings, according to the Modern Bibles - in the Vulgate, followed by the Douay, there were Four Books of Kings - so here, **1 K** means 1st Samuel.

^{xlvii} *Primum Regum* is the Latin genitive case for: *The Exposition on First Kings [meaning 1st Samuel]* commented on at some length - this is St. Gregory's Commentary on First Samuel - the Latin title.

^{xlviii} **That which dominates by far, is Gregory's concern for the Priesthood:** this means that in his work on First Kings, he has two major concerns: the renewal of the Priesthood and the renewal of the Monastic Life But, that which dominates by far in his

concerns s Pope, is the renewal of the Priesthood.

^{xlix} **Asceticism:** there are two aspects of spirituality: Asceticism, dealing with what the baptized Christian should do: his/her own mortification, the carrying of one's cross to be a better person, etc. Then, there is Mysticism: that aspect of spirituality which emphasizes what God does in the human soul, of every person 'open' to Him. This would include the 'Prayer of Quiet' – 'Mystical espousals' and other matters developed by St. John of the Cross, St. Teresa of Avila - following St. Thomas - and lived by St. Gaspar - as a Model of Holy Abandonment.

¹ **Notable Defects:** it is highly likely that this idea came from St. Ignatius of Loyola - he had suggested in his *Spiritual Exercises* a three-fold examination of Conscience: in the Morning when one arises, and plans the day; one at noon - and one at going to bed at night. This would involve two aspects: one is the General Examen: one's more general failings and defects [as, for example, one may often be discouraged - and he/she would try to exercise hope throughout the day]. And, then the Particular Examen: where a believer would concentrate on his personal failings that might offend others - e.g., impatience; unkind words about others. These defects are more 'Notable' - and therefore should be the 'Object of the Particular Examen' - meaning three times a day, one would try to see how he/she has done to over-come them.

^{li} The **horn** means two things: the ram's horn was hollowed out and used as A religious trumpet - and was usually played to announce religious ceremonies. However, it was also sometimes used to hold sacred oil - that would be used to anoint kings, priests, altars etc. Furthermore, the symbolic meaning of **horn** was to go back to the original - as the animal, the ram, has strength in the use of its **horn**, was an exercise of strength - so, **horn** symbolically was used to describe royal or sacred power.

^{lii} **Suaviter et fortiter:** the words mean literally: sweetly, but strongly! As Fr. Bertoni is using St. Gregory [who was Pope], who was trying to renew the Priesthood and the Monastic Life throughout the entire Church. Fr. Bertoni, like St. Ignatius, considered the *Superior* to be a *Father* - so, he would be called Father [sweetly] Superior [but, strongly] - this would be the ideal form of administration.

^{liii} This means that the Bishop must be so in command of his knowledge that he is able to **teach** it, and **preach** it well - as Pope St. Gregory the Great did - and the great Fathers of the Church - and, we might add humble, as did St. **Gaspar!** It means his **knowledge must be shared** - it is not an ornament for his own greatness.

^{liv} **Conversatio** - this word literally means conversation - in the Monastic tradition, it can mean Conversion [as in the expression of St. Benedict: *conversatio morum*] - it means **Mental Prayer**, meaning conversation with God - and it can mean Conversation with our Confreres, Fellow Human Beings, as in recreation and in daily life. So, it is a broad term.

^{lv} The **flock** is a common image co-relative with the Divine Good Shepherd! The Bishop is to imitate Christ, the Good Shepherd [Jn 10] - who lays down His life for His flock - i.e., God's, Jesus' own People.

^{lvi} **Gradated** means: according to various *grades of ordination* - as Minor Orders, Major Orders - these are different *grades*, or *steps* along the way. Then, when one does become an ordained teacher, he teaches *gradually* - babies in the faith need milk - only with progress do we receive solid food.

^{lvii} **Suitability**: in the matter of priestly and religious **formation**, the superiors, bishops need to be sure that the candidates that offer themselves are *suitable, worthy of the call - intellectually and spiritually*.

^{lviii} In this context, the word *fail* means - as in our own time, some men [especially] **have not been able to withstand the temptation**, and have fallen into sin, or **have abandoned the graces that accompany this vocation**.

