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The Founding and Early Expansion of the Salesian Work in the San Francisco Area from Archival Documents

Part II: Early Expansion (1897-1910)

by Arthur J. Lenti, SDB

Introduction

In his *Mission Memoir*, Father Raphael Piperni, after describing the founding of the Salesian work in San Francisco at the church of SS. Peter and Paul in the North Beach district, gives the following compressed account of the first enlarging of the circle of Salesian activity.

At the so-called “farmers’ gardens” of Mission Street, out of the city, on the way to San Mateo, lived numerous Italian immigrants almost totally deprived of pastoral care. Toward the end of 1897, with the archbishop’s consent and on land donated by him, work began on a church for them. It was located on Croke Street, as it was then called, and it was named Corpus Christi by the archbishop [Richard P. Riordan].¹

¹ Piperni, *Mission Memoir*, p. 2. The Archive of the Salesian Province of San Francisco holds three typewritten memoirs authored by Father Piperni. The first memoir (12 pages) describes his career by stages up to 1906. The second memoir (7 pages) describes the beginning of the Salesian work in San Francisco, the earthquake and the reconstruction. [*Mission Memoir*] This memoir was written no earlier than 1914, the date of the last entry. He authored a third and longer memoir, also biographical in character, in which he describes his activities (chiefly fund raising), as a priest of the Work of the Holy Family of Nazareth.

William Patrick Riordan, born in 1841 in New Brunswick, Canada, attended Notre Dame University, the North American College in Rome, and the University of Louvain, where he earned a Master of Theology degree and was ordained in 1865. After serving as professor of theology at the seminary of St. Mary of the Lake, Chicago, and as pastor at Woodstock, Joliet and Chicago, Illinois, in 1883 he was named coadjutor bishop of San Francisco with right of succession. He succeeded Archbishop Joseph Sadoc Alemany in 1885. Archbishop Riordan’s achievements as leader of the Catholic Church in northern California are too numerous to mention. Among them, the founding of St. Patrick’s Seminary in Menlo Park and of Newman Clubs on California’s university campuses testify to his pastoral concern, as does his abiding commitment to the care of immigrants. Archbishop Riordan died in 1914 and was

This is how pioneer Father Piperni describes the first development of the Salesian work. Barely a year had elapsed since its founding at SS. Peter and Paul in early 1897 before the first expansion took place, Corpus Christi church on the city's southern outskirts. A few years later, in 1902, a longer step was taken with the establishment of a Salesian community in the East Bay, to undertake the spiritual care of Portuguese and other immigrants at St. Joseph's Church in Oakland. Father Michael Rua, the Salesian Rector Major, in response to Archbishop Riordan's repeated requests wrote:

The group of Salesian missionaries assigned to [St. Joseph's Portuguese Church in] Oakland is on its way at long last. Great difficulties were experienced in the process [of assembling a suitable team], but they were overcome with God's help. The bearer of the present letter, the Very Rev. Father Michael Borghino, will be the superior. He is one of our veteran missionaries and can speak Portuguese, having served in Brazil for a number of years. The Rev. Father Joseph Galli, lately from Portugal, is also in the group. He should be very valuable to the mission.²

Thus another chapter in the story began to be written.

In an earlier article,³ I have attempted to tell the story of the first founding by transcribing and translating pertinent documents (chiefly correspondence) from the Central Salesian Archive. In this second article (Part II. Early Expansion) I propose to pursue the same course. As I mentioned in Part I, the Central Salesian Archives have recently released the files of the Rua rectorate (1888-1910) on some 1,750 microfiches.⁴ These files were drawn upon for the earlier article; they will also serve as the chief source for the present essay. I will also make use of documents held in the archives of the Salesian Province. The documents from the San Francisco Archdiocese are quoted from copies in the San Francisco Province archives. Among them are some interesting historical summaries and chronicles which shall be put to use. They are as follows. (1) A brief historical sketch of the founding and early development of Corpus Christi parish compiled from official parish and diocesan records and signed by Father Patrick

succeeded by Archbishop Edward J. Hanna. [Cf. J. T. Foudy, "San Francisco," in *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. XII, pp. 1022-1028]

² Father Michael Rua to Archbishop Patrick Riordan, August 5, 1902. Archive of the San Francisco Province, from the Archive of the Archdiocese of San Francisco.

³ A. Lenti, "The Founding and Early Expansion of the Salesian Work in the San Francisco Area from Archival Documents, Part I. The Founding Era," *Journal of Salesian Studies* 7:2 (1996), pp. 1-53. [*Lenti, Founding*]

⁴ Archivio Salesiano Centrale [ASC], *Fondo Don Rua con annessi Don Bosco (Complementi), Maria Domenica Mazzarello*. Microschede-Descrizione (Roma: [SDB], 1996. [*FDR*])

Diamond.⁵ (2) A substantial history of St. Joseph's parish by Father Henry Ferreira who served as associate from 1907 to the fifties.⁶ (3) A summary chronicle of the Salesian Community of St. Joseph's Church from 1890 to 1897.⁷ (4) A summary chronicle of the Salesian Community of SS. Peter and Paul from 1897 to 1937.⁸

Finally, I have at my disposal a database of Salesian personnel created by Father Ralph J. Murphy of this Institute. Compiled from official Salesian directories (*Elenco Generale*) and other sources, this database records all personnel for all Salesian houses in the United States and Canada, from the establishment of the Salesian work in 1897 to the present. I will use both of these statistical resources (the database and the directories) as needed without any further reference.⁹

As in the earlier article, so also in the present one, besides transcribing and translating pertinent archival documents (chiefly letters), I will try to provide an essential historical framework designed to make the sequence intelligible. Beyond this, my main concern is simply to bring to my readers' attention this body of original archival material pertaining to the beginnings of the Salesian work in the United States while the celebrations of the centenary of the founding proceed apace toward their solemn conclusion in March 1998.

In this article, then, I will first present available documentation relating to the beginning of the Salesian work at Corpus Christi Church in San Francisco. Next, I will describe the beginnings of the work in Oakland. Finally I will return to SS. Peter and Paul with brief comments and documentation about develop-

⁵ This is a 2-page single-spaced typescript dated January 1, 1935 and signed by the then pastor, Salesian Father Patrick J. Diamond. To this summary is attached a record of sacramental administration in the parish from its founding in 1898 to 1963. [**Diamond, Corpus Christi**]

⁶ *History of St. Joseph's Portuguese Church [...]. Second Corrected and Amplified Edition Supplemented with Very Valuable Information from the Archives of San Francisco Archdiocese and Our Own.* The work, subscribed by Father Henry J. Ferreira is a 47-page single-spaced typescript which may be dated (on internal evidence) to 1935. [**Ferreira, St. Joseph's Hist.**] With regard to his sources, Ferreira adds: "This history of St. Joseph's Portuguese Church [...] was taken from the Baptismal and Census records, the secular and diocesan papers, 'The Monitor.' I also availed myself of the diaries and account books of the Parish, and of information acquired through my experience of 27 years here." [p. 21]

⁷ This 11-page typewritten chronicle was excerpted and compiled by Father Henry Ferreira from the house records of the Salesian community. [**Ferreira, St. Joseph's Chron.**]

⁸ This 35-page typewritten chronicle was excerpted and compiled from house records by Father Bartholomew Pellegrino, who was associate pastor from 1930 to 1952 and beyond. [**Pellegrino, SS. P. & Paul's Chron.**]

⁹ The Salesian Directories (*Elenchi*) for each year of the Rua rectorate (1889-1910) are available in *FDR* 4,083 B7 - 4,156 C11.

ments after the founding and about the reconstruction after the great earthquake and fire of 1906.

Preliminary Comment: The Salesian Province of St. Philip the Apostle for North America

Before discussing the circumstances of the founding of the Church of Corpus Christi, a word on the origin of the Salesian Province in North America seems appropriate. It will make certain references in the correspondence below more understandable, as well as provide a larger framework within which to view our small beginnings.

The Salesian community of SS. Peter and Paul in San Francisco, first established in 1897, was attached to the nearest existing Salesian province, the *Province of Mexico and Venezuela*. This province comprised two houses in Mexico, two in Venezuela, one in Northern Brazil, and one in San Francisco. Father Joseph Lazzero, while still a member of the Superior Chapter in Turin, held the post of provincial.¹⁰

In 1898 and 1899 the situation remained unchanged, though the number of foundations increased. For example, in 1898 two new foundations were established in the United States: Corpus Christi in San Francisco and the Salesian work for Italian immigrants in the basement of St. Brigid Parish in New York.¹¹

In 1900, Mexico was detached from the mother province and made first into a separate vice-province and subsequently into a province. The mother province took the name of *Province of Venezuela and Northern Brazil* under the same provincial, and the United States with its three foundations remained part of it.

In 1901, the situation remaining the same, the province was placed under the patronage of St. Luke the Evangelist and renamed *Province of St. Luke for Venezuela, Northern Brazil and North America*.

In 1902 Father Michael Rua applied to the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars for a validation of all preceding official acts (*sanatio*), and the provinces were re-organized throughout the congregation. This explains why the provinces established up to that year all bear the official date of 1902. At this point in time, the mother province to which the United States belonged was divided, and the foundations in North America were erected into a separate vice-province under

¹⁰ For a biographical sketch of Father Joseph Lazzero and of all the Salesians who worked in the three Bay Area foundations from 1897 to 1910, see Appendix II.

¹¹ For the story of establishment of the Salesian work in New York, first in the basement of St. Brigid Parish Church (December 1898) and subsequently at Transfiguration Church (1902), cf. Philip Pascucci, "Once upon a Time in Old New York," *Journal of Salesian Studies* 3:1 (1992) pp. 1-25, esp., pp. 18-20.

the patronage of St. Philip the Apostle, and under Father Michael Borghino as vice-provincial with residence at SS. Peter and Paul in San Francisco.

In the same year (1902), St. Joseph's Portuguese Church in Oakland, CA, and Transfiguration Church in New York were entrusted to the Salesians. And in 1903 the Vice-Province of St. Philip the Apostle was upgraded to province and vice-provincial Father Michael Borghino to provincial, residing at Corpus Christi Church in San Francisco.

In 1904, St. Joseph's College in Troy, New York, was established as a house of formation, and in 1905 Father Michael Borghino took up residence there. He held office as provincial until 1908, and in 1909 he was succeeded by Father Michael Foglino. By that time the house of formation and provincial residence had been transferred from Troy to Columbus College in Hawthorne, New York, and the number of foundations in the United States had risen to six. These were: SS. Peter and Paul (1896/97) and Corpus Christi Church (1898) in San Francisco, CA; St. Brigid Church (1898) and Transfiguration Church (1902) in New York; St. Joseph's Portuguese Church in Oakland, CA (1902); and Columbus College in Hawthorne, NY (1909).

Thus Corpus Christi Church was established while the five Salesians and the one novice in San Francisco were under the Salesian Province of Mexico and Venezuela, with Father Joseph Lazzero as provincial. These Salesian pioneers (whose story was told in the earlier article) were Father Raphael Piperni, Father Valentine Cassini, Seminarian Joseph Oreni, Lay Brother Nicholas Imielinski, Father Charles Bernard Redahan, and twenty-year old Anselm Petazzi, who became a novice and professed two years later.

I. The Church of Corpus Christi at the "Mission Street Gardens"

1. Founding of Corpus Christi Church

The idea of a mission among the Italian immigrant community on the southern outskirts of the city seems to have originated with Father Piperni himself. This seems to be the implication of statements made in the above-mentioned historical summary.

There being a large population of Italians in the Southern part of the city, it was considered necessary, with the permission of the Archbishop, to build another church at the corner of Croke St. (now Santa Rosa Ave.) and Alemany Blvd. [...] Father Piperni had charge of this work. Land was bought and the plans [...] were approved by the Archbishop and Father Piperni the 14th of February, 1898. The architect was Mr. Shea and the contractor, Mr. L[ouis] Chereghino. The corner

stone was blessed by [...] Mgr. Prendergast, Vicar General, representing the Archbishop, the sponsors being Dr. Joseph Pescia and his wife, Anastasia.¹²

The laying of the cornerstone was no doubt attended by the local populace. The historical summary speaks of the presence of a group of "principals," which included what appear to have been well known lay people. This seems to indicate that the mission had local support from the start.¹³

The church was a simple frame structure. Although not yet completed, it was blessed on April 3, 1898, and Mass was celebrated by Father Cassini. The official dedication ceremony, with the blessing of the completed church and the celebration of a "solemn high Mass," was held on June 19, 1898, Archbishop Riordan presiding.¹⁴ The document adds that a festive banquet was held after the dedication with the participation of thirty people. The participation of Franciscan and Jesuit priests is noted for the various occasions. It may be of interest to note that in 1898, April 3 was Palm or Passion Sunday, and June 19, Pentecost Sunday.

Father Piperni adds in the above-cited memoir:

Father Cassini took charge of the church and celebrated Mass there. For a few months, Corpus Christi functioned as a mission of SS. Peter and Paul. But I pleaded with Father Rua, and as a consequence it became an independent parish, and Father Cassini was named its pastor.¹⁵

Valentine Cassini, had joined the first Salesian missionary expedition to South America in 1875 as a newly ordained priest. He worked in Salesian schools and churches in Argentina and Uruguay. On his revisiting Italy in 1896 to see his aged mother and for a period of convalescence, he was recruited for the San Francisco mission, led by Father Piperni. After one year at SS. Peter and Paul, he was assigned to Corpus Christi Church as curate and then as pastor. In this capacity he served from 1898 to 1903. He returned to Argentina, where he died in 1922.

Father Cassini continued to live at SS. Peter and Paul until a separate community was established at Corpus Christi. A simple frame house was built adjacent to the church to serve as priests' residence. It is described as consisting

¹² Diamond, *Corpus Christi*, #1, 3 and 4.

¹³ Cf. Diamond, *Corpus Christi*, #5.

¹⁴ Diamond, *Corpus Christi*, #6 and 7.

¹⁵ Piperni, *Mission Memoir*, p. 2. Father Piperni's statement refers only to the Salesian part of the appointment, which was made official in 1900. [cf. note 38 and related letter below, and the Directory for 1901] Obviously, it was the archbishop's prerogative to erect the parish. Like SS. Peter and Paul, Corpus Christi was a "national parish church," not a territorial one. It became territorial only in April 1922, created out of the adjacent parishes of St. John and Epiphany.

of “three rooms, a small dining room and a kitchen.”¹⁶ From information contained in some documents the inference may be drawn that Father Cassini began to live at Corpus Christi in 1900, and that he had as an assistant for the English-language ministry the Deacon Daniel MacCarthy transferred from Venezuela. Since MacCarthy failed to meet expectations, in 1901 Father Charles Buss was brought in from England as associate pastor. The newly professed Lay Brother Anselm Petazzi was added to the community.¹⁷

2. Corpus Christi Church and the Rua-Cassini Correspondence

During his all too brief tenure at Corpus Christi, Father Cassini carried on a lively correspondence with Father Rua, with whom he seems to have been on familiar terms. Unfortunately, with a couple of exceptions, Father Cassini’s letters are not available to me.¹⁸ We have only Father Rua’s letters written in reply to Father Cassini’s. Although these letters deal largely with formalities, there emerges from them nonetheless a fair picture of Father Cassini’s ministry. He seems to have been struggling with problems of a personal and social nature. For one thing, he seems to have been in poor health all along, a condition aggravated by tension and stress. He further seems to have had problems adjusting to the new cultural situation and to have been the object of some hostility on the part of some priests. He also seems to have suffered from certain ministerial inadequacies. In a letter to Father Rua (transcribed in full below), Father Piperni writes:

With your kind indulgence, I would suggest that you seek rather to ameliorate the condition of our Italian mission [rather than establish a new work in Oakland]. The work at our newly accepted church of Corpus Christi, where Father Cassini is vicar, is increasing by the day. Besides, Father Cassini is running with handicaps. In the first place, he cannot preach; and secondly, although he has nearly 200 boys and girls for religious instruction, he can’t say a word to them, because the young people speak nothing but English. Catechism classes are taught by two sisters with the willing help of a few American lay women. It is truly an em-

¹⁶ Diamond, *Corpus Christi*, #3.

