

ANTONIO LEZÁUN

THE HISTORY OF THE ORDER  
OF THE PIOUS SCHOOLS  
(A Handbook)



MADRID, 2011

## MATERIALES

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OF THE PIOUS SCHOOLS  
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## **The history of the Order of the Pious Schools (a Handbook)**

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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

- DENES *Diccionario Enciclopédico Escolapio*, 3 vols. Madrid, 1983-1990.
- EC *Epistolarium Coetaneorum S. Josephi Calasanctii* (Letters from the contemporaries of Joseph Calasanz). Roma, 1977-1982.
- EEC *Epistulae ad S. J. Calasanctium ex Europa Centrali* (Letters sent to Calasanz from Central Europe). Roma, 1969.
- EHI *Epistulae ad S. J. Calasanctium ex Hispania et Italia* (Letters sent to Calasanz from Spain and Italy). Roma, 1972.
- EP *Epistolario di San Giuseppe Calasanzio*. 10 volumes of Calasanz's letters (Picanyol, 1950-56 and Vilá, 1988).
- ICCE Instituto Calasanz de Ciencias de la Educación.
- NGO Non Governmental Organisation.
- PC *Perfectae Caritatis*. Decree of Vatican Council II on Consecrate Life.
- SDM Su Divina Majestad (God).





## FOREWORD

It is with great joy and with my thanks to the author, that I present you with this **HANDBOOK OF THE HISTORY OF THE PIOUS SCHOOLS**, written by Fr. Antonio Lezáun, from the Province of Emaús, who is currently Fr. Vice-Provincial of Chile.

This publication is greatly needed by our Order, not only for the formation of our youngsters and the lay people who share our mission or our charism. All religious of the Order need to know our history a little better, to understand the path that we, as a religious Order have trod through the centuries, and our efforts to consolidate the work of Saint Joseph Calasanz over all this time, including our successes and our mistakes. We must learn from our history, and this handbook will help us on our path forward.

In the past few months I have heard of the need of our Piarist trainers for a book about our history. The same desire has been communicated by those religious and lay people whose responsibility it is to train Piarist laity. This is why I asked Fr. Antonio Lezáun to complete the study notes he had in hand so that they could be published by the Order, for the benefit of all.

I think that knowledge of our history as an Order can help us in the task of revitalization which we are undertaking. A study of this book will certainly strengthen our sense of belonging to and our knowledge of the path followed by the Order, faithful to the Gospels and to Calasanz.

Therefore I most strongly recommend your reading this book, and thank Fr. Antonio Lezáun for the work he has done for the benefit of the Pious Schools. He has conceived it as an approach to our history, and it is written as a summary. We have also tried to orientate the text for teaching purposes so that we may all know and appreciate what and who

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we are through our collective experience, and I believe Fr. Lezáun has responded to our request in a most useful way. Thank you!

*Pedro Aguado*

Rome, 1<sup>st</sup> December 2010

## INTRODUCTION

We often turn to the founding sources of our charism, and we must continue to do so, so that our establishments and our works continue with St. Joseph Calasanz's vocational stimulation and should not deviate from the mission with which we have been entrusted by the Church. But also the history of our Institute, by which I mean the application and development of the Piarist vocation, which Piarists themselves have undertaken over the centuries, has something to teach us about our charism. As Vatican Council II (PC 2b) states: "Healthy traditions" also constitute the "patrimony of the Institute", along with "the spirit and the aims of the founders".

Thus, it is not only curiosity, even if worthy in itself, that justifies the study of our past and the inheritance of our ancestors. There is also a theological-spiritual reason which leads us to that history and its study. Over the last three and a half centuries, the charism of Calasanz has shown diverse potential for adapting itself "to the changing conditions of the times (PC, 2)". This adaptation must take place every day, for our charism is a living essence and it will not cease to be so for us unless humanity itself no longer exists.

Therefore, I invite all those who are attracted by the educational charism of Saint Joseph Calasanz to get to know not only the mind and thought of the founder, but also the Works by which Piarists have, through history, contributed to keeping the inspiration which Calasanz received, alive and flourishing. As this changed and adapted in time, there is no doubt that we are able to see the work of the Holy Spirit. It remains our task to discern between those "real adaptations" and "healthy traditions" on the one hand, and those which are not on the other, because we too have received the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Even if ours is not one of the major Orders, the history of an Order like ours must be presented as long and complex. Any study of it requires the work of various historians and lengthy research.

My job has chiefly been one of collecting and collating data and summarising it so that, in a short amount of time, anyone interested in the subject may get a useful and more or less precise idea of our vocation in times and circumstances which differ greatly from each other.

This has clearly been made possible because of the many historians of the Order itself. Those most consulted for the writing of this work have been: Severino Giner, György Sántha, Enrique Ferrer, Giovanni Ausenda, Llogari Picanyol, Claudio Vilá, Luis María Bandrés, Joaquín Lecea. To these names we must add others, whose contribution has also been important in learning of the history of our Order, like: Carlos Lasalde, Josep Poch, Vicente Faubell, Joan Florensa, Miguel A. Asiáin, etc. Our thanks go to all of them. Finally, I should like to especially thank Fr. Adolfo García-Durán, who is currently the official Historian of the Order, for his precious help in making this handbook possible.

As we have desired to summarise and simplify, this is done through distinguishing different periods. We shall try to link each of these periods to a century, although we realise that historical facts cannot be so easily classified. However, this method is used to make it easier to understand and to assimilate the story and the facts. Our collection of data will finish with Fr. Giuseppe María Balcells's term as Father General. Subsequent events are better known and in any case, time will have to pass before we acquire the necessary historical perspective.

As far as the period of St. Joseph Calasanz is concerned, although it is of great importance in order to understand the original inspiration of our charism and what the founder meant to do and succeeded in doing, we shall outline this in a summary manner. A simple sketch may suffice for this period, which is certainly well known to Piarists and has been described in detail in many old and current publications which are frequently consulted by those who love the Pious Schools. Later periods will be dealt with at greater length, even though they too will be summarised in outline, according to the aims of this handbook.

In closing here, I apologise in advance for anything lacking and for omissions, and there will be many of these, even of facts which are worthy of mention. I hope that this may lead to many people being stimulated towards amplifying and completing these notes.

*Antonio Lezáun*

# 1. 17<sup>th</sup> CENTURY (1597-1699): FOUNDATION AND GROWTH, REDUCTION, RESTORATION, STABILISATION

## Pontiffs:

Clement VIII, Aldobrandini: 1592-1605

Paul V, Borghese: 1605-1621

Gregory XV, Ludovisi: 1621-1623

Urban VIII, Barberini: 1623-1644

Innocent X, Panfili: 1644-1655

Alexander VII, Chigi: 1655-1667

Clement IX, Rospigliosi: 1667-1669

Clement X : 1670-1676

Innocent XI: 1676-1689

Alexander VIII: 1689-1691

Innocent XII: 1691-1700

In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the institution of the Pious Schools grew and became consolidated, and it has come down to us to fulfil a precious mission in the field of human and Christian education. During its long history, the Order of the Pious Schools has undergone periods of great difficulty and the worst of all took place during this very century, when it risked disappearance altogether.

The first half of the century was characterised by the charismatic presence of the Founder. There was rapid growth at the beginning and an almost fatal crisis at the end of his life: these are the facts of what Calasanz experienced in the last fifty years of his life. There was great satisfaction, as he received pressing requests for his schools all over Europe, along with great pain and trouble when faced with incomprehension from many of the important leaders of his beloved Church.

The second half of the century saw the legal restoration of the Pious Schools, as had been predicted by the Blessed Founder, together with a slow reorganisation, which was not without difficulties. This second half of the century is also extremely important in the history of the Pious Schools, not only because that was when what was supposed to disappear returned to life, but also because during those 45 years it was possible to shape what was to be the Order of the Pious Schools during the coming three centuries, from the juridical, spiritual and organizational points of view.

Calasanz the saint, with his educational inspiration on the one hand and his ascetic and reformed religious life on the other, wanted a Religious Order which was intensely concentrated on both the educational ministry and to those tied to more active life, as well as one which observed the most fervent spirituality of the Franciscans of the Poor Man of Assisi and of the Discalced Carmelites, who had recently been reformed. This difficult combination caused problems even during the life of Calasanz, and they arose again after the restoration of the Order.

Fr. Camilo Scassellati, who was the second successor to Calasanz, tried to undertake a rapid but loosely thought out reform of the rules for life which were dear to the Founder, but many Piarists and the Holy See itself, made sure that this reform failed. However, the problems did not disappear. Many scores of years and various Superior Generals were to pass before a valid and fecund synthesis was achieved, which, while maintaining the authentic Calasanz spirit in all its integrity, gradually introduced, in practice and by statute, those changes which the new times and needs of the Institute of Calasanz required.

During the terms of the Father Generals which we shall now look at, they tried, not without tension, to establish the norms, the habits, the ways of life and of relationships that shaped the life and mission of Piarists in subsequent centuries. All the protagonists, or at least most of them, continued in their love for the Founder Saint, and simultaneously they greatly appreciated and respected the Piarist mission. But each of them emphasised this or that special aspect. Human limitations, which were sometimes accompanied by not easily eliminated passions or defects, give some of these periods a more troubled tone than should have been expected of them. Nevertheless, little by little calm and stability entered the Piarist Houses and Provinces, which then became able to give birth to a splendid flourishing of the Pious Schools during the century which would follow.

## 1.1. The Pious Schools during the government of the Founder (1597-1646)

At the age of 40, while walking through the streets of Rome to visit needy families, Joseph Calasanz discovered that eight out of ten children grew up on the streets, without any preparation for their future lives but learning vices and bad habits. This was happening throughout Europe. He heard God asking him to look after those poor children.

After much consultation and making many requests, he decided to face the challenge of responding to this flagrant shortcoming. A small parish school in the Trastevere area of Rome was like that which he thought was needed by these children: the school was attended every day of the week for the whole day, and it taught not only the catechism, but also reading, writing and arithmetic, with other skills to develop the aptitudes of the children and help them to earn their living in a worthy manner. All that was missing from that school was that it was not free and available to all, including those unable to pay. Calasanz pawned his goods and did all he could to make sure this would be free of charge. This was in the Parish of St. Dorothy in 1597.

The school was so successful that the number of children attending rapidly multiplied. The 40 children at the outset soon became 100, and then 500, 700, 800 and then 1,000 pupils. Calasanz had to rent new houses, which were bigger and bigger and ever more expensive: Piazza del Paradiso, Palazzo Vestri, Palazzo Mannini, and Palazzo Torres. He found that he needed to invent a system to organise that mass of pupils and to draw up an original syllabus for teaching: nine classes, according to the knowledge which each pupil needed to acquire, beginning with letters (reading) and spelling, up to rhetoric and poetics. There was music and calligraphy, which helped to find jobs in shops, offices, churches and the palaces of the Roman nobility.

Offerings from benevolent individuals were no longer sufficient to meet the expenses involved and the brothers were forced to beg from door to door, but never to the families of the pupils. Many schoolmasters offered their services to this charitable work, but many soon wore themselves out. And it was in this way that for 17 years, those schools, which from 1604 would be called the “Pious Schools”, worked.

Calasanz, who was “by now of a certain age and in indifferent health”, began to worry about the future of his Schools. In 1614, he thought that the religious of Our Lady of Luca might guarantee a proper future for them,

but the experience was unsuccessful. In the end, he decided to found his own Religious Institute, as he was convinced that this would lead to better schoolmasters, who would be more constant in their teaching ministry and education of the children. In 1617, Pope Paul V gave his approval to the “Pauline Congregation of the Poor of the Mother of God of the Pious Schools”. So much did the Pope appreciate these schools that he wished to give them his own name. Fr. Joseph was nominated Prefect General.

Within 4 years there were 77 religious and they kept 10 schools. However, Calasanz was not satisfied. Such was the feeling that he felt for this task of teaching and educating that he wished to see his Institute rise to the highest level within the Church and to be accepted on the same level as those institutes for contemplative or apostolic life which have been so highly venerated during the history and life of the Church. In 1621, Pope Gregory XV declared the Pious Schools to be a Regular and Mendicant Order. Calasanz became Superior General. The Order grew and expanded at a very rapid rate: 300 religious with 21 schools in 1631; in 1646 there were more than 500 religious who were working in 37 Houses spread all over Italy and Central Europe.

However, it was not all joy for the Founder. Various circumstances joined together in a fatal way: the growth was too rapid; some religious were lax and ambitious; there was opposition to educating the children of the poor from the aristocracy; highly placed people had political interests, etc. In 1646, Pope Innocent X dissolved the Order and left the houses entirely at the disposition of local bishops and ordinaries, with an express prohibition on admitting novices.

With blessed patience, and in imitation of the prophet Job, Calasanz accepted this unjust decision. Convinced that the Pope had been misinformed, he exhorted his religious to continue their work in the schools in unity and with joy, as theirs was, without doubt, the work of God. He accepted intercessions in favour of the Institute which came from various courts of Europe (Poland, the Austrian Empire, and Florence etc.).

With admirable interior peace and his certain hope that the situation of his schools would be resolved, he died, surrounded by his religious, in San Pantaleo on 25<sup>th</sup> August 1648. His funeral was a real apotheosis, which was given by the people of Rome to the man that the little children called “the saint”.



## 1.2. The Pious Schools during the period when they were reduced to being a Congregation without vows (1646-1656)

### a) *The Papal Brief*

On 16<sup>th</sup> March 1646, Pope Innocent X (Pamphilj) signed the Papal Brief, *Ea quae pro felici*. The contents of the brief were communicated to the community of San Pantaleo on the evening of the following day by Sig. Giuseppe Palamolla, secretary of the Cardinal Vicar of Rome. On 13<sup>th</sup> April, the Brief came off the press and the Vatican began to distribute it to the relevant bishops and to the houses of the Pious Schools.

This document turned the Pious Schools into a Congregation or an Association, but without vows; all their houses were completely in the hands of their local bishops; there were no longer any Major Superiors (neither Generals nor Provincials); the authority of the Superiors was in every case dependent upon the will of the relevant bishop; those religious who had already professed were to keep their solemn vows, but they could move to any other Order; no novices would be allowed to enter the Order and new Constitutions would have to be drawn up (which meant declaring the current Constitutions invalid). In addition, apart from what was contained within the Brief, the Holy See immediately started to give easy permission to leave the Congregation and to live as seculars, even with the vows and the habit of secular clergy. In actual fact, the great majority of those who left did this, without leaving for another Order or Congregation, for they just obtained a personal and dispensational Brief.

When the Order was reduced it had slightly more than 500 religious (220 priests, 129 clerics and 160 brothers) and 37 Houses in 6 Provinces (Rome, Liguria, Naples, Tuscany, Germany, and Sicily).

### b) *External relations*

The Pious Schools were naturally famous in all those inhabited centres where they taught. They were appreciated by many people who helped them; but they did not lack enemies either, who were often hidden, perhaps rivals or those who disapproved of educating the poor. It is thus no surprise that when faced with such a serious papal decision, the reactions of citizens were antagonistic.

There were many expressions of condolences for the Piarists. Here are some:

- 26<sup>th</sup> April 1646, a few days after the Brief had been read, Calasanz writes: *“Here in Rome, all express compassion for us, but nobody wants to be the first to bring up the matter with the Pope”* (EP 4366).
- From Pieve di Cento they write: *“You cannot imagine the enormous displeasure of the people here as they learn of our travails, and they will be even more displeased if we leave”*.
- From Carcare: *“In this village, everybody feels sympathy for us and they are displeased because of this problem; they have the same affection for us and the same charity as before, so we shall try to satisfy them both in the village and outside”*.
- From Ancona: *“You cannot imagine the sympathy felt for us and everyone hopes that we shall be rehabilitated”*.
- From Cesena: *“Cardinal Fachenetti sends you double greetings, to you and to Fr. Pedro (Casani)... and he is most displeased about the Religion matter; he was almost in tears, but I cannot write everything that he said”*.

Nevertheless, there were also many jokes, insults and scorn for the Piarists who had been dissolved by the Holy See. Here are some examples:

- In Rome, as Fr. Berro relates: *“Those who went begging in the city heard a thousand suggestions; the fathers who accompanied the children home as usual were offended and mortified, especially when they came across other children who were leaving other schools, who spoke in loud voices: ‘Look at the Fathers of the Discongregation; look at the Flooded Schools (‘Scuole delle Piene’ instead of ‘Scuole Pie’); they have been excommunicated, have disobeyed the Pontiff, are teaching against the wishes of the Pope’ and other things which I do not recall. Therefore, as far as possible, one tried not to leave the house so as not to feel so ashamed. And it was not only in Rome that this happened, but also in other towns where there were Pious Schools”*.
- A religious in Cagliari wrote to Calasanz: *“We have been discredited here more than one can imagine and we do not know what to do*

*... For the love of God, do not cease to hearten us with your advice, for, amidst all this displeasure we find consolation in your letters”.*

- From Genoa another wrote: *“Our poor mendicants are tired of being so upbraided by the laity and, what’s more, at receiving hardly any alms, as they are told: ‘Your Religion has been dissolved and alms are not given to those who return to the secular state’ and so on. We are derided by all, and all point their fingers at us. But there are also some who feel pity for us. I assure you, Father, that many people are greatly deluded”.*

### *c) Those who left*

In the Vatican Archives, 120 of these Briefs for personal dispensation have so far been found. However, Fr. Berro states that “about 200 professed religious returned to their own homes, over and above those who moved to other Orders”. Since it is probable that few people transferred to other orders, we may calculate that about a half of all religious left the Order. The number leaving was greater at the beginning, but also following the death of the Founder. Those who left continued with their solemn vows, but they had a licence “to wear the habit of a secular priest” whether they were priests, clerics or brothers. This was a real dispensation from following the Rules and from living in the religious House, even if they maintained their solemn vows and lived as seculars with their own resources.

We must mention another painful aspect: some, or many, of those who obtained the Brief to leave the Order, did not in fact do so. This presupposes a frequent source of trouble in the life of the Community, and in actual fact, many of these could be counted amongst the friends of Fr. Mario Sozzi. Fr. Berro writes about this situation in the following words: *“They wanted to live as seculars at their whim and yet remain in the regular houses, using the property of the Houses, keeping the alms given to buy furniture for their own homes, without working for the good of the Pious Schools and certainly not observing our old Constitutions, or exercises of mortification and prayer. This was a disturbance for all the others, who, with more affection and devotion than ever, and to obtain the grace of the Holy Mother of God, did everything possible to observe them”.* The Blessed Founder tried to remedy this appalling situation and asked the Holy See to intervene; and on 4<sup>th</sup> December 1646, a Brief was issued in which a period of no more than four months was

given to abandon the Congregation, after which time the dispensation was considered to be annulled.

Furthermore, some despotic and arbitrary bishops gave their own contribution to bad feelings within the Pious Schools. For example, the Cardinal of Naples got to the point where he expelled from within his diocese all “strangers” (non-Neapolitans). Amongst these were Fr. Berro and Fr. Caputi, who joined the San Pantaleo community in Rome. Then there was the Bishop of Savona, who converted our institute into his Diocesan Seminary.

This whole situation naturally encouraged people to leave, both because good Piarists did not find the religious and observant environment they wanted and because those who were less pious took advantage of the opportunity to free themselves from the rigours of the Rules and the burden of the schools. The character of a hero was required to put up with this sort of insecurity, the humiliations, arbitrary power, and accusations and so on, when future prospects were only those of the supernatural.

Therefore it is no surprise to hear that good and worthy Piarists became discouraged and left. There are many painful examples of this:

- Fr. Carlos Patera wrote to Calasanz from Naples, and after having told of the shameful and threatening way he had been treated by the Vicar of the Cardinal, added: *“For the love of God, try to find a solution, for very few will remain...; those who have some spirit to persevere, will lose it in practice. I even doubt about myself, but hope in God that I shall not get to the extreme action of abandoning the habit. But it is certain that I shall not stay in Naples, even though I try to encourage the others to persevere...”* (EHI, p. 1601). And in less than a year, this good father left.
- Fr. Vanni wrote to the Saint, from Norcia: *“We are up here in the middle of the mountains, and we believe rather than listen. They tell us that after all these events the Religion is more upset than ever, although I cannot believe that the Virgin Mary, under whose symbol and protection we live, wants to abandon us. You must send us a word. This is sure, that I, on my part, with my words and deeds wish to help the Institute and to persevere in the vocation to which I have been called, even if we must foresee and prepare for greater tribulation in the future... I hope that we shall not remain in this humiliation and the shame of the populace for ever – rather*

*I hope that the Virgin Mary will remember her servants”* (EHI, p. 2212). This priest did not resist either, and he left.

- On 23<sup>rd</sup> June 1646 Fr. Gianluca Rapallo wrote from Genoa: *“In this poor and ruined house, there are only 10 religious remaining, of which 6 are priests, whereas previously there were 20 of us. We shall keep the schools going until the holidays, but if no help arrives it will be impossible”* (EHI, p. 1759 and 1762). In November he obtained his Brief and left.

On the other hand, that which at first seemed an opportunity to rid the Pious Schools of the dead wood of the malcontents and the lax did not altogether happen. It would certainly have been better if more had left than did; to be precise, those that most people hoped would leave, like Cherubini, Gavotti, Ceruti and other friends of theirs. However, although some of them had actually been given the Brief, they stayed on. They are referred to in certain letters received by the Founder. For example:

- From Fr. Berro: *“Since it seems that the Pope commonly gives permission to leave to those who no longer wish to remain with us, please at least make it possible for every house to be able to get rid of those whom it thinks convenient”* (EHI, p. 327).
- From Fr. Patera: *“In a certain way, it would be a good thing for some to be granted the Brief and leave. I feel that as they have no means for sustenance in their own houses, these people will not leave us but will continue to live according to their own manner, infecting the others and constantly tormenting the poor Superiors and those who really care for the Institute”* (EHI, p. 1597).

Furthermore, when in 1556 the Order was reorganised as a Congregation with simple vows, many of those who had left wanted to return. But the Piarists decided not to allow any of those to re-enter, in case the undesirables also returned. During the lifetime of the Founder, they began to accept the idea that none of those who had left should be re-admitted, for they were afraid that the malcontents and the lax might return.

Fr. Bianchi explained things thus to Calasanz: *“We had better allow the bad weather to work itself out naturally while we wait for better times, in which, if those rejected wish yet again to board ship on the shores of the world’s seas so that we are at risk more than even before, I am sure that, as we have already been damaged by their heavy presence in the humble boat*

*of our Religion, we shall not allow them to board so easily, unless some fool lets them enter. As we have rid ourselves of these bad 'humours', it would not be a good idea to press the serpent to our bosom again"* (EHI, p. 385).

#### *d) No House was closed*

In spite of this remarkable flight, no school was closed, even though many naturally had to reduce the number of classrooms and put up with considerable penury. Many of them turned to the Founder, whom they continued to call Father General, asking him to send reinforcements, "at least some Brothers, to assist the sick".

Most bishops behaved well to these poor Piarists. As a sign of his gratitude, Fr. Berro mentions many: the Bishop of Alba, because of the college at Carcare; the Cardinal Archbishop of Genoa for the college and Novitiate of his city; the respective bishops of the Houses in Narni, Poli, Moricone, Ancona, Norcia, Chieti, Nocera, Florence, Pisa, Sardinia and Sicily. In some places they didn't even publish the Brief of Reduction, perhaps because of the benevolence of the bishops, as in Florence, or perhaps because of the decisive support of the civil authorities, as in Sicily, Germany and Poland.

- Fr. Berro writes from Sicily: *"The Most Illustrious and Most Reverend Luis Cameros, Judge of the Monarchy of this Kingdom, placed all his religious under his own protection and did not allow anyone to lay hands on them, but on the contrary desired that everyone should consider them to be real religious, and he always treated them as such till the very day that Pope Alexander VII blessed us and reintegrated us"*.
- And he had this to say about the Archbishop of Florence: *"We can't help singing his praises again and again, for he did not publish the Brief, neither did he perform any act of his jurisdiction, but left our religious in their regular conditions, exempt from the ordinary rules"*.

After the first few months of humiliation, desperation and lamentations, when the initial flight from the Order was ceasing or decreasing, those who had persevered began to be encouraged and those who remained began to reorganise their scholastic work and duties. Thus they began to live more peacefully with greater desire to be observant and to give the children a good education. There is ample testimony of this new situation of peace and tranquillity, of enthusiasm and optimism, in the letters sent

to Calasanz during the second half of 1647 and the first few months of 1648. It is interesting to read some of the great number of letters which reached the *Blessed Elder* during the twilight of his life.

- From Genoa on 25<sup>th</sup> January 1648: “*By the Grace of God, the Institute goes on well, and even though this is a period of famine for us, we have never had so many pupils... at home we live in observance and one day, because of Your protection, I hope to see our Religion exalted*”. Again, on 15<sup>th</sup> August 1648: “*Nobody here takes on the role of disturber, and may God make all Houses as peaceful as those in Genoa, in which everybody performs his own task*”.
- From Cagliari (Sardinia) on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 1647: “*Thanks be to God, the schools are full and flourishing. And this is especially pleasing because you would be astonished if you knew with what diligence the Jesuits try to take pupils from us*”.
- On 6<sup>th</sup> November 1646, Fr. Michelini wrote from Pisa: “*This House has not done at all badly, with good people, and up to now it has been like Paradise and I hope it goes on like this ... As soon as possible, we want to make a House of Saints and the troublesome will be sent elsewhere to practise their evil talents*”.
- From Fanano on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 1646: “*We still follow the ancient, or rather ordinary, observances which the Fanano House has always professed. We do not omit any of the usual exercises...*”.
- On 13<sup>th</sup> June 1646, they wrote from Duchesca di Napoli: “*For the glory of God, I try to make sure that the House and schools go forward with precision in observances... the abacus class is full, with more than seventy very promising pupils... and the other five classes are well organised, the church is well-served... alms are arriving... there is great peace*”.
- From Porta Reali (Naples) on 24<sup>th</sup> April 1648: “*As for the Institute’s more enthusiastic revival, in my House (says the Rector), thanks be to God, not only was there never any interruption, but this has been carried out most profitably because of the diligence of the brothers and fathers, who have always taken things very seriously. In actual fact the number of pupils has risen... and the oratories and doctrine has been maintained, with confessions, communion and daily catechism for the pupils... and the community numbers 23 people*”.

As Severino Giner states: *“There is no doubt that those who remained knew how to maintain or recuperate the spirit of the Order, to faithfully fulfil, with heroic effort and with complete trust in the future of the special mission of the Order, without closing –and let us repeat this– one single House, during the critical decade of the Papal Reduction”* (*San Giuseppe Calasanzio, maestro e fondatore*, p. 1073).

### *e) First steps towards restoration of the Order*

With an energy which was unsuitable for a person aged nearly 90, Calasanz, convinced that Pope Innocent X had been misinformed, sometimes enthusiastically, others simply hopefully, started an authentic diplomatic battle for the Pious Schools at a very high level.

The first diplomatic steps in favour of the Pious Schools started in the Florentine Court. On hearing of the destructive Brief, the Grand Duke called for a letter to be sent to Gabriele Riccardi, his ambassador in Rome, requiring him to ask the Pope that, at least in the Grand Ducal States, the Piarists *“may continue to teach in the same way as they have previously done here, that is, including Science, even though their means have been limited”*. And Prince Leopold also asked the ambassador to *“do all that is humanly possible for them, not only regarding the teaching of Science, but also regarding their interests, if that is what these fathers ask”*. Even though the Brief says nothing about the teaching which the Piarists might do in the future, Calasanz and many others feared that they might be prohibited from teaching the Humanities and Latin, like Science, and their ministry be limited only to Elementary Classes. For the Founder, this was *“destroying our Institute ex indirecto”*. The Medici petition expressly referred to the Science of Mathematics, which the Florentine Piarists taught brilliantly. But it also coincided with the interests of Calasanz, who did not wish his schools to be limited to primary teaching. In April 1646, the Florentine Ambassador actually spoke to Innocent X, but the Pope replied *“that he would not want to change a Brief which had been published only four days earlier, and that the Grand Duke could make use of these fathers in the ways and means described in the Brief. And he told me – Riccardi added - an incredible amount of evil about these fathers”*.

From Poland came another long and insistent series of moves in favour of the Pious Schools. King Ladislaw IV, the National Diet and important ecclesiastical and civil personages played their part. The first was the



Capuchin, Fr. Valeriano Magni, who was brother of the Imperial Count Francesco Magni. Fr. Valeriano was very well known in Germany and Poland and also in the Roman Curia. In May 1646, he wrote an “*Apologia delle Scuole Pie*”, which he sent throughout Poland, to Piarist Houses and to various cardinals and important persons of the Roman Curia as also to the Pope. In this Apologia he wished to demonstrate that the Brief of reduction had been surreptitious in so far as the Pope had been misinformed. Along the same lines of this Apologia, the King of Poland nominated the Theological University of Cracow to study the validity of the Brief, and sent letters to Rome. In reply, Camillo Panfili, the Secretary of State sent a Memorandum to the Papal Nuncio to Poland in December 1646. This explained what had happened with the Pious Schools from his point of view. This Memorandum, called “*Racconto diffuso*”, was drawn up according to information from Mons. Albizzi, and stated that the “Holy Measure” was not taken to eliminate the Institute, but to reform it, reducing it to a Congregation which would be governed by Ordinaries and liberating it from austerity and rigor which made it impracticable. At the same time it insisted that it was not possible to keep it as a Religion in Poland and as a Congregation in other places. Nevertheless, the Papal Nuncio thought that presenting the Memorandum to the Polish Court and authorities would be inappropriate, and considered that it would be best to await the result of an important undertaking that the King had just started. At the end of December 1646, Ladislaw IV had sent Count Magni to Rome, to propose to the Pope, after having already done so to the Emperor and to Venice, the formation of a Catholic league against the Turks, while at the same time he asked that the reestablishment of the Pious Schools, at least in Poland, might be dealt with urgently. Both the Ecclesiastical Arm and the Knightly Arm of the National Diet also intervened with letters sent to the Pope in defence of the Pious Schools, which asked that in Poland they should be allowed to continue as an Order and as a Religion. They also wrote to Cardinals Roma and Spada, and to the new secretary of State, Cardinal Panziroli. However, through Panziroli, the Vatican’s reply was definitive: “*This matter depends directly upon the Pope, who has already closed it and it must not be mentioned again*”. Furthermore, on 7<sup>th</sup> August 1647, the Pope sent a Brief to the King in which he said: “*The matter having been dealt with and resolved most justly, there is no call for any further decisions*”. But in June 1648, the Grand Chancellor of the Kingdom, Duke Ossolinski (the King having just died) wrote to his ambassador in Rome telling him to continue furthering

the cause of the Piarists and to tell His Holiness “*that as long as the Crown of Poland stands, this Religion will always be protected*”.

There was similar intervention by the Court of the Austrian Empire. Prince Maximilian of Dietrichstein and other Magnates of the Empire and even the Viennese Papal Nuncio wrote letters to the Roman Curia, especially to the Congregation of the Propaganda of the Faith, in which they asked for the reestablishment of the Order. In March 1648, the Empress, Eleanora Gonzaga, wrote to the Pope to intercede for the Pious Schools.

Another defence of the Pious Schools, even though it was not at a diplomatic level and less effective in its reasoning, came from the Capuchin Fr. Tommaso of Viterbo. As soon as the Brief had been signed, he wrote, in Rome, a work of two pages, which he sent to the bishops and nuncios of those countries where there were Piarists. It was called “*Amara passio Congregationis Matris Dei Scholarum Piarum, secundum Thomam*”. This is a sort of collection of paraphrases of Gospel texts about the Passion of Christ, applied to the Pious Schools, in which the Jesuits are presented as the Sanhedrin which, before Caiaphas, decides to sacrifice the Pious Schools. It also directly accuses Pietrasanta, Mario and Cherubini, as indeed Mons. Albizzi and Cardinal Spada. The effect of his intervention would certainly have been counterproductive.

#### *f) Some positive signs*

Even though at the time these various interventions did not produce the desired effect, they certainly encouraged a change of attitude towards the Pious Schools in the Vatican authorities. Some of these positive changes began to be seen fairly quickly, in particular those regarding the Constitutions and the admission of novices.

**The new Constitutions which were never emanated:** the Brief of Innocent X required drawing up new Constitutions, without declaring who should write them. At the end of March 1646, Calasanz thought that this would be done by “some Prelates following the orders of the Pope”. In June, he heard that Fr. Cherubini was writing them having been nominated by Mons. Albizzi, and he commented sarcastically to Fr. Berro: “*Imagine what kind of Constitutions will issue from this source*” (EP 4386). In August of the same year, the Saint thinks that once they have been finished they will be reviewed by Prelates and promulgated “*with a Brief which is more*

*destructive than the first*” (EP 4394). In September 1646, the Founder commented that they were already finished “*with many follies, all of them detrimental to the Institute. Certain Prelates saw them but none of them was willing to approve and sign, except Fr. Pietrasanta. We now need to see whether they will be published and what effect they’ll have here in Rome*” (EP 4401). But the months went by and the Constitutions did not appear. In April 1647, people began to be sure that they would not be published.

On this matter, Fr. Caputi gives us a long narrative with himself as the protagonist, according to which the original, signed by the Cardinals and Prelates of the Commission, came into his hands. Caputi himself, accompanied by Catalucci, first delivered it to the Fr. General and then to Cardinal Ginetti, who assured them that these Constitutions “*will never be either published or seen by anybody*”.

In fewer words, Berro says that the Constitutions drawn up by Fr. Cherubini “*came into the hands of the Cardinals on the Commission, were also approved by Pietrasanta and kept by Cardinal Ginetti. And nobody has ever seen the original*”. At that time, Ginetti was the Prefect of the Congregation of Religious, whose task it was to give ultimate approval of the Constitutions of religious before they were published with a Pontifical Brief. Therefore the merit for having avoided the promulgation of Cherubini’s Constitutions must go to this cardinal. This was between March and May in 1647.

In his Recollections, Berro has left us a copy of these failed Constitutions (v. Giner: *San José de Calasanz, maestro*, p. 1090). It eliminated nearly all the mortification and austerity, along with supreme poverty, and at no point is there any mention of “poor children”. But Cherubini had another side to him, which was much more vulnerable and scandalous, and at the end of his life, which took place within these dates, it totally discredited him before the Roman Curia.

**Admitting novices:** already in 1643, by a decree called *In causa Patris Marii*, the Pious Schools were, for the first time, forbidden to take in novices without a licence from the Pope, and from that moment no licences were given. The 1646 Brief repeated the prohibition on admitting novices, but this time it was categorical. This prohibition was respected, as Calasanz states in a paper dated 5<sup>th</sup> April 1647: “*The habit has not been given to anyone here since then*” (EP 4448).

However, in July 1646 Fr. Salazar Maldonado, the rector of the Community in Cagliari, spoke to Cardinal Ginetti, the Vicar of Rome, and *“he begged him to liberally allow novices to wear the habit, because the sooner they had completed their two years in the novitiate, the sooner they would find a way to become fully professed”* (EP 4390). In fact, in May 1647, the Piarists of Nikolsburg began to admit novices, with the apparent agreement of their bishop. Nevertheless, the situation was not at all clear, when we take the doubts and protests of some into account. Such it was until, in January 1648, Monsignor Albizzi issued a new and surprising interpretation of the prohibition of the Brief: *“The day before yesterday the Monsignor Assessor told two of our fathers that it is not forbidden to offer the habit, and that we may dress as we do today (not as in the old Constitutions), but not give Profession without new orders from His Holiness”* (EP 4522). Then half-way through July 1648, Calasanz writes: *“As far as giving the habit to novices is concerned, there is no special brief, but there is the licence from the Most Excellent Cardinal Vicar, which says that we may dress according to the Brief, but that nobody may be admitted to the Profession without new orders from H.H.”* (EP 4568).

From then onwards the Founder began to tell everybody of the possibility that novices might wear the habit. In San Pantaleo this began in May 1648. Since this practice continued to give rise to doubts and adverse reactions on the part of certain bishops (those responsible for having given the habit without his permission were even put into prison by the Archbishop of Naples), Mons. Albizzi took upon himself the task of writing letters to these bishops in which he insisted that such was the will of the Pope. Albizzi had to write two letters to Cardinal Filomarino, Archbishop of Naples, in order to force him to free Fathers Trabucco, Apa and Manzella, after they had spent more than 40 days in prison. In these letters he assured the addressees *“that nobody better than he could know what Pope Innocent X had in mind and that it was unjust to keep them prisoners”*. Berro’s narration of these matters is confirmed by a letter from Albizzi to the Bishop of Savona, dated 10<sup>th</sup> May 1653: *“It was not His Holiness’ intention to prohibit wearing the habit, as long as it was not dependent upon any form of vows, for he did not wish to eliminate the Institute, which was considered useful for the Church. I am very well informed about the intentions of H.H., since I was the secretary of the Commission and I drew up the Brief myself”* (EC, p. 68, n. 3).

Historians relate that in actual fact many young people entered various Novitiates of the Pious Schools during this period. At the end of their obligatory two years' training, many of them joined the Community with the name of "Oblate", and they were a great help in maintaining the schools.