^{lix} This is an old monastic tradition that also gave impetus to the three vows of poverty [custody of desire for possessions]; chastity [custody of the body and its desires]; and obedience [custody of the spirit of unruly independence that would make community living, and prayer, very difficult].

^{lx} **About Footnote 9: Most ordered charity** means we are to love all human beings - but, first and primarily, those of our own household. In this sense, the Stigmatine is called to make his *fellow Stigmatine* his first apostolate. *Accommodated ministries* - Fr. Bertoni had a very broad apostolic scope: *any ministry of the word of God whatsoever*. Under this broad program, the Stigmatines are called - through their Chapters and Superiors - to respond to the particular needs of different locations, and dioceses - For example, in the USA right now, what we need are Stigmatines who would be good in **catechetical [i.e. teaching and preparing good catechism teachers]** - and in helping in **the renewal of priests and religious**. For this, much study and time are needed. Therefore, each Province of Stigmatines should *accommodate* their energies according to the greatest need as seen by the Bishops - and as intended by Fr. Bertoni's Charism.

^{lxi} **The four means**: this is cited here in the middle of a longer discourse by St. Gregory speaking of the various *means* by which God helps the soul to reach Him. This is simply the *fourth way* that God does that - I have quoted it here because it brings in both aspects of the **Suffering** and **Resurrection** in the Mystery of Jesus. A careful reading of Fr. Bertoni sees both the **Sorrowful Stigmata of Good Friday** - as well as the **Glorious Stigmata of Easter Sunday** [cf. Jn 20:20, f.; cf. also Rm 4:25] - the more common belief among Stigmatines is that on showing His Wounds, after His Resurrection - **Jesus sent His Apostles - as the Church, through her Bishops, now sends Stigmatines**. It is the **Integral Stigmata** - I have a long study in the website www.st-bertoni.com, under 'Life & Spirituality', called *Stimate Integre* - and this is what it means.

^{lxii} St. Gregory is providing an allegorical reading of **First Samuel - Ramatha** is actually the home of Elcana and Anna - but in St. Gregory's interpretation, to go *home*, our true home is in heaven. The Church is a single people - and with the coming of Christ, the preaching of the Old Testament prophets, priests and Sages comes to an end, in favor of the Apostles. So, in the Church, the preaching of the OT Jews has just come to an end. And even though, when one lives the life of Jesus Christ - His grace - he (she) is already in heaven, which is nothing more than eternal union with the whole trinity through Jesus. Meanwhile, even though we *are already in heaven* while we live our vocations on earth, *we have not yet ascended into our heavenly homeland...*

^{lxiii} **About Footnote 12: Recurring** means repeated - in the writings of St. Gaspar, there is interest in the **Sorrowful Stigmata of Good Friday** and also in the **Glorious Stigmata of the Resurrection**. This is the content of my study on the *Stimma Integre*, in the Founder's website, at: www.st-bertoni.com, under '**Life & Spirituality**'. Fr. Bertoni mentioned the resurrection, glorious aspects of the Pascal Mystery - from his childhood poems - his sermon on the Sacred Heart - his retreat to priests - his letters - his 'Franciscan' Sermons [St. Francis and St. Veronica Giuliani] - all this is studied in *Stimma Integre*.

^{lxiv} **About Footnote 13:** Fr. Bertoni is described as *The Model of Holy Abandonment* - this spirituality is rooted in the Lord's Prayer: **Thy Will be done!** But the roots of this are very old. They are found in the *Disciple's Prayer* of the Old Testament.

^{lxv} In St. Gregory's allegorical interpretation of **v. 21: to offer the solemn sacrifice** [from First Kings]: The **solemn sacrifice** is offered - [by the Passion and death of Jesus] - which made it possible for us to take our place in the heavenly realms. [This is St. Gregory's presentation of both aspects of the Paschal Mystery - the *Sorrowful* of Good Friday - and the *Glorious* of Easter Sunday.

^{lxvi} It is long the spiritual tradition in the Church **to meditate on the Mysteries of Christ's humanity - culminating in His Passion and Death** - to this the entire second week of St. Ignatius' *Spiritual Exercises* is dedicated - by going through the Suffering and Risen Humanity of Jesus, we come to the heart of the Trinity.