¹⁷ The spelling MacCarthy is that given in the Directories. William John Dickson [*The Dynamics of Growth [...] (Roma: LAS, 1991), p. 114*] spells the name McCarthy, probably more accurately since he “came from Ireland.”

¹⁸ They are not found in the Rua microfiches (*FDR*), where they would have been catalogued under the subject heading, *Letters to Rua*. They are probably to be found in Cassini’s own files in the Central Archives (*ASC*).

barrassing situation for poor Father Cassini. He realizes his unfortunate predicament, and that makes him more nervous than he already is by nature.¹⁹

Father Rua's first letter to Father Cassini in *FDR* is dated shortly after the building of Corpus Christi Church, but it was written in answer to a letter of one year earlier, when Father Cassini was still working at SS. Peter and Paul. Father Charles Redahan, had been recently added to the community and had already achieved initial successes with the young people. But the question of making the work permanent on a local basis, through recruiting local vocations, must have been raised in community meetings.

1. Father Michael Rua to Father Valentine Cassini, Turin, June 17, 1898

He thanks Father Cassini for an offering, and stresses the need of oratories and of local vocations.²⁰

Turin, June 17, 1898

Father Cassini,

Belatedly I want to acknowledge reception of the 90 francs you sent with your letter of August 29 of last year. I thank you, and I will have the Mass offered as requested at the time. I thank you likewise for your good wishes which I return will all my heart. In that letter you spoke of a fist fight you witnessed, which points up the need of establishing good oratories in your area. The Lord will provide the necessary premises. Your immediate need is to develop personnel [priestly vocations] through the Latin curriculum. Get busy then, even at the cost of great sacrifice, and set up your Latin classes. Not unless and until you put a Latin program into effect will Don Bosco be pleased with you; nor will yours truly be pleased.

Affectionately yours in Jesus and Mary,
Father Michael Rua

Torino 17-VI-[18]98

Car[issi]mo D[on] Cassini

Solo adesso ti accuso ricevuta di fr[anchi] 90 da te spediti con lettera del 29 Agosto dello scorso anno. Te ne ringrazio e farò ora celebrare la messa che allora ci affidavi. Ti ringrazio pure degli auguri che in essa mi facevi e te li ricambio di cuore. In essa mi raccontavi un fatto di pugillato [sic] da te veduto che fa ben conoscere quanto bisogno vi è pur costì di buoni Oratorii. I locali il signore li provvede e provvederà. Ciò che dovete fare si è di preparar personale colla scuola di latino. Coraggio adunque alla santa impresa di fare scuola di latino fosse anche con sacrificio. Finchè non si fa costì tale scuola D[on] Bosco non è contento e così è pure.

¹⁹ Father Raphael Piperni to Father Michael Rua, San Francisco, August 11, 1899, ASC, Letters to Rua, *FDR* 3,347 C10 - D1.

²⁰ ASC, Rua's Authentic Letters, *FDR* 3,881 D11. In Rua's hand.

*Il tuo Aff[ezionatissimo] in G[esù] e M[aria][,]
Sac[erdote] Michele Rua*

The letters that follow, dated from 1898 to 1902, testify to Father Cassini's personal dedication in the priestly ministry and to good progress in religious life and practice in the parish of Corpus Christi. The people were clearly supportive and generous, and they seem to have responded to his pastoral care.

2. Father Michael Rua to Father Valentine Cassini, Ivrea, September 28, 1898

He praises Father Cassini for good work at his "new church," stresses the necessity of keeping in good health, and urges patience and prudence in the face of "persecution" from other priests.²¹

Ivrea, September 28, 1898
Dear Son in Jesus Christ,
Father Valentine Cassinis [*sic*],
San Francisco, California.

The good news you shared with me by your welcome letter of the 7th of this month filled my heart with joy and consolation. Your report is clear proof that the hand, rather than just the finger, of God is at work with you in your mission. For on last April 3,²² due to your zeal, God has begun to reign over that vast region from the Tabernacle. May God's reign take hold with ever greater force, and may it soon pass from the Tabernacle into the hearts [of your people]. This, my dear Father Valentine, is my fond hope and the wish I offer you from the bottom of my heart.

I am overjoyed to hear that you have celebrated the months of Mary and of the Sacred Heart, and that these devotions have already borne fruit. You have likewise erected the Association of the Apostleship of Prayer in your Church with good success. You can now do no better than to move toward the establishment of our own Confraternity of Mary Help of Christians. You are to be congratulated for organizing Sunday school, and you are fortunate to have been able to enlist the help of good young men and young women [for the classes]. I am sure you will see to it that propriety is observed at every step. Let us hope that, with God's help, you will soon have the much needed help of our Sisters for your oratory.

I realize how heavy Sundays and holy days must be for you in your uncertain health condition. The celebration of Masses with two, sometimes three, sermons, without mentioning the hours in the confessional, must be very tiring. You must make every effort not only to maintain but, if possible, to improve your health.

²¹ ASC, Rua's Authentic Letters, *FDR* 3,881 D12 - E2. In secretary's hand and rhetorical style; signature and postscript in Rua's hand.

²² On April 3, 1898, the church was blessed and the first Mass celebrated there by Father Cassini. [Cf. note 12 and related text above]

Your work, being God's work, could not be lacking the marks characteristic of all divine works, namely trials and persecution. As you state in your letter, the persecution you are subjected to is of the most painful and demoralizing kind, for whereas people, even people of other denominations, admire and praise your work, it is your very brother priests who show hostility. However, dear Father Valentine, you must press forward with courage and constancy, for God is with you. Only see to it that you act with care and prudence so as not to give, as you express it so well, a pretext for persecution. *Deus patiens reeditor* [God requites in God's good time].²³

Your church is poor and is in addition burdened with a large debt;²⁴ but the Lord, better than in Paul the Hermit's case, sends you what is needful for life through the ministry of your good people. What more can you ask? Only take proper care of that stomach of yours. To hear that you are happy with your situation makes me very happy. Try to learn the English language little by little so that your ministry may be even more fruitful.

I gratefully accept your congratulations, your good wishes, your prayers, and even more the Mass which you promise to offer for my intention.²⁵ In return, I pray with all my heart that the Lord may bless you and your work abundantly.

Affectionately yours in Jesus and Mary,
Father Michael Rua.

[In Rua's hand:] P. S. Enclosed please find the ticket which you people sent to us last year for one passage to the United States. It is returned because we cannot send anyone to San Francisco this year. We can only spare someone for New York, where likewise he will take on a parish to care for Italian immigrants.²⁶

[Still in Rua's hand but clearly in a different ink:] Sorry, I already returned the ticket in my earlier letter of September 11, 1898.

Carissimo figlio in Gesù Cristo[,]
D[on] Valentino Cassinis,
S[an] Francisco di California.

Oh di quale e quanta consolazione hanno riempito il mio cuore le sì belle notizie che mi hai comunicate colla gradita tua lettera del 7 corrente! Troppo chiaro mi fai vedere che piucchè il dito lavora teco nella tua Missione la mano di

²³ Who these priests may have been or why they were hostile to Father Cassini must remain a matter for conjecture. The allusion cannot be to the only other two Salesian priests, Father Piperni and Father Redahan.

²⁴ The estimated cost of the projected buildings had been of \$4,700, but the real cost came to \$7,227. Obviously, a bank loan had to be obtained. [Cf. Diamond, *Corpus Christi*, # 1]

²⁵ Father Cassini's congratulations and best wishes may have been intended for Father Rua's name day, Feast of St. Michael, September 29.

²⁶ Father Redahan had already joined the SS. Peter and Paul community in February 1898. The ticket mentioned would have been for an additional Salesian priest. The foundation in New York would be the work at St. Brigid Church, and the priest, Father Ernest Coppo.

Dio. Dunque, mercè il tuo zelo, dl 3 Aprile pp. cominciò a regnare in quella vastissima regione il Dio del Tabernacolo; che possa raffermarsi ognor più ivi il suo regno, e che dal Tabernacolo passi presto a regnare nei cuori, ecco, caro D[on] Valentin, gli ardenti voti del mio cuore. Benissimo hai fatto a celebrare i mesi di Maria e del S. Cuore, che già hanno dato il loro frutto. Dopo di avere con sì bell'esito stabilito nella tua Chiesa l'Apostolato della Preghiera, non puoi far meglio che preparare il terreno alla nostra Confraternita di Maria Ausiliatrice. Ma benissimo coll'impianto della scuola Domenicale; e fortunato in aver trovato l'ajuto di buoni giovani e di zelanti Signorine; e tu non mancherai certo di vigilare perchè tutto riesca a modo. Piaccia a Dio che presto possa pure / aver le sospirate Suore pel tuo Oratorio festivo. Veramente pesanti sono per te, delicato di salute, i giorni festivi, con dire Messa, con due e alle volte tre prediche, senza contare il Confessionario; procura di saperti non solo conservare, ma migliorare in salute. La tua opera, perchè opera di Dio, non poteva mancare del carattere proprio delle opere divine, cioè la prova, la persecuzione e non qualunque persecuzione, ma la più dolorosa, la più triste, qual è, come mi scrivi, quella che ti fanno li stessi sacri Ministri, mentre la gente, anche di altre credenze, ti ammira e loda. Avanti, e costanza, D[on] Valentino, Iddio è con te; avvedutezza e prudenza per non dare, come dici bene, motivi, e pretesti alla persecuzione. Deus patiens redditor. La tua Chiesa è povera ed inoltre aggravata di debiti; ma intanto il Signore, meglio che a Paolo eremita, per mezzo della buona gente ti manda il necessario per la vita: che vuoi di più? Attento solo colla digestione. Io pure sono assai contento che tu ti trovi contentissimo della tua posizione, e a poco a poco fa di impraticirti dell'Inglese, per poter lavorare con sempre maggior frutto. Accetto assai volentieri le felicitazioni[,] gli auguri, le preghiere e più la seconda Messa, che prometti applicare per me; ed in cambio ricevi la benedizione che a te e alle opere tue to manda di tutto cuore.

Ivrea, li 28/ 9/ [18]98

[In Rua's hand:] Il tuo Aff[ezionatissi]mo in G[esù] e M[aria].{.}

Sac[erdote] Michele Rua

[in Rua's hand:] P. S. Ti unisco il biglietto che mi avete mandato lo scorso anno pel viaggio a codesti paesi, non potendo quest'anno mandare alcuno a S[an] Francisco, bensì solo a Nuova York per assumere anche colà una parrocchia fra gl'Italiani.

[Still in Rua's hand but clearly in a different ink:] L'ho già spedito in altra mia, 11/ 9 - [18]98[.]

3. Father Michael Rua to Father Valentine Cassini, Turin, January 13, 1899

He gives thanks to God for Father Cassini's good work at the Church of Corpus Christi, and regrets that he cannot immediately meet Father Cassini's request for an assistant.²⁷

Turin, January 13, 1899 [in Rua's hand:] Posted on January 30, 1899.

Dear Father Cassini [in Rua's hand:] (San Francisco, Cal.)

²⁷ ASC, Rua's Authentic Letters, FDR 3, 881 E3. In secretary's hand, with signature and some words in Rua's hand, as noted.

I was overjoyed at hearing the good news which you shared with me in your letter of this past December. It is a clear sign that the Lord loves us very much and wishes to make use of our service in order to spread His kingdom. I rejoice over the good you are doing in your area and I join you in giving thanks to the Lord. I liked very much your idea of having the people chant the prophecies of the Christmas novena. If this innovation has been well received, it might be continued in future years. Only too gladly would I send you the help you request, but I can't spare any one at all. Renew your petition in July, and hopefully we shall be able to provide. Thank you for the congratulations you offer on my reelection, for your good wishes, and for the good feelings you express in your letter.²⁸

May the Lord bless you and give you success in everything. Pray for me.
Affectionately yours in Jesus and Mary,
[in Rua hand:] Father Michael Rua

Torino, 13. 1. [18]99. [in Rua's hand:] Spedita il 30/1-[18]99

Caro D[on] Cassini [in Rua's hand:] (S. Francisco Cal.)

Sono molto contento delle buone notizie che mi dai nella gradita tua del pp. [prossimo passato] Xbre [Dicembre]. Si vede che il Signore ci vuol molto bene ed ama servirsi di noi per dilatare il suo regno. Godo del bene che vai facendo costì e mi unisco di cuore a te per ringraziare il Signore. Mi piace l'idea che hai avuto di far cantare le profezie nella novena del S[anto] Natale. Se la novità è piaciuta, si potrà continuare negli anni avvenire. Ti manderei troppo volentieri l'aiuto che mi domandi, ma non ho proprio nessuno. Rinnova la domanda a Luglio e speriamo poter provvedere. Tante grazie delle congratulazioni che mi mandi per la mia rielezione e pei voti che fai per me e per le buone intenzioni che dimostri nella tua.

Il Signore ti benedica e ti prosperi in tutte le cose. Prega per me e credimi tuo aff[leezionatissi]mo in G[esù] e M[aria],
[in Rua's hand:] Sac[erdote] Michele Rua

4. Father Michael Rua to Father Valentine Cassini, Lanzo, June 29, 1899

He expresses satisfaction over Father Cassini's work in the parish, and advises him to ignore a disreputable man who has moved in next door.²⁹

[printed letterhead:] Collegio-Convitto / S. Filippo Neri / in Lanzo Torinese

²⁸ In 1884 Pope Leo XIII appointed Father Rua Don Bosco's vicar with right of succession. After completing a term of ten years as Don Bosco's appointed successor, Father Rua was elected to a second term by General Chapter VIII (on August 30, 1898).

²⁹ ASC, Rua's Authentic Letters, FDR 3,881 E4. In secretary's hand, with words and signature in Rua's hand, as noted.

June 29, 1899

Dear Father Cassini, [in Rua's hand:] (San Francisco)

I received your welcome letter of May 12 past, and am overjoyed to learn from it that you are doing much good in that area with the visible help of the Lord. Please accept my congratulations for what you have achieved, and my good wishes for all you hope yet to accomplish to the greater advantage of your people, for they are in such dire need of religious instruction. I am overjoyed at hearing that you are in good health, and that you have secured the good will of every kind of people. Disregard the miserable rascal who has moved in next door to you. Pray for him and just go forward in the Lord. The Lord may have brought him to your door step for His holy purposes.