**Recognition of the sanctity of the Founder:** The death of Fr. Joseph during the disastrous period affecting his Institute became an authentic popular apotheosis of the blessed Founder. After his "good death", in deep inner peace and with firm hope, which was confirmed in a supernatural way, surrounded by the affection and veneration of his religious, the people of Rome flocked to venerate his mortal body, which was laid out for view in the church of San Pantaleo. "The saint has died" was the cry of a child as he saw him being carried into the church, and this was repeated by those ever more numerous people who visited it. It was an unstoppable multitude, including Prelates and many of the notable people of Rome, members of the nobility and even some cardinals, who wanted to pray before the corpse, touch his body and carry away with them some relic of his clothes, his hair... It became necessary to call soldiers to keep people in order. There were even miracles, both during his last illness (Sebastiano Previsano, who was handicapped; Francesco Domenico Piantanidi, a child with deformed feet), and by his dead body (Catalina d'Alessandro, who had a paralysed arm). But there were also those who went to the Vicariate to report the disorderly conduct at San Pantaleo, asking that he should be buried immediately. However, the Vice-Regent of Rome replied: "*By God! Is this possible? He is still persecuted even after his death!*" Even the Pope was personally informed of this by Mons. Camillo dei Massimi, who managed to get a group of the Swiss Guards to protect his body.

After only a year and a half from his death, the first steps required by Canon Law for his sanctification started. At every level, these steps needed not only the authorisation but also the direct intervention of the authorities of the Church.

### *g) Petitions for the foundation in Spain*

Even though they were small, other facts must have encouraged those Piarists, and in particular, the Founder. Rome received requests from Spain for the opening of Pious Schools there, even though at that time these were only pious intentions.

The first request came from the Marquises of Quirra and of Nules, and from the Counts of Centelles (Castellon). In August 1646, they sent Father Agostino “*to get from Cardinal Ginetti a licence to extend this Religion to the Kingdom of Valencia, where we have our State... and permission to allow the fathers to do this*”.

The second came from Senor Miguel Paolo Gamón, on behalf of the Royal Council of Aragon, who, on 4<sup>th</sup> February 1648, sent a letter to the Father General which closed with the following words: “*I should be very happy to be the instrument for the introduction of such a holy Religion, which is so beneficial for the common good and especially for the most needy*”.

#### *h) San Pantaleo, the Mother-House*

The Community and House of San Pantaleo was an important help for the maintenance of the Pious Schools in this period.

##### *The Community of San Pantaleo*

When the Order was reduced, this Community had 41 religious (23 priests and 18 brothers), of which 6 priests and 3 brothers were given a dispensation to leave.

One week after the Brief for the reduction had been communicated (25<sup>th</sup> March), Don Giuseppe Palamolla, the Secretary of State of the Cardinal Vicar called a meeting of the Community and asked them to vote to nominate a Rector for the House. After preliminary consultations, they decided that the Founder should give three names. Calasanz nominated fathers Spinola, Baldi and Fedele. From these three names, the Community chose Fr. Giovanni Stefano Spinola. The following day, Marzio Ginetti, the Cardinal Vicar arrived at San Pantaleo and nominated Fr. Giovanni Stefano Spinola as rector and asked all to live in peace. In April 1647, when Fr. Spinola resigned from the post to go to live in Narni, on the suggestion of Calasanz the Community voted for Fr. Juan García del Castillo (also called “Fr. Castilla”) as rector of the House and he stayed in the post until 30<sup>th</sup> May 1649. He was succeeded by Fr. Francesco Baldi, who resigned two years later and abandoned the Order. Fr. Juan García was again elected as rector and he remained in the post until he was made Father General in March 1656.

### *Unifying function*

Because of its uninterrupted tradition as the headquarters of the general Curia and because the Father Founder still lived there, this House maintained a certain primacy and moral authority, which was tacitly recognised by Piarists from every House.

Cardinal Marzio Ginetti, Vicar of the Pope and Ordinary of the Diocese of Rome, was, from a legal point of view, the Superior of the Roman Houses (except that of the Nazarenes). This cardinal admired Calasanz and appreciated the Pious Schools. With the utmost delicacy and discretion he allowed firstly Calasanz and then the House of San Pantaleo, to act with all possible liberty in order to encourage the religious, to maintain unity between the different houses of the dismembered Order and for the success of efforts for restoration. Thus, in a certain way, Cardinal Ginetti filled the role of Superior General.

While he was still alive, the Founder was the centre of the Congregation. From all over they came to him for advice, for people and for decisions, and when he was unable to help (he no longer had any official authority), he turned to the Cardinal Vicar, Marzio Ginetti, for certain decisions. Thus we know what he did to send Fr. Onofrio Conti and Brother Agapito into Germany and Poland, and to satisfy the request of those in Cagliari for a Visitor.

Calasanz decided that some in Florence should leave for other houses. They wrote to him from Nikolsburg: *“All the decisions and orders that are adopted shall be sent to you, as Father, and we shall do nothing without your approval and consent”* (EEC, p. 602). And the Rector at Naples writes: *“The letter from you, most reverend Father, has been great consolation to all the fathers and brothers of this family, who pray to be your subjects and to depend, as far as is possible in the present times, upon your mandate and counsel”* (EHI, p. 882).

In actual fact, for a certain period there was movement of religious between the various houses. One, but not the only, example of this was the House of San Pantaleo, from which 8 priests and 3 brothers departed for other houses, and 6 priests and 8 brothers entered from other places. These people admitted to San Pantaleo had to convince the members of the Community, and, just as elsewhere, they decided that community members would vote upon the entrance of newcomers.

Upon the death of the venerable “Father General”, the House of San Pantaleo, through its rectors and various members (Berro, Caputi, Castelli, Mazzei, Morelli, Geronimo Scassellati), continued to be the axis for unity

between the various Houses and was the centre of initiatives in favour of the restoration of the Order and the beatification of the Founder.

### *The importance of Fr. Juan García*

Fr. Juan García was really the principal person behind what was done during the 8 years after the death of the Founder until the reintegration of the Pious Schools. This was not only because he was the rector of the Mother-House for most of these years, but also because of long bonds of friendship and his closeness to the Founder, since, in fact, 1611. His friendship with Calasanz, whose confessor he was for many years, along with his faithfulness to the Founder and the deep piety he had always shown, won him the trust of the Piarists. His very pacific, discreet and impartial temperament also brought him close to those religious who had once been separated from Calasanz. Thanks to all this he was able in difficult times to pacify tempers and make people accept those decisions and actions which did not please everybody.

During those years, the most important matter for the Pious Schools was certainly the group of initiatives and actions which aimed at the reintegration of the Order. Fr. Juan García, Rector of St. Pantaleo, did not have a leading role in this, but he allowed, helped and encouraged other faithful sons of Calasanz to further such actions and initiatives.

#### *i) Towards reintegration of the Order*

After the death of the Founder, the following fathers merit mention for having encouraged the restoration of the Pious Schools: Fathers Giancarlo Caputi, Vincenzo Berro, Onofrio Conti, Carlo Mazzei and Pietro Mussesti.

This long process may be divided into three distinct stages:

##### *1) Up until Fabio Chigi became a cardinal (February 1652)*

Immediately after Calasanz's death there was silence for a certain time, for all had come to the conclusion that it would be better to wait for a better opportunity for taking action.

However, between January 1651 and March 1652, Fr. Alessandro Novari, from Moravia, sent the Sacred Congregation for the Propaganda of the Faith three letters or reports in which he amply set out the activity of the Pious Schools in those regions, amongst the protestants, and the problems caused them by the situation in which the Congregation found itself.



At the end of 1651, Monsignor Fabio Chigi, who was a good friend of Fr. Carlo Mazzei, was nominated Secretary of State and became a cardinal in February 1652. This allowed the Piarists to have some hope. Immediately, Fathers Carlo Mazzei and Giancarlo Caputi decided to approach him and ask him to intercede before Innocent X. But although the cardinal received the Piarists with kindness, he promised nothing concrete: he said that if their case came before him, he would really help them.

### *2) The last attempts before the death of Innocent X (January 1655)*

The best friends of the Piarists had often advised them not to open the matter again while Innocent X was still alive.

This is the reason why the Piarists had done little for many years. Nevertheless, some people wished to make use of a favourable circumstance in order to get certain changes from the Pope which would help the Congregation. This circumstance was that Fr. Giovanni Garcia was the confessor of Donna Olimpia Maidalchini, the sister-in-law of the Pope, who wielded great influence upon him. Thus, from the Polish Court letters were sent to the Pope, not to ask for the revocation of the brief but to annul certain clauses in it. This was so that union between the Houses could be re-established, Major Superiors would be appointed, as would a Cardinal Protector. But the Pope died before he could reply.

### *3) Up until the first restoration*

When, on 7<sup>th</sup> April 1655, Cardinal Fabio Chigi was elected to the papacy with the name of Alexander VII, new hope was kindled for the much-desired restoration and supplications to this end multiplied.

At the request of Fr. Onofrio Conti, letters reached the Pope from the King and Queen of Poland, from Prince Lubomirski and from the Apostolic Nuncio. The Supreme Pontiff replied in August and showed that he was favourably disposed to help the fathers of the Pious Schools.

In Rome, too, the Piarists did all that they could. There were three personal audiences with the Pope: of Fr. Caputi: of Fathers Berro and Caputi: of fathers Juan García, Francesco Castelli, Geronimo Scassellati and Carlo Mazzei. There were nine letters from the Polish Court: letters and personal intervention from the Florentine Medici family: and a letter from the Viceroy of Sardinia.

### *The final acts*

The Pope, who had yet again shown the Piarists that what they wanted was not so simply achieved, finally put the matter in the hands of an illustrious jurist, Prospero Fagnani. However, this person, influenced by his personal rigor, prepared a plan for the Brief which confirmed that of Innocent X, with the exception of certain clauses and restrictions.

There were new proposals made to the Pope, asking him to give the job to another person. Alexander VII finally agreed to place the cause in the hands of Geronimo Farnese, who did not take long to draw up a new prospective Brief, which envisaged the Pious Schools in the same situation as the previous Pauline Congregation. The Pope asked that this should be examined by a commission of three cardinals (Ginetti, Corradi and Albizzi) and of prelates (Farnese and Gualtiero).

In order to avoid new problems, Fathers Berro, Caputi and Morelli had a meeting with the now cardinal Albizzi, who, after having stated that he had never been against the Institute, confessed that *“My Fathers, I was misled... If the misdeeds of some had not put my reputation on the line, that Brief of Innocent X would never have been issued”*.

The Piarists sent a memorandum to the Pontifical Commission, in which they asked:

- To be declared a Congregation with simple vows, which only the Pope could dispense from, and with an oath of perseverance.
- To be given permission to give Sacred Orders as a Congregation.
- To be given permission to elect General and Provincial Superiors.
- To limit the authority of the Ordinaries to scholastic matters.

The Commission accepted practically all the requests, except for the election of the General, which would depend upon the Pope the first time, and they imposed certain restrictions and changes in the matter of poverty. On 8<sup>th</sup> November 1655, the conclusions were presented to the Pope, who accepted all the proposals and ordered that the Brief be issued.

When everything was ready and prepared for promulgation, an anonymous memorandum full of accusations against the Pious Schools was presented to the Pontiff. The Pope was perturbed and perplexed. All the skill of Fr. Caputi was needed to avoid this new obstacle, and he demonstrated the inconsistency and falsity of the accusations..

### 1.3. The Pious Schools during the Partial Restoration (1656-1669)

**The first Superiors General**

Juan García del Castillo (1656-1659). After his death,

Giuseppe Fedele – Vicar General (16 February-11 May 1659)

Camillo Scassellati (1659-1665)

Cosimo Chiara (1665-1671)

Giuseppe Fedele (1671-1677)

Carlo Giovanni Pirroni (1677-1685). After his death,

Alessio Armini – Vicar General (13 April 1685-2 May 1686)

Alessio Armini (1686-1692)

Giovanni Francesco Foci (1692-1699). After his death,

Bernardo Salaris – Vicar General (2 June 1699-2 May 1700)

#### *a) The Brief of the First Restoration*

On 24th January 1656 the Brief of Alexander VII was signed. It was entitled *Dudum felicitis recordationis Paulus Papa V*, and was given to the Cardinal Vicar, Marzio Ginetti, to be communicated to the Piarists. He decided to keep it until the Father General and his Assistants had been nominated in accordance with the Brief.

#### *The nomination of the General and publication of the Brief.*

The election of the General was preceded by great discussion about the most suitable person. In the end the choice of Fr. Juan García, Rector of St. Pantaleo, prevailed, because of the holiness of his life and his fidelity to the Rules of life given by Calasanz, even though many people thought he was inappropriate as a governor, given his calm and inactive temperament. The Assistants nominated were Fathers Francesco Castelli, Giuseppe Fedele, Giovanni Stefano Spinola and Camillo Scassellati. On 12th March 1656, the Cardinal Vicar, who had also become the Protector of the Pious Schools, published the Brief in San Pantaleo, along with the names of the Father General and his Assistants.

#### *Contents of and reactions to the Brief*

Most Piarists received it joyfully but some felt disappointed.

In actual fact, this Brief did not reintegrate the Piarists as they were previously, a religious Order, nor did it reintroduce the powers and privilege they had previously had. Furthermore, it contained various clauses which would be complicated to apply and would be restrictive in many cases.

These were its main provisions:

- It was called “Lay Congregation with three simple vows” (to underline that it was not an Order or a Religion and they were not Regulars), even though dispensation from these vows could only be given by the Pope.
- All the Houses were unified under the authority of the Father General and the respective Fathers Provincial.
- They would depend upon the Ordinaries of the places in which they worked only in matters concerning schooling (even though it seems that control of this field increased).
- Novices might be admitted, but not before they had reached the age of 18 (normally the entrance age was 16) and they had to show proof, given by their Ordinaries, of their birth, their duties to their families and their suitability for the ministry.
- Professed vows would be accompanied by an oath of perseverance. Religious who were already professed would be given three months in which to make the oath or would have to move to another Order.
- The Prefects (directors) of the schools would have to be at least 32 years old, and schoolmasters, 25.
- Poverty in the new Congregation would be mitigated as they would be allowed to receive a stable income.

In spite of the limitation and difficulty of certain of the clauses, the brief was certainly positive, for it created the conditions needed to maintain and to propagate the Institute. Its positive points were certainly: unity of all the Houses; the fact that they had Major Superiors; their ability to take religious vows; that they could admit novices and offer them profession.

### *The reasons for a partial restoration*

Some historians, such as P. G. Santha, have asked why Alexander VII, who was a friend of the Pious Schools, did not decide to reintegrate the Order fully. The main reasons are:

1. It did not seem a prudent move to annul a Brief which had been published by his predecessor.
2. In official circles of the Church they began to believe that the best form of religious life, which was also in tune with the needs of the times, was that of the oratory of St. Philip Neri (a Congregation with no vows). With the best of intentions, they thought that such a form would allow them to work to serve their neighbour more freely, more rapidly and more efficiently, as was the wish of the religious. Many thought that the period for monastic, mendicant orders, and even for regular clerics was over and done with: and they believed that institutes without any vows or with only simple ones should be encouraged. This is the path the Church followed in subsequent centuries.
3. Internal problems which the Piarists had had, some of which were still manifest, regarding the training of its members, discipline, requests for dispensation, certain imprudent behaviour or defects in masters who were too young... For all these reasons, some people thought that it would be a good idea to change the structure of the Institute and leave it as only a Congregation with simple vows.

#### *b) Fr. Juan García's term as Father General*

The Brief of January 1656 was an important step towards the restoration of the Pious Schools but it left many things unclear, although it was needed in order for the Institute to go forward. Therefore the Holy See was petitioned again, and a second Brief was issued, dated 4th April of the same year, in which it was decided that:

- The term of service of Father García and his Assistants would be three years.
- The Assistants would have a decisive say, with the Superior General, “in the running and government of the Congregation”.
- The General Congregation would be able to nominate Provincial and Local Superiors, according to the rules of the Constitutions.

#### *Problems*

The last two above-mentioned dispositions immediately led to discord within the General Congregation. Fr. Juan García, who was a tenacious

defender of his own point of view and mindful of the old way in which Calasanz ruled, was determined to maintain his authority, while the Assistants wanted to make use of their generic rights, as if they too were Generals, sometimes in an insolent way. In this situation, the will of the Father General was sometimes suffocated by the contrary will of the Assistants, especially that of Fathers Fedele and Scassellati. Thus, for example, the Fr. Provincial of Naples and the Rector of San Pantaleo were nominated with the Father General voting against. He then refused to sign the patents of the Fathers Provincial and Rectors who had been elected against his will, until these were sent to him by the Cardinal Protector.

Other problems arrived to add to these internal difficulties. Amongst other things, these were concerned with the minimum age given to begin the Novitiate, or to be a Master or Prefect; the jurisdiction of the Ordinaries over the schools; the poverty which was required observance from henceforth in the Institute; the value of the old Constitutions; the new Profession of “*Agregados*”.

At the end of 1656 there was yet another problem to add to all these as the plague arrived and took away about 70 Piarists in a very short time.

### *Some important questions*

Even in the midst of many problems, the number of houses of the Pious Schools slowly continued to increase. Even during the period of the Reduction of Innocent X there were 4 new foundations, as Houses opened in Calizzano (1650), Nocera dei pagani (1653), Castiglione Fiorentino (1657), and Rzeszow, in Poland (1656). During Fr. García’s period as General the houses in Horn (Austria, 1657) and Schlam (Bohemia, 1658) were founded.

As far as the initial formation of the new members was concerned, practically nothing was done during this Father General’s term of office. We may, however, mention the decision of the General Congregation that every house should give a contribution to the Fr. Provincial to help train young people.

At the end of 1657, in spite of all those who left and the 70 people who succumbed to the plague, the Congregation of the Pious Schools had:

- 320 religious.
- 40 houses.
- 6 Provinces.

### *Decease*

Fr. Juan García died suddenly on 16<sup>th</sup> February 1659, aged 75, after he had called the General Chapter for the following month of May. He died with the reputation of a saint but unable to see his Institute fully restored, nor completely living in peace. There were more than a few problems and uncertainties, which needed the terms of other Generals to resolve them definitively. Even though by nature weak and fragile, Fr. Juan confirmed the doubtful, gathered the dispersed and, faithful to Calasanz, tried as hard as he could to re-establish the Institute to its primitive spirit and state. His first Assistant, Fr. Giuseppe Fedele followed him, as Vicar General.

### *c) Fr. Camillo Scassellati's term as Father General*

Father Camillo Scassellati was a distinguished humanist, Rector and professor at the Nazarene College (Rome) for many years. He showed his love for the blessed Founder and took an active part in running the restoration of the Pious Schools.

Nevertheless, when he saw that the reintegration of the Order was sure, Fr. Santha says there grew in him “an immoderate and disordered desire to get for himself the supreme government of the Order, and he wished to reform it completely, according to his own ideas rather than to those of Calasanz”.

### *Attempts at reform*

When the reintegration of Alexander VII was being drawn up, Scassellati arranged that his Memorandum should reach the Cardinal Datary of the Pope, Giacomo Corradi, who was a friend of his. These expressed what he wished for the Order and contained advice for the reintegration. As he was the Assistant of Fr. Juan García, he became an ally of Fr. Giuseppe Fedele and the two of them guided the opposition to the Father General so that his mandate would be for only three years and in order to introduce a life of more ease within the Pious Schools.

On the opening of the General Chapter in 1659, the two positions, or factions, which had been growing for years, became clear immediately: one, guided by Fr. Camillo Scassellati, wanted a more comfortable or relaxed lifestyle; the other, led by Fr. Onofrio Conti, sought to conserve and completely restore the old traditions of Calasanz.

Thus it was that the moment came to elect the Father General. Partly due to the absence of certain Chapter members, Fr. Scassellati was elected with 10 votes out of 16 on 11<sup>th</sup> May 1659.

During the Chapter he was already trying to surround himself with collaborators who shared his ideas, and this Chapter approved 52 declarations or decrees which mostly aimed to change the Constitutions or Rules for the life of the Piarists. In this way, the General Chapter already mitigated silence, abolished the habit of accompanying the children home, reduced fasting, allowed theatrical shows within the schools, changed the quality and tailoring of the habit, and declared “*that the essence of our poverty is contained in the Brief of Alexander VII, issued on 24<sup>th</sup> January 1656*”, and no longer in that of Paul V.

When the Chapter was over, the new General not only sent his main opponents (Conti, Berro, Caputi) away from Rome, but introduced certain modes which were totally new to the Calasanzian Institute, such as, for example: the wearing of shoes; adding a surname to one’s name along with the place of origin rather than that of the religious saint; abandoning the House of San Pantaleo as the headquarters of the General Curia, for he remained in his own residence within the Nazarene College.

Furthermore, it became clear that, according to the Constitutions, he had been elected General for his lifetime. He also began to take no notice of the votes of the Assistants in governing the Congregation.

This rapid and brazen-faced shift naturally caused a reaction in the religious who opposed it. Even his own Assistants began to complain that the second Brief of Alexander VII was not being observed. Because of all this, Fathers Fedele, Mussesti and Morelli delivered a Memorandum to the Holy See with a series of petitions. The Pope had been informed about the situation and put the matter into the hands of a Commission of Prelates, chaired by Prospero Fagnani, which would study what was going on. This Commission listened to each side and then sent its conclusions to Pope



Alexander VII, who, on 28<sup>th</sup> April 1660, published the Brief entitled *Cum sicut accepimus*, which stated:

- That the length of the mandate of the Fr. General and his Assistants was to be six years, both for those already governing and for those in the future.
- That the Assistants would have a decisive vote, together with that of the General, in electing, nominating or changing any superior, and also for other actions established in the Constitutions.
- That both the General and his Assistants would live in the House of San Pantaleo.
- That the praiseworthy traditions of the Congregation would be inviolably maintained, in particular: accompanying poor children home; wearing the habit of the quality and tailoring required by the Constitutions; walking barefoot; allowing elementary pupils into the schools; using beds which conformed to the Constitutions; calling members of the Congregation with the name of a saint and not by their surname; observance of poverty even when travelling.
- To observe the old Constitutions in every way suitable for a lay Congregation and not to do anything against the present decree.

It was also necessary for the Prelates who were making an Apostolic Visitation of the Roman Pious Schools, as part of the series of visitations that the Pope had ordered for the whole city during 1661-1662, to insist upon these points so that Fr. Scassellati might observe at least most of the *Cum sicut accepimus* Brief. In any case, from this document the General Congregation (Fr. General and Assistants) adopted the form of working which, with necessary adjustments, continues to this day, even though Fr. Scassellati tried to reduce or get around application of the rules in many ways.

Fr. Camillo Scassellati did not even wish to change the legal state of the “Secular Congregation with simple vows” which the first Brief of Alexander VII established, for he maintained that this was the state which was most suitable for the educational work and activities of Piarists. This explains why there were no moves to complete the reintegration of the Order during his period as Father General, which some critics sadly

accuse him of. However, it is also true that any advance in this matter would have been very difficult during the pontificate of Alexander VII, in which three Briefs had been published for the good government of the Congregation. This was able to be addressed more successfully after the death of Alexander VII.

### *Right measures*

As well as the above mentioned trouble and lack of impartiality, Fr. Scassellati also undertook some effective measures aimed at the good government and progress of the Institute. For example, he tried to make the rules imposed by Alexander VII on the admission of novices and on the age of schoolmasters disappear as soon as possible. Thus, in June 1660, he was already able to get the Supreme Pontiff to agree that the masters could teach as soon as they had been ordained priests, even if they were not yet 25 years of age.

As far as studies for young clerics were concerned, Fr. Scassellati did everything he could to make sure that the Congregation had certain fixed establishments for study. Thus, in 1660, the first inter-Provincial Study House was inaugurated in Chieti, and this would produce a rich harvest for the next hundred and fifty years, although most of its students hailed from the Province of Naples. The first Prefect for its twelve students was Fr. Carlo Giovanni Pirroni, who, when later on he became General, greatly encouraged more study in the Order. And in 1661, the General Congregation decided to found another place for study, which this time would be truly international, at San Pantaleo in Rome, to which chosen clerics from every Province would be sent.

In the administrative and legal field certain steps were taken which would be fruitful in the future:

- After two new Houses had been founded in Sardinia (the training house in Cagliari in 1660 and the house in Isili in 1661), a new Province of Sardinia was created when they had overcome certain internal disciplinary problems. These were most worthy additions in the field of education and the cultivation of Letters and Science, and these Piarists were the first to set down roots for the Pious Schools in Spain.

- In 1662, the General Congregation approved the separation of the Province of Poland from that of Germany. This stimulated both to work with greater enthusiasm to reinforce and increase the Institute and its fruits would be seen during the coming decades. This was so even though the Province of Poland had been involved in problems of no small matter, which were on the one hand connected to having pretensions to greater independence from the Superiors in Rome, and on the other to undisciplined behaviour on the part of certain religious.

Fr. Scassellati's management was especially effective and fruitful in the way he encouraged and cultivated Letters (the humanities) and Science in the Pious Schools:

- By means of various decrees he promoted and organised the library and archive of the Pious Schools.
- Under his patronage, a literary group was set up in the Nazarene College called the "*Accademia degli Incolti*" ("Academy of the Uncultivated"), which was for various centuries fertile ground for distinguished men of Letters and Science.
- He enthusiastically encouraged a series of illustrious Piarist writers (Carlo Mazzei, Giuseppe Pennazzi, Giovanni Francesco Bischett, for example, and Camillo Scassellati himself).

#### *d) Fr. Cosimo Chiara's term as Father General*

Between 4<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> May 1665 the General Chapter was held at San Pantaleo, convened by Fr. Camillo Scassellati at the end of his six-year mandate.

Yet again there were two tendencies: that in favour of faithful conservation of the traditions of Calasanz and that which sought considerable changes in the life of Piarists. This time it was the former which won. Thus on 13<sup>th</sup> May, with 18 votes out of 30, Fr. Cosimo Chiara, the Fr. Provincial of Sicily, was elected Father General.

Born in Sicily in 1616, Fr. Cosimo donned the Piarist habit in Palermo at the age of 22, when he was already a sub-deacon. He was a great admirer of Calasanz and had worthily held the posts of Rector at Messina and Palermo and that of Father Provincial of Sicily.

### *The first tasks of the new Father General*

After having nominated the Major and Local Superiors, his first task was to carry out a personal visit to all the Provinces of Italy. On 12<sup>th</sup> October 1665, he left from San Pantaleo to visit the Roman Province, moving on to Etruria, Liguria and Naples. In all the places he visited, he showed his zeal in encouraging and guaranteeing observance of the old Constitutions and Rules, as had been decided by the last General Chapter. In fact, before the General was elected, the Chapter had almost unanimously approved the Rites and Common Rules (drawn up according to the old models), along with the Declarations on the Constitutions.

In May 1666 he returned to Rome and with especial commitment he dedicated himself to solving what he considered to be the main concerns of the Congregation: the process for the beatification of the Founder and full reintegration of the Order.

### *The Process for the Beatification of the Founder*

The 1659 General Chapter decided that there cannot have been a Procurator (now known as Postulator) for the cause of the blessed Founder. For this reason, after having sent the principal experts in the matter (Fr. Berro and Fr. Caputi) away from Rome, he nominated Fr. Giuseppe Pennazzi, a man whom he trusted and who was already Procurator General of the Congregation. But Fr. Pennazzi did practically nothing at all to encourage the cause of the Founder.

On 9<sup>th</sup> October 1665, after various consultations, Fr. Chiara, as General, decided to nominate three Procurators at the same time, so that they should further the process “with greater diligence and fidelity”. These were Fathers Angelo Morelli and Giuseppe Pennazzi, both Assistants General, and Fr. Giancarlo Caputi. They were to be able to work separately or together, and they should answer to the General Congregation for their work at least once a month. But in actual fact it was Fr. Caputi who carried forward the whole process, almost on his own, in every place and at all times.

First of all Fr. Caputi managed to get Cardinal Scipione as “*Relatore*” or Proposer. He also got many postulant letters from bishops, Roman princes and others in the Catholic world, religious Orders and Confraternities. Carefully prepared by Fr. Caputi, the Cardinal Proposer presented the

Sacred Congregation of Rites with a magnificent report upon the life, habits, virtues and facts of Calasanz. Thus it was that on 4<sup>th</sup> September 1667, under the Papacy of Clement IX, it was declared “*that the cause of introduction to the process of the Venerable Servant of God, Joseph of the Mother of God could be signed*”.

This important “signature” started, from the following year, the cause which was called “unless proof is lost”. In 1686, and at the heart of this process, the cause which was called “On the reputation of sanctity in general”, started, and this was concluded only during Fr. Armini’s term as General, when the decree was published on 30<sup>th</sup> July 1689. This declared “*that there was constancy in a reputation for sanctity, virtue and miracles in general*”.

All of this much increased knowledge of the Pious Schools within the Curia of the Vatican and certainly helped full reintegration of the Order.

#### *Towards complete restoration*

The unfortunate consequences of being that “Congregation with simple vows” decided by Alexander VII were still being felt: from difficulties regarding funerals to more serious problems about founding schools or excessive interference from bishops, to say nothing of easy dispensations from their simple vows on the part of weary or less observant religious.

In the meantime, in 1667, Alexander VII had died and Cardinal Giulio Rospigliosi had been elected Pope with the name of Clement IX. He had long been an admirer of the sanctity of Joseph Calasanz.

All of this, together with the memory of the blessed Founder, caused the Fr. General and his Assistants to openly request the full reintegration of the Order with solemn vows and all the rights previously exercised. Thus, during the session held on 29<sup>th</sup> May 1668, after having carefully evaluated the pros and the contras, the General Congregation decided to ask the Supreme Pontiff Clement IX for full reintegration of the Order, introducing the variant that religious should be conceded solemn profession by the Fr. General with the consent of his Assistants only after having fulfilled the ministry of teaching for ten years. To this end a Supplication was sent to the Holy See, followed shortly afterwards by a Memorandum. Fr. Pennazzi, who was Assistant General, was nominated to deal with the matter with the competent authorities.

However, to Fr. Giancarlo Caputi and Fr. Pietro Mussesti, who had, in the meantime, become Rector of San Pantaleo, another method seemed a better, surer and faster way to achieve the desired result. Thus, moving away from normal channels and with the consent of the Father General, they sought the help of the Medici family and of Donna Leonora Baroni Castellani, who had been well known to the Pope from when he had been merely Cardinal Rospigliosi. They first managed to get the question entrusted to a Commission of three important Prelates of the Roman Curia who were well disposed to the Pious Schools. One of these was Mons. Carlo de Vecchis, Secretary of the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars. The Pope conceded this on 13<sup>th</sup> February 1669.

The Commission completed its work rapidly and perfectly so that the Congregation of Bishops and regulars approved its proposals in a plenary session on 4<sup>th</sup> October 1669 after considering the excellent report presented by Cardinal Lorenzo Imperiale.

On 14<sup>th</sup> October, the Pope approved the decree of the Congregation of the Regulars and after a few days, on 23<sup>rd</sup> October, the Brief was published.

#### 1.4. Complete restoration of the Order and stabilisation (1669-1699)

##### *The Brief for the reintegration and how it was applied*

Therefore, Clement IX's Brief, *Ex iniunctio nobis*, bears the date of 23<sup>rd</sup> October 1669. The Pope, who as Mons. Giulio Rospigliosi had chaired the General Chapter in 1637, had seen Calasanz's virtues at close quarters and who appreciated the work of the Pious Schools, said that when he signed the Brief he felt "*happy because a Religion which was dead was now resurrected because he was Pope*". And Cardinal Marzio Ginetti, Protector of the Pious Schools, kissed the Brief as he received it and fell to his knees to give thanks to God.

In the dispositions of the Brief we read: "*We hereby re-establish, re-propose and reintegrate the Secular Congregation of the Poor Regular Clerics of the Mother of God of the Pious Schools to the normal state and rank of Order with three solemn vows and we again give them all the privileges, immunity, powers, exemptions and other graces and concessions granted to mendicant Orders in all things and by all means: with the limitations of the two Briefs of Gregory XV and according to the dispositions, tenor and effects of the same. Furthermore, with our authority and hereby, we order and decree that each of the points contained in the above mentioned letter of our predecessor, Alexander VII, issued on 28<sup>th</sup> April 1660, shall be inviolably and strictly observed*".

If in his restoration of the Pious Schools, Alexander VII had followed what Paul V had established, Clement IX took as his model the work of Gregory XV. Thus with the present Brief it was decided that the legal base of the Pious Schools would from henceforth be that of the Briefs of Gregory XV (The Elevation as an Order of 1621 and the Approval of the Constitutions of 1622) and the third Brief of Alexander VII, *Cum sicut accepimus*, of 1660. We should remember that the latter fixed the mandate of the General and his Assistants to six years and also established the conditions in which the Assistants had either a decisive vote or merely a consultant role. Furthermore, it required that the praiseworthy traditions of the Pious Schools should be maintained, such as accompanying children home, the style and quality of the habit, going barefoot and an obligation to follow the old Constitutions, and so on.

When the Brief was published and communicated there was a problem for all those who had only made their simple vows, as had been established by Alexander VII, and who now refused to commit themselves in solemn form. Therefore the Holy See was again asked to express a line of action. Pope Clement X placed the matter in the hands of the same Commission which had prepared the reintegration.

On 30<sup>th</sup> September 1670 it decided that:

- Those who had not yet made their solemn profession of vows had a deadline of two, three or four months respectively, if they lived in Italy, in the adjacent islands or outside this territory, to make their Solemn Profession.
- After this deadline and when they had not made their Profession: if they were lay members or clerics in minor orders, they would be sent away by the Father General and they would be exempted from their vows and oath. If they were clerics who had already started Holy Orders and they had sufficient means for their decent maintenance, they would be dismissed but remain subject to the Ordinary of the place where they lived. If they did not have sufficient means to live, then they might live in the Piarist houses but without any active or passive say in matters; if however they preferred to leave they should be dismissed and remain subject to the Ordinaries of the place, but suspended from exercising their Orders until they found a sufficient patrimony or benefice.

The Pope gave full approval to this deliberation of the Commission, and on 18<sup>th</sup> October 1670 the Brief *Cum felicis recordationis* was issued.

When this Brief was applied, about 40 religious left the Order.

Father Santha concludes the matter when he states: *“Their leaving certainly helped pacify the Order internally. Finally, after much tribulation, it achieved almost full and perfect legal stability and little by little also disciplinary peace”*.

During the last third of the century, our account will be organised by subjects or aspects of religious life and the ministry of the Order, as we analyse its development through the terms of successive Generals. The topics dealt with will be: 1) Religious observance and the government of the Order; 2) Formation and studies for young Piarists; 3) Growth



and expansion; 4) Educational-pedagogical work; 5) Contributions to the field of Letters and Science.

### *The Order's development during the last third of the century*

#### *Religious observance and the government of the Order*

Stabilisation and consolidation of the Pious Schools took place in this period and in the different fields of their life and mission a satisfying result was achieved and it would bear splendid fruit during the following century.

Fr. Giuseppe Fedele (1671-1677) succeeded, through his stratagems in the 1671 General Chapter, to make sure that he was nominated General of the Order by the Holy See, avoiding normal election by the Chapter. After having been given the role of Supreme Moderator that he so greatly desired, he developed his government to the benefit of the Pious Schools and successfully resolved many matters which concerned the life of the Order.

One of the first measures of his government was to duplicate the number of meetings of the General Congregation which would now be twice weekly. In this way he made the government more effective and rapid in all parts of the Order. He also decided that copies of all papers sent should be transcribed in a register. Therefore he is the first Father General from whom we have copies of every letter sent by the Congregation or at least draft copies.

In the Canonical Visitations which he personally made (to the Provinces of Rome, Tuscany and Naples) or by his delegates (Sicily and Liguria), he tried to encourage strict observance of the Constitutions and of the Common Rules and Rites, and placed special emphasis upon the education and formation of novices and clerics, and of the proper working of the schools, whose internal life, economic situation and pedagogical results were followed by him in the smallest details and with paternal solicitation.

Fr. Carlo Giovanni Pirroni (1677-1685) was elected General at the age of 36, in May 1677. He was re-elected by the General Chapter in May 1683, but died of lung cancer on 13<sup>th</sup> April 1685. Fr. Santha ends his biography with these words: "*When we maturely assess what has happened, it is clear to all that, since Calasanz, only a few other Generals have been as serious and efficacious for the future of the Pious Schools as has Fr. Carlo Giovanni Pirroni, the distinguished restorer and promoter of the Order*".

During his eight years as General, which in spite of his fragile state of health he undertook with great energy and with notable success, there was an improvement in the life and ministry of the Order, although there were obstacles placed in the way of nearly all his measures by three of his Assistants during his first six year term.

As soon as he had been elected Father General, he enthusiastically completed the reform that he too so much desired: the restoration of the life of the Order according to the Constitutions and Rules. To this end he used all means at his disposal: letters, decrees, circulars, canonical or paternal visits, lectures to his communities, and so on. It is, for example, significant that on 10<sup>th</sup> July 1677 he was already writing a long circular to all religious which in a certain way sums up all his wishes for an improvement in the Order. These are given with fervour and the spirit of a Father, as these concluding lines show: *“Were I to say all that runs through my mind, I should never finish. I should like to be everywhere and personally instil into the minds of my religious the tenor of life that I should like all to follow. But I shall go and discover this slowly and, in the meantime, I trust in God and most fervently pray that He will speak to the hearts of each of you, as I know that it is easy to learn and observe that which He himself teaches us. I have not wanted to issue any punishment, for I believe that only love and a desire for personal salvation should be sufficient reason for observing what was spontaneously promised to the Lord. I have a very high opinion of you all ... and I assure you, just as I similarly wish all Superiors a paternal spirit of piety, as far as this may depend upon me”*.