^{lxvii} **Uction** just means with more piety - enthusiasm - vigor - to preach in a more holy manner.

^{lxviii} St. Paul divided up his world into the **Jews and Gentiles - the gentility** would be converted from paganism - **as this ideal is contained already in the Word of God.**

^{lxix} As is now known, St. Gregory allegorizes the text of First Kings: Anna fed her child with her maternal milk. This is a symbol of the Church, teaching her children [believers] with the milk of God's word. Our dispositions as believers - depend on the Church's instruction of us all. We are perfected in our human and spiritual dispositions by the

teaching of the Church, which is God's Word - we are then able to hand on this word of God when we are instructed ourselves - our dispositions thus become *perfected*.

^{lxx} **Gradated Espousals Principle:** Fr. Bertoni offered a *gradated*, meaning ever **more intense following of Jesus Christ - as: some follow as friends, but withdraw when Jesus suffers; some follow as sons, but withdraw when they are unhappy over their inheritance - but only a few follow as ardent lovers** [in accord with the **Canticle of Canticles** of the Old testament] **when they are really in love Jesus. The Espousals Principle** is my own phraseology - meaning the ultimate way - and the most intimate manner of **following** Jesus - is to be **espoused to Him**.

^{lxxi} This is the way **St. Thomas Aquinas' works** are usually quoted. His *Summa Theologica* - his best known work, and masterpiece, was divided as follows:

First Part [about God and Creation, etc.]: [Prima Pars] - indicated by the roman numeral "I" - then, 'q.' which means Question; and 'a' which means which Article of the Question.

The First Part of the Second Part [the 'Second Part' is very long on Moral Theology questions, and Grace: so divided into two parts]: [Prima-Secundae] and then the same abbreviations regarding 'Questions' and 'Articles' as above. This is indicated by the Roman numerals: "I-II".

The Second Part of the Second Part [this deals with the Theological Virtues, Prayer, Ascetical and Mystical Life etc.]. This is indicated by the Roman Numerals: II-II'.

The Third Part [this deals with Jesus Christ: the Incarnation-Redemption; the Sacraments etc] – this is the Tertia Pars - and is indicated by the Roman Numeral "III".

^{lxxii} **Broiled Fish:** we do think of Jesus as the Lamb of God to be received in Holy Communion. The Fathers of the Church used an early Liturgical Symbol by drawing a 'fish' in the ground, to indicate in a secret message form that Mass would be offered: the Greek word for FISH is ICHTHUS: and the Letters would mean: I"= Jesus; "CH" = Christ; "TH"= THE GREEK WORD, THEOS, Meaning God! "U" - is Greek for Men and Women; humanity"; and "S" is the Greek word for SAVIOR. [The whole symbol would mean: Jesus Christ, the Son of God, Savior of Humanity – and will be celebrated at the usual time and usual place. As the early Church knew many persecutions, so they developed a secret Code to communicate their liturgies. [cf. Danielou, *Symbols of the Early Church*.].

^{lxxiii} **Fr. Nello Dalle Vedove**, CSS [S. M. Estra, VR, Italy, 1917] – He is one of the greatest Stigmatine Historians, with Fr. Joseph Fiorio [1876 – 1958], and Fr. Joseph Stofella [1885 –1966]. He has dedicated his whole life to St. Gaspar Bertoni and was postulator of his cause. About 1950, Fr. Dalle Vedove completed his doctoral thesis under the direction of the world-renowned Dominican theologian, Fr. Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, OP, at the Angelicum in Rome. The title of Fr. Dalle Vedove's thesis was A Model of Holy Abandonment - a theological study on the Charism of St. Gaspar Bertoni. 'Fr. Nello' spent much of the years since then studying the Charism of St. Gaspar - and finished 6 massive volumes of a biography of St. Gaspar. Fr. Nello prepared the lengthy

Cause of Beatification for St. Gaspar - bring the Beatification phase of it to completion on Nov. 1, 1975 - and the Canonization phase on Nov. 1, 1989. Fr. Nello will always be remembered as one of the outstanding Stigmatines.