When you happen to visit the confreres, please extend to them our cordial greetings, mine, and those of the superiors and of all the confreres here in Turin.

God be with you, keep well, and pray for me.

Affectionately yours in Jesus and Mary,

[In Rua's hand:] Father Michael Rua.

[printed letterhead:] Collegio-Convitto / S. Filippo Neri / in Lanzo Torinese

Li 29 Giugno 1899

Caro D[on] Cassini, [in Rua's hand:] (S. Francisco)

Ho ricevuto la gradita tua del 12 u[ltimo] s[corso] Maggio, da cui ho rilevato con grande mia consolazione quanto bene vai facendo costì coll'aiuto veramente visibile del Signore. Ti presento perciò i miei rallegramenti per quanto hai fatto e ti auguro di poter fare tutto quello che desideri per viepiù giovare a coteste popolazioni che hanno un grandissimo bisogno di istruzione religiosa. Sono contento che goda buona salute e che incontri la simpatia di tutti. Non ti curar del disgraziato che è venuto ad abitare vicino a te: prega per lui e tira avanti in Domino. Chi sa che il Signore non te l'abbia condotto vicino per i suoi santi fini!

Recandoti a visitare i conf[r]rate]lli presenterai loro i cordiali saluti miei, dei superiori, e dei conf[r]rate]lli tutti di Torino.

Addio, sta bene, prega per me e credimi

Tuo aff[ezionato]ssimo in G[esù] e M[aria],

[in Rua's hand:] Sac[er]dote] Michele Rua

5. Father Michael Rua to Father Valentine Cassini, Turin, January 22, 1900

He thanks Father Cassini for a recent letter, and the St. Aloysius Sodality for their offering.³⁰

Dear Father Cassini,

I received your short letter and I was exceedingly pleased with the gentle thoughts you express. Accept my thanks and the assurance of my continued prayer for you. May you do a lot of good in this our house in San Francisco.

³⁰ ASC Rua's authentic Letters, FDR 3,881 E5-6. In secretary's hand, signature in Rua's hand.

Convey my grateful thanks to the members of the St. Aloysius sodality for their generous offering of 100 lire to help those who suffered loss in Patagonia.³¹ The Lord will know how to repay them generously for the goodness of their hearts.

I have passed on to the office of the Salesian Bulletin the report on the grace obtained by Mr. Joseph Piola from Fossano, together with his offering of one dollar. Its publication will help promote the devotion to Mary Help of Christians.

I wish you and the confreres of your house the continued blessings of the Holy Year.³² Please commend me to the Lord in your prayers.

Affectionately yours in Jesus and Mary

Turin, January 22, 1900[,]

{In Rua's hand:} Father Michael Rua.

Carissimo D[on] Cassini,

Ricevetti la tua letterina che mi tornò oltremodo gradita pe' tuoi buoni sentimenti. Io ti ringrazio, e t'assicuro che sempre prego per te affinché possa far molto bene in codesta nostra Casa di S[an] Francisco.

Ringrazia a nome mio i carissimi Soci della Compagnia di S[an] Luigi per la loro generosa offerta di L[ire] 100 in favore dei danneggiati della Patagonia. Il Signore saprà ricompensare largamente il loro buon cuore. Ho trasmesso ~~anche~~ all'ufficio del Bollettino la grazia ottenuta dal Sig[nor] Piola Giuseppe da Fossano coll'offerta di un dollaro affinché sia pubblicata ad aumentare sempre più la divozione verso di Maria SS. [Santissima] Ausiliatrice.

Augurando a te e ai Confratelli di codesta casa buon proseguimento d'Anno Santo, raccomanda al Signore.

Il Tuo affez[ionatissimo] in G[esù] M[aria][,]

Torino, 22 Genn[naio] 1900[,]

[In Rua's hand] Sac[er]dote] Michele Rua

³¹ In the winter of 1899-1900 devastating floods destroyed or damaged Salesian mission establishments in Patagonia, especially those on the Río Negro. [Cf. E. Ceria, *Annali* III, pp. 59-72]

³² On May 11, 1899 Pope Leo XIII by the Bull *Properante ad exitum* proclaimed the holy year for the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century. This proclamation was followed by the Encyclical *Annum sacrum* (May 25), in which, as a preparation for the great jubilee, the pope called for the consecration of the whole human race to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. On June 11, 1899, in solemn services the pope consecrated the whole world to the Sacred Heart, and bishops did the same in their own dioceses. In Rome, in the Salesian Church of the Sacred Heart, a solemn consecration of Latin America was held by 53 archbishops and bishops gathered in synod from those countries. By the circular letter of November 21, 1900, Father Rua called for the consecration of the whole Salesian Society to the Sacred Heart to inaugurate the twentieth century. A preparatory triduum was to be held in each house beginning on December 28, and the act of consecration was to be made at midnight of December 31, 1899. [Ceria, *Annali* III, pp. 92-103; *Lettere Circolari di Don Michele Rua ai Salesiani* (Paul Albera, ed. Turin: S.A.I.D., 1910), pp. 222-257]

6. Father Michael Rua to Father Valentine Cassini, February 6, 1900

He acknowledges offerings received, praises Father Cassini's intention to help the devastated Patagonian missions, and speaks of Deacon MacCarthy.³³

[Printed letterhead:] Ospizio / del / S[acro] Cuore di Gesù / Roma / Via Porta S[an] Lorenzo, 44 / (Opera di D. Bosco)

February 6, 1900

Dear Father Cassini, San Francisco, Calif.

Thank you for your welcome letter of January 16 past and for the news it brings. Please convey my thanks to the good lady Cooperator who sent five dollars for the celebration of a Mass at the altar of Mary Help of Christians. Assure her that the Mass will be celebrated as soon as possible for her intention. My thanks also go to all the Cooperators, both women and men, for the offerings they have given or will give. Assure them that we will pray for their intentions.

I applaud your desire to help the confreres [in Patagonia] who have suffered losses on account of the flood. If you can do something in practice, you will have recompense in heaven.³⁴

I hope that the seminarian [Deacon Daniel] MacCarthy has arrived, and that he will be a great help to you.³⁵

I received the check for 65 francs, and I thank the Lord for all the good Cooperators in your area.

Go forward with courage and do what you can. The Lord will do the rest and will not fail to help you. With his help, you will be able to do much good to the souls entrusted to you.

Give my regards to all the confreres and pray for me.

Affectionately yours in Jesus and Mary,

[In Rua's hand:] Father Michael Rua.

[Printed letterhead:] Ospizio / del / S[acro] Cuore di Gesù / Roma / Via Porta S[an] Lorenzo, 44 / (Opera di D. Bosco)

li 6 Febbraio 1900

mio caro D. Cassini, San Francisco Calif.

Ti ringrazio della gradita tua del 16 u[ltimo] s[corso] Gennaio e delle notizie che mi hai mandato. Ringrazia la buona cooperatrice che per mezzo tuo mi

³³ ASC, Rua's Authentic Letters, FDR 3,881 E7-8. In secretary's hand, signature in Rua's hand.

³⁴ For this disastrous flood, cf. note 31 and related text above.

³⁵ The need was felt for English-speaking Salesians, especially priests, for youth ministry and confessions. Father Piperni repeatedly makes the point in his letters to Father Rua. Father Charles Bernard Redahan was the first such priest to be added to the Salesian community in San Francisco (1898). Daniel MacCarthy is the second such person mentioned in the sources. MacCarthy turned out to be a disappointment. [Cf. note 37 and related text below, and Appendix II.]

ha mandato cinque scudi per la celebrazione di una messa all'altare di Maria Ausiliatrice ed assicurata che sarà celebrata al più presto e secondo le sue pie intenzioni. Con lei ringrazia tutte le cooperatrici ed i operatori che ti han fatto o ti faranno qualche offerta assicurandoli che si pregherà secondo le loro pie intenzioni.

Sono ottimi i tuoi sentimenti di venire in soccorso ai conf[r]rate]lli danneggiati dall'inondazione e se puoi metterli in pratica ti acquisterai molti meriti pel paradiso.

/ Spero sarà già arrivato il Ch[ierico] MacKarty [sic] che ti sarà di molto aiuto.

Ho ricevuto la cambiale di 65 franchi, e ne rendo grazie al Signore ed a codesti buoni operatori.

Fatti coraggio, continua a fare quello che puoi, che il Signore farà egli il resto e ti aiuterà a fare del gran bene alle anime che ti sono affidate.

Saluta tutti, prega per me e credimi.

Tuo aff[ezionatissi]mo in G[esù] M[aria][,]

[In Rua's hand:] Sac[erdote] Michele Rua

7. Father Michael Rua to Father Valentine Cassini, Turin, October 9, 1900

Apologizing for the delay, he gives Father Cassini permission to travel to Buenos Aires, expresses regret over Deacon MacCarthy's conduct, and offers congratulation on Father Cassini's silver jubilee.³⁶

Turin, October 9, 1900

My dear Father Cassini, S. Francisco,

Numerous commitments for the spiritual retreats in the past two months prevented me from replying sooner to your welcome letter of August 4. Now it's too late to make arrangements for the October retreat. I gladly give you permission to travel to Buenos Aires if you can arrange things in such a way that your people won't suffer harm.

I'm greatly distressed at the report of Seminarian MacCarthy's way of acting. See if you and the other confreres can bring him to his senses and set him on the right path again. I am sorry that he has so often neglected his duty of helping with church services. We hoped that MacCarthy would be a good helper in church and other areas. We will look for someone to replace him. May the Lord help us find a good one.³⁷

Please accept my sincere and heartfelt good wishes for your silver anniversary of priesthood. May you reach your golden jubilee as well. Have courage. We shall have a great celebration, if we're still around.

Keep in good health. Give my regards to everybody, and please pray for me.

Sincerely and affectionately yours,

Father Michael Rua.

³⁶ ASC, Rua's Authentic Letters, *FDR* 3,881 E9-10. In secretary's hand, signature in Rua's hand.

³⁷ For Daniel MacCarthy note 35 and Appendix II.

Torino, 9. 10. [1]900

Mio caro D. Cassini, S[an] Francisco[.]

Le molteplici mie occupazioni di oltre due mesi per Santi esercizi mi impediscono di rispondere prima d'ora alla gradita tua del 4 agosto e perciò non siamo più a tempo per gli esercizi di ottobre. Ti permetto di buon grado l'andata a Buenos Ayres, quando possa disporre le cose di costì in modo che la popolazione non ne abbia a soffrire.

Mi fa molto pena il contegno del Ch[ierico] McKarty [sic]: procurate tra tutti di ridurlo a buoni sentimenti e rimmetterlo sulla buona strada. Mi rincresce che ti abbiano lasciato tante volte senza l'aiuto necessario per provvedere al decoro delle sacre funzioni. Noi speravamo che McKarty ti sarebbe stato di grande aiuto per le funzioni della Chiesa e per tutto. Cercheremo un altro. Ci aiuti il Signore a fare una buona scelta.

Sinceri e cordiali augurii per le tue nozze / d'argento. Speriamo di festeggiare solennemente le nozze d'oro - fatti coraggio - se ci saremo, faremo una bella festa.

Sta bene, saluta tutti prega per me e credimi di cuore.

Tuo aff[ezionatissimo] in G[esù] e M[aria]

[In Rua's hand:] Sac[erdote] Michele Rua

8. Father Michael Rua to Father Valentine Cassini, October 25, 1900

He congratulates Father Cassini for making the news on the occasion of his silver jubilee and for being accepted as pastor, comments on the debt which is due on the church, and promises to send an English-speaking Salesian to Corpus Christi.³⁸

Turin, October 25, 1900

Dear Father Cassini,

We have seen your picture in the papers. Lord, how important you've become! Congratulations to you [for this achievement], and congratulations also for your silver anniversary. May your fervor increase until your Mass turns golden. I am happy to see that you are accepted as pastor by your parishioners. It has always been our intention, since you were installed in that church, that you should be regarded as pastor, as it is also the archbishop's intention, I'm sure. I will see to it that you be designated as pastor in the next issue of our directory.³⁹

The time is close at hand when the first installment of the debt on the church and on the house is due. I believe it amounts to 1,000 dollars a year for 7 years, right? Have courage, and see that you give a good account of yourself as pastor. The confreres of SS. Peter and Paul should not have to take this added burden on themselves to bail you out. If you don't have the full sum, get after your parishioners until you have made up the difference. Make the payment to the proper agency through Father Piperni for, if I am not mistaken, the debt is in his name. Let me know how things turn out.

³⁸ ASC, Rua's Authentic Letters, FDR 3,881 E9-10. All in Rua's hand.

³⁹ Cf. note 15 and related text above.

We are looking for a priest or a seminarian [to replace MacCarthy] for your children's religious instruction program in English. Pray that we may come up with someone.

May the Lord always live in your heart to make you holy and to help you save the people entrusted to your care.

Best regards to our dear [Brother] Petazzi.

Affectionately yours in Jesus and Mary,
Father Michael Rua

Torino 25 - X - 1900

Car.mo D. Cassini

Abbiam veduto il tuo ritratto riprodotto sui giornali. Ohi! che uomo d'importanza! Ci ralleghiamo con te, come ci ralleghiamo della tua messa d'argento. Facciamo voti che vada crescendo il tuo fervore nel celebrare la messa fino a diventar d'oro. Vedo che i Parrocchiani ti riconoscono per loro parroco ed io ne sono contento; giacchè dal momento che ti sei installato in codesto presbitero nostra intenzione fu sempre che fungessi come Parroco. Come tale, credo, ti riconosca anche l'Arcivescovo. Starò attento che nel Catalogo pure, se non si fece ancora in passato, si noti la tua qualifica di Parroco.

Si avvicina il tempo di pagare la prima rata del debito per la fabbrica della Chiesa e casa che se non erro dev'essere di mille scudi all'anno per 7 anni. Fa coraggio e procura farti onore come Parroco. Non permettere che i Confratelli dei SS. Pietro e Paolo abbiano a sobbarcarsi a tale spesa in vece tua. Se non hai tutta la somma, scuoti la borsa dei Parrocchiani e compisci la somma occorrente, consegnandola a chi di ragione per mezzo di D. Piperni che, se non erro, comparisce come debitore. Sentirò volentieri notizie in proposito. - Stiamo cercando un prete od almeno un cherico che / insegni a['] fanciulli il catechismo in inglese. Prega anche tu che possiamo trovartelo.

Il Signore viva sempre nel tuo cuore per santificarti ed aiutarti a salvare codesta popolazione affidata alle tue cure.