In this circular, after having spoken of the schools and the juniors (as we shall see later), he stresses immediate obedience, praises chastity and the means to maintain it, states the rules of poverty, insists that communal life and goods should be observed, encourages spiritual actions, remembers charity, which must be mirrored by an environment of peace and concord... And he concludes by forbidding people to address him as “Most Reverend”, for the title of “Father General” is enough.

As for going barefoot, he says that the Constitutions should be observed, even though he shows paternal indulgence for those who live in cold climates, such as in Germany, Spain and certain regions of Italy. From some phrases and expressions he uses, we may deduce that in private he thought that it was more convenient for the Piarists to be shod;

but because of the pressure of the Constitutions and the second Brief of Alexander VII, he did not want to move too quickly. He was waiting for the topic to be discussed in the next General Chapter, but the topic was not raised there.

As for poverty, Fr. Pirroni strictly insisted upon the personal poverty of the religious, and in particular the prohibition about having money at their personal disposal. Rather, all that which, for whatever reason, entered the hands of any religious should be consigned to the common funds. Generally speaking, he tried to faithfully reproduce the style of austerity and poverty which Calasanz established, even though he asked the Superiors to proceed with prudence, charity, humanity and goodness. But on one point he wanted to open up a new path. If Alexander VII had authorized the possibility of having annual incomes, now the Fr. General wanted the Order to be able to possess property in common. This would avoid the previous precarious economic situation with all the problems it caused, both for the normal discipline of the religious and for the ordinary working of the schools, and also to maintain a good formation plan for new members. But this was not achieved definitively until the term of the next General.

As far as the way the Order was governed is concerned, Fr. Pirroni finally resolved a matter which had confused people since the time of the Founder and which had caused serious problems for various successors: nomination of Provincial and Local Superiors. This had often been a source of conflict between various Generals and their Assistants. At first it seemed that it was the exclusive task of the Fr. General; but the Assistants complained. When Alexander VII decided that the decisive vote of the Assistants was necessary for every nomination, these confused the right to approve with the right to elect or present people they considered suitable for the post. Fr. Pirroni thought that this right to elect and present belonged to the Fr. General, whereas the three opposing Assistants defended their own position whereby it was their right to do so. It got to the point where, as a last resort, they argued that this right could be claimed by one member of the Congregation. Basing his reasoning upon Common Rules and the Constitutions, Fr. Pirroni tenaciously argued that this right always belonged to him. This interpretation was finally and expressly confirmed by the Cardinal Protector and the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars in 1682.

To keep efficiently in touch with the whole Order, Fr. Pirroni made abundant use of epistolary correspondence, and sometimes wrote more

than 30 letters a day. He also ordered all Superiors to send annual reports, information and catalogues to Rome, the use of which kept him up to date with all that was going on and he was thus able to intervene with effective solutions when needed.

In 1684, he was able to get the Pope to confirm exemption from the jurisdiction of the Local Ordinaries for Piarists, with the Bull “*Nuper pro parte*”.

Fr. Pirroni began a real and true programme for the restoration and juridical and spiritual renewal of the Order, which he gradually put into practice. In this way he created the necessary conditions for successive evolution and for further improvement, both in the teaching field and in the numerical and geographical increase of the Pious Schools.

Fr. Alessio Armini (1685-1692), who was an Assistant, was of great help to Fr. Pirroni. From 12<sup>th</sup> August 1684, the date in which the severely ill Fr. Pirroni nominated him Vicar General, he resolved nearly all the affairs of the Order single-handedly, since the Fr. General, who would struggle with his illness for another eight months, was rarely able to intervene in the problems of government. However, he was careful to act only according to the wishes and the reasons of Fr. General Pirroni. When, on 13<sup>th</sup> April 1685, he died, Fr. Alessio convened the General Chapter in May 1686, during which he himself was elected General.

One important fact about this General Chapter was the definitive approval of our “Penitential Canons”, which regulated the sanctions and corrections that should be applied to those who broke a rule or committed a wrong of whatever type. The “Canons” had begun to be gathered from the time of the Founder, but it was only on this occasion that they acquired definitive form and juridical value. Thus, this Chapter led by Fr. Alessio made a useful contribution to the codification of laws and practices as well as to the stability and seriousness of Piarist life and observances.

As far as poverty was concerned, Fr. Armini reacted energetically against abuses regarding personal possession of money which had been introduced in Sicily. He finally managed to get the Holy See to agree to a right to possess wealth in common. This was sanctioned by the Brief of Innocent XI entitled *Exponi nobis super*, of 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1686, in which it was expressly stated “*that the above-named religion or Congregation of the Pious Schools is allowed to have possessions, according to the form of the Sacred Council of*

*Trent*". This meant that the individual poverty of religious was reaffirmed, but that communities could possess moveable and unmoveable goods. In this matter, it is interesting to see how this was communicated to the Fathers Provincial by the Fr. General: "*As we ourselves cannot, by the rules of our Constitutions, possess anything in common, but on the other hand, as all the Houses possess certain stable goods, because, as experience shows, the Institute cannot keep itself by alms alone, in the last General Chapter we tried to find a solution which might put our consciences at rest. Finally, in the recent General Chapter, a decision was taken to ask the Apostolic See to declare that our poverty should be understood in the way laid down by the Council of Trent in Ch. 3, section 25 on the Regulars. Therefore, immediately after the above-mentioned General Chapter the Procurator General put into motion the case for our Order... and with the help of God we were given grace through the declaration and issue of the Brief, which is sent to you here in an authenticated copy*".

Another matter, which had been discussed since Fr. Scassellati's times, was whether or not it was a good idea to go barefoot. At the start of his mandate, Fr. Armini was fairly rigid about the observance of what was laid down in the Constitutions. But when he saw that both the Cardinal Protector and the Supreme Pontiff himself thought that they should wear shoes, he did not resist. He only asked that a *Motu Proprio* on the matter should be published, so that it would be clear that it had not been asked for by the Piarists. This was done by Pope Alexander VIII on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 1690, in the Brief *Cum, sicut accepimus*, which says: "*Having heard the report of our dear son Cardinal Carpinei, Vicar of Rome and Protector of the said Congregation before us... of our own will, with certain knowledge and after mature deliberation, we establish and order that all members of the above-mentioned Congregation of Poor Clerics of the Mother of God of the Pious Schools should go everywhere with shoes; also in such a way that those shoes should be black, should conform to humility and to simplicity, be closed and that their socks should also be of black wool...*".

There was another aspect to the improvement of the Order under Fr. Armini. Fr. Alessio managed to see that the affairs and problems which were the business of the General Congregation were resolved fairly rapidly and with the agreement of the Assistants, from whom he hid nothing and with whom he lived in peace and harmony. Fr. Santha comments on this: "*With this, at least in this sense, there began a new period in the House*

*of San Pantaleo, which had been a place which had often witnessed internal discussions between the Assistant fathers and the Fr. General, since the time of the Founder”.*

As far as concerned governing the Provinces, Fr. Armini was rather conservative, not wishing to increase the number of Provinces until they were sufficiently consolidated. In fact he created no new Provinces. However, he did take some steps forward, for example:

- In the Province of Poland, which had always wanted greater autonomy, he gave the Fr. Provincial power to dismiss Rectors, substitute them or move them from one house to another, but with an obligation to inform the General Curia.
- For the three Houses in Hungary, who wished to separate from Poland, he nominated a Commissioner General who would be responsible for them, and thus he prepared for their future separation.
- In Spain, where the House in Moyà, which depended upon the province of Sardinia, continued to have problems, he nominated Fr. Passante of the Province of Naples “Fr. Vice-Provincial in Spain”, in 1689, and in the following year he arranged for a second House in Oliana (Lérida).

Fr. Giovanni Francesco Foci published an excellent and updated compilation of the current laws of the Order, which was published in 1698 and called *Sinopsis*; it long remained useful.

#### *Formation and studies for young Piarists*

Fr. Cosimo Chiara worked his best to encourage studies for young Piarists. In the 1665 General Chapter, after having been elected General, he determined that each Province should build and keep a Study House in which the juniors should be able to pursue their studies “with neither any dilution nor interruption”. The Chapter also showed that it wanted a General Study Plan for Piarists to be drawn up as early as possible, for the Constitutions and Common Rules only had individual points dealing with the matter.

Busy with other urgent business and impeded because of the supreme poverty of the Order, Fr. Cosimo could not do all that which had been decided by the General Chapter within his six-year term, even though there is ample proof of his interest and his concern for the matter.

The following may be mentioned as concrete actions of his mandate:

- In 1667, when the Chieti House declared that it was unable to find the means to sustain its twelve students, the Fr. General arranged that all of them should be transferred to the Novitiate in Rome until better times arrived in Chieti.
- Studies flourished in Cagliari, in the humanistic, philosophical and theological fields.
- In 1665, a Provincial Juniorate was set up in Nikolsburg.
- In 1668, a theological studio was opened in Schlam.

During Fr. Giuseppe Fedele's mandate as General, around 1675 there arose a complicated problem on the validity of Solemn Professions which had been made in the Italian Provinces after the 1669 reintegration. In actual fact, after that date many had been admitted to the Novitiate and later to Solemn Profession without having respected the norms issued by Innocent X in his Bull *Inter cetera*. In order that there should be no doubt in the matter, the sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars issued a decree, dated 27<sup>th</sup> February 1676, which gave validity for all the irregularities which might have been committed, and ratified yet again any Professions which might have been doubtful; but it insisted "*that in the future nobody shall be given the habit or allowed to profess, except with the permission of this Sacred Congregation, in writing, and in the House which it will itself designate*".

In order to respect all the requisites, the Fr. General and his Assistants got from the Holy See a decree entitled *Ad propagandam in Religione Clericorum Regularium Pauperum Matris Dei Scholarum Piarum regularem osservantiam*, which was promulgated 18<sup>th</sup> March 1676, in which:

1. It was determined which houses would be approved for Novices, for candidates for Profession (or students).
2. The maximum number of novices which each Province might admit was established (6 clerics and 3 laity, except in the Province of Rome where 7 clerics and 3 laity might be admitted).
3. The method and subjects for the admission test for novices was set out.
4. Studies were allowed in the second year of the Novitiate.

5. The way of life and education of professed clerics was established up until the moment they took Sacred Orders or at least for a three-year period.
6. All the Study Houses were made the responsibility and were at the disposal of the Provost General.

This decree, which with the greatest diligence possible Fr. Fedele put into practice, gradually resolved all study questions in the Piarist Order, and it opened the way for further progress, which the successive Father General Fr. Carlo Giovanni Pirroni made effective during his mandate. The only point which was not faithfully observed and which required further management was that relating to the maximum number of novices which might be allowed to enter.

Fr. Carlo Giovanni Pirroni became Father General with rich previous experience in the field of training our clerics. From 1660 onwards he had actually been Junior Master and Prefect in Chieti for more than five years. Between 1673 and 1677, as Procurator General in Rome, he was also Junior Master at San Pantaleo. Furthermore, as Procurator he had developed important action in favour of the formation of young people, and had promoted and got from the Sacred Congregation of Religious, the above-mentioned decree *Ad propagandum*.

As soon as he was elected Father General, the first thing that Fr. Pirroni did was to arrange for the Novitiates and Juniorates to be given proper juridical status, according to the decisions of the Congregation of Religious, so that past mistakes could be avoided, both as far as admitting novices without previous examination was concerned and regarding continual moving between Houses without previous permission from the Holy See. In the 1683 General Chapter, on his initiative the Profession formulae for clerics and laity were established, according to the new situation of the restored Order.

At nearly four years into his mandate, the Study Plan, which had been long desired in the Order, saw the light of day. With very few modifications, this plan was solemnly approved by the 1683 Chapter “to the joy and happiness of Chapter members”. This plan established the following stages:

- In the second year of the Novitiate, the students would study grammar, arithmetic and literary exercises.



- After the Novitiate, they would complete a further two years dedicated to humanistic studies, after which they would have to take a demanding examination.
- If they were considered capable of doing so, they would be required to study Philosophy for another two years. They might also be introduced to the study of Mathematics.
- Two years of practical work in schools.
- Those who had shown sufficient ability and good conduct in all the above-mentioned stages, after a further examination, would be required to study Theology for three years, with an obligatory examination in each year.
- At the end of their studies they would have to teach in a praiseworthy way for 7 years, before being able to become Superiors and in order to have a passive voice in decisions.

This study plan could not immediately and entirely be put into practice by Fr. Pirroni, on the one hand because of economic difficulties, and on the other because of a lack of suitable students and teachers. However, it was almost entirely accepted in the Study Plan approved by the 1718 General Chapter.

As far as the concrete work done is concerned, we should mention the following data:

- The St. Pantaleo Student House: it was created by Calasanz, restored by Fr. Scassellati, reopened by Fr. Fedele, strengthened from 1673 onwards thanks to the presence of Fr. Pirroni as Master of the clerical students, even in the absence of fixed regulations and a proper study programme. It was the first in which regular theological studies were introduced. We should also note the presence of the study of Mathematics, especially from 1677 onwards, thanks to the eminent mathematician Alfonso Borelli, who succeeded in transmitting a love for the science in various students of his, who would later become celebrated university professors in Italy and Poland. It never had more than 8 or 10 students.
- The Chieti Study House: founded by Fr. Scassellati in 1660, principally to train religious of the Neapolitan Province, it opened its doors to those who hailed from other Provinces of Italy. At the beginning it taught literary studies and mathematics. From 1681

onwards, because of Fr. Pirroni, they added philosophical and theological studies. It never had more than 20 students.

- The other Study Houses of the Order: during Fr. Pirroni's mandate there were eleven Study Houses in Italy, in which more or less the same study programme was in use. Fr. Pirroni kept a close eye on what was happening in these houses and he recommended that every province should have three student bodies (Humanistic Sciences, Philosophy and Theology). The Provinces of Germany and Poland also had flourishing student bodies, and succeeded in transmitting a love for Theology and Science in their young Piarists, and some of these later became brilliant in these subjects.

### *Growth and expansion*

Fr. Cosimo Chiara showed interest and concern for the propagation of the Order. He thought that the economic base of the order should be placed upon a firmer footing so that no House should lack necessities. In this matter he was more demanding than Calasanz's Constitutions called for. Thus, before admitting or approving the foundation of any new House, he made sure that the General Curia had all the foundation documents, from which it would be clear that there was a secure annual sum available to maintain the establishment and its religious. He did not allow any Fr. Provincial to act on his own initiative in this matter, and reserved for himself the last word on approval of every new foundation.

During his mandate various new foundations met his criteria and the following new Houses were founded: Schlackenwerth, in Bohemia (1666); Prievidza, in Hungary (1666); Chelm, in Poland (1667); Murany, in Hungary (1667); Łowicz, in Poland (1668). And Houses in Brindisi, Isili and Pescina, which had been started in Fr. Scassellati's time, were consolidated.

During Fr. Giuseppe Fedele's mandate as General, even though there were numerous requests for new foundations, few of them were accepted: two in Italy, one in Hungary and two in Poland.

In 1677, at the end of Fr Fedele's term of office, the Order had:

- 726 religious
- 56 houses
- 8 Provinces

It astonishes that, although certain crises provoked large numbers to leave, in the last 20 years the Order had doubled the number of its religious, but not those of its Houses.

Fr. Carlo Giovanni Pirroni, after internal consolidation in the Order, fervently wished for the expansion or propagation of the Institute. But he came across difficulties here too. First of all there was a lack of suitable religious because, as he used to say, there were “too many beardless youths”. Secondly, the rules of the Holy See about accepting new foundations had become more severe. Furthermore, towns often stood back and were not very cooperative because of the excessive number of religious communities they had to put up with. In addition, in Poland and Sardinia the Jesuits used various pretexts to impede or at least retard an increase in the Pious Schools, for they were afraid of competition in the teaching field.

In spite of all this, during Fr. Pirroni’s term as General two new foundations were started: one in Rome (*San Michele “ad ripam”* or *San Michele a Ripa*), two in Naples, two in Sardinia, one in Lithuania and one in Hungary. But the most notable fact was the introduction of the Pious Schools in Spain. In 1677, when the towns of Barbastro and Benabarre asked for Piarist institutes, Fr. Pirroni sent Fr. Luis Cavada to Spain. He was the Fr. Provincial of Sardinia and would soon be joined by another six fathers from the island and three Neapolitans. They opened houses in Barbastro (1677) and in Benabarre (1681), but they soon had to be abandoned. Faced with difficulties, the Fr. General sent two fathers from the Province of Naples to Spain. These were Domenico Prato and Agostino Passante, who were finally able to open the Moya foundation in 1683, which was the first Piarist House to last in Spain.

Fr. Alessio Armini, just like his predecessors, had a strong desire to propagate the Order both within Italy and elsewhere. He worked hard for this, even though conditions for founding new Houses became more difficult every day, because of ever more frequent intervention from the Holy See, which insisted upon secure means for the maintenance of religious.

Nevertheless, during Fr. Armini’s mandate 12 new houses were founded: 3 in the Province of Rome; 1 in Tuscany; 3 in Germany; 3 in Poland; 1 in Sicily and 1 in Spain.

*Educational and pedagogical work*

St. Joseph Calasanz had a study programme in mind for the pupils and an organisation of the schools which, with slight variations, remained the practice in the Pious Schools for many decades. Naturally, all this happened in the second half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

Let us look firstly at Calasanz’s plan and then add the most important modifications made during this period, even though they were not especially innovative.

St. Joseph Calasanz, in his own hand, wrote down what is considered to be the *Documentum princeps de la pedagogia calasancia* (also called “*Breve relazione*”) in 1604 or 1605. That programme of studies, which was perfectly organised in classes, was universally applied in all Piarist schools and was later widely imitated by others. The division was into 8 or 9 grades, which were numbered, as was the custom in those days, from the highest to the lowest. This included what we now call Primary or Elementary School and secondary or Middle School:

Primary School		Secondary School	
9 <sup>th</sup>	Letters and spelling (from <i>The Holy Cross</i> )	4 <sup>th</sup>	Grammar: declination, collocations
8 <sup>th</sup>	Reading (from the <i>Psaltery</i> )	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Grammar: conjugation. Luigi Vives
7 <sup>th</sup>	Rapid reading, in the native language	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Grammar: the impersonal. Cicero
6 <sup>th</sup>	Writing	1 <sup>st</sup>	Humanistic Scienze Rhetoric, Poetics
5 <sup>th</sup> A	Writing and Abacus: sums and calligraphy		
5 <sup>th</sup> B	Scripture and Abacus: nouns and calligraphy		

– *Reading* was divided into 3 classes:

- The smallest children, either from *The Holy Cross*, or from the *Speller* (six year olds)
- Reading, without understanding, from the *Psaltery*.
- Rapid reading, with understanding, from books in the vernacular.

- *Writing* consisted at first in making sure that the pupils could learn how to write a certain type of letter clearly. This lasted 3 or 4 months. Then writing would be improved with different kinds of handwriting.
- The 5<sup>th</sup> class, which was generally dedicated to writing and the use of the abacus, was divided, according to whether the pupils needed to leave the Institute quickly in order to work or thought they might continue their studies:
  - Sums and Calligraphy
  - Nouns and Calligraphy
- *Grammar* too was divided into 3 or 4 classes. This was the Latin grammar in all its levels and aspects and included the study of various Classical authors.
- The class of *Humanistic Studies, Rhetoric and Poetics* was never introduced at San Pantaleo: this was firstly so as not to compete with the *Istituto Romano* of the Jesuits and later to send them to the Piarist Nazarene Institute.
- Calasanz's most characteristic contribution was certainly the organisation of the Primary or Elementary School, which he looked after most carefully. The organisation of the Secondary or Middle School was also the work of Calasanz, but he had been inspired by that of the Istituto Romano.

Shortly afterwards, Calasanz added his Regulations for scholars and for masters and other workers, which were drawn up with great pedagogical sensitivity. In the Regulations for Pupils we find a firm and regulated kind of education, with a strong preventive note, which reaches the children at schools and outside the school doors. The fact that you were a pupil of the Pious Schools implied a certain proper kind of conduct which should be observed at home in the family, when playing, with friends, in a choice of clothes end so on. It also contained rules for etiquette.

Generally the school hours were: two and a half hours in the morning followed by two and a half during the afternoons. Vacations were only a fortnight during the autumn. However, during the year there were many feast-day holidays.

The school Staff was composed of: a minister-rector, schoolmasters, a confessor, a prefect for perpetual oration, a prefect of the courtyard, etc.

As for the presence of lay teachers in Calasanz’s schools, we should underline the following data: during the first fifteen years all teachers were secular (priests of the secular clergy and lay people, in almost equal parts). When he founded his Religious Congregation in 1617, most of the masters were lay religious, often called “lay members”, even though in our Order they were called “working brothers”. Furthermore, in order to give them recognition in all the dignity and authority with which they performed their tasks of instruction, our Order invented a new term for them and called them “worker clerics”. Unfortunately, this innovation caused many problems and the experience lasted only ten years. Nevertheless, Calasanz always had certain lay teachers, and the most well-known amongst them was Ventura Sarafellini, the painter and calligrapher, who was contracted to work there for all his life, and who lived with the religious for a long time. The Brotherhood Card (or Fraternity Card) was established so that distinguished lay friends could be spiritually united with the Order.

Fr. Cosimo Chiara, as a part of his commitment to promoting and guaranteeing observance of our ancient norms and customs, also included those concerning scholastic duties, in particular during his Canonical Visitations to the Houses. In the 1665 General Chapter in which he was elected Father General, the Common Rites were approved, which, starting from the traditions of Calasanz, established the following organisation of the schools:

Primary:	Reading class
	Writing class
	Abacus class
	(Sometimes Noun class or the rudiments of Latin)
Secondary:	Lower grammar class
	Middle grammar class
	Upper grammar class
	Humanistic Science class
	Rhetoric class

Fr. Giovanni Pironi insisted upon reminding people of the fourth vow, which was peculiar to this Institute and which had been put in the background in recent decades: *“We exhort all to exercise this ministry of the school, which they must perform with charity, effort and a desire to bring youth to fruition, as is intended in the vow which we have uttered, and considering the responsibility we have in the success or the failure of our youngsters, who chiefly depend upon us from their first education, which is able to correct even their own nature, this therefore requires especial attention more than all the other duties of our Order”*.

He also recalled that everybody should use the same teaching methods *“so that, as teachers change, the pupils will not suffer because of variations in the method, for this leads to much poorer results”*. And he insisted that the same school books should be used so that *“they do not have to buy new books every day, with the consequent results for our children, who are generally poor and needy”*.

He also stressed how important it was that the schoolmasters should be well-grounded in Latin, the language which opened the doors of culture to them, *“and since we cannot teach what we do not know with any success, we ask all teachers to dedicate themselves to learning it, for it is easier for a student to imitate the style of his living master than that of dead authors”*.

He also wished to restore school discipline by nominating well-prepared prefects to every school and by making sure that there were good Regulations in all of them, both for pupils and for teachers.

In addition he insisted on good guidance for pupils so that only those who had a chance of completing their studies well should move to the upper levels. To those who did not have the ability to progress properly, he recommended that they should be given good instruction in what were then called “mechanical studies”, so that all of them could find a suitable job. In this way he sought to avoid that dangerous sloth of those who, having left their studies incomplete, were left not knowing what to do.

During Fr. Pirroni’s mandate as General, children of the pious Schools were taught from the very basics to the last classes of Rhetoric or Poetics, with an organisation which was similar to that of Calasanz. In some places even Philosophy was taught and in Poland Fr. Pirroni allowed Theology to be studied.

Fr. Giovanni Francesco Foci was elected by the 1692 General Chapter and he followed its recommendations by drawing up a “Ratio Studiorum pro exteris”, which was published in 1694. In addition to the numerous norms needed for the pupils to have a good human and religious education, this contained a Study programme which was very similar to the previous one, but the ordinal number sequence was different:

Primary School		Secondar School	
1 <sup>st</sup>	Lower class for reading	4 <sup>th</sup>	Lower grammar class
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Middle class for reading and writing	5 <sup>th</sup>	Middle grammar class
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Upper class for writing and arithmetic	6 <sup>th</sup>	Upper grammar class
		7 <sup>th</sup>	Humanistic science class
		8 <sup>th</sup>	Rhetoric class
		9 <sup>th</sup>	Moral Theology class

### *Contributions in the field of Letters and Science*

Fr. Cosimo Chiara, maintained that dignified zeal to stimulate the study of Letters and Science that Fr. Scassellati and Calasanz himself had started. During this period these started to be taught well in our Institute. During his six-year mandate, Fr. Camillo Scassellati published various textbooks in the humanistic sciences: Fr. Carlo Giovanni Pirroni printed various poems as did Fr. Sigismondo Coccapani and Fr. Lorenzo Fiorita. Fr. Carlo Mazzei continued to compose Latin verse. The Province of Poland started to produce scientific and literary works which would soon lead it to become the fruitful mother of a good part of their national culture.

Fr. Giuseppe Fedele actively encouraged the cultivation of Letters within the Order. Right from the beginning of his mandate as General, he maintained excellent relations with those Piarists who were well-known in the literary field, such as Fathers Tommaso Simone, Gabriele Bianchi, Sigismondo Coccapani, Camillo Scassellati and Carlo Mazzei. The latter



was exempt from almost all other work as long as he committed himself to publishing new books (he had already published two very successful ones, called *Enigmi* and *Anagrammi*). Fr. Ambrosio Berretta published a Latin Grammar during this six-year period. It was called *In Linguam Latinam Grammaticae Institutiones* and it went into many new editions during the following decades.

Fr. Carlo Giovanni Pirroni prepared two volumes with his speeches to the Community, called *Conferenze Spirituali Domestiche*, and the first volume was published in 1696. He also composed various sacred hymns for the Sacred Congregation of Rites.

Fr. Alessio Armini was the first to write a Documented Life of the Venerable Joseph Calasanz, which saw the light of day only after Fr. Armini's death.

Special mention in this period is merited also by Fr. Damaso Stachowicz (1648-1699), a Polish composer of various notable musical works: the Hungarian, Fr. Lucas Möscher (1651-1701), author of books on Mathematics, Pedagogy and Literature; Fr. Miguel Kraus (1628-1703), who wrote many works on different subjects, amongst which a weighty treatise upon religious life.



## 2. 18<sup>th</sup> CENTURY (1700-1804): THE GOLDEN CENTURY OF THE PIOUS SCHOOLS

### Superiors General

Francesco Zanoni (1700-1706)

Giovanni Crisostomo Salistri (1706-1712)

Andrea Boschi (1712-1718)

Gregorio Bornò (1718-1724)

Adolf Groll (1724-1730)

Giuseppe Lalli (1730-1736)

Gianfelice Arduini (1736-1742)

Giuseppe Oliva (1742-1745). On his decease,

Giovanni Diego Manconi (29 Nov. 1745-2 May 1748)

Giuseppe Agostino Delbecchi (1748-1751)

Paolino Chelucci (1751-1754). On his decease,

Gaetano Bonlieti (17 Jan. 1754-2 May 1754)

Edoardo Corsini (1754-1760)

Giuseppe Maria Giuria (1760-1771). On his decease,

Mattia Peri (3 May 1771-2 May 1772)

Gaetano Ramo (1772-1784)

Stefano Quadri (1784-1792). On his decease,

Carlo Maria Voenna (15 May 1792-2 May 1796)

Giuseppe Beccaria (1796-1808)

In this century, Europe is politically characterised by Absolute Monarchies which remain such as they pass from Illuminated Reformism and finish with the French Revolution, which will put an end to the “Ancien Régime”. It was dominated culturally by the powerful movement

of the Enlightenment, with its cult of the light of reason and faith in undefined progress. Artistically it began under the continued influence of the Baroque only to succumb later to Neoclassicism, with its taste for classical rules.

It is a century full of promise and contrasts, during which the modern Europe of centuries to come will be illuminated. All of this is of great influence upon culture, politics and religion, and therefore on the Church and our own Order.

This period might be called the “Golden Century” for our Order, and in particular for the Pious Schools of Central Europe and Italy. However, we should not consider the whole of the century in such an optimistic light, because at the end of the period black clouds appear on the horizons of the Church and the Order which are a sign of difficult times ahead. The most fruitful years for the Pious Schools are the first 60 or 70 years of the century.

## 2.1. Growth and expansion of the Order

### *Rapid growth*

During the first 60 years the number of Piarist Houses doubled from 90 to 186 while that of religious almost trebled, from 900 to 2,500.

This important increase continued until the French Revolution, and reached the number of nearly 3,000 Piarists.

The most rapid growth took place in central Europe: if in 1724 the Central European Pious Schools represented 40% of the Order, by 1784 this ratio had increased to about 50%. About 1,500 religious were spread over 6 Piarist Provinces in the regions of Bohemia, Poland, Lithuania, Hungary, Austria, Rhineland-Switzerland. In 1795, the Province of Poland was divided into Galizia and Borussia.

In Spain there was also a remarkable increase, as we shall see shortly. However, it must be said that judging from the numbers of requests and attempts made, there might have been far more foundations. But because of difficulties caused by “Absolutism” and the brake which was often applied by other institutions (the clergy, teachers, the Society of Jesus and other municipal religious) much slowed further progress.

On the other hand, in Italy this century was characterised by slow growth. Towards the end of the century the Italian Pious Schools had about 1,000 religious, distributed over the 7 Provinces of Rome, Liguria, Naples (called Campania then), Tuscany, Sicily, Sardinia and Puglia.

### *Analysis*

Our numerical growth was a consequence of the stimulating life and vitality of the Order in various fields. It was not only notable in the scholastic field, where its schools, institutes and colleges were distinguished for their educational results and their cultural level in a world where governments were not yet concerned with such matters. They were distinguished also because of the number of eminent religious in the fields of letters, science, social relationships, the sanctity of their lives, and so on.

The fact that the Pious Schools were almost totally rooted in Italy and Central Europe would have inevitable and serious consequences because

of the serious political changes which so profoundly changed the heart of Europe and the Italian peninsular during the Napoleonic period.

The ideas of the Enlightenment, of Liberalism or Jansenism, which were adopted by a certain number of Piarists, also contributed to the decline of the Order, mainly in the last decade of the 18<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, even though it should not be forgotten that various Piarists who were called “enlightened” led exemplary religious lives and encountered no doctrinal problems.

The Piarist Order has never been so numerous as it was then. It reached the zenith of its expansion around 1789, when it had about 3,000 religious, which is the highest number in its long history.

**The Pious Schools in Spain:** here are some facts regarding the Pious Schools in Spain:

- At the request of Fr. Pablo Durán, the Bishop of Urgel, an attempt to found an establishment in Guisona. Fr. Alacchi was in charge of the preparations between 1638 and 1641.
- In 1677, the civil authorities of Barbastro and Benabarre (Huesca) sent the Fr. General a request to open Pious Schools in the vicinity.
- The Fr. General Pirroni sent Fr. Luis Cavada, Fr. Provincial of Sardinia, and shortly afterwards he sent another 6 Sardinian religious and 3 Neapolitans.
- In October 1677 the Barbastro House was opened. However, opposition from other religious from the very beginning gave rise to trouble and litigation, which finished with the expulsion of the Piarists in 1680 (the definitive foundation in Barbastro had to wait until 1721).
- Some of those who were expelled moved to Benabarre, where they opened a House in 1681. However, similar opposition to that in Barbastro, but from other religious, obliged them to leave in 1683, without having succeeded in establishing themselves there (the definitive House would have to wait until 1729 and it stayed there until 1842). Others who left Barbastro left for Catalonia and later for Italy.

- In 1683, Fathers Domenico Prato and Agostino Passante, who belonged to the Province of Naples but had come from elsewhere in Spain, stayed in Catalonia, where, with those expelled from Benabarre, they opened the House in Moyá (Barcelona), which would last a long time.
- In 1690, a second lasting House opened in Oliana (Province of Lleida).
- In 1692 the Houses in Spain became the responsibility of the Province of Sardinia.
- 1695. In 1693 the religious of Peralta de la Sal (Huesca) had asked Fr. Agostino Passante, Commissioner General for Spanish Foundations, to found a House there. They reached an agreement but the foundation could not be completed because of difficulties which arose. In 1695 a new foundation request was sent from Peralta de la Sal to Fr. Paolo Bonino. In the agreement, the local council committed itself to opening a college, with a school and living quarters and to give it an income. Once civil and religious permission had been granted, the Piarists temporarily established themselves in the Zaidín House (1695), while the local council built the new college.
- In 1700, the college in Balaguer (Lleida) opened and thus became the fourth Piarist House in Spain. However, the War of the Spanish Succession (1701-1714) caused considerable difficulties for the Piarists.
- 1707. The by then four Piarist Houses formed the General Commissariat of Spain, subject directly to Rome, because it was made up of religious from Sardinia and Naples. Fr. Tommaso Audet was nominated Commissar General.
- In 1711, this is elevated to Vicariate General.
- 1724. The Pious Schools in Spain had *50 religious* and *6 Houses*. The last two foundations had been Castellbó in 1709 (it lasted 9 years) and Tramacastilla in 1715 (this lasted 22 years).
- In 1713 the Province of Spain was set up and Fr. Giovanni Crisostomo Plana was nominated Fr. Provincial. It had *96 religious* (39 priests, 14 clerics, 21 working brothers and 22 novices), *9 houses* and *2 residences*.

- In 1742 the Province of Aragon was founded and it had the following Houses: Peralta, Valencia, Madrid, Barbastro, Albarracín, Almodóvar, Daroca, Alcañiz, Zaragoza, Jaca, Getafe, Benabarre e Tamarite (the last three were only residences). At the same time the Vice-Province of Catalonia was created, which depended directly on Rome, with Houses in Moyá, Oliana, Balaguer, Igualada, Puigcerdá, Mataró.
- In 1751 the Province of Catalonia was formed.
- In 1754 the Province of the Two Castiles was set up, with Houses previously in the Province of Aragon.
- 1784. In Spain the Pious Schools had 300 religious and 24 Houses.
- In 1826 the independent Vice-Province of Valencia was set up, with houses in Valencia, Gandía and Abarracín.
- In 1833 this became the Province of Valencia, even though it was made up only of the three above-mentioned Houses.
- In 1933 the Province of Vasconia was set up.
- In December 1974 the Vice-Province of Andalusia was created; it depended upon that of Castile.
- In May 1975 Andalusia was declared to be an Independent Vice-Province. It had *25 religious* and the following *Houses*: Dulcísimo Nombre de María (“Sweetest Name of Mary”), in Granada (founded in 1860); the Sacred Heart, in Seville (founded in 1888); Colegio Mayor in Granada (founded in 1971)... And immediately other Houses were founded or joined: Cerro de Águila, in Seville (founded in 1975); Zaidín, in Granada (founded 1975); Escuela Profesional of Bollullos, in Huelva (founded in 1975); Vélez Málaga (founded in 1975); Anzaldo and Cochabamba, in Bolivia (founded in 1992).



## 2.2. The scholastic and extra-scholastic ministry

### *Freedom to teach*

During the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, conflict with the Society of Jesus reached its highest point because of the middle and senior schools, which had till then practically been a monopoly of the Jesuits.

On 1<sup>st</sup> May 1731, the Fr. General, Giuseppe Lalli, obtained the Bull “*Nobis quibus*” from Pope Clement XII, which solved the dispute and granted the Piarists freedom to teach. Despite various appeals by the Jesuits, the Piarists were soon recognised and supported by the civil authorities. With the expulsion of the Society of Jesus from Spain in 1767 and from Sicily in 1768, as indeed with the suppression of the Company decreed by Pope Clement XIV in 1773, in many places the Piarists were given freedom to work and sometimes had to govern institutes abandoned by the Jesuits.

The Bull, “*Nobis quibus*” declared that the Poor regular Clerics of the Mother of God of the Pious Schools:

- Had to teach the early basics of letters and sums, the Catholic Faith and grammar. They were also allowed to teach the liberal disciplines of Latin and Greek, and also Science and the “Major Sciences” (Philosophy and Theology), as long as they observed the rules of their Constitutions regarding lower schools.
- They had to admit the children of the poor and they were also allowed to admit the children of the rich and from the nobility.
- They could run and look after institutes for young people (university residences) seminaries and colleges.
- They were allowed to found Houses without needing the permission of other Regulars, as long as they possessed adequate means to do so without needing to ask for alms.

### *Methods and study programmes*

We still have the study plan which was included in the “*Ratio Studiorum pro exteris*” in 1694. This insists upon the “uniform method” which must be carried out in all Piarist schools.

In any case, certain novelties were introduced. For example, In 1748 the Fr. General Agostino Delbecchi published a “*Decree for the Good Government of the Pious Schools*”, which introduced innovations for secondary schools. It remained organised in six classes over three two-year stages:

1. Grammar, lower and upper (1 and 2).
2. Humanist studies and Rhetoric (3 and 4): the study of Latin is important.
3. Philosophy and Theology (5 and 6): included in the Philosophy course was Mathematics, geometry and experimental Physics.

Other important innovations are described in the following point.

### *Free of charge*

This was always a clear aim of the Order. Financing depended upon foundations, income from the nobility and municipal contributions. Income from the colleges and from religious services also helped.