Saluta il caro Petazzi e credimi

Tuo aff[ezionatissimo] in G[esù] e M[aria],]

Sac[erdote] Michele Rua

9. Father Michael Rua to Father Valentine Cassini. Turin, December 20, 1900

He urges Father Cassini to be reconciled with being pastor, and to work in harmony with Father Piperni. He hopes to be able to send an English-speaking priest soon.⁴⁰

Turin, December 20, 1900

Dear Father Cassini, San Francisco

I read your letter of November 20 past with great pleasure, and I thank you for the news you had for me. You tell me that you don't like holding the office of

⁴⁰ ASC, Rua's Authentic Letters, FDR 3,882 A1. In secretary's hand, signature in Rua's hand.

pastor, and that you would gladly surrender it to the priest whom we are sending over to help you. I admire you for this act of humility, but I should remind you that we must always and willingly accept the superiors' disposition in our regard in a spirit of holy obedience. I hope to be able to send you a good English [added above the line:] *or Polish* priest who will work with you and under your direction, especially by preaching, teaching catechism, and hearing the confessions of your English-speaking young people.

Try to come to an understanding with Father Piperni about the people whom each of you should visit for the purpose of seeking financial help. Divide up the territory between the two of you, and work together in perfect harmony *ad maiorem Dei gloriam* [for God's greater glory]. If you go and solicit offerings from benefactors of Father Piperni's house, he cannot possibly be pleased. So come to an agreement among yourselves like good brothers, and go forward *in Domino* [in the Lord]. Happy Holidays!

Affectionately yours in Jesus and Mary,
 Father Michael Rua

Torino 20. 12. [1]900
Caro D[on] Cassini, S[an] Francisco

Ho letto la gradita tua del 20 u[ltim]o s[corso] novembre e ti ringrazio delle notizie che mi hai mandato. In essa mi dici che non ami avere il nome di parroco che cederesti volentieri ad un altro che venisse costì in tuo aiuto. Sono contento del tuo atto di umiltà, ma nel tempo stesso ti ricordo che bisogna che ci mettiamo nelle mani de' Superiori e facciamo volentieri sempre la santa obbedienza. Spero poterti mandare un buon prete inglese [inserted above the line:] o polacco che si metterà a' tuoi ordini e ti aiuterà specialmente nel santo ministero predicando, catechizzando e confessando codesti inglesi. Procura di metterti d'accordo con D[on] Piperni circa le visite da farsi soprattutto a scopo di cercare offerte: dividetevi nettamente il territorio e con perfetta armonia attendete a lavorare ad maiorem Dei gloriam. Certo che se vai a cercare offerte presso i benefattori della casa di D[on] Piperni, egli ne può soffrire e perciò sentirne rinascimento. Accordatevi adunque da buoni fratelli e sempre avanti in Domino. Buone feste.

Tuo aff[ezionatissim]o in G[esù] e M[aria][,]
[In Rua's hand:] Sac[erdote] Michele Rua

10. Father Michael Rua to Father Velentine Cassini, February 17, 1901

He notifies Father Cassini that an English-speaking priest is ready to leave for San Francisco and Corpus Christi. He asks Father Cassini to provide the ticket for the journey.⁴¹

[Printed letterhead:] Oratorio / San Francesco di Sales / Via Cottolengo N° 32 / Torino

⁴¹ ASC, Rua's Authentic Letters, FDR 3,882 A2. All in Rua's hand.

February 17, 1901
Dear Father Cassini,

By now you will have learnt the we have decided to send you a priest who knows both English and Italian as your assistant. So, get an economy-class ticket, London-San Francisco, and send it to London without delay. The ticket should be valid over the next several months, so that this confrere can use it even if some unforeseen circumstance should cause a delay. Also, the ticket should not be personal, so that should this priest for some reason not be able to leave, another can take his place. With these arrangements, I hope you will have a good helper and will be able to do a greater amount of good. Meanwhile be prepared to receive him in a cordial and brotherly fashion, and keep him happy. And you, too, keep cheerful and pray for me.

Affectionately yours in Jesus and Mary,
Father Michael Rua.

[Printed letterhead:] *Oratorio / San Francesco di Sales / Via Cottolengo N° 32 / Torino*

17 - II - 1901
Car[issi]mo D[on] Cassini

Già saprai che abbiám determinato mandarti in ajuto un prete che sappia inglese ed italiano. Perciò adoperati subito per avere e spedire a Londra un biglietto riduzione pel viaggio da Londra a S[an] Francisco. Procura sia servibile per qualche mese, affinché se il sacerdote non potrà partir subito per qualche incaglio, possa servirsene anche con qualche ritardo. Converterà pure non sia nominativo, affinché non potendo per caso servirsene il designato, possa servirsene un altro. - Così spero avrai buona compagnia e potrete fare maggior bene. Tu preparati a tenerlo poi sempre allegro colla tua fraterna cordialità. - Sta allegro anche tu e prega pel

Tuo aff[ezionatissimo] in G[esù] e M[aria][,]
Sac[erdote] Michele Rua

In previous letters (Nos. 2, 5 and 6, above) reference is made to [Deacon] Daniel MacCarthy, the English-language assistant at Corpus Christi, and to his failure to measure up to expectations. Subsequent letters (Nos. 7, 8 and 9 above) document Father Rua's efforts to find an English-speaking Salesian to replace MacCarthy. In the letter that follows (No. 11), the identity of this Salesian is finally revealed. He is Father Charles Buss.

11. Father Michael Rua to Father Valentine Cassini, Turin, March 14, 1901

He thanks Father Cassini for offerings received, and asks him to send tickets for Father Charles Buss in London, who is to leave for San Francisco and Cor-

pus Christi. He adds, however, that Father Buss would leave a little later than originally planned.⁴²

Turin, March 14, 1901

Dear Father Cassini,

I received your letters of February 22 and February 18. I want to thank you for the offering of 330 lire. Convey my thanks to Mrs. Catherine Bonnet for her generous offering of 300 lire for the support of a Son of Mary. Please give her the enclosed personal note. My heartfelt thanks also to St. Anthony for the gift of 30 lire. We need a lot of St. Anthony's bread here, for we have a lot of poor youngsters to feed.⁴³

As for the priest you are awaiting, you must get economy-class tickets for boat and railway trip, and send them directly to London, care of Father Macey, for the person who is to come as your assistant is waiting there. You can have the tickets made out in the name of Reverend Father Charles Buss.

I find your good spirit very encouraging. May the Lord bless you.

Affectionately yours in Jesus and Mary,

Father Michael Rua

P.S. I have just received a letter from dear Father Buss, with your telegram enclosed. He is asking for permission to leave after March 23, for that is the day when a Salesian of the house of Burwash is to be ordained a priest. I shall give him an affirmative answer. God willing, he will leave on the 24th or 26th of this month.

Torino 14 - III - 1901

Car.mo D. Cassini

In possesso della gradite tue del 22/2 e del 18, arrivata dopo, mi affretto a risponderti. Anzitutto ti ringrazio delle L[ire] 330 che mi hai mandate. Ringrazio per me l'ottima Sig[nor]a Catterina [sic] Bonnet delle L[ire] 300 per un figlio di Maria, e favorisci consegnarle l'unita lettera. Ringrazio anche S[ant'] Antonio per la somma di L[ire]30: qui veramente abbiám gran bisogno del Pane di S[ant'] Antonio avendo tanti poverelli da mantenere.

Riguardo al Prete che aspetti converrà che ci procuri il biglietto di riduzione sui battelli e ferrovie. Potrai mandarlo direttamente a D[on] Macey a Londra essendo già colà l'individuo che deve venire in tuo ajuto. - Puoi farlo in capo al Rev[erendo] D[on] Carlo Buss.

Mi piacciono assai le buone disposizioni che dimostri. Voglia il Signore benedirti col

Tuo aff[ezionatissimo] in G[esù] e M[aria],

Sac[erdote] Michele Rua

⁴² ASC, Rua's Authentic Letters, FDR 3,882 A3-4. All in Rua's hand.

⁴³ In popular devotion the Franciscan preacher and theologian, St. Anthony of Padua (1195-1231), is venerated as the apostle of charity. A special form of devotion is St. Anthony's Bread, which consists in alms given to the poor in his name, to obtain his protection.

/ P. S. Ricevo in questo giorno stesso lettera dal caro D[on] Buss contenente il tuo telegramma. Egli dimanda se può aspettare a partire dopo il 23, giorno in cui un diacono della casa di Burwash sarà ordinato sacerdote. Io gli risponderò affermativamente. Di modo che penso che, se Dio vuole, partirà verso il 24 o 26 corrente.

The next two letters refer to a sizable offering (a first installment) intended for the support of a Son of Mary. This and future sums are to be sent to the Salesian novitiate in London. Presumably, it was the donor's will or Father Rua's decision that this money be used for the education of an English-speaking vocation.

12. Father Michael Rua to Father Valentine Cassini, Turin March 17, 1901

He acknowledges offerings received, and congratulated Father Cassini for religious celebrations.⁴⁴

Turin, March 17, 1901.
Dear Father Cassini,

I received your welcome letter of February 26, and the good news it brought about yourself and your house made me very happy. Thank you.

Please convey my thanks to Mrs. Concetta Craviotti for the offering she sent with your letter and give her assurance that the Mass will be celebrated for her intention. We have also received the sum [Rua writes in:] of 330 francs which you sent earlier.[+] [+] As your provincial may already have asked you to do,⁴⁵ you are to send additional sums given for the novitiate directly to London. Let me congratulate you for the solemn end-of-the century celebrations held in your church,⁴⁶ and for those in honor of St. Francis de Sales. For everything we give our heartfelt praise to the Lord.

My blessing on you and your whole house, and on all your Cooperators.
Keep fit, convey my regards to all, and pray for me.
Affectionately yours in Jesus and Mary,
Father Michael Rua

P.S. Father Lazzero's wishes to acknowledge receipt of the [Rua writes in:] the 300 lire, the first installment intended for the novitiate. May the Lord repay you a hundredfold.

⁴⁴ ASC, Rua's Authentic Letters, FDR 3,882 A5-6. In secretary's hand, with notes and signature in Rua's hand.

⁴⁵ As already indicated, the three Salesian houses in the United States at this time (SS. Peter and Paul and Corpus Christi in San Francisco, and St. Brigid Church in New York) were part of "Saint Luke's Province for Venezuela, Northern Brazil and North America." The provincial was Father Joseph Lazzero, who was also a member of the Superior Chapter in Turin. [Cf. note 10 and related text above]

⁴⁶Cf. note 32 and related text above.

[Rua's footnotes:]

[+] 300 lire from Mrs. Bonnet, intended for the support of a Son of Mary.

[+] which I have already acknowledged.

Torino, 17. 3. [1]901.

Caro D[on] Cassini[,]

Ho letto con molto piacere la gradita tua del 26 febbraio e ti ringrazio delle buone notizie che mi hai mandato di te e di codesta casa.

Ringrazia la gentilissima Signora Concetta Craviotti dell'offerta che ci ha mandato per mezzo tuo ed assicurala della celebrazione della messa secondo le pie sue intenzioni. Fu ricevuta la somma che ci hai mandato [Rua writes in:] di 330 franchi [+] [+]. Come avrai avuto ordine dal tuo Ispettore manderai il resto pel noviziato direttamente a Londra. Ti faccio i miei più sinceri complimenti per le feste solenni che hai fatto [A6] in fin di secolo ed a S Francesco e di tutto rendiamo le più vive grazie al signore.

Ti benedico di tutto cuore e con te benedico codesta casa tutta e i suoi cooperatori.

Stia bene, saluta tutti, prega per me e credimi di cuore

Tuo aff.mo in G. e M.

[in Rua's hand:] Sac. Michele Rua

P. S. A nome del Sig[nor] D[on] Lazzerò ti accuso ricevuta delle [Rua writes in:] 300 lire come acconto quota pel noviziato. Il Signore ti renda il centuplo.

[Rua's footnotes:]

[+] delle quali 300 erano dalla Sig[nor]a Bonnet per un figlio di Maria[.]

[+] come già ti accusai ricevuta.

13. Father Michael Rua to Father Valentine Cassini, Turin, April 14, 1901

He acknowledges receipt of an offering, and promises to expedite Father Buss' departure for San Francisco. He expresses concern over Father Cassini's illness.⁴⁷

Turin, April 14, 1901

Dear Father Cassini,

Yesterday through Father Lazzerò I received your check for 300 lire to send on to the novitiate [in London].⁴⁸ We will forward it without delay. We will also tell them to expedite Father Buss' departure, if he hasn't left yet.

I am sorry to hear that you are not well. Please take care of yourself. Sleep a little longer in the morning, and don't start work immediately after meals. Allow some time for digestion.

⁴⁷ ASC, Rua's Authentic Letters, FDR 3,882 A7. All in Rua's hand.

⁴⁸ See Letters Nos. 11 and 12 and related comment above.

Let us hear from you soon. May the Lord speed your recovery and may he help you in your work for his greater glory and for the salvation of souls.
Yours affectionately in Jesus and Mary,
Father Michael Rua

Torino 14 - IV - 1901
Car[issi]mo D[on] Cassini

Per mezzo del caro D[on] Lazzerò ricevetti jeri il tuo chèque di L. 300 da spedirsi al noviziato. Lo spediremo al più presto. Intanto scriveremo che si mandi presto D[on] Buss, se pur non è ancor partito.

Mi rincresce di saperti incomodato; abbiti riguardo. Riposa un po' più tardi al mattino e non lavorare subito dopo aver mangiato; lascia tempo allo stomaco di cominciare la digestione.

Mandaci presto tue notizie. Il signore ti ridoni la salute e ti ajuti a lavorar molto alla sua gloria e salvezza delle anime.

Credimi sempre
Tuo aff[ezionatissimo] in G[esù] e M[aria],
Sac. Michele Rua

14. Father Michael Rua Rua to Father Valentine Cassini, May 27, 1901

He is happy to hear that Father Buss has arrived at Corpus Christi and acknowledges offerings received.⁴⁹

[Printed letterhead:] Oeuvres de Don Bosco / Oratoire Salésien / Rue Cottolengo, N. 32./ Turin

May 27, 1901
Dear [Father Cassini],

I am very happy to hear that the addition to your staff of our dear confrere, Father Charles Buss, has been a tremendous help to you in your work generally, and especially in coordinating the activities of the Association of the Sacred Heart and of the St. Aloysius Sodality.

Many thanks to you and to your Cooperators for the offering of 70 lire enclosed with your letter. With the present I am sending you the pictures of the Sacred Heart which you requested for the new members enrolled in the Association. Please thank them for their offering of 75 lire.

My heartfelt thanks to you for the good wishes on the occasion of my name day, and my sincere thanks to all who offered prayers for me. May the good God reward you abundantly for your good will and charity.

Please convey respectful regards and my heartfelt thanks to our devoted Cooperator Mrs. Geronima Ruffino de Bernal for her generous offering of 10 dollars. Assure her of our prayers for her intention. The editors of the Salesian

⁴⁹ ASC, Rua's Authentic Letters, FDR 3,882 A8-9. In secretary's hand, with signature in Rua's hand. The postscript is in a third hand.

Bulletin will be asked to publish the grace she received through the intercession of Mary Help of Christians.

May God's choicest blessings be upon you.

Affectionately yours in Corde Jesu [in the Heart of Jesus],
Father Michael Rua

P.S. Father Lago and all your friends at the Oratory send their best regards to you, to Father Buss, to Father Redahan, and to each and everyone.⁵⁰

[Printed letterhead:] *Oeuvres de Don Bosco / Oratoire Salésien / Rue Cottolengo, N. 32./ Turin*

Ce 27/5.... 1901

Mio carissimo,

Sono ben contento di sapere, che la venuta costà del nsō [nostro] buon confratello D[on] Carlo Buss ti sia di molto aiuto nel disimpegno dei tuoi uffici, e particolarmente pel buon avviamento della Lega del Sacro Cuore e Compagnia di S. Luigi.

Tanti ringraziamenti a te ed a codesti pii Coop[erato]ri per l'offerta di L. 70, trasmesseci per mezzo tuo: assicurali delle nostre preghiere a favor loro. Unitamente alla presente, ti spedisco le immagini del Sacro Cuore per codesti nuovi ascritti alla pia opera omonima, dei quali ci hai fatto tenere l'offerta di L[ire] 75.

Ti ricambio di tutto cuore gli augurii, offertimi per l'occasione del mio Di onomastico; ringraziando tutti delle preghiere fatte in mio favore. Che il buon Dio ve ne renda merito, e rimunerì ben largamente della benevolenza e carità usatoci.

/ Porgi pure, di grazia, i miei ossequiosi rispetti e cordiali ringraziamenti a codesta nostra egregia Cooperat[ri]ce Sig[no]ra Geronima Ruffino de Bernal per la generosa offerta di dieci dollari, cui [sic] ha avuto la bontà di rimetterci per mezzo tuo; assicurandola delle nostre preghiere a favor suo. Sarà dato avviso alla Direz[i]one del n[ost]ro Boll[etti]no di far cenno nel medesimo della grazia speciale da Lei ricevuta ad intercessione di Maria SS. Aus[iliat]rice.

*Pregandoti da Dio le più elette benedizioni godo intanto poter affermarmi tuo aff.mo in Corde Jesu
Sac. Michele Rua*

P. S. D Lago e tutti gli amici dell'Oratorio mandano un cordiale saluto a te, a D. Buss, a Don Redahan, à tout le monde[.]

⁵⁰ Angelo Lago was born in 1834 in Peveragno (Cuneo, Italy). A successful pharmacist, he entered the Oratory after hearing a sermon on religious life by Don Bosco, professed as a Salesian on September 19, 1873, and was ordained on September 22, 1877. Thereafter, until his death on March 14, 1914, he served as a member of Father Rua's office staff and as secretary to Father Paul Albera. [Diz. Biogr., s.v., Lago]

15. Father Michael Rua to Father Valentine Cassini, Turin, October 16, 1901
He acknowledges offerings received and promises prayers.⁵¹
[Printed letterhead:] Oratorio / di / San Francesco di Sales / Via Cottolengo, N°
32 / Torino

October 16, 1901
Dear Father Cassini,

Please accept my heartfelt thanks for the generous offering of 100 lire which came with your letter of last September 27. Of this sum, 15 lire are earmarked for the Pious Association of the Sacred Heart, and the balance partly for the poor lepers in Colombia and partly for St. Anthony's bread.⁵² Please convey my most sincere thanks to all the well deserving Cooperators who joined in making this offering. Tell them that I will pray for all of them, especially for those who may be in pain or distress. Tell them also that our dear little orphans here join me in praying for them—that the good Jesus and his holy Mother take them into their special care.

The materials you requested are being sent to you separately. Pray for me.

Devotedly yours in Jesus and Mary,
Father Michael Rua

*Printed letterhead:] Oratorio / di / San Francesco di Sales / Via Cottolengo,
N° 32 / Torino*

16. 10. [19]01
Am[amatissi]mo D[on] Cassini,

Ti ringrazio cordialmente per la graziosa offerta di L[ire] 100 che mi hai fatto avere con tua lettera del 27 Settembre p[rossimo] p[assato], di cui L[ire] 15,00 per la Pia Opera del S[acro] Cuore, ed il resto per i poveri lebbrosi della Colombia e pane di Sant'antonio. Favorisci estendere i miei più vivi ringraziamenti a tutti i Benemeriti Signor/i Cooperatori che s'unirono per farmi avere la detta somma e dì pur Loro e specie a quelli che sono travagliati da grandi dispiaceri che per tutti ben volentieri prego e pregherò ogni giorno coi miei cari orfanelli perchè il buon Gesù e la sua Cara Madre ne prendano speciale cura.

A parte riceverai quanto chiedi. Prega anche per chi gode dirsi in G[esù] e M[aria],

*Tutto tuo[.],
Sac[erdote] Michele Rua*

⁵¹ ASC, Rua's Authentic Letters, FDR 3,882 A10. In secretary's hand, signature in Rua's hand.

⁵² In 1891 Father Michael Rua received an appeal from government and church authorities in Colombia for help in caring for lepers in the "leper colony" of Agua de Dios. In 1899, in similar dire circumstances, a similar request was made for the "leper colony" of Contratación. A number of Salesians, among whom Fathers Michael Unia, Raphael Crippa, Evasio Rabagliati, Luis Variara, and Brother Raymond Piantoni, volunteered for these missions. The Daughters of Charity and the Salesian Sisters were also involved. [Ceria, *Annali* II, pp. 141-154; III, 386-417]

For St. "Anthony's Bread" cf. note 43 and related text above.

16. Father Valentine Cassini to Father Michael Rua, San Francisco, February 26, 1901

He sends a stipend for a Mass to be offered for a sick cooperator and gives information regarding celebrations held for the beginning of the century and for the feast of St. Francis de Sales.⁵³

[Faint oval stamp:] Church of Corpus Christi / 60 Croke St. / Near Mission Street / San Francisco, Calif.

February 26, 1901
Very Reverend and dear Father,

Mrs. Concetta Craviotto,⁵⁴ a Salesian Cooperator, is ill with a serious physical illness, and is in a much perturbed state of mind. She requests that in your fatherly concern you be pleased to have a Mass offered at the altar of Mary Help of Christians. The intention would be to obtain for her, if it be God's will, healing in the body, but above all to obtain patience and resignation, and peace of soul at the hour of death. Her offering for this intention is the 5-dollar note herewith enclosed.

I hope my letter of the 23rd of this month, with 330 francs enclosed, has already been received.

In compliance with Circular No. 22 we held the preparatory triduum and the special exercise on the first day of the century in our church.⁵⁵ According to instructions from our archbishop, *summo mane* [very early in the morning] after we individually renewed vows, the Blessed Sacrament was exposed as is customary for the Forty Hours devotions. We likewise made our consecration to the Sacred Heart of Jesus—of our parish, of our little house, and of ourselves. A great number of people filled the church, but not too many received Communion, because I had no one to help me with confessions. The following Sunday, however, we had general Communion, having engaged the services of a Jesuit father for confessions.

The Apostleship of Prayer and Communion of Reparation have been in effect for about a year now. We also have begun the practice of the Nine Offices and the Guard of Honor.

I hope and pray that the Sacred Heart of Jesus, whose power I have so often experienced during my stay in Argentina, will have pity on these poor people.

I beg you to bless me and to commend me to the Lord *ne perear* [*sic*, lest I perish].

Affectionately yours in Jesus Christ,
Father Valentine Cassini

⁵³ ASC, Letters to Rua, FDR 3,347 D8-9. All in Father Cassini's hand.

⁵⁴ Cf. Letter No. 12 above (Craviotti).

⁵⁵ Circular Letter No. 22 by Father Rua called for the consecration of the congregation to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and gave specific directives. [*Lettere Circolari di Don Michele Rua* (1910), pp. 222-227] For details on the Holy Year and Jubilee cf. note 32 and related text above.

P. S. With the help of Jesuits and Franciscans we solemnized the feast of St. Francis de Sales. Father Oreni gave the sermon. On the 6th of this month we celebrated a solemn Requiem Mass for Don Bosco.

[Notation in Rua's hand:] Father G[usmano] [?] Enter check in book and thank / (then pass on to Father Barb[eris])⁵⁶

[Other hand:] 5 dollars Entered / the 300 lire already recorded

[Other hand:] Replied March 17, 1901

[Faint oval stamp:] Church of Corpus Christi / 60 Croke St. / Near Mission Street / San Francisco, Calif.

Febraio [sic] 26, 1901

Rev[erendissi]mo ed Amatissimo Padre[,]

La Signora Concetta Craviotto Coop[eratrice] Salesiana gravemente ammalata di corpo e molto disturbata nello spirito, prega la p[aternità] s[ua] si degni fare celebrare una messa all'Altare di M[aria] Ausiliatrice per ottenere la salute corporale se a Dio piace, ma specialmente la pasienza e la rassegnazione e la pace dell'anima in punto di morte. A questo fine le manda il qui unito biglietto di 5 dollari.

Spero avrà ricevuta una mia del 23 corrente con 330 franchi.

In conformità alla circ[olare] 22, in questa chiesa abbiamo il triduo di preparazione ed il primo giorno del secolo, secondo le prescrizioni di questo arcivescovo, summo mane, dopo avere fatta la rinnovazione dei voti in particolare, si è fatta la Esposizione del SS. Sacr[amento] in forma di 40 ore. abbiamo fatta la solenne Consacrazione della parrocchia, della / nostra piccola casa e delle nostre persone al Sacr[atissimo] Cuore di Gesù. Nella chiesa ci fu molta concorrenza, non vi furono molte comunioni perche io ero solo, ma nella Domenica seguente vi fu la Com[unione] Generale, avendo avuto un padre Gesuita per le confessioni.

L'Apostolato della preghiera e la Comunione riparatrice è fiorente da un anno circa. abbiamo ora incominciato la pratica de Nove Uffizi. e La Guardia d'Onore.

⁵⁶ Julius Barberis (1847-1927), born near Turin in 1857, became a Salesian in 1865 and was ordained in 1870. He was appointed first novice master in 1879, and in 1892 novice master general (that is, director of formation) and later spiritual director of the Society. He was active as a teacher, chronicler, writer, and secretary. [Alessio Barberis, *Don Giulio Barberis [...]* (San Benigno: Scuola Tipografica Don Bosco, 1932); Also E. Ceria, *Profili dei Capitoli salesiani [...]* (Colle Don Bosco: Libreria Dottrina Cristiana, 1951), pp. 305-324]

Calogero Gusmano, born in Cesarò (Messina, Italy) in 1872, was received by Don Bosco into the Oratory in 1885. He became a Salesian in 1892, and was ordained on April 13, 1895. He served as secretary to Father Rua and Father Albera, and accompanied the latter on many of his journeys. He visited San Francisco with Father Albera on March 3, 1903. He served as secretary of the Superior Chapter from 1912 until his sudden death in Nice (France) in 1935. [Diz. Biogr., s.v. Gusmano]

Il Sacro Cuore di Gesù che mi ha fatto sperimentare tante volte la sua efficacia nell'Argentina, spero avrà pietà di questa povera popolazione.

La prego di benedirmi e raccomandarmi al Signore ne perear [sic].

Aff[ezionatissi]mo figlio in G[esù] C[risto],

Sac[erdote] Valentino Cassini

P. S. Mediante la cooperazione dei Gesuiti e Francescani si è celebrato con pompa la solennità di San Francesco di Sales, avendo predicato D. Oreni, e si è fatto solennemente il funerale di D[on] Bo[s]co il 6 corr[ente].

[Notation in Rua's hand:] D. G. Reg[istrare] ringr[aziare] ass[egno?]/ (poi a D[on] Barb[eris])

[Other hand:] D[ollari] 5 Regist[rati;] già notate le 300 L[ire]

[Other Hand:] Risp[osto] 17- 3-[1]901

Thus far the Rua-Cassini correspondence relating to Corpus Christi and to Father Cassini's ministry there, as given in *FDR*. As mentioned above, by 1903 Father Cassini had left Corpus Christi and had returned to Argentina. By 1902 the Salesian houses in the United States had been made a vice-province, and in 1903 a province, under the patronage of St. Philip the Apostle, with Father Michael Borghino (from Bahía Blanca, Argentina) as [vice-]provincial. Father Borghino at first took up residence at SS. Peter and Paul. But when Father Cassini left for Argentina, Father Borghino as provincial took his place as pastor at Corpus Christi. In 1904 Father Borghino decided to establish his residence at the house of formation, St. Joseph's Salesian College in Troy, NY, and was succeeded as pastor of Corpus Christi by Father John Piovano, who was succeeded by Father Charles Buss in 1908. In 1909 Father Borghino became provincial of St. Luke's Province in Venezuela, and the provincial of that province, Father Michael Foglino, was appointed provincial in the United States, with residence at the new house of formation, Columbus College, Hawthorne, NY.⁵⁷

⁵⁷ Cf. Preliminary Comment, pp. 24-25 above.

II. St. Joseph Portuguese Church, Oakland, CA

1. Historical Notice on Portuguese Immigrants and on St. Joseph Portuguese Church

(1) Portuguese Catholics in Oakland and in the East Bay⁵⁸

Citing various sources, Father Ferreira speaks of a first influx of Portuguese nationals into the area in the days of the gold rush. After the mines were closed down, while some migrants returned to their homeland, others settled around the San Francisco Bay. Ferreira avers to have met some of these old-time forty-niners when he first arrived in Oakland in 1907. This relatively small stream was subsequently reinforced by a new migratory wave. The newcomers were Portuguese nationals from Madeira and Azores Islands, and from some provinces of the Portuguese mainland. They had been working under contract in the sugar cane, pineapple and coffee plantations of the Hawaiian Islands, sharing near-inhuman conditions with native Hawaiians, Filipinos and Japanese. There was no Portuguese priest to minister to the plantation workers in Hawaii and, in spite of good efforts by the Picpus Fathers of the Sacred Hearts, they had little spiritual care. In fact, a good number of them had joined fundamentalist Christian sects. Given the opportunity, these poor laborers crossed to the continental United States, and settled mostly in the San Francisco Bay area. The largest number of them gravitated to the East Bay, and Oakland soon acquired the largest Portuguese community on the West Coast. The colony was strengthened by a continued migratory influx from the Portuguese islands and mainland. By the 1890s the Portuguese-speaking population was about 10,000 strong, scattered through the city, but found in greater concentration in West, North and East Oakland. This is what led to the building of St. Joseph's Church in 1891-92.⁵⁹

The vast majority of these immigrants were at first poor, if not destitute. The men found employment as unskilled laborers. Eventually, however, their lot improved. Quite a number went on to become sheep and cattle ranchers, dairy farmers, fruit growers, and some were successful in various professions. But, as did the Italians of San Francisco with respect to SS. Peter and Paul's, so the Portuguese of Oakland never wavered in their allegiance to St. Joseph's, no matter where they might be living.

⁵⁸ For this section I summarize and organize the information scattered through Ferreira, *St. Joseph's Hist.*, pp. 2-16 and passim.

⁵⁹ In San Francisco, St. Anthony's mission chapel for the Portuguese had been established in earlier times. It was a hall located at the corner of Front and Jackson Streets and was still in use in the 1890s, at which times it was served by a priest from Oakland.