One of the most serious attacks upon free schooling came in 1783 from Emperor Joseph II, who sequestered the funds of the Foundation of Religious Congregations and at the same time insisted that the pupils should pay for the keep of the teachers and of the schools.

In Spain our teaching had always been free of charge and open to all social classes. This made our schools very popular: a kind of public school which was accessible even to the most modest social classes. Generally speaking, the Order was quite poor and with precarious finances. Some Provinces, such as Rhineland-Switzerland, lived in almost extreme poverty.

### *Different environments for the ministry*

The places in which Piarists developed their ministry were chiefly elementary and middle schools. Generally speaking, these were schools divided into classes and sometimes had 200 pupils per group, even though in small places there were also some schools which had one class only.

There were different kinds of educational establishments:

- *Institutes for the nobility, colleges*: there were various Institute-Colleges, especially after the suppression of the Society of Jesus,

for many of their Institutes had been entrusted to the Piarists. There were many Colleges for children of the nobility, some of which were very prestigious: the Nazarene College, the College for the Nobility of Parma, the College for the Nobility of Siena and the College for the Nobility of Ravenna. Some of these were real centres of pedagogical experimentation, like the “College for the Nobility” of Warsaw, founded by Fr. Stanislaw Konarski in 1740. Little by little colleges which were not for the nobility began to arise. This kind of centre was useful for economic reasons.

- *Diocesan Seminaries*: even though some of these were accepted, in actual fact it was mainly so as not to disappoint the Bishop Protectors, especially in Hungary and in Bohemia-Moravia (now the Czech Republic).
- *Professional schools*: there were isolated cases, even though of great interest to us, like the school of San Michele a Ripa in Rome.
- *Preceptors for Princes*, the children of nobles and of great gentlemen: there were some Piarists who carried out this kind of teaching, particularly in Central Europe, but also in Spain and Italy. This was always with the permission of the Fr. General. The 1718 General Chapter set down regulations on the matter.

### *Tension between being a priest and being a teacher*

Tension between the role of a priest with religious rites and sacraments and that of dedication to teaching was not infrequent. Most Piarists stayed faithful to the ministry of teaching, but many of them consecrated themselves in a preferential way or even exclusively to administering the sacraments and to preaching to adults. Nevertheless, most of these had spent a period of their earlier Piarist lives committed to teaching. But in those days it was not at all uncommon for people, at a certain moment in their lives, to be exempted from giving lessons, because of their age (a kind of retirement) or for other reasons.

### *Religious formation for children and adults*

During the 18<sup>th</sup> century, catechistic and religious formation of pupils followed previously established custom, even though humanistic and

scientific training prevailed over religious and moral. What contributed to this state of affairs was the search for social prestige caused by problems with the Society of Jesus.

Teaching the catechism is the cardinal point of religious formation. There are various catechisms which were written by Piarists. The most famous is that drawn up by Fr. Cayetano Ramo (Zaragoza, 1759), which was widely used.

In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the Piarist apostolic ministry for the adult faithful reached its peak: a large numbers of members of the Order were preachers, confessors, theologians, teachers in seminaries, authors of pious texts, composers of sacred music, and so on. Confraternities continued to do pastoral activity of a very popular and widespread kind amongst us. Parishes were also important in this century, although there were not many outside of Central Europe.

Saint Pompilius was born in 1710 and died in 1766. After thirteen years of commitment to the school, he dedicated himself almost exclusively to preaching, spiritual direction and confession of adults, and received the title of “Apostolic Preacher” from the Pope.

## 2.3. More innovative contributions to the Church and to society

### *Contributions in the pedagogical-educational field*

By far the greatest contribution that the Pious Schools gave to society and the Church during the 18<sup>th</sup> century was the education of thousands of children and youngsters (every year there were more than 20,000 pupils), especially when we consider that in those days society had neither the means nor the will to provide this service.

Nevertheless, other more innovative contributions are worthy of mention, and perhaps are more surprising because of this. Some of the very best contributions of Piarists to the history of pedagogy appear in this very period. We shall mention some:

- Poland: the Polish Piarists were involved in all the most significant problems of the cultural and social life of Poland and Lithuania: missionary work amongst Lutherans; interventions in the dispute of about rites (Uniati); increasing Polish influence in Lithuania; educational reform; the cultivation of the Polish language and nationalism, especially during the division of the country and Russian domination. In addition, the protection of the Pious Schools by the Polish Royal House was widely known.

Fr. Stanislaw Konarski (1699-1773) stands out: he proposed a study programme for Piarist institutes which lasted eight years. Even though the basis was still humanistic, this was extended to other subjects such as geography, History, law, Physics, Natural Sciences, the Polish Language, foreign Languages (French, German) and gymnastic exercises. This was important modernisation of the schools, to say nothing of the patriotic aspect in a period when the kingdom of Poland was an appetising prey for its surrounding powers.

Through the National Commission for Education, Fr Kinarski had a decisive role in the Educational Reform which the Polish government carried out in the period.

Still in Poland, Fr. Antonio Wisniewski (1718-1772) introduced modern Physics and experimental Physics into middle school.

- Hungary: the intellectual prestige of the Piarists of Hungary was immense. They were important in the teaching of the Magyar

language, which was a key factor in the nationalistic movements of the following century. They were closely linked to the state and benefited from official financial aid. Many of them were distinguished university professors.

They prepared many study programmes for their school pupils which had been adapted to the current times. In the end a state syllabus was imposed in 1775, but many Piarists had a hand in its drawing up.

- Austria: after the Society of Jesus had been disbanded (1773), the Piarists became the most popular educators in Austria. They had strong ties with the throne. They ran institutes, parishes, colleges and took part in scientific Academies. Fr. Gratian Marx was one of the most notable.
- Tuscany: the Province of Etruria continued with its Galilean traditions and won great prestige in the fields of science and letters. Fr. Gaetano del Ricco, astronomer and mathematician, became director of the Ximenes Observatory in Florence, which is still managed by the Piarists.
- Spain: the Piarists of Spain were intellectually very prestigious and excellent teachers who were much appreciated at the Royal Court, although some of them were perhaps too attached to it. Fathers Felipe Scío and Benito Feliú were among the most well-known.

### *Piarists of Note*

Even though we should not forget that the greatest glories of our Order are in the field of the silent and patient work that the “unknown Piarist”, like a goldsmith, does every day with and for children and young people, as Pope Pius XII proclaimed, some names of Piarists who distinguished themselves during these years should be mentioned here, both because of the roles they occupied and honours they received and for their culture and the sanctity of their lives. We shall cite only a few names here, but a fuller listing may be found in the book, “*Escuelas Pías, ser e historia*”.

- Bishops: numerous Piarists were nominated bishops during this century and the next.
  1. *Passante, Agostino* (1724-1732) from the Province of Naples, was the co-founder of the Pious Schools in Spain, preacher

and counsellor to the Imperial Court in Vienna and Bishop of Pozzuoli.

2. *Sabbatini, Giuliano* (1726-1757) from Tuscany, was Bishop of Modena.
3. *Correa, Francisco* (1727-1738), from the Province of Rome, was a native of Portugal, a pupil of the Nazarene College and Bishop of Ripatransone.
4. *Groll, Adolf* (1731-1743) from the Province of Germany, was General of the Order and later Bishop of Győr in Hungary.
5. *Delbecchi, Giuseppe Agostino* (1751-1777) from the Province of Sicily, was a consultant to the Congregation of Rites, Superior General, Bishop of Alghero and Archbishop of Cagliari.
6. *Bajtay, Anton* (1760-1773) from Hungary was the Bishop of Transylvania.
7. *Olenski, Joseph Basil* (1763-1773) from Poland was Bishop of Cambisopoli.
8. *Bruni, Filippo* (1715-1771) from Romania, was Bishop of Lyda and Vicar of the diocese of Sabina.
9. *Sancho, Basilio* (1766-1787), from Aragon, was Archbishop of Manila for 21 years.
10. *Di Nobili, Francesco Maria* (1772-1774) from the Province of Puglia was the Bishop of Lariano in Puglia.
11. *Gorski, Ludovico* (1781-1799) from Poland was auxiliary bishop of Pomerania.
12. *Fengler, Jozsef* (1788-1802) from Austria was the Bishop of Győr in Hungary.
13. *Serrano, Melchor* (1788-1800) from Aragon was titular Bishop of Arca and auxiliary of Valeza; banned from Godoy.
14. *Del Muscio, Gaetano* (1792-1808) from Puglia was Archbishop of Manfredonia.
15. *Scío, Felipe*, (1795-1796) from Castile, was a biblical scholar and Bishop of Segovia.

16. *Orengo, Paolo Geronimo* (1752-1815) from Liguria was Bishop of Ventimiglia.
  17. *Strojnowski, Geronimo* from Poland, was Bishop of Luck and of Vilnius (Lithuania).
  18. *Lenzi, Carlo Maria* (1818-1825) from Sicily was Superior General and Bishop of Lipari.
  19. *Pes, Domenico* (1819-1832) from Sardinia was Bishop of Bisarcio.
  20. *Cao, Federico* (1830-1852) was from Sardinia and Bishop of Zama.
  21. *Ramo, Lorenzo* (1833-1845) from Valencia was Bishop of Huesca.
  22. *Rosani, Giovanni Battista* (1845-1862) from the Province of Tuscany, was general of the Order and Bishop of Eritrea and also Vicar of the Basilica of the Vatican.
  23. *Todde-Valeri, Michele* (1850-1852), from Sardinia, was Bishop of Ogliastra.
  24. *Barnowski, Valentino* (1850-1852), from Poland, was Bishop of Lorima.
  25. *Krasinski, Stanislao* (1858-1895) from Lithuania, was Bishop of Vilnius.
  26. *Del Nisio, Salvatore* (1858-1895) from Naples was Bishop of Ariano.
  27. *Schuster, Constantin* (1877-1899) from Hungary was Bishop of Cassovia.
  28. *Zini, Celestino* (1889-1892) from Tuscany was Bishop of Siena.
  29. *Mistrangelo, Alfonso Maria* (1892-1930), from Liguria, was Bishop of Apio and Archbishop of Florence, Superior General and a Cardinal.
- Distinguished Piarists in the cultural field: many Piarists were noted for their knowledge and their publications in many fields of letters and science. Here are some of them:



- *Beccaria, Giovanni Battista* (1716-1761), from the Province of Rome, a distinguished physicist, specialised in electricity, he had a long correspondence with Benjamin Franklin.
- *Chelucci, Paolino* (1681-1754), from the Province of Rome, ex-General, professor of the Roman university of “La Sapienza”, he was a Latin scholar who was well-known in Italy and Germany.
- *Corsini, Edoardo* (1702-1765), from Tuscany, ex-General and professor of the University of Pisa, he wrote many books on Philology.
- *Dalham, Floriano* (1713-1795), an Austrian mathematician, philosopher and theologian.
- *Del Ricco, Gaetano* (1746-1818) from Tuscany, physicist and mathematician; on the death of the Jesuit Leonardo Ximenes, the founder of the Florentine Astronomical and Seismological Observatory, he was his successor in the Chair of Astronomy and became the first Piarist director of the Observatory; he was also preceptor of the future Grand Duke of Tuscany, Ferdinand III.
- *Feliú, Benito* (1732-1801), from Aragon, biblical scholar and professor of philosophy and theology; he was a full member of the *Sociedad de Amigos del País* for 25 years and he was greatly appreciated as a man of wisdom throughout Spain and Europe; he assisted in the reform of the University of Valencia. He proposed that the study of Castilian grammar should be separate from that of Latin. He was also Fr. Provincial of Aragon.
- *Konarski, Stanislaw* (1699-1773), from Poland, pedagogue and humanist; he founded the College for the Nobility in Warsaw; he established a new system of education and teaching which would spread throughout Poland; he also reformed the parliamentary system of his country; he is considered to be the “pedagogue of Poland” and a “Father of the Nation”.
- *Marx, Gratian* (1721-1810) from Austria, pedagogue and a reformer of teaching in Austria; he was nominated Rector of the Academy of Savoy by the Empress Maria Teresa; by her he was also given the task of reforming the national teaching programme, and this was subsequently approved unanimously

by the Commission of Studies of the Court; this Programme was valid from 1775 to 1804.

- *Maschat, Remigio* (1692-1747), from Bohemia, published various works on Canon Law which ran into several editions, not only in his country of Bohemia but also in Rome, Augsburg, Venice and Madrid.
- *Merino, Andrés* (1730-1787), from Castile, was an excellent calligrapher who wrote elementary school text books. His principal work was “*Escuela paleográfica o de leer letras antiguas desde la entrada de los godos a España hasta nuestros tiempos*”.
- *Natali, Martino* (1730-1791), from Rome, was Professor of Theology at the University of Pavia
- *Osinski, Germano* (1730-1802), from Poland, physicist, biologist and man of letters; he was Professor of Physics and achieved great renown because of his experiments in the field; he built lightning conductors and was considered the “first Polish electricity scientist”. He was the first Pole to study the composition of the air and chlorophyll in plants.
- *Piaggio, Antonio* (1713-1797), from Liguria, was an exceptional calligrapher in the Vatican Library who invented a method to restore the carbonised papyri of Herculaneum, which was used for a very long time.
- *Sakl, Agustín* (1642-1717), from Bohemia, was a personal friend of the philosopher Leibniz and published works on advanced mathematics.
- *Scío, Felipe* (1642-1717), from Castile, biblical scholar and pedagogue; in 1780 he published the “Uniform Method” for Primary Schools and in Castile he developed the Pascale method to teach reading. He reformed the teaching methods of humanistic studies in which he introduced direct reference to the classics. He won the respect of Charles III, who entrusted the education of his grandchildren to him. Charles IV nominated him teacher of religion of the future King Ferdinand VII. His greatest work was publishing the complete version of the Vulgate Bible in Castilian.

## 2.4. Religious life and the government of the Order

### *A flourishing period*

According to Fr. Ausenda, the first 60 years of the century should be considered as one of the best periods in the history of the Pious Schools.

The 1718 General Chapter, which had been carefully prepared by Fr. Andrea Boschi, was the most important of the century in the matter of decisions taken for the education of young people and many other aspects of Piarist life.

Regular observances were the main concern of the members of the General Chapter, as of the Father General and the Fathers Provincial.

The Order was known for its seriousness and rigor as also for its large number of religious who were conspicuous for holiness and social importance (bishops, advisors of the Pope and princes, members of various official boards, etc.). St. Pompilius Mary Pirrotti (1710-1766) represented the highest case of sanctity recognised by the Church; but many others were notable for the holiness of their lives.

The formation of young people was generally of a high level, both in the novitiates and Juniorates, and the number was always high. Their formation and training was regulated by the "*Methodus seu Ratio Studiorum pro Religiosis nostris*" approved by the 1718 Chapter, which had been drawn up based upon Fr. Pirroni's plan. Unfortunately, it was not always followed in the same way: in Poland and Hungary, the programme, with their own special regulations which were updated, was maintained for the whole period; but in Italy, poverty and a lack of teachers meant that in the latter part of the period they repeated the error of sending youngsters who had not finished their studies on to the Institutes. From 1748, the study of Canon Law was added to the syllabus and they again insisted upon the study of Mathematics.

### *Collating and publishing the Constitutions and Rules*

Gathering together and publishing all that which encouraged observing the rules and the spirit of Calasanz was considered to be very important:

- Various publications were completed, which, even though they were not official, were widely read and influential. For example, that of the Fr. General, Paolino Chelucci in 1754; that of the Province of Castile in 1761; and that of the Province of Poland in 1768.
- The Fr. General, Gaetano Ramo, published an official edition in 1781. The success of this edition was immense and it went into various editions during the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Its main contents were: Constitutions, Common Rules, Common Ritual and Penitential Canons.

Amongst other things which were established, we should note the common rules for prayer, which remained valid until the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vatican Council, and these were as follows:

- Matins: the Angelus, the psalm *Miserere*, meditation upon the Passion (one hour, later reduced to half an hour).
- Midday: an examination of conscience.
- Before supper: a Crown of 5 Psalms of our Lady, mental prayer on the new entries (half an hour, later reduced to a quarter of an hour).
- Before nocturnal rest: the Litany of Saints, an examination of conscience, *Sub tuum praesidium*.

### *Living with vows*

This was continually insisted upon, but certain changes were gradually introduced.

- Poverty and austerity: the word “supreme” did not appear in the wording of the “Profession”. It soon became a custom for the Superior to have money for personal use (future *peculio*), a usage which was authorised by the 1718 General Chapter. The habit should conform to that worn by clerics regular, beards were abolished and they began to sign with their names and surnames.
- Obedience: in this matter the main problem was the interference of the ecclesiastical or civil authorities because a certain order or transfer had not been obeyed.
- Chastity: this topic is hardly mentioned, as was usual in those times; but sanctions were established for those who transgressed.

- Teaching: the 1718 General Chapter, in addition to reminding them of the fact that this was a perpetual vow (there were Fathers Provincial and other Superiors who did not want to return to teaching at the end of their mandate), coined the evergreen expression in Piarist tradition, “a vow to teach implies a vow to learn”. Frequent reminders were made so that they should not use the pretext of preaching or confessing to avoid scholastic duties.

### *The beatification and canonisation of the Founder*

On 18<sup>th</sup> August 1748, Joseph Calasanz was proclaimed Blessed by Pope Benedict XIV (Prospero Lambertini), who, on the centenary of his death (25<sup>th</sup> of the same month) went in person to San Pantaleo in order to prostrate himself before the tomb of the new Blessed.

On 16<sup>th</sup> July 1767, Joseph Calasanz was proclaimed a saint by Clement XIII.

As well as underlining the character of the Founder of the Pious Schools for the Roman Curia and the Church in general, these facts helped to emphasise the Calasanzian spirit of Piarists, preparing them, so to speak, for a break-up in the government of the Order.

### *12 year Generals*

Faced with practical problems, mostly of an organisation and economic kind, and a need to convene frequent General Chapters, the General Curia presented its desiderata to the Holy See. In 1758, with a Brief, “*Christianae pietatis*”, Pope Benedict XIV decided that from henceforth the Generals would be nominated for 12 years, while the General Chapters would be held with the same frequency. Assistants would continue to be elected for a six-year term. Therefore, six years after the General Chapter, the “General Congregation” would be convened, to elect the Assistants. This General Congregation was composed of the General and his Assistants, the Procurator General and the Father- Provincials. This decree came into effect in 1760. But this usage also had its problems. Then in 1804 it was again decided that the mandate of the Generals should again be six years.

The first general elected for 12 years was Fr. Giuseppe Maria Guria, who died in 1771, before completing his mandate. The most celebrated event of his term as General was the canonisation of Joseph Calasanz.

But these years saw the beginning of something which would cause a real and true crisis, even though for the Order the most damaging effects would appear later on: that fact is that amongst our members the Jansenist, Absolutist and “Illustrious” doctrines started to appear, which, during the closing years of the 18<sup>th</sup> century would trouble a large number of distinguished Piarists, especially in Rome and Italy, where some of them even joined the ranks of Jacobin revolutionaries, and one of them, Fr. Giuseppe Solari, even became a member of the government of the “Roman Republic” which was proclaimed in 1798.

Fr. Giuseppe Beccaria (1738-1813), elected in 1796, governed the Order for 12 years, with great prudence and strength in most difficult times. He was unable to carry out all his duties as he would have wished because of political and military events (the Napoleonic wars, revolutionary movements in Italy, the third repartition of Poland): first of all he was forced to abandon Rome for a certain period; when he returned to Rome he was unable to keep in regular touch with the most far flung Provinces, not even with Sicily and Sardinia. He impotently presided over the break-up of the Order; the disintegration of the Provinces of Liguria and Naples; the official disappearance of the Province of Poland (the religious had to reorganise because of the new territorial situation caused by the dismemberment of Poland in 1795); and the loss of many religious and many Houses.

### *The autonomy of the Provinces and centrifugal tendencies*

Since the days of St. Joseph Calasanz, the Fr. General, with the approval of his Assistants, had nominated the Provincial Superiors in the utmost liberty. However, there soon arose a greater desire for more autonomy on the part of the Provinces, especially those furthest away, such as Poland and Hungary, where the General Congregation had a very limited knowledge of possible candidates.

In 1744, the Pope established for Italy, and in 1759 extended the rule to all Provinces of the Order, that when the General Congregation elected a Provincial Superior or the Rector of a House, it could only

choose one of the three names which the Province in question had presented each time.

This centripetal force was dramatically increased by the Absolutist politics which began to take root in various countries towards the end of the century. The Austrian Empire was one of the first; with laws dictated in 1781 by Emperor Joseph II (“Josephism”), the Provinces of Austria and Hungary were no longer subject to the control of Rome and were not allowed to attend the General Chapter of 1784. The Bourbons of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies went down the same path and, in 1788, decided that the Provinces of Naples, Sicily and Puglia would be separated from Rome. The Bourbon monarchs of Spain shortly followed suite. For this and other reasons the 1796 General Chapter was made up only of Italians. This movement which undid the Order was sometimes encouraged by notable Piarists.

Thus, in practical terms the Order was divided into three sections (the Austrian Empire, Spain and Italy). We might also speak of a fourth, since Polish and Lithuanian Piarists led an autonomous life, although things were done to maintain unity with the centre in Rome.

All of this came to a head in 1804, in the Bull of Pope Pius VII “*Inter graviores*”, which will be dealt with in the next chapter.

## 2.5. Upheaval in the new century

In those 25 years which stretch from the beginning of the French Revolution (1789) to the Congress of Vienna (1815) after the defeat of Napoleon, there was a deep political, ideological, religious and moral upheaval over the whole of the European mainland. Even though the Revolution had been defeated in military terms, its ideas continued to spread as moderate or radical Liberalism. The Church, and certainly the Pious Schools, experienced this crisis in a traumatic way.

As far as our order is concerned, it should be underlined that:

- **Religious life** was deeply affected by great tension and contradictions: internally, there was an excess of formalism and routine, which was the fruit of the previous regime; disunion with Rome; deep-rooted ill-feeling caused by the presence of religious influenced by the new ideas; customs which did not conform to the vow of poverty (certain types of *peculio*); the lack of training in many religious because of instable government... Externally, there was interference and obstacles raised by the civil authorities, with dominant ideas which were opposed to religious life, laws which dissolved religious Orders and Congregations...
- **The teaching ministry** was especially affected: centralising state systems tried to impose control on any public activity, especially where teaching was concerned. Official teaching plans ended up by creating a most difficult path for the schools of Calasanz. Enlightenment-influenced lay movements and a new conception of education, along the lines of Rousseau, created many difficulties for Christian education.

Both Absolutism and Liberalism thought that teaching should not remain in the hands of the Church, for that meant keeping a brake on progress and individual liberty. In all nations, beginning with France, a national Primary School (obligatory, free and lay) was created. The liberal regimes of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, even the most moderate of them, wanted to impose educational policy based on centralism and nation-statehood.

The French Revolution and the Napoleonic period	
1789 - Estates General. Fall of the Bastille	1804 - Napoleon becomes Emperor
1796 - Napoleon Commander in Chief of troops in Italy	1808 - Invasion of Spain
1799 - Coup d'État: Napoleon First Consul	1814 - Abdicates at Fontainebleau
1802 - Napoleon Consul for Life	1815 - Waterloo. Congress of Vienna



### 3. 19<sup>th</sup> CENTURY (1804-1904): A CENTURY OF PAINFUL FRAGMENTATION

#### Superior Generals from Rome

Giuseppe Beccaria (1796-1808)

- As Vicar General: Arcangelo Isaia (1808-1814)
- As Vicar General: Jacopo Baldovinetti (1814-1816)
- As Vicar General: Stanislao Stefanini (1816-1818)

Carlo Maria Lenzi (1818-1819). Nominated bishop, he was substituted by Ignazio Satta (May 1819 – May 1820). On his death, substituted by Giovanni Battista Evangelisti (May 1820 - October 1824)

Vincenzo Maria d'Addiego (1824-1830). On his death, substituted by Giuseppe Rollerio (March 1830 – May 1830)

- As Vicar General: Pompilio Casella (1830-1836)

Giovanni Battista Rosani (1836-1842)

- As Vicar General: Giovanni Battista Rosani (1842-1844). Nominated bishop, substituted by Giovanni Inghirami (1844-1848)

Gennaro Fucile (1848-1861)

Giovanni Battista Perrando (1861-1868)

José Calasanz Casanovas (1868-1884). At his request, substituted by Mauro Ricci (August 1884-September 1886)

Mauro Ricci (1886-1900). On his death, substituted by Dionisio Tassinari (January 1900 – April 1900)

Alfonso Maria Mistrangelo (1900 – 1904)

*The Vicars General of Spain for the same period may be found in "Escuelas Pías. Ser e historia", p. 282.*

### 3.1. The Bull “*Inter graviores*” and the two concomitant Superiors General

As we saw previously, impositions from the civil authorities, sometimes encouraged by certain Piarists, gave rise to a situation which was of disturbing fragmentation or separation of the Piarist Provinces, creating practically autonomous blocs. With his Bull “*Inter graviores*”, Pope Pius VII tried, as far as possible, to regulate this kind of organisation without total fragmentation of the original single unit. This was effective only in the Spanish Provinces, for the Central European bloc was beyond his control because of the political and military situation.

The Bull established:

- That the mandate for a General of the Pious Schools would be six years (thus annulling the 1758 disposition of Benedict XIV, which spoke of 12 years).
- That in the Order there would be simultaneous Superior Generals, one in Rome and another in Spain. But one would take the name of Provost General and the other of Vicar General, so that they might alternate for six-year terms. Thus the title of Father General would be held for six years by that of Rome and the following six years by that of Spain.

Shortly after the Bull had been published, Fr. Gabriel Hernández was nominated Vicar General in Spain. He was confirmed in the role various times and kept the post until 1825. When, in 1808, the last General with a twelve-year mandate, Fr. Giuseppe Beccaria, finished his term, as established, it became the turn of Spain to claim the title of Provost General. In fact, Fr. Arcangelo Isiaia, who had been elected during the General Chapter in Rome that year, became Vicar General. It is interesting to see that the elections at this General Chapter at Rome, as for various successive General Chapters, took place using ballot forms sent by post and examined by a special representative of the Holy See, because political impositions and the disastrous situation caused by war stopped many from attending.

In July 1839, for the first and only time, the two General Chapters of Spain and Rome coincided. The Spanish one elected and proclaimed Fr. Lorenzo Ramo as Provost General, while Rome elected Fr. Pompilio

Cassella, who took the title of Vicar General. Thus the Superiors of Spain or Rome were successively elected by their own General Chapters or nominated by the Holy See when political circumstances did not allow the Chapter to be held.

Pope Pius IX (1846-1878) was an ex-pupil of the Piarists of Volterra in Etruria (beatified on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2000) and in 1861 he tried to reunify the Order, but in vain. He tried again in 1868, when he put a Spaniard, Calasanz Casanovas, at the head of the Order. Fr. Casanovas addressed the problem decisively but also very tactfully. He made courtesy visits to all Provinces in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. He was unable to achieve more at the time, but he laid the way for reunification.

Nevertheless we should underline that even though they were divided in their organisation, the Pious Schools remained faithful to the spirit of the blessed Founder and were united at least in their spirituality, as, for example, in their rites for the deceased. Thus, when the Order was reunified in 1904, all Piarists recognised themselves as children of Calasanz.

### 3.2. Evolution of the Order during the 19<sup>th</sup> century

The century began with a dramatic fall in the numbers of the Order's members and Houses, but as the century went by there was a comprehensive and clear, although not total, recovery.

According to data available to us, there were about 3,000 Piarists at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century (actually, at the beginning of the French Revolution). In 1830, statistics give us a total of 1,230 religious, which implies a dramatic reduction in a relatively short time. At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century a total of about 2,000 Piarists had been reached, which indicates considerable recovery.

But every Province developed differently from the others. Let us see what happened in every bloc and in each Province.

#### *a) Italy*

The Pious Schools of Italy suffered great losses and their later recovery was modest: if at the end of the previous century there had been 1,000 religious, at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century there were not more than 300.

It should not be forgotten that in addition to the upheaval and persecution caused by the Napoleonic invasions and revolutionary movements which followed, there was, shortly after, a long and difficult path for all religious orders because of the wars and conflicts leading to the unification of Italy, which finished in 1870, with the conquest of Rome, when the Pope considered that he was a prisoner of the Masonic government of King Victor-Emmanuel II.

But let us continue with details of what happened:

- The Napoleonic wars and revolutions of the beginning of the century:
  - Almost annihilated the Provinces of Liguria and Campania (Naples).
  - Seriously damaged the Province of Rome, reducing its more than 300 religious in 1790 to just over 100.
  - Its effects in Sardinia and Sicily were not quite so serious.
  - The Provinces of Tuscany and Puglia were hardly affected.

During these 25 years, the Superiors tried with all their might to oppose any decrease in religious life and decay in schools. They managed to make sure that after 1815 the Provinces which had suffered most would dedicate their efforts to reorganisation and spiritual renewal: with some difficulty Liguria recovered, but Campania (Naples) did not manage to reunite its old religious and for this reason, in 1823, it joined Puglia to make a new Province, which returned to being called the Province of Naples. From then onwards it began to flourish and the numbers of religious increased. Tuscany also grew.

Half way through the century, the Pious Schools of Italy had about 600 religious. The European mainland political revolutions which happened around 1848 did not affect the Piarists greatly. Their Houses proceeded well until the 1859 revolution.

The political movements and wars which led to the reunification of Italy, or rather the governments which it imposed upon Italy caused more and very serious damage to the Pious Schools.

It was in the Kingdom of the House of Savoy that liberal politics and confiscation of Church property began (1850), along with other measures against the Church and its institutions. This policy slowly spread to those states which joined the kingdom of Victor Emmanuel II. Thus unification was being carried out “against” the Church and the Pope. In spite of trying to discuss policy, especially at the beginning of the papacy of Pius IX (1846-1878), the religious atmosphere became delicate and the conscience of Catholics was divided: first of all the Church became isolationist and forbade Catholics to take part in State institutions; later it incited the faithful to fight the anti-religious tendencies of the government, through conferences, campaigns and so on.

The consequences of this clash were very serious for Religious Congregations: the 1866 law denied legal recognition to nearly 2,000 religious Orders, Congregations and Corporations; their property was expropriated by the State; there was state control of teaching in religious centres; a state certificate became necessary in order to teach; religious were expelled from their Houses, unless those Houses were annexed to a Church for public worship; prohibition of accepting novices; and so on.

Faced with this situation, the Piarist reaction shows, yet again, their respect for culture and society. There was no unique stance taken which might have closed them to the problems of changing a country into a modern unified nation. On this matter, Fr. Ernesto Balducci states: *“To tell the truth, the Piarists did not, as a group, follow these intransigent orders; the clerical/anti-clerical conflict did not seem to affect them. The most significant aspects of their culture seemed to be open to the influence of Gioberti and Rosmini, so much so, in fact, that unlike the Jesuits, who had a strong sense of ideology, the Piarist lack of this gave rise to certain suspicions in Curial quarters”*.

Nevertheless, with laws passed during the 1860s, the government inflicted a mortal blow upon the Provinces of Sicily and Sardinia, which led to their disappearance. The other four Provinces survived and continued working, even though things were not easy for them. In Tuscany those laws were applied later on, in the 1870s, but the effect was destructive. And the Province of Naples, which had reached the figure of 240 religious by the middle of the century, was seen to be the weakest when faced with these new difficulties: many of its members left, in some cases to work as teachers in other centres or as secular priests.

By 1888, the number of Italian Piarists had fallen to just over 300, distributed thus:

- Province of Rome: 80.
- Province of Liguria: 84.
- Province of Tuscany: 135.
- Province of Naples: 17 in 3 communities.

### *b) Poland and Lithuania*

The 19<sup>th</sup> century was catastrophic for the Pious Schools of these two regions. If at the end of the previous century these two Piarist Provinces could boast more than 400 religious (in Poland there were 12 Houses and about 150 religious), by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century only 19 religious remained in Poland and Lithuania had disappeared long ago.

But let us examine them one at a time:

## *Poland*

With the third partition of the country in 1795 (the previous ones had taken place in 1772 and 1793), between Prussia, the Austro-Hungarian Empire and Russia, the Piarist Province also had to be divided:

- Those Houses which were then under Russian domination moved to the Province of Lithuania and began a precarious existence.
- Houses which were under Austro-Hungarian domination made up the Province of East-Galizia. It consisted of five Houses and was short-lived (1775-1810).
- Houses under Prussian domination made up the so-called province of Borussia (1795-1807), until Prussia was defeated by Napoleon in 1806-7 and the politically independent Duchy of Warsaw was created.

From this point on, those Houses which resided within this area organised themselves into the so-called province of the Duchy of Warsaw. This Province ceased to exist when the above-mentioned Duchy disappeared, that is, at the Congress of Vienna in 1815. This restored the Kingdom of Poland, although it was a part of the Russian Empire.

This helped all those Piarist Houses which were under Russian domination to re-group and make the Province of Poland in 1816 and to work more or less peacefully until 1832. However, because of the failed Polish nationalist insurrection of 1839, Tsar Nicholas I made Poland into a simple province of Russia. All religious were henceforth forbidden to keep schools. Thus Piarists dedicated their lives to pastoral and cultural work in the churches annexed to their schools (religious rites, catechism, theatrical performances, and so on). After a further Polish insurrection in 1863, the Russian Tsar forbade religious to do any kind of activity and the Piarist Province was disbanded. Many Piarists were deported to Siberia, others disappeared and some escaped abroad.

Two of those who escaped, Fr. A. Slotwinski and Fr. T. Chromechi, with the help of the Fr. General, managed to get the old college of Cracow back in 1873. They restored the religious community with 15 religious. This was the seed for the growth of the Pious Schools in Poland, which started in 1892, when the Province of Poland returned to life.



### *Lithuania*

This was a province which had flourished since 1736, and it had some Houses in Russian territory, one at St. Petersburg. In 1795, when Lithuania was annexed to Russia, the Piarists were allowed to continue their teaching work by adopting the syllabuses proposed by the University of Vilnius, on which they were to depend. However, in 1832, Tsar Nicholas I closed all their schools except three, and these were subsequently closed (in 1842, 1844 and 1853). From this moment on the Piarist province of Lithuania ceased to exist. The last Piarists, who ran a home in the town of Międzyrzecz, were forced to find refuge in a Franciscan convent.



*c) The Provinces of the Austro-Hungarian Empire*

The four Provinces which the Piarists had built in the territories of the Austro-Hungarian Empire had very different destinies during the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Let us examine them individually:

*The Province of Rhineland-Switzerland (1776-1808)*

To overcome difficulties in governing Houses situated in the far off Western areas of Germany, an Independent Vice-Province had been created in 1762 and in 1776 it was made a Province. This consisted of six houses from the province of Bohemia and Austria. Later on three more Houses were founded; two of them were in Switzerland.

It never had many religious and its economic situation was one of almost penury, even though it was to be of great intellectual prestige.

The French Revolution and the wars which followed it razed the left side of the Rhine to the ground, and one by one the Piarist Houses disappeared. Therefore, in 1808, they considered the Province of Rhineland-Switzerland disbanded: "*Expiravit omnino provincia nostra*" (our Province has completely disappeared) wrote two Piarists from Tempien in their last letter to the Father General. Four years later, in Krin, Napoleonic troops murdered Fr. Hemmerle, who was perhaps the last Piarist from this Province, which was never to be resuscitated.

*Province of Bohemia and Moravia (now in the Czech Republic)*

This Province came from the 1751 division of the old Piarist province of Germany, founded by St. Joseph Calasanz. It had Houses in Silesia, Moravia and Bohemia.

Since 1781 it had been dominated by the wild absolutism of the Emperor, who even wished to control religious life and impose its separation from Rome. This started its decadence, although the Order was strong enough to create three new foundations and have a flourishing existence during the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The revolutions of 1848 sent this Province into a period of serious crisis, which was mainly due to two causes: the first was not having wished to conform to the new laws which required state qualifications in order to teach.

*Old Province  
of Rhineland-Switzerland*



The Piarists abandoned the schools and dedicated themselves to pastoral work, while the institutes had to be taught by lay schoolmasters. Further laws of the state made it easy for religious and priests to abandon their orders and join the diocesan clergy. Many Piarists abandoned the Order.

In such conditions, between 1870 and 1871 the Province lost its novices and juniors, given slight means for sustenance and an uncertain Piarist future. In 1872, Fr. General Casanovas wrote: *“The disappearance of the Order in those provinces because of the need to dismiss all novices, was due to a lack of means to keep them, and because the Order was abandoned by its religious”*.

This may be seen in the following table:

- 1802: 257 religious
- 1839: 307 religious
- 1880: 112 religious
- 1900: 53 religious

### *Province of Austria*

In 1752, this was also created from the partitioning of the Province of Germany and had an era of flourishing life during which it was protected by the Court. Thus, in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century they managed to open 15 new Houses. Most of these foundations were due to the suppression of the Jesuits and the benevolence of Empress Maria Teresa.

The prestige of the Piarists was celebrated, thanks to the quality of their regular lives but also because of the high intellectual, academic and pastoral levels their work achieved.

During the 19<sup>th</sup> century these levels began to fall for various reasons: the first half of the century was beset by the wild absolutism which tried to interfere everywhere and which sanctioned separation from Rome. During the second half, because of a series of state laws which left the Piarists unprepared (no recognised teaching qualifications, easy exit from religious orders, prohibition of religious schools).