Almost from the start, immigrants of other nationalities were served by St. Joseph's, in particular Italians and Mexicans. Referring to the first decades of Salesian tenure, and to the period after the establishment of the mission of Mary Help of Christians (January 1, 1916) for the care of nationals on the east and south sides of the city, Ferreira writes: "We still have over 400 Portuguese families in West Oakland. There are more than 400 Italian families in the vicinity and about 150 Mexican families. All these people belong to this church."⁶⁰

(2) The Founding of St. Joseph's Church

The founder of St. Joseph's Church was Father Manuel T. Fernandes, from Pico (Azores Islands). He came to California as a young man and worked as a sheep herder in the San Joaquin Valley. Learning of the plight of the Portuguese people, he entered the seminary in his natives Azores, and later came to San Francisco where Archbishop Riordan ordained him to the priesthood. He served as pastor at the Old Mission San José for a number of years. He then petitioned the archbishop for permission to build a church in Oakland for the Portuguese, but was rebuffed. He left in a huff for Macau (China), where he stayed for some time. Apparently the archbishop's refusal was motivated by the fact that Father John Tavares, a newly ordained priest from San Miguel (Azores Islands), was already involved with ministry among the Portuguese in Oakland. He held services in the hall of St. Mary's parish church from February 1890 to February 1891, when he died suddenly.

At this point Father Fernandes returned to San Francisco and again offered his services to the archbishop for the Portuguese ministry. The archbishop appointed him to succeed Father Tavares in Oakland. Father Fernandes immediately went to work on the church, toward the building of which he contributed his personal resources, including \$3,000 realized from the sale of a property inherited from his brother.

St. Joseph's Church was to rise on a lot purchased for the purpose on Chestnut, between Seventh and Eighth Streets, within the territorial boundaries of St. Mary's parish, bordering on St. Patrick's. The handsome gothic-style structure "of seasoned pine and redwood," was designed by architect T. J. Welch of San Francisco, and built by contractor T. R. Basset of Oakland, at a total cost of \$14,000. With a stately length of 116 ft. and width of 58 ft., surmounted by a bell tower rising 40 ft. above the roof over the entrance, it had a seating capacity of 528.

⁶⁰ Ferreira, *St. Joseph's Hist.*, p. 15.

The solemn dedication took place on February 21, 1892, Archbishop Riordan presiding. Father Ferreira transcribes articles from the *Oakland Tribune* and the *Oakland Post Enquirer*, both of which give glowing reports.⁶¹

Father Fernandes served as pastor from April 1891 until his death on June 25, 1896. He was succeeded by Portuguese priests whom he himself had enticed to the Bay Area from the seminary in the Azores. They were: Father William S. Gloria, from July 1896 to July 1899, when "he retired to private life;" Father A. D. de Campos, from August 1899 to December 1900; Father Darius A. Raposo, from January 1901 to September 11, 1902, when the church was entrusted to the Salesians.

It was during Father Gloria's tenure as pastor that Archbishop Riordan first turned to the Salesians. Negotiations were successful, and they are fairly well (though not fully) documented in letters held in *ASC (FDR)* which follow.

2. The Salesians at St. Joseph's Portuguese Church

Whereas for Rua-Cassini correspondence, we had only Father Rua's letters, in the present case with the two exceptions recorded below (Nos. 21 and 22), we have only Father Piperni's. His first letter to Father Rua in our possession (in *FDR*) lets us understand that he had conveyed Archbishop Riordan's request to the rector major in an earlier letter. He had also notified him that the archbishop was planning to present his request personally in Turin. Now he gives additional information and voices his misgivings.

17. Father Raphael Piperni to Father Michael Rua, San Francisco, August 11, 1899

Following up on a previous letter regarding the offer of a Portuguese-Italian parish in Oakland, he refers to Archbishop Riordan's projected visit and alerts Father Rua to the debt on that church. He also speaks about Father Cassini's predicament at Corpus Christi parish.⁶²

1600 Dupont Street
San Francisco

August 11, 1899
Dear Father Rua,

In a letter written about ten days ago I spoke to you about our Archbishop's impending visit to the Oratory. He comes to present to Your Reverence a request for some missionaries to take charge of a Portuguese-Italian parish [in Oakland].

⁶¹ Ferreira, *St. Joseph's Hist.*, pp. 8-9.

⁶² *ASC*, Letters to Rua, *FDR* 3,347 C10 - D1. All in Piperni's hand.

By this time you will have received my letter. I am now following up with additional information, as I promised. Actually, the only new piece of information is that there's a large debt on the church. I could not ascertain the exact amount, but a priest tells me that it is large—in fact, too large for the Portuguese people, who are very poor, to defray. The prudent thing for us to do then, so it seems, is not to increase our sorrows by taking on additional debts. We have a large enough debt as it is, and we are forced to eat humble pie just to meet obligations. What a torture debts can be!

With your kind indulgence, I would suggest that you seek rather to ameliorate the condition of our Italian mission [in San Francisco]. The work at our newly accepted church of Corpus Christi, where Father Cassini is vicar, is increasing by the day. Besides, Father Cassini is running with handicaps. In the first place, he can't preach; and secondly, although he has nearly 200 boys and girls for religious instruction, he can't say a word to them, because the young people speak nothing but English. Catechism classes are taught by two sisters with the devoted help of a few American lay women.

It is truly an embarrassing situation for poor Father Cassini. He realizes his unfortunate predicament, and that makes him more nervous than he already is by nature.⁶³

As far as the debt on that little church of his is concerned, we are trying to come up with some scheme, hoping that God will help us.

In an effort to reduce the debt on this church of SS. Peter and Paul, we are organizing a bazaar.

I would like also to present some ideas on the future direction of this parish of SS. Peter and Paul, but I've gone on long enough. I shall return to this matter later. For the present I limit myself to pleading Father Cassini's case.

Be pleased to bless us, dear Father, and to hold us in affection *in Corde Iesu* [in the Heart of Jesus],

Your useles son,
Father Piperni

[Notation in Rua's hand:] To be filed for the information regarding the Portuguese church which is being offered to us.

1600 Dupont Str[ee]t
San Francisco

Agosto 11. [18]99
Amatissimo P[adr]e S[igno]r Don Rua.

Sono una decina di giorni che Le scrissi circa la prossima visita di qu[est]o Arcivescovo a cotesto Oratorio per cercare a V[ost]ra S[ignori]a missionari per una parrocchia portoghese-italiana. Credo che abbia ricevuto la mia a qu[est]a ora: le prometteva di scrivere altre notizie. L'unica nuova notizia si è che la chiesa portoghese ha debito grosso: non so però quanto sia, ma mi dice un prete, che è grosso e troppo pesante perchè lo potesse pagare la popolazione portoghese, poverissima. Pare dunque prudente non aumentarci dei fastidii coi / de-

⁶³ Cf. note 19 and related text above, and Appendix II.

biti, ch  ne abbiamo abbastanza, e le mortificazioni che soffriamo per essi, sono gravi. Oh! che martirio, i debiti.

Se mi permette, vorrei suggerirle che veda piuttosto come migliorare la posizione dei nostri italiani. Si va sviluppando giorno per giorno il lavoro nella nuova chiesa di Corpus Christi, assistita dal P[adr]e Cassini: ed egli, il Padre,   obbligato a sterzare colle mani legate [sic], perch  1  predicare non   capace; 2  ha quasi 200 tra ragazzi e ragazze ai catechismi, e non /   nella posizione di dirigere loro una parola, per la ragione che i ragazzi non parlano che l'inglese. Il catechismo lo fanno due monache ed altre poche collaboratrici americane.

  proprio una posizione mortificante. Il povero D[on] Cassini la comprende bene la sua triste posizione e si fa pi  nervoso di quello che   per natura.

In quanto al debito della sua chiesuola, stiamo studiando una combinazione e speriamo che Dio ci aiuti.

Pel debito di questa di S. Pietro e Paolo, stiamo organizzando un bazar.

/ Vorrei dirle anche qualche cosa circa l'avvenire di questa parrocchia di S. Pietro e Paolo: ma mi pare troppo per oggi: ne parler  pi  tardi: per ora le raccomando la cosa del P[adr]e Cassini.

Ci benedica, Padre amatissimo, e ci conservi il suo affetto in Corde Iesu[.] suo [sic] inutile figlio[.]

Don Piperni

[Notation in Rua's hand:] Da conserv[arsi] per le inform[azioni] intorno alla Chiesa Portoghese che ci si vuol affidare.

In spite of initial misgivings, by early 1901, Father Piperni (so it seems) had been won over to the archbishop's position and was in favor of accepting the Oakland mission.

18. Father Raphael Piperni to Father Michael Rua, San Francisco, February 20, 1901

He relays the archbishop's urgent request for Salesian priests to take over the Portuguese church in Oakland, describes the needs of that parish, and offers himself for the Italian-language ministry. He notes that his effectiveness as director and pastor of SS. Peter and Paul's is greatly diminished, because of his age and of difficulties with the confreres.⁶⁴

San Francisco, CA

1600 Dupont Str.

Dear Father Rua,

Your most welcome letter of January 31 past was delivered this morning just as I was sitting down to write you a letter. Let me then set down what I was going to write to you in the first place.

Yesterday I had a letter from the archbishop. It was about some parish business; but he also had this to say: "Last Sunday, the 17th, the present pastor of

⁶⁴ ASC, Letters to Rua, FDR 3,347 D2-7. All in Father Piperni's hand.

the Portuguese church (Father Campos [*sic*]) suffered a stroke. Because of this emergency, the Salesian Fathers promised by your superior, are urgently needed. Please write to your Superior General about the matter." A few days earlier, I had occasion to pay the archbishop a visit. At one point he remarked: "That Father Campos over there [in Oakland] is unbearable... People keep coming to the chancery office to prefer charges against him. You must absolutely write to your superior general and ask him to send the Salesians quickly. The people are growing impatient."

An English-speaking priest is needed there also, to take over the religious instruction of the young people, both boys and girls, and to hear their confessions. It's no different there than anywhere else: the generation of those who have been born here are American both in language and manners. Obviously an English-speaking seminarian could take charge of catechetical instruction, but for the ministry of the confessional an English-speaking priest is needed. This priest, moreover, must be a person of unimpeachable character and manner. He will have the task of luring back to the Portuguese church young people of both sexes who left it on account of scandals that have occurred there recently.⁶⁵ These young people may now be attending one of various English-language parishes in the city of Oakland. Certain adults, too, require the services of an English-speaking priest. Italian and Portuguese families have young adults, married or unmarried, who are more at home with the English language than with their mother tongue. Thus a priest who is fluent in English is needed in order to foster the formation of a representative parish flock. Otherwise, the ministry would have to be restricted to the older Portuguese men and women. The Italian people scattered through the city must likewise be ministered to in parallel fashion, and the archbishop is both concerned about them and committed to helping them.

I believe that these remarks of mine will help you in putting together a group that will be up to the task. One of the priests, who could serve as director and pastor, should be Portuguese so as to appeal to the Portuguese-speaking population. As for the Italian-language priestly ministry, I take the liberty of offering my poor self. I have for a long time wanted to be relieved of all command positions. At 59 years of age, I have become a humorless, gloomy old man, and a burden to my confreres. They've had enough of me. I have lost the old drive and the spirit of initiative, qualities which are essential equipment in this part of the world. Father Redahan's sarcastic, critical, caustic, overbearing attitude, at work these past three years, has considerably eroded my authority. This situation has been the cause of misunderstandings; and these misunderstandings never quite get resolved, because since his arrival he has never come in for a brotherly manifestation. He is piqued at the least trifle and then poses as one who is much aggrieved... Be good enough therefore, I beg you, to relieve me from command posts of any kind. I may still be able to serve our mother the Congregation in the ministry of the confessional and of preaching in some Salesian house.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ The reference here is the Father William S. Gloria, pastor from 1886-1889, who "retired to private life." [Ferreira, *St. Joseph's Hist.*, p. 18]

⁶⁶ Father Piperni's plea fell on deaf ears, as was to be expected. As late as 1910, the minutes of the meetings of the Superior Chapter note: "Father Foglino is asking that the Superiors confirm Father Raphael Piperni and Father Ernest Coppo as director of their respective communities. He will have a chance to make his case *viva voce*

On the other hand, Father Redahan is very successful in his own work. It would be disastrous for the works to remove him from here. He is a dyed-in-the-wool optimist, but he is very good at his work. He has the death-defying tenacity of the English [sic]. Were he only a little more compassionate!

Regarding Father Oreni, tell me: Must he take examinations in all the moral treatises in order to obtain faculties to hear confessions?⁶⁷

I shall be awaiting your encouraging reply, as I now kiss your hand with filial love.

Your affectionate son,
Father Piperni

P. S. I dare not take a decision regarding MacCarthy without express instructions from your Reverence.

[Notation not in Rua's hand:] Replied February 20; [unreadable word] not possible for the present.

San Francisco California
1600 Dupont Street

20. Feb[braio] 1901
Amatissimo Padre S[igno]r Don Rua.

Nel momento che mi disponeva per scriverle, mi arriva qu[est]a mattina la carissima sua del 31 p[rossimo] p[assato] Genn[ai]o— Innanzi tutto comincio dal dirle ciò che mi disponeva a scriverle.

Ieri l'Arcivescovo in una sua che mi scrive per cose parrocchiali, aggiunge questo: "Domenica sera passata, giorno 17., fu attaccato di paralisi [sic] l'attuale parroco (P[adr]e Campos) della Chiesa Portoghese: perciò urge che vengano i promessi Padri Salesiani il più presto possibile: scrivetene al Superiore Generale." — Pochi giorni innanzi, lo stesso Arciv[escov]o in una visita che gli feci, mi disse: "Quel P[adr]e Campos è là insopportabile... il popolino viene / spesso qua (in Curia) a por reclami contro di lui: è proprio urgente che scriviate al Superio[re] Generale che mi manda [sic] i Salesiani: il popolo è impaziente."

Or dunque c'è bisogno là di uno che sappia l'inglese per la opera dei catechismi ai ragazzi dell'uno e dell'altro sesso: e che deve confessarli in inglese. La posizione delle cose è la stessa dovunque: cioè, la generazione nata qui è tutta inglese nell'idioma e costumi. Perciò un chierico che parli l'inglese non farebbe che mezzo servizio, quello dei catechismi: ma c'è bisogno di chi confessi anche in inglese: dunque dev'essere prete: e prete di molto tatto fino e prudente, perchè / si tratta pure di richiamare alla chiesa portoghese i giovanetti e le giovanette che, in questi ultimi tempi per li scandali avvenuti in essa, naturalmente si spargliarono per accorrere ad altre chiese americane di quella città di Oakland, che

when he comes for the General Chapter." [Meeting of the Superior Chapter, March 4, 1910, *Minutes* II, p. 276, *FDR* 4,249 B9]

⁶⁷ Normally priests were given faculties to hear confession not earlier than two years after ordination and not before passing examination in the various moral treatises.

contiene varie parrocchie. Ci vuole un prete che confessi in inglese anche le persone adulte: infatti, nella stessa famiglia italiana o portoghese si trovano giovani dell'uno e dell'altro sesso, maritati e non maritati, che hanno familiare l'inglese più che la lingua materna. Dunque è necessario un sacerdote che parli speditamente l'inglese, per formarsi, per mezzo del ministero in inglese, un gregge proprio rispettabile: altrimenti il ministero si ri- / durrebbe attorno ai soli vecchi e vecchie Portoghesi. Poi c'è da pensare anche alla popolazione italiana di d[ett]a città, per la quale l'Arciv[escov]o è impegnato ad aiutarla.