Here are the numbers of this Province:

- 1891: 136 religious
- 1830: 124 religious

- 1880: 48 religious
- 1900: 28 religious

### *Province of Hungary*

Events in this Province happened in a very different way, even though they belonged to the same Empire. This was chiefly due to the personal work and effort of the Piarists.

During the first half of the century they were favoured by the greater political freedom which the Kingdom of Hungary had within the Empire.

However, following the events of 1848-49 they had to obey restrictions imposed by Austria. Nevertheless, their love for study meant that they anticipated the demands of the government for recognised academic qualifications and managed to get their schools officially recognised. Their traditional commitment to continual training and their desire to participate in religious and social activity meant that they were leaders in all fields of theology, philosophy, pedagogics, literature and science. Their prestige as teachers was extraordinary. This is why the laws which were promulgated in that period hardly touched them.

With the Political Pact of 1867, Hungary reacquired freedom and the Piarists were able to profit from this situation to grow and improve further.

These are the positive statistics which show what happened:

- 1819: 359 religious
- 1850: 263 religious
- 1881: 312 religious
- 1898: 390 religious

### *d) Spain*

#### *Political situation*

The 19<sup>th</sup> century in Spain was one of extraordinary mobility and complexity, with constant conflict between traditionalists and liberals, and between moderate liberals and radical liberals. Three civil wars and other foreign wars (Africa and America) made the situation yet more dramatic and complex.

The Church and Religious Orders and Congregations were frequently the victims of unjust laws and cruel persecution. On the restoration of the monarchy of Alfonso XI there was an attempt to reconcile Catholicism with moderate liberalism.

This outline of the century's political events may help to set on what happened more easily:

Period	Date	Stage	Events of interest
War of Independence	1808-14	Joseph I: 1808-1813	Suppression of Religious Orders. 1812 Constitution.
Ferdinand VII	1814-33	Absolutism: 14-20	Religious orders begin to reorganise themselves.
		Constitutional period: 20-23	Partial suppress. religious orders. Hundred-thousand Children of St. Louis.
		Absolutism: 23-33	Re-establishment of religious orders.
Regency of Maria Cristina of Bourbon	1833-40	Cea Bermúdez, Mz. De la Rosa	1 <sup>st</sup> Carlist war: 33-39
		Queipo de Llano: 34	Anti-religious wars.
		Mendizábal: 34-36	1835 Confiscation. Abolition of religious houses with fewer than 12 members.
		Calatrava: 36	1837 Constitution. Radicale Suppression of religious orders.
Regency of Espartero	1840-43		
Isabella II	1843-68	Decade of moderation: 44-54	1845 Constitution. 1851 Concordate. 2 <sup>nd</sup> Carlist war: 46-49.
		Biennio progressista: 54-56	Pascual Madoz Confiscation: 55.
		Liberal Union government: 57-68	War in Africa: 59-60. Moyano Law: 57.
Prov. Government	1868-69	1868 Liberal revol.	1869 Progressive Constitution.
Amedeus of Savoy	1869-73		3 <sup>rd</sup> Carlist war: 72-76.
The Republic	1873-74		
Alfonso XII	1875-85	Restoration of the monarchy	1876 moderate Liberal Constitution.
Regency of Maria Cristina von Hapsburg	1885-02		Loss of Cuba, The Philippines and Puerto Rico.
Alfonso XIII	1902-31		

### *The Pious Schools of Spain, an overview*

We may distinguish between two periods in the development of Spanish Pious Schools during the 19th century.

#### *First period (until 1844)*

This was a period characterised by many difficulties, but the Piarists knew how to deal with them, but not without problems.

- a) They began the 19<sup>th</sup> century with about 300 religious. But the 6 year War of Independence (with the abolition of religious orders decreed by Joseph I) halved this: in 1814 there were only about 150 religious. The others became secular priests or simply left the Order or had died.
- b) In the first Absolutist period of Ferdinand VII (1814-20), the Piarists returned to their religious houses and organised their lives and activities.

But in the so-called Constitutional Period (1820-23) there was a partial suppression of religious congregations and orders: Major Superiors disappeared by law, and the Houses are subject to their local Bishops. Yet again people left the order and some became secular priests.

During the second Absolutist Period (1823-33), religious congregations returned to the situation before 1820. That of the Pious Schools improved somewhat.

- c) During Maria Cristina of Bourbon's Regency (1833-40), the situation was very much worse. Anti-clerical liberalism took over matters, especially during the governments of certain Prime Ministers, who followed one another in rapid succession: in 1834 in Madrid and other cities the populace attacked convents and many religious were murdered and houses destroyed.

In 1835, Mendizábel carried out the notorious confiscation of ecclesiastical property, which was certainly not the lowest point reached in a series of confiscations which were carried out in that century, before and after Mendizábel. Houses of Orders and Congregations with fewer than twelve members were closed. In 1837, all Religious Orders and Congregations, except two charitable organisations (Piarists and Pauline Fathers) and one which worked in the Philippines (Augustinian Fathers).

It should be noted that Piarists were subject to control but not to suppression, because they were considered to be “educators of the people”, as was publicly stated in Parliament. But these three orders were not allowed to admit novices. This situation, even though one of comparative privilege, greatly damaged the Piarists, because it denied them possible income needed to support the institutes and communities, because they were not allowed to admit novices and because of the closure of certain houses (those which had fewer than 12 members). All this was discouraging to some, who therefore left the Order.

Some Piarists escaped abroad, some to Italy, others to Latin America, where they founded schools, whose existence was somewhat ephemeral: Havana, between 1812 and 1815 (it would last until 1829); Montevideo, in 1835 (it lasted until 1875); Camagüey in 1835 (this did not last).

In his “*Historia literaria y bibliográfica de las Escuelas Pías en España*” (Madrid 1893), Fr. Carlos Lasalde describes the situation in thus:

*“When, in 1824, the novitiates, which had been closed since the period of the French occupation, reopened there were far fewer members than before, and those who did wear the habit of Calasanz were not able to concentrate on studying, as had been the case previously, because they had to assist in the schools, so it was impossible to learn the subjects with the conscientiousness of olden times. This is why they must have been at a lower level than the men of their time. If you then add that those who had come from the previous century were dying off, and that their work to maintain the existing colleges was very hard, it is not surprising that the state of the Institute was deplorable.*

*“When they reached 1844, the state of the Pious Schools in Spain was very sad: novitiates had been closed ten years earlier; the communities had lost almost a third of their members; there were very few Superiors, and in any case they had no canonical authority; there was a lot of work; people had almost lost hope: all this presaged rapid and complete closure”.*

### *Second period (1844-1902)*

- a) Restoration of the Pious Schools began in the reign of Isabella II (1843-1868), although these schools had lost their former autonomy and they were now subject to the official laws of the State.

In 1846, Fr. Jacinto Feliú (1787-1867) was nominated Apostolic Commissar for Spain, and he remained in the post for 18 years. His government was extremely beneficial for the Pious Schools: the Order began to get organised; they established precise rules for the formation of young religious, with a serious syllabus of studies with great importance being given to Mathematics, Philosophy and Theology; he sent the first Piarists to Cuba, where they founded Guanabacoa (1857) and to Camagüey (1858); he supported the foundation of the Piarist Mothers. At the end of his mandate, the number of Piarists in Spain had considerably increased and the four Provinces were flourishing.

Various decisions that the Spanish Government took during this period had repercussions in the Pious Schools: the signing of the Concordat with the Holy See (1851); approval of the most important teaching programme of the century, by the so-called Moyano Law (1857); the declaration that non-state teaching centres would be treated as commercial enterprises (1859).

- b) During 1868-1869, the religious had to face another adverse situation with the so-called Liberal Revolution of September 1868, which caused Isabella II to seek refuge in France. Yet again religious orders and congregations were suppressed. But again, the Piarists were exempt from this, even though their centres would be given a public profile.

The political events which followed (Amadeus of Savoy: 1869/1873 and the First Republic: 1873/74) continued to hinder their work.

- c) With full Restoration of the Monarchy in 1875, when Alfonso XII started to reign, the situation for religious life, including for the Piarists, started to improve. This stage is one of real expansion. This was reflected in the rapid increase in the numbers of religious and the number of new foundations. In fact, during the last quarter of the century, 28 new Piarist Houses were founded in Spain, responsibility of the various Demarcations. These are the numbers of Houses founded in the period: General Vicariate, 6; Province of Catalonia, 9; Province of Aragon, 5; Province of Castile, 5; Province of Valencia, 3.

However, other significant events happened:

- *Centralised Houses*: in order to train young Piarists better, there was an interest in devoting Houses exclusively to them, which were



well equipped and had good teachers. They thought that this could be best guaranteed if they were inter-Provincial Houses which were answerable directly to the Vicar General. Thus the following study centres for juniors began to be created:

- San Marcos de León (1879), for the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> stage of studies, after the novitiate. It was abandoned in 1888.
- Monastery of Irache (1885), where the 1<sup>st</sup> stage of studies was set up.
- San Pedro de Cardeña (1888), for the 2<sup>nd</sup> stage, instead of San Marcos.
- Tarasa (1901), which substituted Cardeña.
- *Piarists dependent upon the General (“Generalicios”)*: there are three distinct periods: Preparation; Institutionalisation; Dissolution.
  - Preparation: from 1875, the Vicar General of Spain, Juan Martra, guided by the inspiration of the Fr. General Calasanz Casanovas, started to encourage the existence of religious who depended directly upon him (and not on the Fathers Provincial), so as to provide better answers to new needs, especially in America.
  - Institutionalisation: in 1885 a new and personal Demarcation was given institutional legal authority. In 1885 the Novitiate of San Marcos de León (for friars) was opened and also in Irache (for clerics and friars). In 1888, the Novitiate of San Marcos transferred to San Pedro de Cardeña and novices were admitted for clerics and for friars.
  - The “Generalicios” increased rapidly, so that when, in 1897, its dissolution was decided upon, there were 160 religious. In this was various new foundations were made possible, amongst which, the following:
    - Tucumán (Argentina): 1884
    - Concepción (Chile): 1886
    - Yumbel (Chile): 1886
    - Copiapó (Chile): 1887

- Seville: 1888
- Panamá: 1889
- Buenos Aires: 1891
- Estella: 1893
- Córdoba (Argentina): 1894
- Porto Rico: 1894
- Santiago de Chile (Providencia): 1896

In 1897 this institution of the “Generalicios” which had been very fruitful, disappeared and its members and Houses were assigned to the various Spanish Provinces.

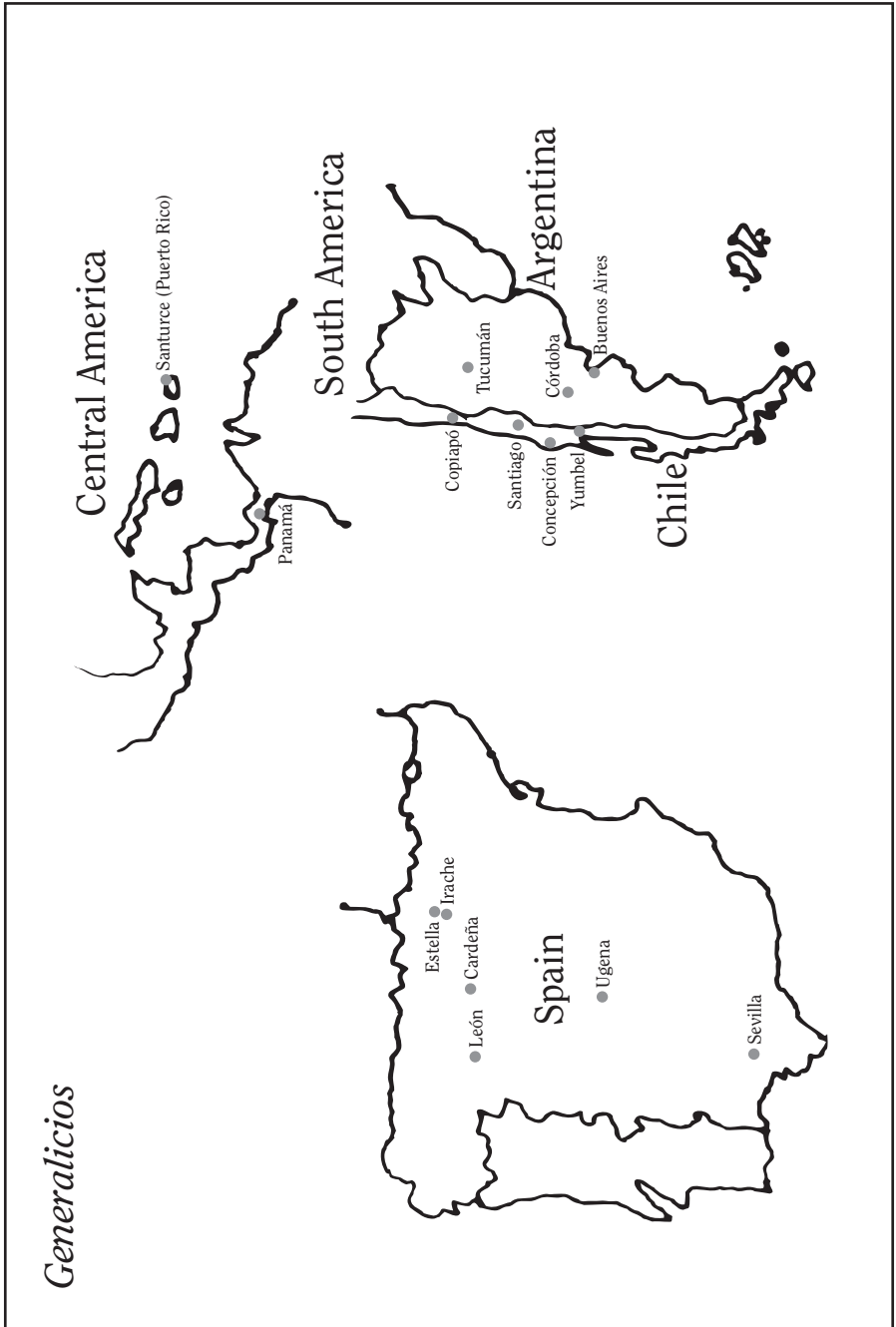
- Dissolution: up until 1904 the Vicars General, Fathers Pedro Gómez and Eduardo Llana, managed the liquidation of this curious institution of the “Generalicios”.

The four Provinces developed in a parallel way, depending upon the circumstances of the Spanish State. In the second half of the century everybody experienced a flourishing period of expansion, both as regards the number of religious and the new foundations.

At the end of the century, the situation was as follows:

	Aragon	Catalonia	Castille	Valencia	Vicar General	TOTAL
Year created	1742	1751	1754	1833		
N. of Religious	219	342	316	105	160	1,142
N. of Houses	14	21	15	6	3	59

Thus the Spanish Piarists achieved spectacular growth: the religious went from about 150 in 1814 to 1,142 in 1899 (912 priests or clerics, 230 working brothers). The Houses increased to 59. Therefore, at the beginning of the 20th century, the pious Schools of Spain made up the greater part of the Order.



### 3.3. The Piarist ministry in various Countries

#### *a) Changes in education during the period of Liberalism*

Liberalism wanted civil liberty and progress. It was an entirely new conception of life and society: secularised, lay and strongly centred in the state. It soon became clear that scholastic teaching was an essential part of all this. It was thought that School could and should transmit this new culture to all citizens.

Up until then, the Church, with its Orders and Religious Congregations, had practically had a monopoly in the field of education. But the Church was seen as conservative, obscurantist and an enemy of progress.

Many countries of mainland Europe began to organise a system of public instruction, which had a strong lay and state bias. The liberals wanted to obstruct teaching by the Church. Thus they had recourse to the suppression of religious congregations; sequestered buildings and property; state education qualifications were needed to teach; syllabuses and teaching methods; and so on. They sometimes offered posts in the state schools to religious who abandoned their Orders.

All of this created great tension and trauma, and nearly always ended in the defeat of the ecclesiastical positions by anti-clerical and pro-state ones. On other occasions these questions became an important part of Concordats with the Holy See.

The Church certainly opposed such tendencies, but it was undergoing certain important experiences of interior renewal in the teaching field, such as the “Escuelas del Ave María” (“Hail Mary Schools”) of Fr. Manjón, which were based upon an intuitive method. Over time, many religious centres adapted themselves to the new needs of these times.

#### *b) New systems of state education and repercussions for our schools*

Governments of various countries created a whole system of laws and rules for teaching, which were to be applied to all citizens. This new order of the educational system was done quite quickly, depending upon the country. But the basic elements used were more or less the same.

These are the principal ones:

### *Official programmes*

In the **Austro-Hungarian Empire** these had already been introduced since the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The 1848 laws were restrictive, but the reforms of 1866 and in the years which followed were radical.

For the Pious Schools, these laws meant a real change in their educational style. However, in Hungary the Piarists were more autonomous, both because of their high cultural level and because of their role in encouraging the Magyar culture.

In **Italy**, schooling was important for the cohesion of the new Nation. The Boncompagni Law established the rights and duties of the state in the educational field, and Pius IX protested because the Church had been excluded from the system of education. The Casati Law recognised the right of private organisations to open schools, but reserved the organisation and inspection of these to the state. From 1870 a unified and lay model of schooling was reinforced. In 1879, primary school became compulsory.

Father General Casanovas insisted that Piarist schools should adapt themselves to the programmes established by the laws of the Italian State, in spite of the unwillingness of some.

In **Spain** there were numerous and ephemeral official programmes:

- 1824: General Programme of Studies.
- 1825: Calomarde's Syllabus and Regulations for the first school of "Letters" (when the programme was being drawn up the Piarists took part).
- 1834: Instructions for the organisation and governance of primary schools: structures, teachers, inspections.
- 1836: Programme for secondary schools.
- 1857: General Law for Public Instruction: first and second stage of teaching (Moyano Programme). Primary schooling is declared compulsory, but these norms could not be applied because of lack of funds.

The failure of state education policies is confirmed by the fact that in 1900, 63% of the population was illiterate, and of the 30,000 pupils who attended Middle School, two thirds of them chose private or religious schools.

It should be remembered that the Pious Schools had “special treatment” in Spain, and they were exempt from many of the laws which were passed about education. Thus, in 1837, when the Courts approved the Law for the dissolution of religious Congregations, the Pious Schools (along with the Pauline and Augustinian Fathers), maintaining those schools with at least 12 Piarists. But various conditions were imposed: they would be considered “public schools”; their superiors would not be recognised, nor would their unity as a corporation; they would have to dress as diocesan priests; they would not be allowed to take in novices. It is clear that the Pious Schools are of the people and it is the people who defend them.

During the period of the restoration of Narváez, the Royal Order of 15<sup>th</sup> November 1845 fully acknowledged the Pious Schools as a religious Order and declared that Piarists should be treated with “*the considerations merited by their Institute*”, which were: “*Authorisation to teach philosophical subjects, a dispensation from various requisites for opening schools, and exemption from the qualification and grades for teaching, with some other preventive rules regarding those matriculating*”. In 1901, the Vicar General, Fr. Llanas, expressed “*gratitude to the State for the favours and privileges which distinguished it when the Congregations were under threat*”. In 1868 there were 34 Piarist Houses in Spain.

But even if the Pious Schools received favoured treatment during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, they were still subject to the educational programmes of the State as far as their organisation was concerned. They were considered to be “*useful auxiliary help for public instruction*”, and not only this, for they were also considered to be “*public schools*”. When they lost this role with the 1857 Moyano Law, because they were henceforth considered to be Commercial Enterprises, in many places they lost the subsidies they had previously enjoyed.

### *Official qualifications*

As the century advanced, this became a more important requisite.

**Austria and Bohemia:** by the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century they were already asking for a state examination to be passed before being able to teach, after having followed a university course. Piarists were opposed to this (the advanced age for starting to study; university professors of liberal and antireligious tendencies). The result was atrocious: lay teachers had to be employed and the schools ended in closure for

economic reasons. In the 70s, Piarists with teaching diplomas were often teachers in state schools.

**Hungary:** the religious took the state qualifications and the problem hardly affected them at all.

**Italy:** from 1870 onwards a licence or qualification was required in order to teach. Starting with Fr. General Perrando, the Piarists chose to get teaching diplomas, against the advice of the bishops. The Pope even had to intervene to authorise them to do so. Some Piarists took advantage of this new qualification to reaffirm their independence from their Superiors or to leave the Order.

**Spain:** official qualifications were not required from Piarists, because their specific studies were considered already to prepare them for teaching. But in the long term this exception was prejudicial for them.

### *Government inspections*

These were introduced along with official teaching programmes.

**Italy:** they were very important in Italy because they could impose unified norms for the new unified nation. Piarists generally avoided conflict and always welcomed the inspectors.

**Spain:** the Piarists had special treatment in this matter, too. However, the 1849 Plans decided that our early teaching centres should also be inspected, and this requirement was confirmed in 1858.

### *Examining pupils*

The end of course examinations for pupils, which were held in their own schools or elsewhere, came under ever closer control by governments.

**Spain:** Here too, Piarists met with the favour of the authorities. In 1848, the Madrid colleges were authorised to examine students in their own establishments. In 1852, this concession was extended to all establishments in inhabited centres which did not have a University or a Secondary Schooling Institute. In 1878, Professors of Piarist Colleges were to be allowed on examining boards, and in 1897 it was stated officially that the Pious Schools were the only Congregation authorised to examine within their establishments, with members of their own teaching staff on the examination boards.

### *c) State control over Piarist establishments*

Sequestering of property, laws on the ownership of the foundations, confiscation, and also cancelling agreements with the local authorities, meant that many institutes either closed or were ceded to the state or local council.

**Poland and Lithuania:** the reasons for eliminating religious colleges were political: the Russian government wanted to use this method to weaken Polish nationalism.

**Italy:** liberal and anti-clerical policies led to the dissolution of Religious Congregations and to Church property being sequestered. Thus, for example, the administration of the Nazarene College was granted to a state commission. The House of San Pantaleo itself was taken over by the Government in 1874 and given to the Roman City Council. One part of it remained with the Piarists as their residence, while they were responsible for religious services in the church, which was itself swallowed up, the schools were closed.

**Spain:** in spite of the damage caused by the 1835 confiscation, and apart from some Houses which were closed during the liberal stage of 1837, they were able to remain owners of most of their buildings and to maintain the subsidy agreements with many local authorities. During the period of the Restoration of the Monarchy there was greater stability. Many colleges closed as a consequence of the economic and legal climate. Nevertheless, many also survived. The last quarter of the century saw the expansion and increase of colleges.

### *d) The question of free schooling*

The fact that Pious Schools were free of charge was always a key point for our educational establishments, so much so that in dictionaries you will find the following definition of a Piarist: “*regular cleric of the Pious Schools, dedicated to the free instruction of young people*”. This was made possible by the contributions of private people and subsidy agreements with civil and church authorities. Income from church services and from homes provided important funding. This system had worked for centuries, even though there had been difficult times and even penury.

But the situation worsened during the 19<sup>th</sup> century because of the sequestering of Church property and goods and of the foundations, confiscation, annulment of subsidy agreements with local authorities, etc.



In 1872, the Provincial Chapter of Catalonia underlined the need to have some “*supervised*” pupils, who should be asked for a small contribution in order to solve the problems of the House. This proposal was passed almost unanimously. These “*supervised*” pupils would remain in the college after lessons to do the homework for the following day or for guided study. Thus they were not paying for the school but for out-of-school activities. Since this decision was not part of the mandate of a Provincial Chapter, the Fr. General went to the Holy See and asked for dispensation on the point of the Constitutions in which it stated that no money was to be earned. During the papacy of Pius IX, the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, dated 20 June 1873, authorised this partial payment in the following words: “*Considering the most serious situation in Spain, concession ‘ad triennium’ is given to the wished for ability to ask children who are not poor for a stipend or payment only as far as this covers the necessary cost of board, lodging and clothing of the religious, on condition that needy children are not rejected by the schools*”. Thus it was possible to ask the “*supervised*” for a certain sum to cover the extra time which they spent in the teaching establishment under the eye of the schoolmasters. From henceforth there were therefore two kinds of pupil: the so-called “externals”, free of charge, and the “supervised”, who were asked for payment. In many colleges there was also a third kind, the “internals” or “boarders”. In fact, these three kinds corresponded to the three social classes: the external and free pupils mostly came from poor families; the supervised pupils from well-off families; and the boarding pupils came from landed proprietors, doctors and others in the professions, wealthy tradesmen... from rural areas (not to mention a few boarding students from the élite). Problems arose when in certain places a certain kind of teaching, school uniform or different treatment was reserved for the free pupils.

### *e) Instruction provided in Piarist establishments*

The difficult situation in non-state schools might suggest deafness to teaching problems in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. But this was not the case and in actual fact, wherever possible, progress continued and the celebrated tradition of Piarist education increased.

Many places gave rise to a real “school” of Piarists, experts in Mathematics, Natural Sciences, Classical literature and so on. The

Province of Tuscany was of a high scientific level and the same may be said of Bohemia-Moravia.

The field of education widened. In Bohemia the Piarists were pioneers in teaching the deaf-and-dumb, even though the best results came from Italy, in the deaf-mute schools of Genoa and Siena. Fathers Ottavio Assarotti and Tommaso Pendola were the most celebrated teachers. Poland and Austria were also very interested in this special needs teaching.

Another specialist topic which the Piarists encouraged was commercial teaching (book-keeping). During the last years of the century this was very important in Barcelona, Mataró and Zaragoza. At Mataró there was also a nautical school for a certain period (1869).

Residential colleges continued to increase; there were different kinds: for the élite (Siena, Badia Fiesolana) with their own syllabuses; traditional (Nazarene, Valencia, Krems, Sarria of Barcelona, etc.); more modest, which considered the needs of nearby villages which had no schools. These also existed in Poland, Bohemia and elsewhere.

One of the most notable characteristics of the new study programmes was growing inclusion of scientific subjects more than those of a humanistic and philological kind. Latin, which had been the real backbone of Secondary Schools for centuries, began to lose ground to Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry and Natural Sciences. Gymnastics, or Physical Education, began to be introduced as a part of the school curriculum. "Civic studies" was a very popular subject and the Piarists kept it in their syllabuses and wrote textbooks to teach it. In order to improve teaching, wealthier colleges began to install laboratories for physics and chemistry, natural science museums, observatories or meteorological stations. These scientific laboratories existed in Hungary, Italy and Spain and also in some of the new American foundations.

During the second half of the century, organisation and study programmes began to be adapted to official state programmes. The 1857 Moyano Law profoundly and lastingly affected the evolution of Spanish education: 4 years of primary school (later on this increased to a fifth year, that of "Entrance") and 6 of secondary schools (the future *Baccalaureate*).

### 3.4. Distinguished Piarists in the cultural field

Although this century was in many ways an unfortunate one for much of the Piarist Order, many of their religious were celebrated for their scientific and literary contributions. Some of them are listed here (others may be found in “*Escuelas Pías, ser e historia*”):

- *Aínsa, Blas* (1841-1889), from Aragon, naturalist and meteorologist; he installed meteorological observatories in various Piarist colleges and published the results of his observations; the Director of the Astronomical Observatory of Madrid arranged for these to be published by the State. Because of this work the Cross of Isabella the Catholic was conferred upon him and he was nominated to the “Society of Friends of the Country”; the micrographs of these, which were presented at the universal Exhibition in Barcelona (1888), won him the Gold Medal.
- *Assarotti, Ottavio* (1753-1829), from Liguria, an educator of the deaf and dumb; after some years in which he spent his free time looking after some deaf mutes who attended his church, Napoleon gave him the old monastery of Our Lady of Mercy in Genoa, where he opened his home for deaf mutes; he was much appreciated and was encouraged and helped in practical terms by the King of Sardinia, Carlo Felice; his example and methods were widely copied.
- *Barsanti, Eugenio* (1821-1864), from Tuscany, inventor; while preparing experiments for his pupils in class (to be precise, Volta’s Pistol), he had an idea about a mixture of detonating gases to create a force of movement; this led to the “explosion motor”, which he created with Filippo Matteucci; between 1854 and 1858, both had their new invention patented by the government agencies of the United Kingdom, Piedmont, France and Belgium.
- *Csaplar, Benedikt* (1821-1906), from Hungary, historian and social apostle; he created a circle for young workers and an orphanage and he worked upon education for working class adults; he studied popular traditions; he published various studies on general and literary history, on popular education and social life; he was an “extraordinary member” of the Hungarian Academy of Science.
- *Feliú, Jacinto* (1787-1867), from Catalonia, mathematician; he studied mathematics under Mariano Vallejo; Ferdinand VII

nominated him professor of Mathematics to the Military Academy of Segovia; in 1839 he received the American Order of Isabella the Catholic. In 1844 he received the Grand Cross of Charles III. Isabella II financed the publication of his book of “Logarithm Tables”. The Holy See nominated him as Apostolic Commissioner of the Pious Schools in Spain, and in this role he organised the studies of Piarist seminarians, in which the study of mathematics was increased; he encouraged the first new foundations in America and re-established Piarist life in Spain.

- *Gómez, Pedro* (1841-1902), from Castile, Hebrew scholar and critic; professor of natural history, Greek and Hebrew; he published a “Hebrew Grammar”, in which he introduced the comparative historical method of Olshausen into Spain, which denotes solid knowledge not only of Hebrew but also of the other Semitic languages, and in which he demolishes erroneous grammar theories of other authors. He was also Vicar General of the Piarists in Spain and as such he ordered the publication of the “Repertory of the General Dispositions” of the Order, as well as various volumes of “Escolapios Insignes” (“Distinguished Piarists”).
- *Inghirami, Giovanni* (1779-1851), from Tuscany, astronomer and cartographer; in 1818 he became director of the Ximenes Observatory; he wrote works which made him and his astronomy, mathematics, geodesics and cartography very famous; he drew up the annual tables of the stars which were hidden by the Moon, which were adopted by various nations; he was one of the authors of the new Celestial Atlas; he was recognised as one of the greatest astronomers and his name was given to one of the Eastern craters of the Moon; he carried out the triangulation of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, and the consequent geographical map; he was made an Honorary Member of about 30 Italian and foreign Academies. He was Fr. Provincial of the Pious Schools of Tuscany and later on Vicar General of the Order.
- *Lang, Innocent* (1752-1835), from Austria, pedagogue; professor of grammar and humanistic studies; Emperor Francis II called him to Court as teacher of his brothers, the Arch-Dukes, and later nominated him Rector of the Imperial resident college, the Stadkonvikt, and also permanent consultant for all the *Gymnasium+schools* of

the country and member of the Commission of Studies, and thus his influence on Austrian school reform was considerable. The Emperor decorated him with the Gold Medal and in 1809 he was made a State Counsellor.

- *Lasalde, Carlos* (1841-1906), from Castile, historian; he published a “Latin Grammar” and “The Latin Language and How to Teach it”, and he was the first in Spain to apply the rules of comparative philology to the study of Latin; he was also a good Greek scholar; he was responsible for many archaeological discoveries about the Turdetans and Bastetans; Amadeus I conferred the title of “*Benemerito della Nazione*” (“Meritorious member of the nation”) upon him; in his book, Azorín dedicated a eulogy to this Piarist.
- *Pendola, Tommaso* (1800-1883), from Tuscany, educator of deaf mutes; university professor of philosophy and law; Chancellor of the University of Siena; friend and defender of Rosmini; scholar of the cognitive ability of deaf mutes who, in 1828, with the help of the Grand Duke, Leopold II, founded an institute which was to become the “Royal Tuscan Institute for Deaf-mutes”, and it changed the mime method for an oral one; he wrote on various subjects, but mainly on deaf-mutes. He was also Fr. Provincial of the Pious Schools of Tuscany.
- *Purgstaller, Jozef* (1806-1867), from Hungary, writer of articles and pedagogue; efficient communicator of the philosophical and educational ideas of his time; author of numerous articles which were later collected in various volumes; he collaborated for the new Hungarian state programme of studies and was a member of the Commission for state teaching; he was very influential for a long time in the field of Hungarian instructions.

### 3.5. Similar Congregations: the Calasanzian Family

The 19<sup>th</sup> century saw the birth of many Religious Congregations, many of which were dedicated to education. The spirit of St. Joseph Calasanz is expressly mentioned in some of them. In a few cases, these Congregations were founded or inspired by a Piarist religious. However, they were all inspired by St. Joseph Calasanz, particularly by his dedication to the education of children and especially those of the poor.

Even though the number of male and female religious in these Congregations was not high, their presence in the field of education, in humble and needy environments, is an important witness to the fecundity of the charism of Calasanz. They are all deeply dedicated to St. Joseph Calasanz and all of them together make up the so-called “Calasanzian Family”.

1. *Congregation of the School of Charity* (Cavanis Fathers): their founders were the two friars, Antonangelo and Marcantonio Cavanis, in Venice in 1802. Definitive approval was granted in 1835.
2. *Sisters of the Christian Schools of St. Joseph Calasanz* (Vorselaar Sisters): their founder was Fr. Luis Vicente Donche, S.J., in Belgium in 1820. Official approval was granted in 1834.
3. *Congregation of the Daughters of Mary, Sisters of the Pious Schools* (Piarist): founded by Mother Paola Montal (Beatified in 1993, Canonised in 2001), in Figueras (Barcelona), 1829. Officially approved in 1845. Fr. Jacinto Feliú, Apostolic Commissioner of the Order, gave them the “Fraternity Diploma” in 1848. This was the first female Congregation dedicated exclusively to the education of female children and youngsters, with a fourth vow for teaching.
4. *Congregation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus* (Timón-David Fathers): the founder was Joseph-Marie Timón-David, in Marseille, 1852. Official approval was inb 1859.
5. *Calasanzian Institute of the Daughters of the Divine Shepherdess* (Calasancias Sisters): the founder was the Piarist, Fr. Faustino Míguez (Beatified in 1998), in Sanlúcar de Barrameda (Cadice), 1885. Pontifical approval was in 1910.
6. *Congregation of the Poor Daughters of St. Joseph Calasanz* (Calasanzian Sisters): the founders were Sister Celestina Donati

(Beatified in 2008) and Mons. Celestino Zini, Piarist and Archbishop of Siena, in Florence, 1889. Pontifical approval in 1911.

7. *Congregation for Christian Workers* (Kalasantiner Brothers): it was founded by the priest Anton Maria Schwart (beatified in 1998), in Vienna, 1889. Pontifical approval in 1939.
8. *The Company of Our Lady for the Education of Deaf-Mutes* (Provolo Institute): its founder was the priest, Antonio Provolo, in Verona, 1830. Pontifical approval for the Male Wing in 1937 and for the Female Wing in 1984.





## 4. 20<sup>th</sup> CENTURY (1904-2003): ORGANIC UNITY, FUNCTIONAL VARIETY

### Superiors General

Alfonso Maria Mistrángelo (1900-1904)

Adolfo Brattina (1904-1906)

Manuel Sánchez (1906-1910). After his death,

Edigio Bertolotti-Vicar General (November 1910-July 1912)

Tommaso Viñas (1912-1923). After he stepped down,

Giuseppe del Buono - Vicar General (1923-1929)

Giuseppe del Buono (1929-1947)

Vincent Tomek (1947-1967)

Laureano Suárez (1967-1971). After he stepped down,

Teófilo López (1971-1973)

Ángel Ruiz (1973-1985)

Josep Maria Balcells (1985-2003)

The political and social life of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was characterised by a series of very different events, united by transcendental movements which were often those of powerful ideologies whose consequences were often very tragic, but which on other occasions kindled hope. These events first took place in Europe but they had important repercussions over the rest of the world.

The following facts should be remembered:

- Growing tension between ideologically opposing groups happening during the early decades of the century.
- The First World War (1914-1918).
- The Bolshevik Revolution in Russia (1917).

- Dictatorships of a fascist kind which followed this: Mussolini (1922), Hitler (1933).
- The Spanish Civil War (1936-1939).
- Communist dictatorships, the Cold War and the division of the world into blocs.
- Decolonisation.
- The fall of the Berlin wall in 1989 and the break-up of the Soviet bloc.
- Globalisation and a growing gap between rich and poor countries.
- Mass migration for economic reasons.
- The destruction of the Twin Towers in New York, 11<sup>th</sup> September 2001.

In such a world the Church would be subject to great inner and outer changes. It would try to face these with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vatican Council (1962-1965) and the reforms which followed it.

The Pious Schools, a small boat afloat on these choppy and sometimes tempestuous seas, would also try to adapt, grasping opportunities offered by the environment and at other times suffering, sometimes bodily, the effects of these adverse circumstances: sometimes shining growth, others clandestine life and heroism; clear decline in some places, while there is expansion and hope-bringing growth in others. It is an institution, which is imbued with the very spirit of Calasanz and is guided by the same General Governance, but at the same time it has different ways and different styles, because the circumstances in which its mission is fulfilled are so diverse.

It is not easy, in so few pages, to gather together what Piarists have done and experienced over the course of a century, especially when we are speaking of the last century, which we ourselves have often witnessed. It is necessary to make a selection of dates and events. This will be done as we take into consideration a double interest: first, as religious, members of a religious institution which, although small has a rich spiritual history and living heritage; secondly, as educators who are interested in everything regarding training children and young people, a field to which we, as Piarists, feel we are destined from the very beginning. From all

that might be said, we shall therefore select two subjects: the life and development of the religious Order (seen in the work of the Father-Generals and the lives of the Provinces), and the ministry or work which Piarists and those who help them have carried out during this century. We shall conclude with a small section with the names of some of the most distinguished Piarists.