Crede che questi schiarimenti Le servono per fare una spedizione che ci faccia onore.

Fra i Preti, almeno uno sia Portoghese di nazionalità, per formare la simpatia nazionale, e sia Direttore e Parroco.

In quanto al prete italiano, mi prendo l'ardita libertà di proporre me stesso. È tanto tempo che desidero vivamente essere esonerato da cariche: l'età di 59 anni mi ha convertito in uomo poco o niente allegro, ma serio: / sono venuto in uggia ai miei confratelli, i quali sono fastidiati di me. Ho perduto l'antico spirito di attività e d'intraprendenza [sic]: e qu[est]o è un male in questi luoghi. Lo spirito satirico, critico, frizzante, dominante di D[on] Redahan, da tre anni a questa parte, ha indebolito in me, assai, l'autorità: e qu[est]o occasiona spesso degli equivoci: equivoci che non si diradano mai, perchè da che è qui, giammai ha fatto un fraterno rendiconto: si adombra per una bagatella: si figura offeso... Prego perciò la bontà Vostra paterna, che mi esoneri da cariche di qualunque genere: chi sa, se potrei rendere alla Madre Congrega- / zione il servizio di confessare o anche di predicare in qualche casa.

Don Redahan poi lavora benissimo dove è: crederei una rovina nelle sue opere il rimuoverlo di qua. È della scuola dell'ottimismo: ma fa benissimo. È inglese tenace come la morte. Oh! fosse pietoso!

In quanto a D[on] Oreni: mi dica, se veramente deve dare l'esame sopra tutta la Morale per essere facoltato a confessare.

*In attesa di una consolante risposta, Le bacio amorosamente le Mani.
Suo affezionatissimo figlio[.]
Don Piperni*

P. S. Non ardisco disporre di McCarthy [sic] senza ordini espressi di V[ost]ra Signoria.

[Notation not in Rua's hand:] Risp[osto] 20/2 - [unreadable word] ora impossibile.

The Superior Chapter discussed the Oakland proposal and Father Piperni's explanation, but refrained from making a commitment due to lack of personnel. We read in the minutes:

A letter from Father Piperni is read and discussed. He says that the archbishop of San Francisco, California, is pressing us to take over the Portuguese parish in Oakland. He is asking for a Portuguese priest to serve as pastor and two additional priests, one Italian-speaking and one English-speaking for the ministry of confessions. The Superior Chapter replies that for the present there are neither

Portuguese nor English-speaking priests available and suitable for this work. Regretfully, therefore, it cannot take on this mission at the moment.⁶⁸

As may be gathered from the October letter that follows and from the notation made on it, no progress had been made as of that date.

19. Father Raphael Piperni to Father Michael Rua, San Francisco, October 10, 1901

He acknowledges receipt of the explanations of the Decree on confessions in Salesian houses, encloses offerings, asks about the Oakland foundation, and pleads again to be relieved of command.⁶⁹

[Printed letterhead:] Sts. Peter and Paul's Church / Cor[ner] Dupont and Filbert Sts. / San Francisco, Cal.

October 12, 1901
Dear Father Rua,

I have received your recent welcome letter, bearing the interpretation of the Decree of April 24.⁷⁰

I enclose two bank drafts made out in your name: one for 105 lire for 100 Masses; the other for 62 lire for the Salesian works. I am forwarding the draft for Masses to you, because this is what the donor desires, that is, that the Masses be sent to the Oratory.

The archbishop requests information about the state of the Oakland foundation. And, dear Father, do not overlook the request I made some time ago, to be replaced in this job by some other priest. There is a lot of work to be done in this community if the pastor is active, intelligent, and determined. I am getting on in years, and my former drive has left me. I would also hope that the priest you appoint is gifted with great prudence. He shall have to live with Father Redahan, who is so touchy as to take umbrage at the least provocation.

As I stoop to kiss your hand, I ask for your blessing on all of us *in Corde Iesu* [in the Heart of Jesus].

Your most humble son,
Father Piperni

⁶⁸ Meeting of the Superior Chapter, March 11, 1901, *Minutes* I, p. 168, *FDR* 4,243 B9.

⁶⁹ *ASC*, Letters to Rua, *FDR* 3,347 D10-11. All in Father Piperni's hand.

⁷⁰ The reference is to the Decree of the Holy Office, *Quod a Suprema*, April 24, 1901, forbidding directors to hear confessions of confreres and pupils in Salesian houses. The Decree was apparently aimed specifically at the Salesian practice and was to be implemented without discussion. Because of practical difficulties involved, Father Rua asked the Salesian moral theologian, Father Louis Piscetta, to offer suggestions ("interpretation") as to how local superiors might proceed. This drew the ire of the Holy Office (the Supreme Roman Congregation of Universal Inquisition) and a stiff reprimand for Father Rua. [Ceria, *Annali* III, p. 170-194]

[Notations:]

[in Rua's hand:] Piperni: enter in register: Lire 167 — 100 = 67 / Oakland [some unreadable words follow]

[other hand:] Replied November 6. We need to postpone [the Oakland foundation]. [Piperni] should provide detailed information regarding personnel required, available resources, etc. We might set October 1902 as the goal, provided..., etc.

[other hand:] Bank drafts for 105 and for 62 [lire].

[Printed letterhead:] *Sts. Peter and Paul's Church / Cor. Dupont and Filbert Sts. / San Francisco, Cal.*

Ott.e 12. 1901

Amatissimo P[adr]e S[igno]r Don Rua[,]

Ho ricevuto l'ultima sua carissima colla interpretazione del Decreto 24 Aprile.

Le rimetto qui a Lei dirette due cambiali una di lire 105 per 100 messe: l'altra di 62 lire per l'opera di Don Bosco. Mando la prima perchè così è la volontà della persona donante, che cioè siano mandate a cotesto Oratorio.

L'Arciv[escov]o ci domanda notizie della fondazione di Oakland. Non dimentichi, caro Padre, l'antica preghiera di farmi rimpiazzare qui da qualche altro Sacerdote: c'è da fare in qu[est]a colonia molto bene sotto di un sacerdote attivo, intelligente, energico. Io sono avanzato negli anni: la mia antica attività è finita. Raccomando pure che il prete sia dotato di grande prudenza per poter convivere con Don Redahan, favolosamente suscettibile per un pelo, una mosca. Ci benedica in Corde Jesu e le bacio le mani.

suo um[i]l[issi]mo figlio[,]

Don Piperni

[Notations:]

[in Rua's hand:] Piperni in reg[istro] L[lire] 167 — 100 = 67 / Oakland [+ some unreadable words]

[other hand:] Risposto 6/11 - Conviene ancora differire. mandi intanto esatte notizie sul personale necessario, mezzi per vivere ecc. Speriamo per l'Ottobre 1902 se ecc.

[other hand:] Vaglia di 105 / :: di 62 [lire]

Father Piperni responds to the Superior Chapter's request for detailed information.

20. Father Raphael Piperni to Father Michael Rua, San Francisco, January 31, 1902

He provides detailed information, as requested, on needs, assets and liabilities of the Oakland foundation.⁷¹

⁷¹ ASC, Letters to Rua, FDR 3347 D12 - E1. All in Piperni's hand.

January 31, 1902
 Reverend and Dear Father Rua,

This is in reply to your brief letter of last October 25. In earlier letters I gave you all available information about the [prospective] house of Oakland (a name which means *Terra di Quercie Dure* [Land of hard-wood oak trees]). Those letters may, perhaps, have been misplaced, but I am only too happy to recapitulate.

1. There is a debt of 8,000 dollars on the church.

2. As in other parishes, so at St. Joseph's the offerings of the faithful, such as stole fees, Mass stipends, etc. are the only source of income for the missionaries.

3. The Portuguese, as well as the Italians, are scattered through the territories of various parishes in that large city on the other side of the Bay. At present they attend services in those churches because that's where they live. It will take all a missionary's virtue, prudence, manner, tact, and gentle charity, to lure them into attending the Portuguese church where they belong. They will have to be given a reason for preferring it to others.

4. In working out an agreement with the archbishop, we must demand that the Portuguese and the Italian people of that city be placed under the exclusive care of the Salesian missionaries for all that concerns the administration of the sacraments, baptisms, funerals, etc.

5. Whatever personnel may be assigned, it is of basic importance that there be a priest who can speak and preach in both Portuguese and Italian, and an English-speaking priest for the young people of both Portuguese and Italian families. As I have often explained to you, English is the only language these young people understand.

6. I would very much like, before the end of Autumn, to come to Turin for a visit. I would like personally to discuss with our dear superiors the necessity and the manner of developing this mission, so as to make it a bit more Salesian. Would the Reverend Father Rua give me permission?⁷²

Your faithful son in *Corde Jesu* [in the Heart of Jesus][,]
 Father Piperni

[Notation in Rua's hand:] Draw up [a statement to serve as a basis for] negotiations as soon as Father [Michael] Borghino is ready to move.
 [other:] Replied February 9.

San Francisco. Cal.
1600 Dupont St.
Genn[aio] 31. 1902

Amadissimo [sic] P[adre] S[igno]r Don Rua[,]

Alla sua letterina del 25 Xbre [Ottobre? Dicembre?] p[rossimo] p[assato] rispondendo dicendole che ho dato nelle mie anteriori piene notizie circa la casa di

⁷² I found no record of a visit to Turin by Father Piperni in late 1902.

Oakland. (parola che vuol dire terra di quercie dure) Se le avrà smarrite, eccole con piacere di bel nuovo.

1° Il debito è di circa 8 mila scudi.

2° L'unico cespite per mantenere i Missionari là come altrove, è la limosina dei fedeli e i diritti di stola, messe, etc...

3° I Portoghesi, come gl'Italiani di là, sono dispersi per tutta la gran città fra le altre parrocchie: dipende dalla virtù, prudenza, buoni modi, bel tratto, e carità dolce del missionario, attirarli a frequentare la chiesa portoghese loro assegnata, facendola loro preferire alle / alle altre chiese parrocchiali alle quali oggi vanno perchè più vicine alle loro abitazioni.

4° Nel redattare [sic] i patti col'Arcivescovo, esiggasi [sic] da lui fortemente che assegni i Portoghesi e gl'Italiani di quella città esclusivam[ent]e ai Missionari Salesiani, nell'Amministrazione dei Sacramenti, per Battesimi, Funerali, etc...

5° Se altro personale non può aversi, almeno è interessante un Sacerdote che parli e predichi in Portoghese e italiano, e un Sacerdote inglese per la gioventù delle famiglie Portoghesi e Italiane, la quale come altre volte le dissi, non capisce che l'inglese.

6° Quanto desidererei venire verso l'autunno o prima, a Torino, per parlare a viva voce coi cari Superiori circa il modo e necessità di sviluppare qu[est]a nostra Missione, e renderla un poco Salesiana! Me lo concederà il S[igno]r Don Rua?

Suo in Corde Iesu figlio fedele[.]

Don Piperni

[Notation in Rua's hand:] Compilar trattative appena si sappia che D[on] Borghino viene[.]

[other:] R[isposto] 9/2

The notation on the above letter indicates that a decision had finally been reached, and that Father Borghino (appointed [vice-]provincial of the newly erected [vice-]province of North America) was to lead the expedition. The Agreement or Convention is not available in *FDR*. But the letter that follows shows that the negotiations had reached a happy conclusion.

21. Father Michael Rua to Archbishop Patrick W. Riordan, Turin, August 5, 1902

He introduces and commends to Archbishop Riordan Father Michael Borghino (as new provincial), Father Joseph Galli and "others," who are to staff St. Joseph's Church in Oakland.⁷³

⁷³ Archive of the San Francisco Province, from the Archive of the Archdiocese of San Francisco. All in Rua's hand.

Turin, August 5, 1902
Your Excellency,

The convoy of Salesian missionaries assigned to Oakland is on its way at long last. Great difficulties were experienced in putting the team together, but they were overcome, thanks be to God. The bearer of the present letter, the Very Rev. Father Michael Borghino, will be the superior. He is one of our veteran missionaries and, having served in Brazil for a number of years, he knows Portuguese. The Rev. Father Joseph Galli, lately from Portugal, is also in the group. He should be very valuable to the mission. The other Salesians in the group either know Portuguese already or will be able to learn it without difficulty.⁷⁴ The Rev. Father Borghino will also serve as provincial for all the houses in the United States.

I entrust them all to your fatherly care. I ask you to be for them a counselor, protector, and father, for they come inspired by a keen desire of being good sons to Your Excellency and of working humbly and untiringly for the spread of the Gospel.

Bless them, I pray, and with them bless also
Your most humble and devoted servant,
Father Michael Rua
Rector Major of the Salesians of Don Bosco

To His Excellency,
the Most Reverend Archbishop
of San Francisco, California.

Torino 5 Agosto 1902
Eccellenza Rev[everendissima]ma[.]

Finalmente la carovana di Missionari Salesiani per Oakland si è potuto costituire. Furono molto gravi le difficoltà, ma, ringraziando il Signore, si poterono sormontare. Il Superiore, Rev[erendissimo]mo D[on] Borghino Michele, che le porge questa mia, è un nostro missionario veterano, che conosce il Portoghese, essendo stato parecchi anni nel Brasile. Vi è pure nella carovana il Rev[erendo] D[on] Giuseppe Galli proveniente dal Portogallo, che spero sarà di grande aiuto alla Missione. Sonvi anche altri che già sanno il Portoghese e qualcuno in grado d'impararlo con facilità. Il Rev[erendo] D[on] Borghino dovrà pure fungere da Ispettore per le altre case degli Stati Uniti. Io li raccomando tutti alla sua bontà. Voglia far loro da consigliere, da protettore, da Padre, essendo essi animati dal più vivo desiderio di comportarsi verso l'E[ccellenza] V[ost]ra come buoni figli ed umili e laboriosi operai evangelici.

⁷⁴ Having been ordained in Uruguay, Father Borghino established the first Salesian foundation at Nichteroy (Niteroi, near Rio de Janeiro) and served as its director from 1883 to 1887. However, Father Borghino did not work in Oakland, nor was Father Galli (from Portugal) immediately assigned there. It is the "others" referred to in the letter who would at first staff St. Joseph's in Oakland: Father Andrew Bergeretti (from Venezuela) as director and pastor, Father Emil Pavan (from Brasil) as associate, and Lay Brother John Bovio.

*Voglia, di grazia benedirli tutti e con loro anche
Il Suo Umil[issim]o oss[ervantissi]mo Servo[,]
Sac. Michele Rua
Rett[or] Magg[iore] de' Sales[iani] di D[on] Bosco*

*A S[ua] E[ccellenza] Rev[erendissi]ma
Monsignor Arcivescovo
S[an] Fracisco di Calif[ornia]*

In his "diplomatic pouch" Father Borghino also had a note for Father Cassini from Father Rua.