For the Pious Schools, this period begins in 1904, when Pope Pius X unified the whole Order. This marks the effective end of the *Vicariate General of Spain* (1804-1904). But the name will continue to be used until 1929, the year in which the Congregation of religious decreed that what had until then been “Vicar General” would henceforth become simply “Delegate General”. Fr. Tomek would leave as “Delegate of the Father for the Central Study Houses”. When these disappeared, the title became “Delegate of the Father General”. With the creation of the General Delegation of Spain” he became the major Superior of this Demarcation.

This collection of data will finish with the mandate of Fr. Josep Maria Balcells as Fr. General in 2003.

## 4.1. The Vision of the Order of the Governor Generals

### *a) Cardinal Mistrángelo and unification*

Alfonso Maria Mistrángelo (1852-1930) became a Piarist in the Province of Liguria. In 1894, Pope Leo XIII (1878-1903) made him Bishop of Pontremoli, and Archbishop of Florence in 1899. However, in 1900, without his leaving the archdiocese of Florence, he was nominated Superior General of the Order of the Pious Schools. Pius X (1903-1914) subsequently made him Apostolic Visitor of the Order and asked him to prepare reunification of all the separate branches of the Pious Schools with Rome. He worked hard at this, making numerous visits to central Europe and to Spain.

Finally, Pius X, on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1904, issued the Brief entitled *Singularitas Regiminis* in which he ordered the unification of the whole Order under the Superior General of Rome. At the same time he nominated Fr. Adolfo Brattina interim Provost General, with the special task of preparing the 1906 General Chapter. Mistrángelo continued as Apostolic Visitor of the Order and as Archbishop of Florence. In 1915, Benedict XV made him Cardinal and thus he became the first Piarist cardinal.

In the month of July 1906 the General Chapter was held with representatives from the 12 Provinces which the Order then had. 134 years had passed since the 1772 Chapter, which had been the last one attended by all Piarist Provinces (then numbering 15). The Chapter elected the Spaniard, Fr. Manuel Sánchez, from the Province of Valencia, who was popular with all. However, he died in 1910 before concluding his six-year term of office. His Assistant, Edigio Bertolotti took over.

### *b) Fr. Tomás Viñas (1912-1923)*

In the 1912 Chapter, Fr. Tomás Viñas, from the Province of Catalonia but working in Rome for many years, was elected General. The following Chapter, which was delayed because of the European war, was held in 1919. Fr. Viñas was re-elected.

During the 11 years of his terms of office as General, he worked very hard on various aspects of Piarist life and ministry, so as to restore the vitality of the Order.

He personally prepared the alignment of the Constitutions with the new Canon Law of 1918, intending to present this to the General Chapter. However, this text was never made official.

He was much concerned with the pedagogical aspects of the Pious Schools. He encouraged Calasanzian Literary Academies, Physical Education, ex-pupil associations, professional schools, and so on.

He tirelessly stressed religious observance, which had declined in Italy and Central Europe.

He enthusiastically promoted inter-Provincial collaboration, which had been started before his term, so as to breathe life into those which were most in decline. Various Spanish religious called to Italy to help brought very worthy skills with them. Thus it was, for example, that Fr. Marcellino Llarri, from the Province of Aragon, was Novice Master of the Province of Liguria for more than eight years. Other Fathers travelled to Rome and Naples. Others went to Poland to stimulate the rebirth of that Province. Fr. Joan Borrell of the Province of Catalonia deserves special mention. Mistrángelo sent him to Poland in 1903, where he filled the posts of rector, Delegate of the General and Superior of the Province, as well as that of Novice Master. In Cracow he founded the “Stanislao Konarski” College-School and rebuilt from their ruins the old Piarist Houses. He died in Lubieszow during the war, in 1943, from a mine explosion.

After the Treaty of Versailles in 1919, which sanctioned the disappearance of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the creation of new nation-states, with a rearrangement of borders, Fr. Viñas tried to make sure that the 14 colleges which were consequently no longer within the borders of the country should remain with the Piarist Province of Hungary. He did not succeed and therefore had to establish the Vice-Provinces of Slovakia and Romania, which soon became Provinces.

For the price of 150,000 lire, he bought the House of San Pantaleo, which had been taken by the Government in 1874, and he made it the headquarters of the General Curia again. However, the sale of what had been the General Curia until then, in Via Toscana, gave rise to problems within the Province of Rome.

After some encouraging conversations he finished by strongly opposing the creation of the Province of Vasconia. And this caused those interested to protest to the Holy See.

This, along with other internal conflicts, caused the Holy See to nominate an Apostolic Visitor for the Order. The Fr. General and the Assistants were asked to resign, which they did immediately on 1<sup>st</sup> May 1923. Two days later the Apostolic Visitation was officially announced.

*c) The Apostolic Visitor, Fra Luca Ermenegildo Pasetto (1923-1929)*

On 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1923, Fra Luca Ermenegildo Pasetto, bishop and Capuchin, was nominated Apostolic Visitor. At the same time, Fr. Giuseppe Buono was nominated Vicar General until 1929. Mons. Pasetto ended his Visitation on 27<sup>th</sup> November 1929.

The Visitor fulfilled his mission in no hurry. He visited the Provinces, nominated Superiors, sent reports to the Congregation of Religious. He also took other decisions for the government of the Order and, in conclusion, dictated rules and criteria for working that may generally be said to be positive.

Here are some of them:

- Suppression of the *peculio* (personal deposits of money from extra-scholastic activities).
- Limitation of holidays outside of the Community.
- Insistence on observation of the Constitutions.
- Importance of philosophical-theological studies.
- In 1924 a new inter-Provincial Juniorate and Novitiate were created for Italy, in Genoa and Finalborgo respectively, and in 1926 these were both moved to Florence. In 1928, the study centre of Albeda de Iregua (Logroño) was created for the Spanish Provinces, and the international Juniorate of San Pantaleo was reopened.

*d) Fr. Giuseppe del Buono (1923-1947)*

Fr. Giuseppe del Buono, from the Province of Liguria, was elected Fr. Provincial of his Province in 1922. But in 1923 he was nominated Vicar General to help the Apostolic Visitor in his government of the Order. When the Visitation terminated in 1929, he was nominated Provost General for an indefinite time by the Holy See. He remained in the post until 1947.

From the very beginning he was appreciated by Church authorities because of his prudence and his patience.

During the 24 years in which he led the Order he had to face serious problems which were caused by two wars: the Spanish Civil War, in which more than 200 Piarists were murdered and many colleges and Houses were destroyed; the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War with mass destruction in central Europe and in Italy, not to mention the persecutions which began under the Communist Regimes in those countries under their dictatorships.

At the end of the Civil War the Spanish Piarists quickly began their restoration and rebuilt the schools which had been destroyed, with a notable increase in vocations. After World War II, the Italian Piarists also began to renew themselves, though more slowly.

Amongst Fr. Del Buono's work for the Order, we should mention:

- The restoration of the Mother House of San Pantaleo.
- The creation of three new Provinces: Romania (1925), Slovakia (1930) and Vasconia (1933).
- Reactivating the cause for the Blessed Pompilius, whom he would see canonised in 1934.
- In 1930, the publication, *ad experimentum* for 7 years, of the Constitutions which had been adapted to new Canon Law. In 1939, the sacred Congregation of religious approved the text with some modifications and in 1949 the Fr. General had these officially published. Fr. Picanyol gathered the Rules into one collection, which, however, had no legal power until the following General Chapter.
- Republishing the official organ of the Order *Ephemerides Calasancianae* (begun in 1893 under the then General, Fr. Mauro Ricci), which had been suspended in 1915 because of the war.
- In 1933, the parish of St. Francis, at Monte Mario (Rome) was accepted. Between 1934 and 1936 the magnificent building for the “Calasancium” was constructed, to house the Interprovincial Juniorate of Italy.

At the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War, he thought it would be a good idea to start celebrating the General Chapters again, the last of which had been held in 1919. Thus it was he who convened the 1947 General Chapter.

*e) Fr. Vincent Tomek (1947-1967)*

Fr. Vincent Tomek took the Piarist habit in the Province of Hungary in 1908 and was ordained priest in 1916, during the 1<sup>st</sup> World War. When this ended, he experienced at close quarters the breaking-up of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the shrinking of the frontiers of Hungary, along with the division of the Piarist Province of the same name. He was a Doctor of Theology, Junior Master and was elected Fr. Provincial in 1946. However, in the 1947 General Chapter he was elected Superior General of the Order. He was re-elected twice (in 1955 and in 1961) and ran the Pious Schools for 20 years, until the General Chapter of 1967.

He was unable to procure visas to visit the Provinces of Central Europe, which were under Communist regimes. He was forced to communicate with them by letter or through delegates.

The first notable event of his mandate was the celebration of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Centenary of the death of St. Joseph Calasanz. For nearly two years (1948-1949) there were celebrations, accompanied by much solemnity: Pope Pius XI sent a hand-written letter to the Order and gave a special Audience at Castelgandolfo and, with his Brief *Providentissimus Deus*, on 13<sup>th</sup> August 1949 he proclaimed the Saint “Universal Patron of all Popular Christian Schools”; the relics of the Saint (his incorrupt heart and tongue) were carried in procession through all the principal cities of Spain and through all those towns and villages which hosted Piarist schools, with great solemnity and large numbers of spectators; many pilgrims made the journey to Rome to venerate the House in which the Saint had lived and died, as also his tomb.

These celebrations gave rise to numerous studies, conferences and publications about Calasanz and his Works. It was also the beginning of a long period of Calasanzian historical-pedagogical research, which led to the publication of some important work. Amongst the most important were: “*Biografía crítica de San José de Calasanz*” by Fr. C. Bau, published in 1949 and his “*Revisión de la Vida de San José de Calasanz*” of 1963 and 1967; “*San José de Calasanz, Obra pedagógica*”, by Fr. G. Sántha, published in 1956, and a new edition, edited by Fr. Giner, in 1984; “*Fuentes inéditas de la pedagogía calasanziana*”, by F. C. Vila, in 1960. Of special merit is the “*Epistolario di San Giuseppe Calasanzi*”, an edition of the letters of the Saint edited by Fr. L. Picanyol and published in 9 volumes



between 1950 and 1956. This was later completed with the publication of a 10<sup>th</sup> volume. There was also the important publication of the *Epistulae ad S. J. Calasanctium ex Europa Centrali* (letters sent to the Saint from Central Europe) in one volume in 1969, and a similar volume containing letters from Spain and Italy in 1972. Later on, between 1977 and 1982, five volumes of letters from his contemporaries were published.

Another most important aspect of Fr. Tomek's mandate as General is the expansion of the Order. The growth, which had begun in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, increased during this period. In the 1950s and at the beginning of the 1960s, the number of new foundations was really spectacular, mainly in America, but also in Europe. This is clear from the following list of new foundations during Fr. Tomek's term as General:

### *In Europe*

- *General Delegation of Spain*: the House for Writers (the “Pompiliana”) in Madrid (1947); the Fr. Felipe Scío Theological College, in Salamanca (1961); the Calasanzian Institute of Science and Education, in Madrid (1967).
- *Province of Liguria*: San Luri (1950), Ruta (1957), Milan (1962).
- *Province of Naples*: Fuorigrotta in Naples (1953), Chieti (1956), Messina (1964).
- *Province of Poland*: the Novitiate of Hebdou (1949). In 1957 this is again declared a “Full Province”.
- *Province of Aragon*: Soria (1952), Cristo Rey in Zaragoza (1964).
- *Province of Catalonia*: Sitges (1948), Parish of San José de Calasanz in Barcelona (1953), Saint Papoul in France (1957), Mina Pekín in Barcelona (1963).
- *Province of Castile*: Calasanz de Salamanca (1956), Alcalá (1957), Colegio Mayor Calasanz in Madrid (1960), Seminario Calasancio in Salamanca (1962), La Coruña (1964).
- *Province of Valencia*: Calasanz of Valencia (1954), Malvarrosa (1963).

### *In America*

- *USA*: Derby (1949), New York (1950), Washington (1953), Devon (1953), Buffalo (1958), Fort Lauderdale (1961).

- *Cuba*: La Víbora (1952).
- *Mexico*: Puebla (1951), Parish of the Sacred heart of Jesus in Mexico (1958), Chiautempan (1958), Oaxaca (1959), Veracruz (1962), Apizaco (1962).
- *California*: Parish of María Auxiliadora in Los Ángeles (1949), Playa del Rey (1960), Parish of St. Teresa (1964).
- *Puerto Rico*: University of Ponce (1960), Parish of Río Piedras (1966), Ponceño College (1969).
- *Nicaragua*: León (1949), Managua (1950).
- *Dominican Republic*: Colegio Mayor in Santo Domingo (1951), Colegio Calasanz in Santo Domingo (1954).
- *Costa Rica*: San José (1961).
- *Colombia*: the San Gil Refuge (1948), Calasanz in Bogotá (1949), Medellín (1950), El Paraíso in Bogotá (1953), Cúcuta (1954), Pereira (1959).
- *Ecuador*: Cañar (1964).
- *Venezuela*: Carora (1951), Caracas (1952), Valenza (1959).
- *Brazil*: Belo Horizonte (1950), Governador Valadares (1952), Boa Esperanza (1954).
- *Chile*: Calasanz in Santiago (1950), Malloco (1955).
- *Argentina*: Novitiate in Villa Allende at Córdoba (1957), Mar del Plata (1964). In 1964 it is declared a Province.

### *In Asia*

- *Japan*: Yokohama (1952), Yokkaichi (1955).

### *In Africa*

- *Senegal*: Oussouge (1963).

Evidently, this growth in such a short time is evidence of the vitality of the Pious Schools, at least as far as desire and dedication to increase the mission and the abundance of people are concerned. In actual fact the number of religious during this period was the highest of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries

together: 2,540 in 1965. Furthermore, for the first time the Pious Schools opened to Missions “*ad gentes*”: the Province of Vasconia sent religious to Japan in 1950, while that of Catalonia began its work in Senegal in 1963.

Another concern was the formation of young Piarists. The Juniorate of San Pantaleo and the Interprovincial Juniorates of Italy and Spain, which had been opened under previous Generals, experienced their periods of greatest splendour, both for the numbers of their students as for the qualities of their studies. In 1959, the General Congregation approved a Study Programme for Spanish Juniors, which was later approved by the Holy See. Since 1959, the Irache Juniorate had also been the Teacher Training School of the Church, where most juniors acquired a qualification entitling them to teach in schools. The syllabuses of Irache were also adapted to the baccalaureate exams so that the juniors could take official school-leaving or pre-university examinations. In 1961 a new “Fr. Felipe Scío” Interprovincial Juniorate was opened in Salamanca, many of whose students attended classes at the Pontifical University and took a degree in Theology.

Internal legislation in the Order was also stimulated during this period. The General Chapter of 1955 saw certain modifications made to the Constitutions. These were approved by the Holy See in 1956 and officially published in 1957. In the same volume the Rules were published, after the modifications of the General Chapter had been introduced.

In the field of teacher training, Fr. Tomek stimulated improvements in the professional qualifications of our religious, as he tried to get them to take official civil examinations leading to teacher training certificates or degrees. And school was seen to be an essential aspect of our charism. At the same time, the field of our ministry opened further and accepted a larger number of parishes and during his mandate these increased from 6 to 36.

In December 1947, the “House for Writers” (also known as the “Pompiliana”) was founded in order to increase the publication of text books for our schools. This consolidated what the Spanish Provinces had been preparing for years, the “E.P. Textos”, which had begun in 1941.

During the last years of Fr. Tomek’s mandate they wanted to create a new and highly qualified centre for Educational Studies. To this end, a good number of young Piarists were chosen and were sent to widen and complete their studies in European and North American universities. On 18<sup>th</sup> June 1967, they joined in the creation of the “Instituto Calasanz

de Ciencias de la Educación” (ICCE – Calasanz Institute for Educational Studies), with its headquarters at 3, Calle Eraso in Madrid. Its aim was to research and apply the best methods available in Spain. As well as to Piarist Colleges, it was open to all public and private educational centres which were interested in its services. The main person responsible for all this was Fr. Laureano Suárez, who was then Assistant General.

The many-faceted personality and the prestige of Fr. Tomek meant that he was appreciated and respected in both Church and civil worlds, all of which had positive effects on the Order. He was an assiduous participant at the Vatican II Council.

*f) Fr. Laureano Suárez (1967-1971)*

He was elected Provost General in the General Chapter of 1967, but left the post for personal reasons in June 1971.

During the mandate of Fr. Suárez, a special General Chapter was held, which was convened following the directions of the Council and *Motu Proprio “Ecclesiae Sanctae”*, so as to adapt the rules and life of the Order to the spirit of the Council and to renew it by returning to the roots of the Piarist charism.

This Chapter took place in two stages: 1<sup>st</sup> in August 1967; 2<sup>nd</sup> in July, August and September 1969. The fruit of all this work was published in two volumes: *“Declaraciones y Decretos”* (1970) and *“Declaración sobre la espiritualidad calasancia”* (1971).

In 1969, the Juniorate of Albelda closed and in 1971 Irache ceased to be the central study establishment. This was due to a fall in numbers of juniors and to new arrangements which encouraged the improvement of study and training of juniors in their own Provinces. This was why, from 1970, Provincial Juniorates began to be set up throughout Spain.

In 1968 the new “Book of Prayers” was published, in line with Vatican II, which placed the Holy Scriptures and the Liturgy (the Eucharist and the Liturgy of the Hours) at the centre of Piarist piety and prayer. The daily rhythm of prayers which was established was the following: in the morning, meditation with lauds and the Eucharist; during the afternoon, vigil and meditation or the reading of spiritual texts; evenings, compline with examination of the conscience.

*g) Fr. Teófilo López (1971-1973)*

After Fr. Laureano Suárez had stepped down, Fr. Teófilo, as First Assistant filled the post of Superior General in June 1971.

During his mandate, on 15<sup>th</sup> August 1971, in accordance with the decisions of the Special Chapter, the new Constitutions were promulgated, having been drawn up in a style and according to a plan which was different from that of the Founder. They were considered to be “*ad experimentum*” until the next General Chapter. One of the practical changes was that these Constitutions did away with the concrete rules about the length of time for which superiors should be elected, so that the Rules allowed this to be decided in individual cases, according to the needs of the moment.

In November 1972, the Holy See approved the Liturgical Calendar of the Pious Schools.

*h) Fr. Ángel Ruiz (1973-1985)*

Fr. Ángel Ruiz took the Piarist habit in November 1939. After having been Fr. Provincial of Castile for a three year term and having just been re-elected for a second mandate, he was elected Provost General by the 1973 General Chapter. He was re-elected by the 1979 Chapter and was head of the Pious Schools for 12 years. During this period, he moved the headquarters of the General Curia to the Calasanctianum building on Rome's Monte Mario.

He took decisive steps in legislative matters. The 1973 General Chapter entrusted the General Congregation with the task of revising the 1971 Constitutions and publishing them, as well as drawing up the text of the new Rules. In 1975, the General Congregation promulgated these Constitutions for a second experimental period. In 1977 it published the new Rules, after a complex period of preparation and writing. The 1979 General Chapter approved those Constitutions, with slight modifications. The sacred Congregation of Religious approved the definitive version of the Constitutions in 1983, which were published in 1984. In the meantime, the Rules underwent various revisions, and they were finally approved by the General Chapter of 1985.

As far as the organisation and growth of the Order are concerned, the following events are of importance: in 1975 the Vice-Province of the

United States of America was made a Province; in 1974 the Vice-Province of Andalusia (Betica) was created and it was dependent upon Castile; the following year it was made an independent Vice-Province, under the immediate jurisdiction of the Father General; in 1982 the first House in Equatorial Guinea (Akonibe) was opened.

The number of parishes continued to grow during this period. If in 1976 the Order had had 52 parishes, by 1985 there were 75, which were distributed as follows: Italy, 8; Central Europe, 14; Spain, 15; America, 32; Asia, 2; Africa, 4.

Formation of young Piarists remained a matter of pressing concern, especially since generally this now took place in the Juniorates of their respective Provinces. In 1982 the Study Programme was published. It had been carefully drawn up according to the wishes of the previous General Chapter and may be found in the document called "*Formazione Iniziale dello Scolopio*" (FIES). In any case, programmes for the training of all priests and religious were ever more subject to documents issued by the Holy See in the light of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vatican Council. The most interesting detail about Piarist formation consisted in the complementary relationship between ecclesiastical studies and those of the state, so that valid teaching qualifications could be gained.

As far as religious-community life was concerned, the following data is of interest: sometimes because of necessity, others because they were more suitable for developing a community spirit, small communities with few members began to appear and the number of these grew; this meant an increase in the number of communities in the Order without a corresponding increase in the number of religious. The 1973 Chapter had established that the use of the religious habit need not be subject to the same rules throughout the Order, and that each Province might adapt its regulations to the diocesan norms regarding the use of clerical dress. These years insist upon programming community life and laying down guidelines about how to do this. The Fr. General sent out various circulars on the matter.

Since the 1970s the idea of co-responsibility in the order began to take root and now became more frequent and official: the Council of the Major Superiors (at Order or regional level); International, National or Provincial Secretariats (for the economy, pastoral, pedagogy, vocations, Calasanzian matters, etc.).

Permanent formation of religious was another concern of the General Congregation. Since the 1970s, more attention had been given to helping religious to mature in their vocations and also to train them for more effective educational work. To this end, many permanent training courses were organised in various places; these were frequent and regular. Two circulars were published on the subject by Fr. Ángel Ruiz: one on 25<sup>th</sup> August 1976 and the other on 29<sup>th</sup> September 1982.

Fr. Ruiz's mandate as General started the publication of books and pamphlets on Calasanzian topics, and this was greatly increased during the terms of his successors. Clearly the most important publication of the period was the so-called "*Diccionario Enciclopédico Escolapio*", or DENES ("Encyclopaedic Piarist Dictionary"), which contains the widest collection of data regarding the history of the Pious Schools. It was published in three volumes, starting in 1983, and the editorial team was directed by Fr. Claudio Vilá and Fr. Luis Maria Bandrés.

In 1981, financed by the Pious Schools, the "San José Calasanz" Chair was established in the Faculty of Pedagogics of the Pontifical University of Salamanca. The Fr. General showed the greatest interest and concern for the order's renewal: on 25<sup>th</sup> January 1977, he published a circular entitled: "*Per la riedificazione dell'edificio dell'Ordine*" ("*For rebuilding the building of the Order*"). Starting from the new edition of the Constitutions and the Rules, he invited the order to self-analysis and renewal, as it adapted to the new needs of the Church and society, and he insisted on an urgent and profound study of the Calasanzian identity so as to reach out to the poor and reap a richer evangelical harvest. On 8<sup>th</sup> September 1980, he sent out another circular to the Piarists on the subject of "*Reconverting our educational establishments*" ("*Riconversione delle nostre opere educative*"). In this, he forcefully states that for Piarists "educating is evangelising". He adds that this "reconversion" of the establishments also requires conversion of the agents of education. He concludes by pointing out that in order to have a Christian school you have to have an adult Christian community, which will welcome the youngsters who choose Christ. One year later he sent out another circular on the same topics.

Later, in February 1985, he published an important circular entitled, "*I giovani, scelta preferenziale*" ("*Young people, a preferential choice*"). This circular breathes love for Calasanz and the youngsters to whom the Saint dedicated his life. What are today's youngsters like? How should

we guide them? Reaffirming our vocation as educators... these are the subjects he developed with zeal and conviction.

Another subject dear to Fr. Ángel was the incorporation of the laity into the Order. On 12<sup>th</sup> January 1983, he published an important circular on “*Comunità Ecclesiali Calasanziane*” (CEC – Calasanzian Ecclesiastical Communities), in which he gave reasons for and justified the urgent creation of this kind of community, made up of Christian men and women who shared the charism of Calasanz. The number of CECs spread throughout the world would be gathered into the “Piarist Lay Fraternity” (“*Fraternidad Seglar Escolapia*” – FASE).

Towards the end of Fr. Ángel Ruiz’s period as General, there was the celebration of the IV Centenary of the Ordination of St. Joseph Calasanz as a priest (17<sup>th</sup> December 1583). In December 1983 the Pastoral Symposium in Urgel opened the centenary year, which, after various celebrations in individual Provinces, closed at Peralta de la Sal in December 1984.

#### *i) Fr. Josep Maria Balcells (1985-2003)*

After having been Fr. Provincial of Catalonia for 6 years, Josep Maria Balcells was elected Superior General in 1985, by the General Chapter held in Salamanca (the first held outside Italy). He was re-elected by the Chapters of 1991 and 1997 and led the Order for 18 years. In June 1986, he transferred the headquarters of the General Curia from Monte Mario to San Pantaleo.

He had to adapt our legislation to the new Codes of Canon Law of 1983. The 1985 General Chapter had already altered the Constitutions and revised the Rules. The Holy See approved the Constitutions in a document dated 27<sup>th</sup> February 1986. This was promulgated by the General Congregation on 1<sup>st</sup> October 1986, and thus the new edition of the Constitutions and the Rules saw the light of day, and came into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1987. The 1991 General Chapter approved the celebration of Local and Demarcational Chapters every four years.

One of the most important aspects of Fr. Balcells’s period as Fr. General was the expansion of the Pious Schools in new nations, especially those of Africa and Asia, where young churches were lively and growing and where the Pious Schools would soon receive a large number of new vocations, presaging a flourishing of our ministry amongst these new peoples and cultures, and also new social and educational requirements. Various old



establishments in America were also consolidated in this period. Bearing in mind previous new foundations (Japan in 1950, Senegal in 1963 and Equatorial Guinea in 1982), here are the most important dates:

- 1989: the Piarists of Aragon began their ministry in Cameroon.
- 1990: on 23<sup>rd</sup> May the Fr. General declared the Pious Schools of Mexico a Province.
- 1991: the Piarists of Poland made a new foundation in Cameroon.
- 1992: the Piarists in Andalusia began their work in Bolivia.
- 1994: The Province of Argentina began its missionary and vocational work in India.
- 1994: on 9<sup>th</sup> July the Fr. General decreed the creation of the Province of Colombia.
- 1994: the Piarists of the Province of Liguria began their pastoral work in the Ivory Coast.
- 1995: on the Fr. General's initiative and under his direction, our missionary and vocational ministry in the Philippines began.
- 1996: on 6<sup>th</sup> January the Fr. General decreed that the General Delegation of Japan-Philippines was constituted.
- 1997: the Pious Schools of Senegal became a Vice-Province which was independent of Catalonia.
- 1997: the Pious Schools of Ecuador became a Vicariate which was independent of Colombia.
- 1998: the Vicariate of Equatorial Guinea and Gabon was set up and was independent of the Third Demarcation of Spain.
- 2000: the Houses, which had been founded in Cameroon by the Piarists of Aragon and of Poland, joined to form the new vicariate of Cameroon, which was independent of Aragon.

At the same time this geographical growth was gradually taking place, the Order reflected deeply on the nature and purpose of these new Piarist establishments. Decisions then taken are clearly seen in various documents concerning the three continents where most of the new establishments were situated:

## *Africa*

At the beginning of 1989, in Bamenda (Cameroon) the first Piarist meeting of Africa took place. Piarist religious and sisters, and Calasanzian Daughters of the Holy Shepherdess took part. A programme document was drawn up, which is informally called the Bamenda Document, which was published by the ICCE as *Quaderno 15: "Orientamenti per la presenza delle Scuole Pie in Africa"*. This states our common commitment to a re-founding the Pious Schools in the continent and putting the Calasanzian ideal into practice with all the wealth of our ministry. When ten years had passed, during the 12<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Calasanzian family in Africa, a new programme document was drawn up, to give greater stimulus and to adapt decisions to new circumstances. This was published as *Quaderno 24: "Bamenda 2001"*, in Spanish, Italian, French and English.

In 1992, in a meeting that the Fr. General had with his delegate for Missions and the Major Superiors of Houses in Africa, the so called OCCA (Organismo di Coordinamento e di Consultazione delle Scuole Pie dell'Africa – Organisation for Coordination and Consultation of African Pious Schools) was set up and from then onwards it would meet regularly.

## *America*

In 1990, with the aid of a large number of American Piarists (either native-born or adoptive), a great project was drawn up, which was presented at the meeting of the Superior Majors of America, held in Cuenca (Ecuador) from 30<sup>th</sup> September to 4<sup>th</sup> October of the same year. After this had been studied and amendments had been made, this was published by the ICCE as *Quaderno 17: "Incarnazione delle Scuole Pie in Latinoamerica" (Incarnation of the Pious Schools in Latin America)*. It was informally known as the *Cuenca Document*. It was intended to guide and support the efforts of Latin American Piarists during the coming ten years, with a view to creating the Pious Schools of America in the year 2000. In June 2000, in Veracruz, a second document was drawn up with the assistance of sister Congregations linked to us and were most active in America: Piarists, Piarist Sisters, Calasanzian and Cavanis religious (see *Ephemerides Calasanctianae*, 2001, pp. 476-483).

## Asia

In May 1996, at a meeting in Aroor (the State of Kerala, India) between the Fr. General, the Delegate of the Fr. General for Missions, the Fr. Provincial of Argentina and religious of Japan-Philippines and India, a programme document was drawn up about our work in Asia, which was published by the ICCE as *Quaderno 19: "Testimoni di Gesù e discepoli del Calasanzio in Asia"* (*Witnesses to Jesus and Disciples of Calasanz in Asia*). This was informally known as the *Aroor Document*. Two years later, this document was made stronger in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Asian Piarist Meeting, held in Aroor from 29<sup>th</sup> April to 2<sup>nd</sup> May 1998. This document emphasised the guidelines and general objectives for the five years between 1998 and 2003 (see *Ephemerides Calasanctianae*, 1998, pp. 330-335).

All this presupposed growth in the missionary spirit of our Order, which was first experienced by Calasanz, with his new foundations in Central Europe, and in a more modest way, half way through the 20<sup>th</sup> century with the foundations in Japan and Senegal (1950 and 1963 respectively). In 1996, the "Pious Schools Missionary day" was inaugurated, which would be celebrated every 2<sup>nd</sup> April, to commemorate the day that the first 8 Piarists left for Moravia in 1631. In 1997, the Fr. General nominated a "Delegate for Missions", and the first one was Fr. Jesús María Lecea.

While Fr. Balcells was General, much effort was put into publishing Calasanzian books about the charism and spirituality of the Order. More than 50 works (books and pamphlets) were published. These were divided into three sections: "Spirituality" (seven); "Quaderni" (twenty-seven, of which 8 were edited during the term of the previous Father General); "Materials" (twenty-seven). Here are some titles just as examples: Spirituality: "*L'anno con il Calasanzio*", by M.A. Asiain (The year with Calasanz); "*Intuizioni del Calasanzio sulla formazione scolopica*", by L. Padilla (Calasanz's Ideas about Piarist Formation); "*Spiritualità e pedagogia di San Giuseppe Calasanzio. Saggio di sintesi*", by the General Congregation (Spirituality and Teaching in St. Joseph Calasanz: An Outline). In the Quaderni collection: "*Itinerario spirituale di S. Giuseppe Calasanzio*", by A. García-Durán (The Spiritual Journey of St. Joseph Calasanz); "*Chiavi di lettura delle Costituzioni*", by J.A. Miró (Keys to reading the Constitutions); "*Apostolato extrascolastico nella tradizione scolopica*", by G. Ausenda (Extra-scholastic Apostolic Work in the Piarist

Tradition); “*Presenza religiosa, educativa e missionaria delle Scuole Pie*” by the General Congregation (Religious, Educational and Missionary Works of the Pious Schools); “*La Fraternità delle Scuole Pie*”, by the General Congregation (The Fraternity of the Pious Schools); “*Missione condivisa*” by the General Congregation (The Shared Mission). From the Materials collection: “*Spiritualità calasanziana*” di M.A. Asiain e M.R. Espejo (Calasanzian Spirituality), “*Lettura carismatica delle Costituzioni scolopiche*” by M.A. Asiain and J.A. Miró (A Charismatic Reading of the Piarist Constitutions).

In 1987, the *Yearbook of the Order of the Pious Schools* started to be published. This is a pictorial and literary account of the world-wide activity of the Piarists. It has been published annually (with the exception of 2005).

1987 also saw the first publication of the “*Calendarium Ordinis Scholarum Piarum*”, in order to make it easier to celebrate the Calasanzian feast days. This Calendar is enriched with many items about Piarist history and about current members. The 25<sup>th</sup> of every month is marked as a “Calasanz day”, and it merits special celebrations.

The work of the General Curia in this period for the Causes of beatification and canonization of members of the Order should be mentioned, as also its collaboration in the causes of members of our sister Congregations:

- The Beatification of Mother Paula Montal, founder of the Piarist Sisters (18<sup>th</sup> April 1993).
- The Beatification of Fr. Pietro Casani, the “right-arm” of Calasanz, and of Fr. Dionisio Pamplona and his 12 Martyred Companions (1<sup>st</sup> October 1995).
- The Beatification of Anton Maria Schwartz, founder of the Kalasantiner (12<sup>th</sup> June 1998).
- The Beatification of Fr. Faustino Míguez, Piarist and founder of the Calasanzian Daughters of the Divine Shepherdess (25<sup>th</sup> October 1998).
- The Canonisation of Mother Paula Montal of St. Joseph Calasanz, founder of the Piarist sisters (25<sup>th</sup> November 2001).
- The reactivation of the Cause of Glicerio Landriani, which had been started by St. Joseph Calasanz.

- The introduction of a cause in various places and at various levels (Diocesan or Pontifical) of the following Piarists: Bruno Martínez, Pedro Díez, Joaquín Erviti, Francesc Sagrera.

Another enterprise of this mandate which is worthy of mention is that concerning the meetings of the Calasanzian family. These began in 1989 in St. Pantaleo. The general Congregations of the following institutions attend: Piarist Fathers, Piarist Mothers, Cavanis Fathers, the Provolo Institute (male and female), the Timon-David Fathers, the Calasanzian Mothers, the Calasanzian Sisters, the Vorselaar Sisters, the Kalasantiner Fathers. This is intended to strengthen links between those institutes of Consecrated Life which live expressly according to the charism of Calasanz. From the above-mentioned date, these meetings have been held every four or five years.

Faced with new situations experienced in the Order, because of the low number of vocations in some places and greater in others, we began to reflect upon proposals which were meant to modify the way we understood our organisation of the Order in Provinces, as we moved from a traditionally high level of autonomy to one of greater communication and exchange between people. Therefore, if in the Special General Chapter they had spoken of “a more equilibrated distribution of people”, and in the 1973 General Chapter of “a more suitable distribution of religious throughout the Order”, in the 1997 General Chapter they begin to speak of “inter-Demarcational” aspects, because of which, those Demarcations with greater human resources should come to the aid of their weaker brethren. This led the Father General, Josep Maria Balcells, to introduce, with a new approach and method, but energetically, the movement for “Reorganisation of the Order” as a way to reinvigorate it.

In 1997, the whole order celebrated the IV Centenary of the school of Santa Dorotea. At the same time we celebrated the anniversary of the first “School for All” in Europe, with a desire to renew the spirit which moved those pioneers of the Pious Schools.

Fr. Balcells made a great effort to encourage the Vocational Pastoral throughout the whole Order, and in this he showed how he was clearly looking to the future. In 1992 the *“Direttorio Scolopico di Pastorale Vocazionale”* (Piarist Directives for the Vocational Pastoral) was published. From 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2000 and 13<sup>th</sup> January 2001, there was a meeting in Rome for Demarcational leaders of the Vocational Pastoral: 32 Piarists,

who belonged to 25 Demarcations of the Order, from 18 countries. In 2002, the General Congregation published the final conclusions of the meeting in a book entitled “Vocational Pastoral in the Pious Schools”, which also contained the conclusions which had been made about the four thematic blocs. Attached to this were the directives for the “*Statutes for Co-ordinators of the Vocational Pastoral*”. This was all rich material, which enabled members of the Order to open to new horizons of the Vocational Pastoral and to stimulate a real ‘vocational culture’ within the order.

As far as Initial Formation for young Piarists was concerned, the mandate of this Fr. General witnessed important changes. In 1986 the “Fr. Felipe Scío” Study House in Salamanca was closed, and in Spain this meant that the ancient and fruitful system of Central Houses, which had trained a great number of juniors from the various Spanish provinces, had come to an end. Faced with diversification which entailed a general setting up of Provincial training Houses, in 1988 the Fr. General published a document entitled “Unity and Stability of Piarist Initial Formation”. This established norms which had to be observed in all those Houses. These rules concerned both the trainers, the Houses themselves, the most important aspects of training and the various levels; requirement for access to the Solemn Profession, Sacred Orders, and both state and ecclesiastical studies.

In 1991, a new Directive was published, called “Formación del Escolapio” (FES – Training the Piarist). This Directive was approved by the General Chapter in the same year, after a long period of gestation, with the participation of those parts of the Order most directly interested in the subject. It sets out guidelines on the elements, agents, objectives, stages, etc. for the initial formation, or early training, of Piarists.

For permanent formation, numerous courses continued to be organised in the Circumscriptions and Provinces, for religious and for lay teachers, on Calasanzian topics, on spirituality, on the Bible and on teaching methods, etc. In 1994 the “*Direttorio Scolopico di Formazione Permanente*” (Piarist Directives for Continuous Training), which are still valid.

Great effort was also made to encourage reflection and exchange of experiences about the practice of our ministry. To this end, a series of assemblies on pedagogical and pastoral topics was organised.

- These are the most important:
- Pedagogical Symposium in Gandía (1987).

- Pedagogical Symposium in Gandía (1991).
- Seminars on Calasanzian Spirituality and teaching (1992 and 1993), which led to the document, “Spiritualità e Pedagogia di S. Giuseppe Calasanzio. Saggio di sintesi”.
- Pedagogical Symposium in Gandía (1993).
- Seminar on Calasanzian teaching in Valencia (1995).
- Pedagogical Symposium in Cullera (2001).

The 1997 General Chapter approved two important documents on the Calasanzian ministry: “Il carisma scolopico oggi” (The Piarist Charism Today) and “*Dichiarazione sulla scuola: Nulla ci farà abbandonare...*” (Declaration on Schools: Nothing will make us abandon them...).

Desirous of continually improving the practice of Piarist ministry, with the help of the “Cristóbal Colón” University of Veracruz, an ambitious programme regarding valuation of “Calasanzian Quality” in our establishments was set up. In 2002, this began in the various countries of America, and two years later it took in the rest of the Order’s educational establishments, with the aim of repeating this periodically. In this way, it was hoped to implant in the Order programmes for continuous educational improvement which would follow the values of the Pious Schools.

The role of the laity in the Pious Schools seems to be of especial importance during the term of this Fr. General. Here are the principal facts:

- The 1985 General Chapter approved a document: “*The Laity in the Pious Schools*”. This document called for the creation of a “Lay Branch” of the Piarists, asked to draw up a programme of Christian and Calasanzian formation for lay people, with especial attention to be paid to the fathers of families.
- On 1<sup>st</sup> October 1986, the Fr. General sent the Order a circular in which he touched upon the question of the Calasanzian Laity: a positive definition of laity, the diversity of ministry with unity of mission, autonomy and responsibility in the Church and our establishments, and so on.
- On 25<sup>th</sup> June 1988, the General Congregation, by means of an official document, established the “*Fraternity of the Pious Schools*”. With the motto “The Laity: an option for the future of the Church and for

the Pious Schools”, two fundamental aspects of this institution were developed. These were: its Apostolic and Calasanzian spirituality, and its organic structure (formation, attribution, formulae for promises, perseverance and exit, mutual obligations, local, provincial and general organisation). This was all put into motion on an experimental level until the next General Chapter.

- On 27<sup>th</sup> November 1988, the General Congregation published “*Clarifications and Practical Indications*” on the previous document.
- The 1991 General Chapter approved what the General Congregation had established in 1988, and extended the trial period. It also asked that they should: “*proceed gradually with the integration of the laity... and work in such a way that prejudice and fear should give way to an active desire to create Piarist lay people working side by side and closely with Piarist religious*”. At the same time, it asked that a document should be drawn up for the laity.
- The 1997 General Chapter approved an important document entitled “*Lay people in the Pious Schools*”: *Progetto istituzionale del Laicato* or PIL (Institutional Project for the Laity). This document would be the basis for subsequent lay development of our Order. It was published in *Quaderno 21*, the second part.
- In 1999, the General Congregation published the document “*Clarification on the Identity of Piarist Religious and Laity*”. It was published as *Quaderno 23*.
- The 2003 General Chapter took another step and approved the introduction in our Constitutions of two paragraphs about the collaboration and presence of the laity in the life and mission of the Order. This modification of the Constitutions has already received the necessary approval of the Holy See. These points may be found at numbers 36 and 94 of our current Constitutions.

During the mandate of this Father General, the internal unity of the Order gradually grew, in matters concerning objectives and common lines of action to be taken, as also in inter-Demarcational relationships, thus avoiding the apparent obstacle of progressive diversification imposed upon us by the times we live in.



## 4.2. A View of the Order from Regions and Provinces

### *Global evolution through the century*

During this century, the Pious Schools had to deal with an ecclesial and historical context which differed greatly from that of the previous century. Since the unification of Pius X, the Pious Schools had moved forward on the path towards organic and legislative unity. The Provinces and Houses were better organised, the formation of young Piarists was more closely followed, and the growth of the last period of the previous century continued to be consolidated.

We may distinguish different periods:

- a) Wars: the First World War meant reorganising certain Provinces (Slovakia, Romania) because of border changes. The period between the two World wars, with its emergent dictatorships, created difficulties for the Pious Schools in Italy, Austria, Bohemia and Poland. The Spanish Civil War, with its more than 200 Piarists violently killed, and the Second World War, created very serious difficulties for working schools and communities. The Wars kept the Novitiates closed and the juniors left.
- b) The socio-political blocs: once the wars had finished, the Pious Schools found they were in a very different situation. On the one hand, in Italy, and even more so in Spain, they experienced a period of growth, with a notable increase in vocations and the number of pupils. However, life in the Provinces of Central Europe changed radically: the Communist governments confiscated private colleges and allowed only certain parishes and a much reduced number of schools as a symbol of liberty. Amongst these were those of the Piarists (2 in Hungary and 1 in Poland). Religious Congregations were prohibited. Thus our religious were dispersed. Only very few of them were allowed to live in authorised communities, and the others had to be careful not to appear as religious. Nevertheless, a considerable number of them remained clandestine religious and even received and trained some vocations. But some Provinces were gradually extinguished.

During these years there was great expansion in the Pious Schools, especially those starting from Spain. These new foundations were mainly in America, but also in Europe: in the Iberian Peninsula itself and, more timidly, in France and even in Japan. The number

of pupils considerably increased, along with, naturally enough, the number of lay teachers, even though in the 1960s, Cuba lost all its schools, which were taken over because of the Castro revolution, and the fact that nearly all the Piarists left the country.

- c) The 2<sup>nd</sup> Vatican Council. This took place between 1962 and 1965, and it marked a decisive change of enormous importance: the new way we looked at the real situation upon Earth, the renewal of the pastoral and the liturgy, freedom of conscience and, above all, the conception of the Church as the People of God, with the consequent development of a theology of the laity. This implied a new way to be Christians in the Church and in the world. The call for religious to renew themselves and focus upon the charisms of their founders, and the recognition of education as a means of fulfilling the Christian apostolate were all other messages which would have great effect upon the Piarist Order. The Council saw the Piarists at one of their best moments, for in 1965 there were 2,540 Piarists (the second highest number in their history) with about 77,000 pupils.
- d) Post-Council Crisis: a fall in vocations and the religious crisis of the 1970s, with many priests and religious leaving their orders, meant a significant reduction in the numbers of members both of Religious Congregations and of the diocesan clergy. The same thing happened in our Order. This did not, however, result in a decrease in the number of establishments maintained by Piarists; in actual fact, these continue to increase and diversify. Naturally, this can be done only if new lay or Catholic lay helpers are available and they are ever more qualified and protagonists in the Church. The theology of the laity, which began with Vatican II, slowly progressed and we reaped its harvest, firstly in Latin America, but also in our older and clergy-bound Europe.
- e) The fall of the Berlin Wall (1989): when the Communist regimes of Central Europe disappeared in the early 1990s, the Piarists of those regions immediately came to life again. They came out into the open, recovered control of many of their old colleges and churches, increased the number of their establishments and pupils, and also their vocations. Hungary, Poland and Slovakia are now growing and under reorganisation.

During recent decades, the Pious Schools have opened to new countries, especially in Africa and Asia, as well as to new kinds of work and

establishments. In order to work more closely with the poor and to adapt themselves to new times and situations, Piarists have taken over many parishes, have encouraged many movements for lay volunteers, have encouraged the growth of Christian communities of young people and adults and have developed the Fraternity of the Pious Schools (FEP).

While there is a serious lack of vocations in Spain, Italy and Austria, the Pious Schools are continually growing thanks to the great number of vocations in Hungary, Poland and Slovakia; also in America, and above all in Africa, India and the Philippines.

Thus, this century ended with us re-thinking the organisation of the whole Order. While in Italy and Spain the considerable fall in the numbers of religious led us to make moves towards unification and a regrouping of our forces, in other areas of the world our reorganisation aims more at strengthening opportunities which have opened up, so that they may consolidate their achievements and facilitate further growth.

### *Evolution in the various areas*

#### *a) Italy*

During the first half of the century, circumstances certainly did not favour our Italian Provinces: even though anti-clerical sentiment had weakened, the liberal-lay regime lasted until 1922; the fascist regime was state-centred (1922-1943), although the Lateran Pact of 1929 improved the situation for the Church; the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War and proclamation of the Republic, led to a constitution (1947) which prohibited any subsidies for private education.

During the second half of the century, the democratic governments, even though many of these were led by the Christian Democratic Party, did not support any substantial aid for the Pious Schools, as they were conditioned by the prohibitions of the Constitution.

A weakness of vocations would also be a constant factor. From the 50s to the 60s, there were, it is true, a large number of vocations, which filled the inter-Provincial House at Monte Mario in Rome (the Calasanctianum). However, the religious crises of the 1970s, when many juniors and young priests gave up their orders, again left us in dire straits. Since that period, the number of vocations has been but an intermittent trickle.

Thus there has been a slow but unstoppable decline in the number of Italian Piarists, as may be seen in the following table:

	1909	1965	1973	1989	2003
Rome	75	50	40	41	32
Liguria	112	104	70	61	39
Tuscany	93	60	40	32	21
Naples	27	38	25	22	17
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>252</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>109</b>

During the past 25 years, private colleges throughout Italy, in the grip of the economic situation, have experienced a notable decline in student numbers. The Piarists closed the century with 12 schools or colleges, 8 parishes and 14 churches for public worship. They also have specialist centres, like, for example, a college for the deaf and dumb in Genoa, the seismological and meteorological Ximenes Observatory in Florence and a mission in the Ivory Coast; and we should not forget the educational and pastoral work carried out by Piarists in other centres.

Towards the end of the century, they started to reflect upon the convenience of merging the four Piarist Provinces of Italy, and this became effective on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2007.

### *b) Central Europe*

The political convulsions which took place here (the Nazi dictatorship from 1937 and the Communist dictatorships from 1945), as well as the two World Wars (1914-18 and 1939-45) affected the Central European Pious Schools badly. Their Piarists survived in circumstances which were very difficult and sometimes heroic, in which the persecutions and obstacles encountered were unable to extinguish the spirit of Calasanz, which continued to be cultivated with love. The fate of each Province and State was very different.

#### *Province of Poland*

After the restoration of the Province in 1878, it experienced difficulties until some religious from Catalonia moved there in 1903, and this provided

most effective help. A noteworthy member of this group was Fr. Joan Borrell, who was for many years Novice Master and Father Provincial.

In 1909, the Province had 23 religious, which had increased to 76 by 1931. New colleges and new Houses were opened.

The German invasion of 1939 inflicted an almost fatal blow and marked the beginning of dispersion. In 1944 the Soviet occupation began. This imposed Communist regime led to the loss of all Piarist colleges, except for one small one which was tolerated by the regime. Some religious fled to the USA, while others dedicated themselves to pastoral work. In 1973 their perfectly organised catechism classes in parishes were teaching 10,000 children.

From 1949, the Novitiate began to work, and the Province slowly began to come back to life and opened new residences and parishes.

The freedom reacquired in 1988 and the break up of the Soviet Empire, was a great relief for Polish Piarists. They began to recuperate the Houses and Colleges which had been confiscated. Vocations increased in number. Parishes and residences in the old territory of the Soviet Union which is now Belarus reopened. Some religious were invited to the missions of Cameroon, Japan and the Philippines.

In 2003 there were 89 religious who had professed their solemn vows, 41 with temporary vows and 12 novices, in 15 communities; they ran 7 colleges, 11 parishes and 2 churches for public worship.

This is the evolution of numbers of religious in the Province of Poland:

	1904	1920	1930	1939	1945	1973	2003
Religious	6	12	67	79	51	102	130
Houses	1	2	4	5	2	13	15

### *Province of Hungary*

During the early years of the century the situation was solid and growing. At the end of the First World War, for political reasons it lost many Houses, which moved to make up the Provinces of Romania and Slovakia. In 1931 there were 315 religious in 11 communities.

The various stages in the study programmes of young Piarists were very well organised. However, one defect was that they had to teach the state curriculum in state schools and the ecclesiastical one in their centres at the very same time. In 1940, thanks mainly to Fr. Vincent Tomek, who was Assistant Fr. Provincial, they managed to have separate times allotted to the study of each.

After the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War, the Communist regime which was imposed upon the country closed nearly all Christian colleges and dispersed the religious. The Piarists were allowed to keep their colleges and the respective communities if there was a fixed number of religious. All those who were not included in that number had to leave, and most of them started to live clandestinely and do any kind of work to make a living. Even those who were in the formation stage had a maximum number imposed, which was low. Some religious fled to the USA, where, from 1949 on, along with Polish Piarists, they opened some schools.

The two Hungarian Piarist colleges survived these adverse circumstances and their prestige in the academic and educational field was always recognised.

When the Communist regime came to an end, the Province began to gather its own religious together. With great effort they managed to recuperate various old colleges of theirs and to get them back on their feet again.

In 1990, there were about 100 religious. In 2003, there were 74 priests and 15 juniors, who were distributed over 8 communities and they were running 8 colleges and 1 parish. Now that normal life has started again, and with an acceptable number of new vocations, the Province stands a good chance in the future.

### *Province of Slovakia*

For political reasons, this was created in 1931 from the Hungarian Houses situated in Slav territory. Once the Hungarian religious had returned to their own country, the Slav Piarists continued the Province, even if its existence was somewhat precarious. In 1931 there were 12 religious. Some of these taught in state schools, others did pastoral work in non-Piarist parishes.

In 1938, the first five Piarists who had entered the Province were ordained priests. The War and the new Communist regime dispersed

them. Some were able to fulfil their ministry as parish priests. Religious schools were abolished in 1950.

In spite of suffering harsh persecution, in 1959 there were about 16 Piarist religious. Courageous action, especially on the part of the Fr. Provincial, Jozef Horvatik, started to prepare, clandestinely, a group of young religious. In 1989, by which time there was a new political stage in the country's development, Fr. Horvatik was able to direct about 25 religious. Little by little, normal activity returned to schools and churches. By 2003 there were 20 priests and 2 juniors, in 4 Houses, and they managed 4 colleges, 4 parishes and 4 public churches.

### *Province of Austria*

The socio-political events of the two World Wars, and the dictatorships which also affected Austria, greatly damaged the Pious Schools of the country. During this century the fall in number of Piarists was unstoppable: in 1900 there were 20 religious; in 1989 there were 7 religious; in 2003 there were 8. Help given by other countries (Spain and Poland) was not sufficient. The deeply rooted secularisation of society and a lack of new vocations took this Province to a desperate situation. It has been governed by a Delegate of the Fr. General since 1991.

There are two communities and branches, two schools, two parishes and some churches for public worship.

### *Province of Romania*

This was created in 1925 because of political pressure and in 1931 it had 46 religious. The Second World War and the following Communist regime caused the Piarists to live dispersed, and some of them worked as diocesan priests. In 1959 there were 18 religious, but by 1991 this number had fallen to only 6 and the politico-religious situation was still hostile. In 2006 the last Piarist remaining in Romania died.

### *Province of Bohemia-Moravia (Czech Republic)*

In 1909 there were 44 religious but their number slowly fell and they disappeared altogether. The two World Wars caused the religious to disperse. In 1948, under Communist dictatorship, there were 11 religious, in spite of the clandestine lives they were forced to live. But the political

changes of the 1990s have not led to a hoped-for recovery: in 1989 there were only two elderly Piarists surviving, the last of whom died in 1991.

### *c) Spain*

#### *An Outline*

- a) The 1904 Convention between the Holy See and Spain recognised in the Piarists (the only Religious Congregation expressly mentioned) a privileged or exceptional position. Article 8 states: *“The order of the Piarist Fathers shall continue with the same conditions, rights and benefits which it currently enjoys”*. In an order from the Ministry dated 1<sup>st</sup> September 1914, it is yet again expressly stated that Piarists are exempted from the need for state qualifications.
- b) With the 2<sup>nd</sup> Republic, relations with the Church became tense and difficult. The Constitution and the laws which were consequent upon it placed great restrictions upon education by Religious Congregations, so that these had to turn to civil associations (SADEL: Sociedad Anónima de Enseñanza Libre – Anonymous Association for Free Teaching) in order to be able to take over the direction and titular ownership of the colleges. Some Piarists acquired state qualifications. During the Civil War, persecution against religious in the Republican zone was very harsh: colleges were requisitioned, the religious were dispersed and about 213 Piarists were murdered (75 in Catalonia, 30 in Aragon, 70 in Castile and 38 in Valencia).
- c) When peace broke out, there was a rapid rise in Piarist religious life and a great increase in new vocations. There were numerous communities and they worked very hard; the colleges grew in prestige and pupil numbers and the percentage of lay teachers working in our establishments increased. There was sometimes tension with the Franco regime, but never large scale clashes.

In spite of the 1953 Concordat with the Holy See, it began to be necessary to have state qualifications or recognition in order to teach.

At the beginning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vatican Council, the Spanish Pious Schools had the highest number of religious in the whole of their history: about 1,850.



- d) The 1970 General Law on Education: it became more necessary to have state qualifications but a plan for state subsidies in private schools also started. Thus the economic situation in many of our colleges became calmer.

Although our schools became more answerable to state authorities, the education laws of the 1980s (LODE and LOGSE) brought in generalised Educational Agreements (“*Conciertos Educativos*”), and thus nearly all our establishments became more “popular” and open to all social classes.

The religious crisis of the 1970s, and the consequent fact that considerable numbers of priests and religious abandoned Holy Orders and there was also a drastic cut in the number of new vocations, necessitated new ways in which colleges and schools would be run and community life would be organised.

The Theology of the Laity which had been encouraged by Vatican II, would stimulate and support a Lay presence in the Pious Schools, with both the right to hold posts of direction and responsibility in our establishments, and in sharing the charism of Calasanz in various ways.

The following table shows the development of Piarists in Spain:

YEAR	1899	1909	1948	1965	2003
Vicariate/ General Delegation	160				9
Aragon	219	374	256	288	103 (170)
Catalonia	342	476	360	482	114 (193)
Castile (2nd Demarcation)	316	369	380	557	144 (166)
Valencia	105	164	141	178	68 (103)
Vasconia			216	346	79 (148)
Andalusia					9 (17)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1.142</b>	<b>1.383</b>	<b>1.353</b>	<b>1.851</b>	<b>526 (797 en total)</b>

*N. B. The numbers of the first four columns include members of the Province, even if they work outside of Spain, although these people only become numerous in 1965. The 2003 column contains only those who are resident in the Spanish state (the total number in the whole Province is given in brackets). All numbers in the lists include novices.*

### *General Vicariate of Spain*

After 1904, the General Vicariate of Spain continued to be organised as it had been during the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Vicar General, Assistants, Chapters, etc.); but this organisation was empty of content. Various Vicars followed each other but they were of less juridical and practical relevance.

On 27<sup>th</sup> November 1929, after Mon. Pasetto's Visitation, the Sacred Congregation of Religious published a decree: *Cum in praeclaro*, which ordered that the Vicar General was to be considered a Delegate of the Father General, with the powers of that role. These were as follows: the business of the Central Houses, co-ordinating or moderating meetings of the Father-Provincials of Spain, assisting the General Chapter, and so on.

In 1930, the Fr. General nominated Fr. Valentín Caballero "Vicar Delegate", and in 1940 he nominated Fr. José Olea. Both of them were responsible for important matters as they represented the Fr. General at National Government level during times which were far from easy. But in 1948, Fr. Olea's title was changed to that of "Delegate" of the Father General.

### *Province of Aragon*

In 1909 there were 374 religious and 20 Houses, including those of Argentina and Chile.

In the 1930s, things happened which would reduce the size of the Province: in 1932 the Province of Vasconia was founded, with the Houses of Navarra, Guipúzcoa and Chile; and 30 religious died a violent death during the Spanish Civil War.

At the end of the war, some of the important foundations started to improve, both those on Spanish territory (Soria, the Calasanzian College and Cristo Rey in Zaragoza...), and others in America and Africa. In Spain certain rural colleges closed.

Time, money, people and effort were spent on looking after the house of Peralta de la Sal.

In 1959, there were a total of 325 religious and 17 Houses.

In 2003, this figure changed and became a total of 170 members (103 in Aragon, 24 in New York-Puerto Rico, and 43 in Cameroon) and they had 21 Houses (12 in Aragon, 5 in New York-Puerto Rico and 4 in

Cameroon). In Spain there were 8 colleges, 8 parishes (6 in Peralta) and 4 churches for public worship.

### *Province of Catalonia*

From 1900 to 1936, this Province was dynamic in many fields: at Lovanio it founded a Student House (1909); it encouraged new teaching research and methods; it was pioneering in the benefits of sport (basketball); it was interested in the liturgy and Gregorian chant; it encouraged youth associations and commercial schools; it managed the foundation of Cuba and started that of Mexico (1913).

More than 70 religious met a violent death during the Civil War.

After the war and in the years which followed it, the situation improved: parishes, houses in areas on the margins of society, scouting for youngsters, and so on. It also set up an excellent centralised organisation of its Catalonia schools, restarted its work in Mexico and started new foundations in California and Senegal.

In 1989 there were a total of 298 members and 37 Houses. However, when the Province of Mexico was created in 1990, the number of members and Houses fell. Since 1993 there has also been a community in Pantin (Paris) which looks after a parish.

In 2003, it had a total of 193 members (109 in Catalonia, 36 in California, 43 in Senegal, 5 in Cuba) and 26 Houses (14 in Catalonia, 7 in California, 4 in Senegal and 1 in Cuba). In the Province in the strictest meaning of the word, there are 19 colleges and 5 parishes (2 in Barcelona, 1 in Paris, 2 in Cuba).

### *Province of the Third Demarcation*

In 1931 there were 422 members and 16 Houses.

During the Civil War, 70 religious were murdered and another 29 died or abandoned the order.

After the war there was a sizeable increase in new vocations and new foundations (Santa Cruz di Tenerife, Oviedo, Salamanca, La Coruña, Aluche...) and it began to expand in America.

The religious crisis of the 1970s severely affected vocations in the Province.

Since 1970 it has also had a presence in Africa (Equatorial Guinea and Gabon).

In 1974 the Vice-Province of Andalusia separated from the Third Demarcation and in 1994 the Houses in Colombia-Ecuador became a Province.

In 2003 it had a total of 166 members (144 within the Province in the strictest terms, 22 in Africa) and 21 Houses (17 within the geographical Province itself and 4 in Africa). In Spain there were 12 colleges, 2 parishes and 2 churches for public worship.

### *Province of Valencia*

In 1909 the Province had 164 religious.

In 1924 there was a new foundation in Albacete.

During the Civil War, 38 of its religious were murdered. After the war it made great efforts to rebuild and reorganise what had been destroyed.

In 1949 it founded the Calasanzian College of Valencia and began new foundations in America. The Malvarrosa College opened in 1962. It also took charge of some parishes and created the *Centro de Orientación y Promoción Personal* (COPP – a centre for personal guidance and promotion).

After a period of great decline, the Province had one of great spiritual awakening, which was accompanied by a considerable increase in the number of new religious vocations. It again introduced continuous prayer for children and developed methods for prayer which were suitable for its pupils.

In 2003 it had a total of 103 members (68 in the actual Province and 35 in the Central American Vice-Province) and 16 Houses (10 in the actual Province itself and 6 in the Vice-Province). In Spain there were 8 colleges, 3 parishes and 3 churches for public worship.

### *Province of Vasconia*

This was set up in 1933, with five Houses which came from Aragon and one from Castile, as well as two Houses in Chile, which also came from Aragon. It then had 136 religious.

During the Civil War it had problems in working well.

After the war it was distinguished for its new vocations and for its missionary spirit. During the 1950s it had new foundations in Japan, Brazil and Venezuela; it also increased the number of its schools in Chile. In 1966 it opened a school in Vitoria.

In 1959 it had a total of 270 religious and 16 Houses.

After a period of steep decline in vocations, since 1973 there has been a considerable rise, which is linked to widespread youth pastoral work. The youth groups, which are encouraged with constant care, have led to Christian communities, from which a promising Piarist Lay Fraternity has emerged. Numerous members of the laity have taken up the Calasanzian charism and are trying new ways to experience this.

In 1996, the Japan Houses separated from the Province and became the General Delegation of Japan-Philippines.

In 2003 it had a total of 148 members (79 in the actual Province, 18 in Brazil, 23 in Chile, 29 in Venezuela) and 26 Houses (11 in the actual Province, 4 in Brazil, 4 in Chile, 7 in Venezuela). In Vasconia there are 5 colleges, 19 parishes (15 in Riezu) and 3 churches for public worship).

### *Vice-Province of Andalusia*

In 1974 the Vice-Province of Andalusia, or Betica, was created, which was dependent upon Castile. The following year, it was declared independent.

It was the fruit of a search for a suitable presence in Andalusia and in accordance with the theological and religious concerns contained in the teachings of Vatican II. It started with 27 religious in 4 Houses.

Its first years were characterised by research and crisis. Some abandoned the Order. After acquiring greater serenity, they sent some religious to the mission in Quimili (Argentina) and later, in 1992, to Bolivia. They are still there and they do intense educational and liberating work in a most humble environment.

In 1989 they had 23 members in 4 Houses.

In 2003 there were a total of 17 members (9 in Andalusia and 8 in Bolivia) and 4 Houses (3 in Andalusia and 1 in Bolivia, where they work in various places). In Andalusia they run 3 schools.

#### *d) America*

After some transitory presence during the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Havana from 1812/15 to 1829 and Montevideo from 1836 to 1875), during the second half of that century the Pious Schools succeeded in establishing a permanent presence in the American continent: Cuba (1857, 1868, 1894), Chile (1886), Panama (1889), Argentina (1891, 1894). At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century this expansion continued slowly: (Cuba 1905, 1909 and 1910), Argentina (1914, 1927 and 1931), Mexico (in a transitory way from 1913 to 1935), Santiago de Chile (1917).

But half way through the 20<sup>th</sup> century (in the 1940s and 50s) the Pious Schools flourished in America. Many Houses were founded in many countries, mostly in the Spanish Provinces. The Hungarians and Poles had new foundations in the USA from 1949 onwards. The Province of Poland created a small “outpost” in Canada, but much later.

These foundations were marked by their “institutional” character, as many of them were supported by petitions from bishops or other authorities. It frequently happened that Piarists started by accepting parishes or serving as chaplains or in other work; but they often quickly moved on to founding schools, which were generally new constructions. People were sent there, but money was seldom given for new foundations. Those colleges were nearly always started from the point of view of the mentality of the Europe of that time. This means, great educational establishments in towns with large populations and with students from the middle or upper-middle classes. Local new-vocations were not an immediate concern and so they waited for reinforcements from Spain when necessary.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Vatican Council and reflection from the American Church (e.g. the Documents of Puebla and Medellin) stimulated a change in mentality which slowly produced fruit. Much work was done to approach the world of the poor, even if it was not always successful.

Amongst the most significant results of the last third of the century, we should mention: pedagogical and educational renewal; the stable “missions”, such as Quimilí in Argentina (1971), Maconí in Mexico (1974), Kentucky Appalachians in the USA (1988); co-operative schools; assistance centres for minors; centres for evening study; then the educational outreach centres and parishes on the outskirts of great cities or in depressed rural areas.

At the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Pious Schools had a presence in nearly all countries of North, Central and South America, although this was more important in some countries compared with others.

During the final years of the century, the Vocational Pastoral was of great concern and provided a rich harvest. Many Demarcations could boast their own native Pious Schools.

Here is a list of the various Piarist establishments as they are currently organised in America. This documentation has been updated to 2003, when Fr. José Maria Balcells finished his term as Fr. General.

## *PROVINCES*

### *Province of Argentina (1964)*

After the ephemeral new foundation of 1870, the Piarists created a stable foundation in Buenos Aires in 1891, but they had to wait until 1896 for the new school to be built.

In 1893, the Vicar General of Spain joined the Buenos Aires House to those already extant in Chile (Concepción and Copiapo) and declared them a Vice-Province or Vicariate, led by a Vicar Provincial, Fr. León Vidaller. This was dependent upon the Vicar General of Spain. In 1894 there was a new foundation in Córdoba and in 1896 they took over a third House in Chile: the orphanage of Providencia, in Santiago.

When the Vicars General of Spain were abolished (1897), the five colleges of the Vice-Province of Chile-Argentina came under the jurisdiction of Aragon.

In 1933, with the creation of the Province of Vasconia, Chile separated from Argentina. Chile remained in Vasconia, while Argentina remained with Aragon. After this event, the Argentinian Piarists made various new foundations.

In 1964, the Fr. General, Vincent Tomek, together with his Assistants, took a decision to create the Province of Argentina from the Houses and the religious already there. Thus the Province began with 71 religious (56 priests, 7 brothers and 8 Juniores), in 8 communities.

In 1994, the Province of Argentina made an effort to open to the missions, and it founded a house in Aroor, in the State of Kerala (India), where Piarists do different educational-pastoral work and, above all, they

work for the Piarist religious formation of a considerable number of young people who are attracted by the Calasanzian vocation.

In 2003, the Province had 56 religious (31 priests, 2 brothers and 23 Juniores) in 8 communities. It ran 7 schools, 2 parishes and 3 churches for public worship.

### *Province of the United States of America (1975)*

At the end of World War II, A group of Piarists who had fled from the Communist regimes of Hungary and Poland, arrived in the United States, and, after various contacts having been made, started to establish themselves in the North East of the country. They had new foundations in Buffalo (1949), Derby (1951), Devon (1953) and Washington (1953).

They started by working in parishes, hospitals, supply teachers, teaching in various establishments. In the meanwhile they studied so that they could be trained to open other schools of their own.

In 1964, this became an independent Vice-Province with 4 Houses and the Vice-provincial Superior was Fr. Jozef Batory.

In 1961, thanks to the efforts of the Catalan Piarists, there was a new foundation in Fort Lauderdale (Florida). At the outset, it depended directly upon the Fr. General, but in 1972 it was annexed to the Vice-Province of the USA. In 1975 it became the Province of the United States of America. There were then 38 religious.

In 2003, the Province had 29 priests and 4 novices, distributed over 6 Houses. It runs 3 schools (Fort Lauderdale, Martin and Devon) and is responsible for the work of SEPI (South East Pastoral Institute), which coordinates the Hispanic Pastoral of 30 dioceses, for the social, theological and pastoral training of a total of five million Hispanics, most of whom are young people.

### *Province of Mexico (1990)*

After various unsuccessful attempts, in 1913 the Archbishopric of Puebla asked the Fr. Provincial of Catalonia for a new foundation in its diocese. Once the convention for the building and its relative subsidies had been signed, the “First Pious School in Mexico” was opened. During the revolution, the college was sequestered, but the Piarists remained and



continued to do much and varied useful work until, shortly afterwards, they were able to get their old school back and continue teaching, even though there were serious problems owing to “Christian persecution”. In 1935, with the Cardenas government, these problems intensified and the Fr. Provincial of Catalonia decided to withdraw the religious.

In 1950, some old pupils of the school of Puebla returned to ask the then Fr. Provincial of Catalonia to reopen the college: Fr. Julián Centelles visited Mexico and decided to reopen it. As director of the work, he left his Secretary, Fr. Vicente Ortí. The new opening of the college took place in 1951. At almost the same time there was a new foundation in Merida, but this lasted only two years.

During the first few years, the Mexican foundation depended upon Cuba, until in 1957 the “Delegation of Mexico-California” was created.

From Puebla, new foundations were started: Chiautempan (1958), some Parishes in Mexico (1958), Oaxaca (1961), Apizaco (1962), and Veracruz (1962).

In 1959 the Delegation split into two Delegations: that of California and that of Mexico. During the 1960s, other new schools were founded.

In 1990 this was declared a Province, with 53 priests, 2 deacons, 25 Juniores and 14 novices.

In 2003, the Province had 43 religious with solemn vows, 15 juniors with simple vows and 7 novices, organised in 9 communities.

It runs 6 colleges, 5 parishes and four educational establishments (amongst which are the “Hogares Calasanz” refuges).

#### *Province of Colombia-Ecuador (1994)*

In 1948, a small group of Piarists from Castile arrived in Socorro-San Gil (Colombia), having been called there by the local diocesan bishop. They started to do various jobs, but circumstances were not yet on their side.

In 1949 the first school in Colombia was opened in Bogotá and in 1950 another was opened in Medellín. Other new foundations followed with the “Inmaculada Concepción” in Bogotá (1953) and Cucuta (1954).

In 1956 the Vice-province of Colombia was decreed, which, when it opened its doors to the House of Cañar in Ecuador (1964), was then called “Vice-Province of Colombia- Ecuador”.

Its first schools were inspired by those that its Piarists were familiar with in Spain: large buildings, and mainly orientated towards the wealthy, even though they each had an annex for the children of the poor.

After the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vatican Council, a desire to work more closely with the poor grew. Bearing this in mind, two Houses were set up in Ecuador (Cañar and Saraguro); certain centres were converted into cooperative colleges; outskirts areas inhabited by the poor were chosen for the mission, and so on. In a period of doubt and crisis, the Vice-province lost nearly 50 religious and the number of new vocations fell. When a period of greater serenity was reached, the new vocations began to increase again and it was declared a Province in July 1994. There were then 44 priests, 1 brother, 2 deacons and 12 juniors.

In 1997, with the Houses in Ecuador, the Vicariate of Ecuador was declared, which was dependent upon Colombia.

It currently has a total of 54 members (45 in Colombia and 9 in Ecuador). In Colombia there are 7 communities, which run 7 schools, 1 parish and 2 educational centres (Hogar-residence and Youth Centre).

### *DEPENDENT DEMARCATIONS*

#### *Dependent upon Aragon*

- Vice-Province of New York – Puerto Rico:

These were first founded in New York (1950) and Puerto Rico (1959).

It became a Vice-Province in 1971.

It currently has 24 religious (22 priests and 2 juniors with simple vows). There are live in 4 communities and run 4 schools, 3 parishes, 5 churches for public worship and 1 educational centre.

#### *Dependent upon Catalonia*

- Vice-Province of the Californias:

The Piarists arrived in California in 1945 to run the parish of St. Martha.

In 1957 the Delegation of Mexico-California was created, but in 1960 these split and the delegation of California was set up.

This was declared a Vice-Province in 1995.

In 2003 it was made up of 36 members (21 with solemn vows, 12 with simple vows and 3 novices). These were distributed over 5 communities with two branch establishments and they were responsible for 2 parish schools, 6 parishes and 4 educational centres.

#### *Dependent upon Valencia*

- Vice-Province of central America:

The first foundation was in León (Nicaragua) in 1949.

This became a Vice-province in 1960. Its jurisdiction covers three countries: Nicaragua, Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic.

It currently has 35 religious (28 priests and 7 juniors with simple vows). They have 6 communities, which run 4 schools, 2 parishes, 1 church for public worship and 4 educational centres.

#### *Dependent upon Vasconia*

- Vice-Province of Chile:

Its history goes right back to 1885, when the Vicar General of Spain received a request for a new foundation in Concepción. The Vicar General chose three Piarists from Catalonia and another three from Aragon and sent them to Chile.

In 1886 they took charge of a parish with a school in Yumbel and also became responsible for the Concepción seminary.

With these two Houses they set up the Vicariate of Chile in 1886. Two years later the number of Piarists in the country had increased to 18. In 1890 they abandoned Yumbel and created a great college in Concepción. Soon after that they took on the college-seminary of Copiapo.

In 1893, the Vicar General of Spain united Chile and Argentina and created the Vicariate of Chile-Argentina, which, in 1897, became dependent upon Aragon.

In 1896 they began in Santiago and took over responsibility for the orphanage of Providencia. In 1902 the Copiapó school was abandoned for lack of pupils and in 1912 the first stone of the Hispanic-American College of Santiago was laid and it opened in 1917.

With the creation of the Province of Vasconia in 1933, the three Chilean Houses (Concepción, Providencia, Hispano Americano) detached themselves from Argentina and became dependent upon the new Province. In 1934 there were 29 religious.

But bad times were around the corner for religious institutions in Chile. The Piarists were forced to abandon the Hogares of Providencia in 1934, and the college of Concepción stopped working in January 1939 because the building fell down in an earthquake. This meant that it was no longer a Vice-Province.

It was born again as a Vice-Province in 1960.

In 2003, there were 23 religious (21 priests and 2 juniors). These were distributed over 5 communities, which were responsible for 4 schools, 2 parishes, 2 churches for public worship and 3 educational centres.

– Vice-Province of Brazil

The first Brazilian foundation was in Belo Horizonte in 1950.

It became a Vice-Province in 1958.

There are currently 18 members (11 priests, 5 juniors with simple vows and 2 novices). These live in 4 communities, which are responsible for 2 colleges, 2 parishes, 1 church for public worship and 2 educational centres.

– Vice-Province of Venezuela

The first House founded in the country was that of Carora in 1951.

It became a Vice-Province in 1960.

In 2003 there were 28 religious (16 with solemn vows and 12 juniors with simple vows). These are distributed in 6 communities with one branch establishment. They are responsible for 5 schools, 3 parishes and three social work projects.

*Dependent upon Colombia:*

– Vicariate of Ecuador

The first House was founded in Cañar in 1964.

It became a Vicariate in 1997.

There are currently 9 religious with solemn vows (8 priests and 1 brother). They live in 4 communities, which are responsible for 4 colleges, 2 parishes and 5 educational centres.

### *DEPENDENT HOUSES*

#### *House dependent on the Father General:*

- Veracruz in Mexico:

The Community of “St. Paula Montal”, which was founded in 1962 runs the “Cristobal Colon” University, which has more than 4,000 students.

#### *House dependent upon Catalonia*

- Cuba:

This country was the site of the very first presence of the Pious Schools in America. Between 1812 and 1852 there were ephemeral foundations which nevertheless served to lay foundations for the first official foundation, which was asked for by St. Antonio María Claret, in Guanabacoa (1957). Shortly afterwards the establishment of Camagüey was founded in 1858. Both of these foundations answered to the Vicar General of Spain. In 1871 they were placed under the jurisdiction of the province of Catalonia.

In 1909 the Houses of Cuba were declared to be a Provincial Vicariate, and a series of new foundations were undertaken.

In 1913 it was declared a Vice-Province on which firstly Mexico and then California would be dependent.

In 1961 the Castro regime confiscated private schools (5 belonged to Piarists). Of the 50 Piarists on the island, only 8 remained and they looked after varied pastoral work of the diocese. In 1969 a Provincial Delegate was nominated.

It was only possible to keep the building of the Novitiate of Guanabacoa, where the only Piarist Community on the island is officially resident.

There are currently 5 religious (4 priests and 1 junior) in one community which looks after 2 parishes.

*House dependent upon Poland*

- Canada

This is an “Missionary Station” or Provisional House in Vegreville (Canada), which does pastoral work.

*House dependent upon Andalusia*

- Bolivia

The Community of Anzaldo-Cochabamba was founded in 1992.

On 4<sup>th</sup> June 2007, the Provincial Vicariate (dependent upon Emaus), was constituted, with 16 religious and 3 Houses, responsible for 2 schools and 3 parishes.

*e) Asia and Africa*

*ASIA*

*Dependent on the Father General*

- General Delegation of Japan and the Philippines:

Piarists from Vasconia arrived in Japan in 1950 and in 1952 they founded the Yokohama Community with a parish. This was the base for the further foundations of Yokkaichi (1955) and Tokyo (1966). In 1957 it was declared a Provincial Delegation of Vasconia.

In 1995 a Piarist presence in the Philippines began, on the initiative of and under the direct authority of the Fr. General.

In 1996, with the combined Houses of Japan and the Philippines, the “General Delegation of Japan and the Philippines” was set up and depended directly on the Father General. It had 10 priests and one brother.

In 2003 there were 57 members (14 with solemn vows, 29 juniors with simple vows and 14 novices). These are in 5 communities and are responsible for 2 colleges, 2 parishes and 1 educational centre, and they do other pastoral work.

On 8<sup>th</sup> June 2004, they became an independent Vice-Province.

### *Dependent upon the Province of Argentina*

- The Community of India:

In 1994, Piarists from Argentina went to the State of Kerala in India for a new foundation in Aroor.

By 2003 they had 2 Houses with 7 priests and 18 juniors. This therefore suggests great hope for the growth of the Pious Schools in that great country.

### *AFRICA*

#### *Dependent upon the Father General*

- The Formation House, or Training College of Yaoundé (Cameroon):
- The “Blessed Piarist Martyrs” Community, which was founded in 1998, is an inter-Demarcational House to train juniors from the various Piarist Demarcations of Africa.

#### *Dependent upon Liguria*

- The Ivory Coast:

In 1991 the Piarists of the Italian Province of Liguria opened a Mission in Daloa. They currently occupy a parish and a large cultural centre and also work in the university.

#### *Dependent upon Aragon*

- Vicariate of Cameroon:

Since 1989, Piarists from Aragon and Poland have been working in Cameroon, in various places of the mission. They are also helped by some religious from Senegal.

In 2000, the Fr. General officially set up the “Vicariate of Cameroon”, which depends upon the Province of Aragon. This includes all Piarist Houses in the country with the exception of the Juniorate of Yaounde.

There are currently 43 members (14 with solemn vows, 24 juniors with simple vows and 5 novices), distributed over 4 communities and responsible for 2 schools, 3 parishes and 3 educational centres.

On 17<sup>th</sup> October 2007 the “Vice-Province of Cameroon” was created, with 57 religious and 16 establishments in 6 towns.

*Dependent upon Catalonia*

- Vice-province of Senegal:

The first Piarists reached Senegal in 1963. They belonged to the Province of Catalonia.

It was declared a Provincial Vicariate in 1967 and exactly 30 years later, a Vice-Province, dependent upon Catalonia.

In 2003 there were 43 members (23 with solemn vows, 17 juniors with simple vows and 3 novices). These live in 4 communities and are responsible for 2 schools, 2 parishes and 4 educational centres.

*Dependent upon the 3<sup>rd</sup> Spanish Demarcation*

- Vicariate of Equatorial Guinea-Gabon:

The first presence of Piarists in the country, who were sent by the Province of Castile, goes back to 1970, but for political reasons they had to leave in 1973.

In 1979, a new government in New Guinea asked that new foundations of educational centres should be made. Yet again the Province of Castile accepted the invitation and sent religious, who founded an establishment in Akonibe in 1979. In 1995 they took on a parish in Libreville (Gabon).

With these Houses in Guinea and Gabon, the Vicariate of the same name was created in 1998.

There are currently 22 religious (16 with solemn vows and 6 juniors with simple vows). There are 3 communities, with a branch establishment, and they are responsible for 3 colleges, 2 parishes and 1 church for public worship.



### 4.3. The Piarist Ministry

#### *General Situation*

##### *Education in new political systems*

After the right to an education had been recognised in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, the 20<sup>th</sup> century would be that in which this universal right would be put into practice, even though certain areas would remain where this was not the case.

At the same time, the 20<sup>th</sup> century would be that of political and state intervention in matters of education. Every government, especially those with totalitarian tendencies, would try, not only to guarantee, but also to control the educational system. More than once would this control lead to indoctrination, and to a desire to impose certain fixed political, social and human ideas.

Since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the UNO in 1948, all countries in the world are, at least theoretically, obliged to aim for education for all. The laws of all nations attempt to organise and regulate the education of their respective young generations. Once many countries had achieved the goal of universal education, at the end of the century they concentrated their efforts upon the quality of that education.

##### *The presence of the Church in education*

The Church has always been concerned about and present in the field of education: from the Middle Ages, when the Monastic and Cathedral Schools were the only educational institutes with a social impact in many places, to the men and women who have found education the best way for them to practise Christian charity. Long before any government, knew how to find a way for that education to reach the poorer classes, and right up until modern times in which, accepting the concerns of national governments for the education of all, they have known how to be constantly present in the field. This is demonstrated, on the one hand, by the large number of religious institutes which were created to educate, and on the other, by the numerous statements and documents of the ecclesiastical hierarchy on the matter, right up to today (*Divini illius Magistri*, of Pius XI; *Gravissimum educationis momentum*, of the 2<sup>nd</sup>

Vatican Council; *The Catholic School*, by the Congregation for Catholic Education, etc.).

### *The Pious Schools*

They were born from St. Joseph Calasanz's charismatic idea, in which education was considered an excellent service for children and young people, so that they would be able to develop their personalities and potential, in the most complete and relevant way, in the light of the Gospels, and therefore would be an influence for the good of society as a whole. In order to achieve this aim, they have always, from their very first years, given the greatest importance to education, to the presence of the Gospels and to caring for the poor and humble of society. We live in times which are very different from those of Calasanz, also in the educational field. The Pious Schools wish to continue to be present in the field, discerning, as they do, the principal needs of children and young people of the period in which we live. In some places it is only education which liberates the poor; on the other hand, in others it seems more urgent to evangelise children and the young.

These concerns, which are ever present in the documents and guidelines of the Order, during the 20<sup>th</sup> century had to fall in line with the homogenisation imposed by law and by society. Nearly all nations sanctioned specific study programmes and syllabuses (subjects, timetables, etc.), which have to be followed by children and young people of all ages. The Piarist colleges adapted themselves to all this, while trying to maintain their specific Calasanzian vision of education. To this end they had to take advantage of the opportunities offered by the official syllabuses (religious classes, interdisciplinary studies, personalised tutoring, etc.); of selection of the teaching body in their schools; and of extracurricular or complementary activities (leisure activity groups, religious or apostolic groups, catechism studies, etc.).

Boarding or residential schools, which were once so common and which so much helped the Order to organise itself economically, diminished in time as schools centres multiplied. They firstly helped the children of rural families, then moved into the field of educating pupils with personal or family problems but later on almost completely disappeared from our kind of establishment.

Even if not very extensive in the Pious Schools, professional training has given some interesting results. At the beginning of the century, many

Piarist schools in Spain had commercial classrooms for children who would be forced to leave school early in order to work; many colleges had successful Commercial Schools. Some of our establishments became famous professional schools, such as the Nautical School of Bilbao (from 1945 to 1958), the School of paper makers of Tolosa (from 1908 to 1969), the San Anton school for shorthand, typing and printing in Madrid (1920s). In more recent times, there is the School of Commerce and Informatics of Mataró, the School of Audio-visual Systems in Sarria (Barcelona), the Agricultural School of León (Nicaragua), the *Escuela Milani* in Salamanca, etc.

### *Religious formation*

The way in which we give our pupils a religious formation changed considerably during this century. This is the field in which, above all others, Piarist Provinces will diversify. Here is a brief outline of historical facts:

*The first third of the century:* at the beginning of the century there was a matter of great pastoral importance; Pope Pius X (1903-1914) lowered the age for celebration of the First Communion and he recommended frequent communion. From then onwards there would be some strong points to the pastoral for children: preparation for First Communion and its serious and solemn celebration in colleges; preparation for the sacrament of repentance and a stress on its frequency; sharing in the Eucharist and frequent communion; the creation of “Tarcissus Groups”, with their shifts for nocturnal adoration, etc.

Acts of piety remained the traditional ones: daily mass, the prayer of the little office, Sundays and Feast days, frequent oral prayer during the course of the day, etc.

Groups of children or young people begin to appear, such as the “*Federació de Joves Cristians*” (Catalonia), the “*Tarsicios Calasancios*” (in various Provinces), Marian and St. Joseph Calasanz Congregations, Scouts, which were introduced into Hungary by the Piarist Fr. Sik and immediately adopted in Catalonia. School study camps also started to spread (in Catalonia, in Valencia).

Of no less importance were the public ceremonies of worship, which were authentic social manifestations of faith, such as processions for Holy Week, the Procession of Corpus Christi, a procession for children

celebrating their First Communion, and so on. The pupils of the Piarists took part in many of these, after careful preparation. Catholic Action, encouraged by Pius XI, would be one of the most important ways towards the formation of adults, and also of young people, through the “Aspirants of Catholic Action”, which would be adopted in nearly all Piarist colleges.

*The second third of the century:* this began continuing the same acts, events, groups and celebrations as the previous period. However, little by little, novelties began to appear, like, for example, the Groups of young volunteers who would visit hospitals or deprived areas to offer practical assistance or the catechism; Spiritual Exercises, which were of great importance for the older pupils, even though their style was sometimes a little too emotional; movements for liturgical renewal, which began in Catalonia; the Spiritual Directors of the colleges, who were persons of great relevance in the religious and moral training of pupils, who united the leadership of groups or associations with personal attention to the young people themselves.

*The last third of the century:* the Second Vatican Council brought new approaches to the Church: a Liturgy which was closer to them and more comprehensible (in the native language, addressed to the congregation, homilies instead of sermons, etc.); the prevalence of the Word of God over devotions; a greater sense of Christian faith and life as community faith and life, compared with the intimate style of previous periods; a more highly developed social conscience; etc. After all, the secularisation of European society rendered many previous religious forms obsolete. All this meant great changes for the pastoral of our schools, especially in Spain and Italy.

In a very short time many aspects of the Calasanzian tradition disappeared. For a long time there was a vacuum in the means and ways of our pastoral, until gradually new forms were created. But this was not the case everywhere. Some colleges took on a secularised style which made them similar to state institutes. Nevertheless, most of them found their own way to exercise the pastoral and evangelise children and the young.

Some places carefully developed classes of Religious Formation which were confessional and for catechism; while others chose classes of religious culture. Some Provinces worked intensely for out of school activities and those catechism classes which had an effect in Christian communities. Some of them approached Catholic Movements which already existed.

Others strengthened more social or cultural activities, with little reference to the Christian faith. In many places they encouraged and organised voluntary groups, which led to setting up NGOs, or other kinds of lay associations, through which important help may be given to people or groups living on the margins of society or in a development stage.

Let us look at the development of each of the Circumscriptions of the Order.

### *a) Italy*

The early part of the century was similar to that of the previous one, under typically liberal and lay-orientated governments, even if they were less aggressive.

With the advent of Fascism (1922) humanist and philosophical teaching was strengthened, along with the cult of Patriotism. Private colleges, even though they remained autonomous, basically follow the guidelines of the education ministry. In 1923 a state examination was introduced (*Maturità* = upper secondary level), which was the same for all schools and indispensable to get a school leaving certificate. Under the Lateran Pacts of 1929, private schools were legally recognised. In 1931, Pope Pius XI published the encyclical *Non abbiamo bisogno* against the fascist totalitarian ideology.

The World War of 1939-1945 directly affected many teaching centres, including those of the Piarists, some of which were totally destroyed.

The 1947 Constitution of the Republic of Italy, which was the fruit of a consensus between the governing right wing and the strong left wing, declared that private schools could not receive state funding. This had negative consequences for non-state schools, including those of the Piarists. During the 1950s and 1960s, in order to survive the Pious Schools had to attract the middle classes. Towards the end of the century there was a big fall in the number of pupils, even though the schools had become co-educational (the 1979 General Chapter authorised mixed classes in our establishments). The Piarists managed to keep most of their schools open, but numbers of pupils decreased considerably in many of them.

As the institutes and study centres increased, the previously important boarding arrangements disappeared.

The Italian Pious Schools carried out celebrated work in the education of deaf and dumb children and young people. The Pendola Institute in Siena, which was taken over by the Government in 1876, remained under Piarist direction until 1979. The Assarotti Institute of Chiavari (Genoa) was closed in 1961. The Piarists still run the Institute for the Deaf and Dumb in Genoa, which was founded in 1911.

### *b) Central Europe*

War and totalitarian regimes (Nazism and Communism) had a tragic negative effect upon our educational centres:

- In Austria, annexation by the Third Reich (1938) led to closure of Catholic schools.
- In Bohemia-Moravia, Slovakia and Romania, Piarists had no schools from 1945 onwards.
- In Poland, Communism allowed them to keep only one small school.
- In Hungary, two centres were allowed to keep on working, even though they did not have enough equipment and a limited number of religious who were teachers. Nevertheless, they continued working prestigiously and did useful and good work with the children of catholic families.

With the fall of the Berlin Wall (1989) and the break-up of the Soviet Empire, the countries under its domination regained their liberty. Thus the Piarists began to reorganise and saw an increase in new vocations.

- In Hungary, Poland and Slovakia the state has given many of their old establishments which had been confiscated back to the Pious Schools. These are currently going through a period of religious and scholastic expansion.
- In Romania and the Czech Republic (Bohemia-Moravia), it was too late, because there was no longer any Piarist religious in these places who could start reconstruction.
- In Austria, even though it was very quickly liberated from the Communist presence, recovery was very weak because of a lack of vocations. The low number of religious and high number of lay teachers gives its only two schools (one nursery school with about

150 pupils and one elementary school with about 450) a character which acts as a witness to what in times gone by was an important Piarist presence in the country.

### *c) Spain*

#### *1900-1931*

In 1900, the Ministry of Public Instruction was created and in 1901 the ministry began to pay schoolmasters in state schools directly.

This period is characterised by a growing radicalisation which implied political instability and social-religious conflict.

In the field of education, lay tendencies are ever more visible in certain groups, such as the Institución Libre de Enseñanza, founded in 1876.

The Piarists were damaged in various ways: as far as teaching qualifications were concerned, their previous special conditions began to be abolished, even though this was in an intermittent way, moving from a period in which they were suppressed to one of recuperation. The privilege of having state recognition of the Order's own teaching qualifications was lost at the beginning of the century but regained in 1914; then it was lost again and then in 1923 they got it back again; and with the Laws of the Republic of 1931 it was once again lost, but regained in 1940. As far as their economic and social situation was concerned, in many small towns they kept their economic arrangements with the local authorities; but in large towns and cities their schools began to require payment. There were far more boarders and "supervised" students, while the numbers of those benefiting from free-schooling diminished; at the same time, in some areas these categories became separated by sections and localities. Thus, in the Province of Valencia, for example, in 1915 there were 38% "supervised students", but by 1931 these had increased to 64%.

#### *1931-1939*

The 1931 Constitution of the Spanish Republic caused a great upheaval in the country's education.

- It ordered that teaching should be lay, compulsory and free of charge.
- It established State Inspectors.

- Article 26 stated: *“The State, the regions, the provinces and town councils will not maintain nor encourage nor give economic assistance to churches or to religious associations or institutions”.*
- *Religious Congregations were to be “unable to acquire or keep, either for themselves or by means of another person, more goods than those which are, with reasons given, destined for their houses or for their direct private use”.*
- Religious Congregations were *“forbidden to work in industry, commerce or teaching”.*
- *“The possessions of Religious Orders could be nationalised”.*

In April 1931, decrees were published by which high school graduates would have to be examined in the institutes and nobody would be allowed to teach without having the corresponding diploma of master or graduate.

The decree of 6<sup>th</sup> May 1931, declared that religious instruction in primary schools and official centres was free.

In the 1933 *Law on Religious Congregations and Confessions*, religious were forbidden to teach, to create or support private colleges or to be involved in any economic activity.

In 1934, the electoral triumph of the Right did away with these prohibitions.

During the Civil War (1936-1939), in the Republican zone, religious persecution of curates and brothers flared up, leading to the murder of a large number of them and to the burning of their religious houses. In the Nationalist zone, young religious were called to arms and some of the colleges were taken over for use as barracks, prisons or hospitals. Thus they were impeded from working properly or even at all.

The Pious Schools, especially in 1931, lost their “special status” with government authorities and their situation was the same as that of all other Religious Congregations.

### *1939-1975*

When it took over, as one of its first legislative acts the Franco regime reintroduced various things which had been abolished by the



Republicans: crucifixes in state schoolrooms; religious instruction, even in state schools; freedom to create and run establishments.

The 1938 Law for the Reform of the Middle School expressed the basic philosophy of the new State in educational matters:

- The return and reaffirmation of traditions as a solution to the main problems of a spiritual nature.
- A complete reform of the whole educational system, beginning with the Middle Schools, in so far as that was seen to be the most effective way to implement changes in society and the intellectual and moral training of the future ruling classes.
- The strengthening of Classical and Humanist culture, as a way to return to the values of the “Golden Age” of the 16<sup>th</sup> century.
- Catholicism and Patriotism as the backbone of the history of Spain.

This law recognised private schools as unofficial teaching centres. Private colleges would be able to teach as upper schools, as “recognised” or “authorised” centres. Each of these types of establishments would have to have a certain number of graduates amongst its teaching staff.

In an Order dated 16<sup>th</sup> December 1938, it was laid down that private schools would be assigned a certain percentage of funds allotted for student grants, for free new students, prizes, etc. so that “*culture will be the common patrimony of all Spaniards and no natural abilities will be lost or remain undeveloped for economic reasons*”.

The regime did not envisage, either then or for the future, any system to finance private establishments. There was only some help for certain pupils and some tax-exemption for centres whose “charity-teaching” status was recognised (as would happen for all Piarist establishments).

Later on, the fact that they were declared “works of social interest”, would be used so as to enable these establishments to have special credit rates in order to build schools.

In 1953, the Concordat with the Holy See was signed, by which Catholic religious education was assured in all establishments, including state schools.

The Ministry of Work and the official Trade Unions agreed to create their own educational network which was expressly designed for workers. These were Institutes of Work and the University of Work. The Church gave much assistance to set up Upper Schools for Workers and their Professional Schools, even though the Pious Schools were little involved in this kind of teaching.

The Falangist ideology was officially part of the scholastic system because of the subject of “Forming the National Spirit” (FEN), which was generally taught by teachers who came from that kind of political movement (FET ns JONS). Other means used were the youth movements which joined together as the OJE (Organización Juvenil Española – Spanish Youth Organisation), commemorative celebrations, the raising of the flag, and so on. This great ideological apparatus was not popular in the same way throughout the country, and conflict arose. By the end of the 1950s this was much diluted. Starting with the Baccalaureate Programme of 1957, the subject of FEN was changed into civic studies, which entailed learning about fundamental laws such as the Charter of the Spaniards, the Charter for Work and the Principles of the Movement.

There was friction between Church and State: shortly after the end of the war, the Primate of Spain, Cardinal Gomá, wrote a pastoral letter called *Lessons of war and duties of peace*, in which he denounced totalitarianism, criticised any harsh repression and called for forgiveness and not vendetta. Other reasons for friction were caused by more concrete matters, such as prohibition from teaching in languages other than Castilian, the academic qualifications required of religious, school fees, economic problems in order that students might be educated free of charge, school inspections, and so on. From 1957, intervention from state authorities grew. In that year, and in order to deal with other problems, the Spanish Federation of Religious in Education (FERE) was set up, and some bishops began to show concern for the problems of the school (a pastoral letter from Mons. Pablo Gurrutxaga, the Bishop of Bilbao, was famous).

During the 1960s, the period of Spanish industrial development, required more qualified workers. Social and economic changes, and a greater opening to Europe, meant that a deep-rooted reform of the educational system was required. In 1969, the Ministry published the “*White Paper on Education in Spain: a Basis for Educational Policy*”. The Church showed that it was concerned about this, especially when it found that the White

Paper hardly mentioned private schools. Bishops and the FERE raised their voices to denounce the state-orientation of the future law.

In August 1970, Parliament approved the “*General Law on Education and Financing Educational Reform*” (the “Villar Palasi Law”). It had important repercussions for society and for the Church:

- Article 1 stated: “*The aims of education at all levels and of all kinds are: formation of the complete human being; the harmonious development of personality and preparation for responsible exercise of freedom, inspired by the Christian concept of life and national culture and traditions; social integration and promotion and stimulation of the spirit of living together...*”
- Generally speaking, official academic qualifications were required for teaching; but short courses or other procedures were envisaged for those who had been teaching for years.
- An important practical consequence for private schools was the system of subsidies introduced for “general basic teaching” (from the ages of 6 to 14). This was partial state funding, which would have to be made up from parental contributions. Even this partial funding meant a great difference for our colleges, especially those which were dedicated to the poorest classes, for it meant the lifting of a great economic burden. The Senior Schools, with their school leaving certificates (Bachillerato Unificado y Polivalente – BUP) and the pre-university courses (Curso de Orientación Universitaria – COU) continued as before, but without any state funding.

### *1975-2003*

Political transition brought a new Constitution in 1978. This established that the State was non-confessional, and this led to much discussion and tension when it was put into practice.

Article 27 of the Constitution became famous. It was the fruit of long discussion and was a compromise between two opposite standpoints, which sanctioned fundamental principles for education, although the terminology was somewhat ambiguous. In any case, this was an obligatory reference point for all governments to come, whatever political party they represented. The most relevant points are the following:

- Freedom of teaching was recognised.
- The public authorities guaranteed to parents that their children would receive a moral and religious education appropriate to their beliefs.
- Individuals and other bodies were given the right to create educational establishments, as long as these adhered to the articles of the Constitution.
- Teachers, parents, and where suitable, pupils might have a say in the control and running of all establishments sustained by the Administration from public funds, according to the law.
- The public authorities would help those reaching establishments which satisfied the legal requirements.

In 1979 the Church-State Agreement was signed, to substitute the 1953 Concordat. This too established certain rights and practises about both public and private teaching.

In 1985, at the request of the Socialist government, the Law of the Right to Education (LODE) was passed. As it was being discussed, much diffidence was expressed on the part of private establishments and there were public protests. A state takeover of private schools was feared. However, a judgement of the Constitutional Court fixed the criteria of the agreement and ruled in the application of various points, so that calm returned in this sector. The Educational Agreements (*Conciertos Educativos*) which most Church establishments signed with the State led to a decisive opening in social terms. Even though the economic requirements established in order to benefit from state aid were clearly loss-making, they made it possible for these authorised establishments to be open to pupils from all social classes. On the other hand, this measure meant greater external control over our centres.

Faced with a choice of entering or staying outside the Agreement system, the Pious Schools took a unanimous decision to enter, although some Religious Congregations did not make the same choice. This was a clear and responsible choice, which was, at the time, not without risks, in favour of opening up to the poorer classes and to children with difficulties or deprivation.

Later on, the transfer of responsibility for educational matters from Central Government to Autonomous Governments of all regions

of the country meant that in actual fact the situation differed greatly according to the region, to the political colour or economic wealth of each autonomous local government.

#### *d) America*

The development of our schools in America did not face the problems of Europe, partly because of a more liberal mentality and also perhaps because of some of the limitations of the scholastic system in certain Latin American countries. Amongst the advantages which that system had, we might consider the following: less state control; greater freedom to create and run the centres; easier ways to decide upon employing or keeping teachers. However, one of the most notable inconveniences was (and continues to be) in many cases, the high cost of fees for pupils, which has meant that many of our schools have become class-oriented. They have certainly provided a good education and have won academic and didactic prestige, but only for the children of families who could afford them.

Calasanzian concern for the poor has often appeared clearly to our members. This is the reason why, in certain places, they created adjacent schools for the poor, and in some places they work with marginal people (parishes in poor quarters, reading and writing classes for adults, teaching in public centres, chaplains in hospitals, etc.).

In the last third of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there has been a great increase in initiatives to provide services for the poor; some countries have provided public funding for a good percentage of our schools; some colleges have become cooperatives; schools have been set up in marginal areas; they have started to run some state or "*Fe y Alegría*" ("Faith and Joy") schools; specialist establishments to help abandoned children have been set up (*Hogares*, Centres for minors and street children, etc.). Assistance centres have also been set up, such as dispensaries, canteens for the poor, centres for job-training, missions amongst native peoples, and so on. Many of these works are financed by occasional contributions from foreign governments and from various charitable funding campaigns. They also benefit from important voluntary assistance. During recent years, this has led to substantial funds being made available from organisations working in this field. Some of these, which have been started by Piarists, are worth mentioning, such as the NGO called SETEM (introduced into many Piarist Provinces in Spain and Italy) and the Itaka-Piarist Foundation, which has spread in various Provinces.

#### 4.4. Piarists who have distinguished themselves in the field of Culture

Let us remember the names of some 20<sup>th</sup> century Piarists who have become celebrated for their knowledge in the field of Letters or of Science.

- *Alfani, Guido* (1876-1940), from Tuscany: a scientist, he took over from Fr. Giovannozzi as head of the Ximenes Observatory of Florence, which was furnished with numerous scientific instruments, many of his own invention, such as various seismometers and seismographs, which notably increased the effectiveness of the observatory; a scholar of meteorology, radio-telegraphy and the history of science, he specialised in seismology; he was in frequent contact with Marconi; he was famous for his publications, his lectures and public experiments.
- *Campos, Julio* (1906-1999), from the Province of Vasconia, a humanist and philologist. His doctorate degree was in history, and he specialised in the literature and history of the Classical and High-Medieval eras. After years of working in Piarist schools, he entered the Pontifical University of Salamanca, where he filled the Chair of Latin Philology and eventually became Dean of the Faculty of Humanistic Studies. He tirelessly studied and gave numerous summer courses and took part in many national and international conferences, such as the 1<sup>st</sup> Spanish Conference of Classical Studies (Madrid, 1956), the 7<sup>th</sup> Spanish Philosophical Week on Seneca (Madrid, 1956), the International Conference on Philosophy (Córdoba, 1956), the International Conference on the Latin Language and Literature (Rome 1966), the International Assembly on Visigoth Studies (Toledo, 1967) and so on. He was a member of the Spanish Association for Classical Studies. He was a prolific writer and published more than 80 articles in academic publications and journals, such as those of the *Centro Superior de Investigaciones Científicas*, *Helmántica*, *Príncipe de Viana*, *Salamanticensis*, *Analecta Calasanctiana*, *Revista Calasanciana*, *Estudios Clásicos*, *Hispania*, *Archivo Ibero-Americano*, etc. These are titles of some of his articles: *Fray Prudencio de Sandoval y San Benito el Real de Estella*, *Un sintagma virgiliano*, *El genus dicendi de Quintiliano*, *De Grammatica Lucreciana*, *Textos del Latín*

*medieval hispano, Indoeuropeismo latino, Juvenal Sátira XIV, Para la historia externa de la Mística Ciudad de Dios Fray José de Falces, La Regula Monachorum de San Isidoro y sus lenguas, Reflexiones sobre los principios didácticos de las lenguas clásicas, La educación de la conciencia en Séneca, El lenguaje filosófico de Tertuliano en el dogma Trinitario, La versión latina de la Didaché, Lengua e ideas del monacato visigodo*, etc. He published various books, such as “*Ovidio, Metamorfosis (Introducción, textos y comentario)*”; “*Juan de Biclario, obispo de Gerona*”; “*El cronicón de Idacio, obispo de Chaves*”; and various texts of E.P. However, his greatest work is still unpublished: “*Glosarium maius hispanicae latinitatis*” (more than 13.000 words, with their evolution from Classical Latin to the Romance languages).

- *Castelltort, Ramón* (1915-1966), from the Province of Catalonia, poet and man of letters. While still a student, he wrote poetry which won him the *Englantina de oro* prize of Alcira (Valencia) and the *Rose de oro* of Castellón. He was a writer of essays and published interesting studies of important literary figures such as Lope de Vega, Góngora, Tagore, Villaespesa, Juan Arolas. He gave lectures at the Universities of Paris, Milan, Lisbon and also Barcelona, Madrid and Zaragoza. In 1962 he was unanimously elected an Honorary Member of the International Academy of Science, Letters and Art, called “*Artis templum*” of Rome. Amongst his poetical works, the following may be noted: “*Mi soledad sonora*”, “*Navidad*” with a preface by Eduardo Marquina, “*Poema del ciego que vio a Cristo*” which went into 25 editions and was translated into French and English, “*Padre nuestro que estás en los cielos*” with a preface by José María Peman, “*Ecos y perfiles*”, “*Letanía en voz baja*”, etc. He also published works for the theatre, such as “*La farsa transfigurada*” which won the Ramiro de Maeztu prize, “*Un resplandor detrás del muro*”, etc. In 1950, an “*Antología*”, was published with his works in prose and poetry and in 1978 a second and more complete “*Antología*” of his work came off the press.
- *Fullat, Octavi* (1928- ), from the Province of Catalonia, pedagogue and philosopher. He occupied the Chair of the Fundamentals of Philosophy and was professor of the Philosophy of Education in the Autonomous University of Barcelona. In 1980, he was elected

Head of the Department of Philosophy. He has taken part in many philosophical and pedagogical conferences and taught courses in various universities in Spain, France, Italy, Japan, India, Thailand, Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina, Ecuador, Venezuela, Mexico, USA, etc. He has been a consultant of UNESCO. He has published more than 40 works, amongst which: *L'Home i Deu*, *La moral atea de Albert Camus*, *Reflexions sobre l'educació* (Translated into Castilian), *Teoría y acción: introducción a la filosofía*, *L'Educació actual*, *Pensar y hacer (Introducción a la filosofía)*, *La actual peripecia del creer*, *La juventud actual nuestro futuro*, *Radiografía del ateísmo*, *La sexualidad: carne y amor*, *Filosofía de la educación*, *Las finalidades educativas en tiempo de crisis*.

- *Giovanozzi, Giovanni* (1860-1928), from Tuscany, astronomer, seismologist, theologian; on the death of Fr. Filippo Cecchi, he was made Director of the Florentine Ximenes Observatory; from 1905 he dedicated himself to the study of theology; he was awarded an honorary doctorate in Theology by the University of Florence; in 1925 the Italian government nominated him to the Ministerial Commission for Religious Textbooks; he took part in many conferences, on meteorology at Naples and Venice, on seismology in L'Aquila, on the Map of the Heavens in Paris, on Catholic Sages in Brussels; he was a member of the Pontifical Academy “*La Colombaria*”.
- *Lopez Navío, José* (1909-1970), from the Province of Aragon, philologist, man of letters and researcher. He taught Spanish Language and Literature in various places, but above all in Argentina, where, for more than 20 years, he demonstrated his skills as a good teacher and tireless researcher. Gifted with an excellent memory and wide intellectual curiosity, his knowledge of the Humanities was extraordinary, especially in the fields of philology, Classical and Spanish literature, as in art and history. He early became celebrated for his commentary of “*Don Quijote*”. His knowledge of that masterpiece was based upon deep study and he broke new ground in interpreting it. His literary research led to the publication of numerous articles, such as: “*Génesis y desarrollo del Quijote*”, “*El tipo somático del Quijote idéntico al de Lope de Vega*”, “*Una comedia de Tirso que no está perdida*”, etc.



His greatest work, which was published posthumously, is called “*El ingenioso hidalgo Don Quijote de la Mancha*” (with notes on “Don Quixote”). Another book has recently been published, “*Apostillas al Quijote*” (words, turns of phrase and modisms not explained by commentators, and textual variants).

- *Míguez, Faustino* (1831-1925), from Castile, scientist and the Founder of the Calasanzian Daughters of the Divine Shepherdess. The main fields for his research were botany, physiology and medicine; he made important discoveries on the curative power of medicinal plants and invented many natural remedies, which were called “Específicos Míguez”; at Sanlúcar de Barrameda he discovered medicinal springs which bear his name. Because of his concern for the way in which young girls abandoned school, he founded an institute of teaching sisters with the Calasanz spirit.
- *Pietrobuono, Luigi* (1863-1960), from the Province of Rome; a Dante and Pascoli scholar of world-wide fame; his commentary of the “Divine Comedy” is a monument of erudition and originality; he shone for his lectures in various Italian universities; he was President of the *Arcadia Romana*.
- *Ruiz de Gaona, Máximo* (1902-1971), from the Province of Vasconia, a paleontologist and specialist in nummulites; he tenaciously worked on excavations on the Maestrichense and Quarternario remains at Olazagutía (Navarre), on the Mammals of Monteagudo (Navarre), on the quaternarian fauna of the caverns; he specialised in oceanic micro-fauna, especially in nummulites. He collaborated in collating the National Geographic Maps and he published valuable notes on his speciality. He discovered at least twelve new species, most of which were oceanic. Other researchers named species after him: at least nine bear his name. He was an official correspondent of the National Museum of Natural Sciences and was Provincial Commissioner for Archaeological Excavations; he promoted the “Aranzadi” Society of Science, and collaborated with the San Telmo Museum of San Sebastián and the Vasco Ethnographical Museum of Bilbao. He wrote about thirty scientific works.

## MEMBERS OF THE PIOUS SCHOOLS – Statistics

Year	Religious	Houses	Province	Pupils
1617	30	2		
1621	77	11		
1631	300	23	4	
1646	500	37	6	
1657	320	40	6	
1677	726	56	8	
1700	897	90	8	
1730	1.725	122	10	21.300
1760	2.510	186	15	
1784	3.000 aprox.	218	16	
1830	1.230		15	
1888	1.930	120	12	47.375
1931	2.196	140	14	43.527
1948	2.035	131	15	53.200
1965	2.540	177	16	76.700
1977	1.788	191	17	116.061
1996	1.451	231	18 + 2 D. Indep.	115.805
2003	1.421	211	18 + 4 D. Indep.	112.000

**COUNTRIES IN WHICH THE PIOUS SCHOOLS ARE PRESENT (December 2004)**

Country - number of religious	Juridical situation
Argentina - 35	Independent Province
Austria - 7	Independent Demarcation
Belarus - 7	Dependent on Poland
Bolivia – 9	Dependent on Andalusia
Brazil - 18	Dependente on Vasconia
Cameroon - 50	Dependente on Aragon
Canada - 1	Dependent on Poland
Chile - 24	Dependent on Vasconia
Colombia - 45	Independent Province
Costa Rica - 15	Dependent on Valencia
Cuba - 4	Dependent on Catalonia
Czech Republic - 2	Independent Demarcation
Dominican Republic - 9	Dependent on Valencia
Ecuador - 11	Dependent on Colombia
Equatorial Guinea - 12	Dependent on the 3rd Spanish Demarcation
France - 5	Dependente on Catalonia
Gabon - 3	Dependent on the 3rd Spanish Demarcation
Hungary – 98	Independent Province
India - 25	Dependent on Argentina
Italy - 120	4 Provinces
Ivory Coast - 3	Dependent on Liguria
Japan - 15	Independent Vice-Province (with Philippines)
Mexico - 83	Independent Province
Nicaragua - 9	Dependent on Valencia
Philippines - 34	Independent Vice-Province (with Japan)
Poland - 117	Independent Province
Puerto Rico - 18	Dependent on Aragon
Romania - 1	Independent Demarcation
Senegal - 46	Dependent on Catalonia
Slovakia - 20	Independent Province
Spagna - 471	5 Prov., 1 Independent Vice-Province. 1 Delegation Gen.
USA - 42	1 Province, 2 Vice-Provinces
Venezuela - 27	Dependent on Vasconia



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