22. Father Michael Rua to Father Valentine Cassini, Turin, August 5, 1902

He commends the new provincial [Father Borghino], to whom Father Cassini can turn in any need. He also acknowledges offerings received.⁷⁵

Turin, August 5, 1902
Dear Father Cassini,

Meet your new provincial [Fr. Michele Borghino], a person whom you have known for many years. I hope he will be a source of support and strength to you. You may now deal directly with him in all matters having to do with your mission of Corpus Christi. Should any changes be necessary, he has power to decide. Have great confidence in him.

Yesterday I received the two checks you sent of 25 lire each. Convey my thanks to the persons who made the offerings and assure them of our prayers. Urge them to have great confidence in our heavenly Mother.

Best regards to you, to Father Buss, and to all the confreres there,
Affectionately yours in Jesus and Mary,
Father Michael Rua.

P.S. Your nephew, young Cresta, sends you his best regards. I believe he is doing well.

*Torino 5 Agosto 1902
Car[issim]o D[on] Cassini[,]*

Eccoti il nuovo Ispettore che tu già conosci da lunga data. Spero che ti sarà di ajuto e conforto. Con lui potrai trattare degli affari di codesta missione di Corpus Christi, e se mai fosse necessaria qualche modificazione, egli è investito dell'autorità. Abbi in lui tutta la confidenza.

ho [sic] ricevuto jeri i due chèques di L[ire] 25 caduno: ringrazia per me le persone offerenti ed assicurale di nostre orazioni animandole a grande confidenza nella Celeste Madre.

Gradisci i miei saluti; estendili al caro D[on] Buss ed agli altri che si trovano con voi e credimi sempre

⁷⁵ ASC, Rua's Authentic Letters, FDR 3,882 A11. All in Rua's hand.

*Tuo aff[ezionatissimo] in G[esù] e M[aria][,]
Sac[erdote] Michele Rua*

P. S. Il giovane Cresta tuo nipote mi prega di salutarti da parte sua. Pare vada avanti abbastanza bene.

The party led by Father Borghino arrived in San Francisco on September 5, 1902.⁷⁶ Father Borghino and Father Galli took up residence at SS. Peter and Paul, while Father Andrew Bergeretti, Father Emil Pavan and Brother John Bovio were assigned to St. Joseph's in Oakland. The parish was officially turned over to the Salesians on September 11, 1902. At year's end Father Galli transferred to St. Joseph's.

The Salesian community at St. Joseph's did not undergo drastic changes for many years. Father Pavan left Oakland to return to Italy because of illness in 1904. Father Ferreira from Portugal, via Italy, was added to the staff in 1907. Father Bergeretti died in 1909 and was succeeded by Father Galli as pastor (1909-1932).

Under both Fathers Bergeretti and Galli the parish flourished in every way. In 1908, on the basis of a memorandum presented by Father Bergeretti to the archbishop, St. Joseph's was granted jurisdiction over all Portuguese, Italian and Mexican immigrants residing in Oakland and environs.⁷⁷ Perhaps the most significant development of the work came in 1915 with the building of the church of Mary Help of Christians on East Ninth Street and 26th Avenue, as a mission for East Oakland. It was dedicated on January 1, 1916.⁷⁸

III. Developments at SS. Peter and Paul: Earthquake, Fire, and Reconstruction

In my earlier article I described the founding of the Salesian work at SS. Peter and Paul Church and transcribed documents relating thereto. I also added a brief comment on the earliest development of the work. Some further comments seem in order at this point.

1. Successes in Adult and Youth Ministry

In more than one way the further development of the Salesian work at SS. Peter and Paul is an amazing success story, in spite of the fact that only a few years after the founding earthquake and fire reduced everything to rubble and ashes. To

⁷⁶ Pellegrino, *SS. P. & Paul's Chron.*, p. 2.

⁷⁷ Ferreira, *St. Joseph's Hist.*, pp. 30-31.

⁷⁸ Ferreira, *St. Joseph's Hist.*, pp. 4-6.

begin with we notice a continuous growth of religious life among the people of the Italian community. The frequently cited Chronicle of SS. Peter and Paul notes the initial difficulty and the gradual progress.

The small number of churchgoers, due in part to long neglect, is enough to discourage anybody. [...] The people's suspicion and distrust for the newcomers is fueled by the hatred of the anticlerical groups which hold sway in the community and which incite the people against the priests. [...]

Suspicion and distrust are gradually overcome by the fatherliness of the Salesians, and by their devoted care of the young people. [...] Attendance at church services on Sundays and at daily Mass is ever on the increase.⁷⁹

The building of a large all-purpose hall in 1897 and the addition of Father Charles Redahan to the parish staff in 1898 marked a veritable leap forward in youth and English-language ministry. The sources agree that Father Redahan did more to set the course of typical Salesian work at SS. Peter and Paul (and later at Corpus Christi) than all other early Salesians put together. He is credited with greatly expanding the religious instruction program, ably assisted by the Holy Family Sisters and a group of volunteers. In 1899-1900 he developed evening classes for teenagers, English-language classes specifically for workers, and citizenship classes for people at large. He steered countless people through the tortuous formalities of immigration and citizenship. In 1901, with 36 founding members, he started the Salesian Council, a mutual benefit society for men, which later was affiliated to the Young Men's Institute of California. It grew to be 400 members strong. On parallel tracks, the Young Ladies' Institute turned out to be a comparable success story. Father Redahan proved altogether outstanding with young people.

As Father Piperni so often argued in his letters to Father Rua, English-speaking priests were needed to carry forward the typical Salesian apostolate, especially with young people. Father Redahan was the first such priest to be assigned by Father Rua to San Francisco, and taken for this mission from the prestigious post of financial administrator of the motherhouse in Turin.

Similarly, a couple of years later, Father Charles Buss was commissioned for the English-language ministry at Corpus Christi.

Toward the end of 1903, Father Thomas Deehan arrived at SS. Peter and Paul's, intended perhaps for a similar position at St. Joseph's in Oakland. Archbishop Riordan reacted unfavorably to this appointment, and sent off a letter to Father Rua, requesting Father Deehan's removal. This perplexing letter follows.

⁷⁹ Pellegrino, *SS. P. & Paul's Chron.*, pp. 1-2.

23. Archbishop Patrick W. Riordan to Father Michael Rua, San Francisco, December 16, 1903

He requests that Salesian Father Thomas Deehan, newly arrived in San Francisco, be removed from the scene, because of the latter's inability to engage usefully in any ministry.⁸⁰

[printed letterhead:] St. Mary's Cathedral / 1100 Franklin Street / San Francisco, California

Dec[ember] 16, 1903.

V[ery] Rev[erend] Michael Rua.

Salinas [*sic*] Oratory, via, Cottolengo, Torino, Italia.

Very dear Father:-

There arrived here a few days ago a Father of your Congregation by name, Father Thomas Joseph Deehan. After consultation with some of the Fathers I deem it my duty to write you as follows:

It would be much better if Father Deehan were taken away from here and sent somewhere else. He will not be able to do any work here with the exception of saying Mass. He does not speak Italian sufficiently to be of any use among the grown people, and he speaks English so indistinctly that the children will not be able to understand him. The work here in the Italian quarter is so important that we need the very best men that can be spared. I have no doubt but Father Deehan is a very good man, but besides virtue we need other qualities to be of service in this important mission.

I hope you will give this matter your immediate attention and remove Father Deehan to some other place where he may be able to do some good. He is absolutely worthless here. If you cannot send a priest you might send a Clerico [*sic*] from London, who speaks Italian and English. He will be far more servicable [*sic*] than Father Deehan.

Excuse me for writing this way but the importance of the matter demands my attention.

Wishing you all the blessings of the Christmas Season, I remain,

Sincerely yours[,]

P [*atrick*] W[illiam] Riordan

Archbishop of San Francisco

[Notation in Rua's hand:] 5/1 R[isposto] per mezzo di D[on] Borghino (January 5. Replied by Father Borghino)

Father Borghino, the provincial, had no other option. Father Deehan was assigned to Transfiguration Church in New York. He later returned California and

⁸⁰ ASC, Letter to Rua, FDR 3,806 B4. Typewritten, with autograph signature: P W Riordan.

worked for many years both at SS. Peter and Paul's and at St. Joseph's in Oakland.⁸¹

The archbishop took a wholly different position regarding Father Redahan. In 1907, after the great earthquake and fire, the rumor was put about that Father Redahan was leaving the city. We do not have the archbishop's letter to Father Rua, but we have the latter's reply.

24. Father Michael Rua to Archbishop Patrick W. Riordan, Turin, May 29, 1907

He writes to allay the archbishop's fears that Father Redahan will be removed.⁸²

[Printed letterhead:] Oratorio/ di / S. Francesco di Sales / Via Cottolengo, N. 32 / Torino

Turin, May 29, 1906
Your Grace,

Your revered letter of February 21 past took me by surprise. In it Your Excellency put me on guard against the danger of removing Father Redahan from San Francisco. As far as I know, none of the members of the Superior Chapter of our humble Society has any intention of making such a change. We will also contact Father Borghino, who at present happens to be in San Francisco, and ask him if he is aware of the rumor which is circulating in the city.

On my part I want to assure Your Grace that I shall take your advice to heart, and that it is not my intention in any way whatever to cause any pain to Your Excellency to whom I am so much indebted.

Please bless me and with me my whole numerous family, and please accept my respectful regards.

Your most humble and devoted servant,
Father Michael Rua

[Printed letterhead:] Oratorio/ di / S. Francesco di Sales / Via Cottolengo, N. 32 / Torino

Turin le 29 May 1906
Monseigneur,

Votre vénérée lettre du 21 Février dernier, dans laquelle Votre Grandeur me notifiât le danger que le Père Redahan soit enlevé de S. Francisco m'a bien surpris. Que je sache, aucun Supérieur du Chapitre Supérieur de Notre humble Société a pensé à faire ce changement. Nous allons écrire aussi au Père Borghino, qui

⁸¹ Cf. Appendix II.

⁸² Archive of San Francisco Province, from Archive of the Archdiocese of San Francisco. French, in secretary's hand; signature in Rua's hand [?].

dans ce moment-ci se trouve à S[an] Francisco pour lui demander, s'il est au courant de ce bruit qui court dans la ville.

Pour ma part, soyez sûr, Monseigneur, que je tiendrai compte de votre recommandation, et je ne voudrais d'aucune manière faire de la peine à Votre Grandeur envers laquelle je suis si obligé.

Veillez me bénir avec toute ma nombreuse famille et daignez agréer les hommages respectueux de

Votre bien humble et dévoué Serviteur,

Abbé Michel Rua

Father Borghino may well have been planning personnel moves. But Father Redahan remained at his post and was one of the chief architects of the reconstruction after the earthquake and fire.

2. Disaster and Reconstruction

Disaster struck on April 18, 1906. San Francisco was rocked by a killer earthquake, and during the next few days a raging conflagration reduced two thirds of it to ashes. The devastation by the fire that followed the earthquake stretched from the east wharves to the north beyond Chestnut Street, to the west beyond Van Ness, and to the south in the mission as far as 20th Street.⁸³

The following testimonies from Salesian sources, each confirming the other, tell the story of SS. Peter and Paul's total loss.

April 18, 1906.— Earthquake and fire. The whole North Beach district, where our church is located, is burning. We try to save objects of value, but with little success. Our confreres find refuge in our Salesian house of St. Joseph's in Oakland. We take with us to safety the Blessed Sacrament, sacred vessels, and almost all the registers in our parish archive. — April 20, 1906.— All our buildings are on fire; they are quickly reduced to ashes, down to their foundations.⁸⁴

In greater detail, Father Piperni writes:

April 18, 1906, Easter Wednesday.— At 5:15 A.M. the earthquake struck, and the raging fire which ensued, out of control, destroyed almost the whole city. On April 19, at midnight, as the fire advanced inexorably up Dupont Street, leaving us no hope of being spared, Father Piperni removed the Blessed Sacrament from the Tabernacle, and with Brother Imielinski as body guard, took a ferry across the bay to Oakland. They arrived at St. Joseph's at 2 o'clock in the morning and were received at the door by Father Galli. [...] Later, we borrowed some carts and attempted to carry some the church's appurtenances to safety. But it was too late and everything, including valuable paintings and statues, was lost. The follow-

⁸³ Cf. Warren A. Beck and Ynes D. Haase, *Historical Atlas of California* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1977), No. 80.

⁸⁴ Pellegrino, *SS. P. & Paul's Chron.*, p. 3.

ing objects were rescued from the fire and brought to safety: 2 chalices, 2 ciboria, 1 monstrance, 1 large missal and 3 smaller missals for the liturgy of the dead, all the baptismal registers except 3, the marriage register, and some of the Salesians' most necessary personal books. The sacred vestments were at first stored in Mr. James Costa's house [on Lombard Street]. Then as a safety measure we stacked them up at the center of the street crossing. There they were incinerated, while Mr. Costa's house was spared. On April 20, Father Redahan and Father Buss from the top of Telegraph Hill watched in shock as the house, the church and connected buildings were reduced to ashes. The beautiful 2000-lb. bell, buried in the rubble when the tower collapsed, was later stolen by some of our Italian people and (it is believed) sold to some Jewish merchants who at the time were buying valuable objects cheaply from looters.⁸⁵

Father Ferreira records Father Galli's recollections:

The wonderful church of SS. Peter and Paul, recently adorned with frescoes and stained glass windows, [...] was burnt to the ground in about one hour. [...] The parochial registers and sacred vessels, some encrusted with precious stones, were saved from the flames and carried to safety to St. Joseph's church and rectory in Oakland. Father Piperni, with his confreres, found refuge here. Ringing the door bell, they greeted the good father who opened the door with the discouraging words, "*Finis missionis*" [our mission is over].⁸⁶

But the mission was not over because the missionary's spirit remained undaunted. On Sunday, April 24, Fathers Redahan and Buss were celebrating Mass under large tents set up in the Presidio and on Telegraph Hill. A coach-house on Bay Street and Columbus Avenue was scoured and adapted as a temporary church. Daily Mass was celebrated in a room made available to Father Piperni in a private house on Hyde Street. The spiritual and material care of many people in need kept the Salesians working overtime in succeeding months. A rectory and parochial office were temporarily set up in the only house still standing on Telegraph Hill.

On October 7, a new (though smaller) church and residence, built on the old site on Dupont (Grant) Street, were blessed. A 1,000-pound bell, shipped in from Troy, New York, was installed in the bell tower. The church had a basement which allowed the continuance of the various programs of instruction under Father Redahan's guidance. The Presentation Sisters, whose convent had been destroyed in the fire, accepted the offer to run the children's school.⁸⁷

⁸⁵ Piperni, *Mission Memoir*, pp. 4-5.

⁸⁶ Ferreira, *St. Joseph's Hist.*, p. 36.

⁸⁷ Data summarized from Piperni, *Mission Memoir*, pp. 4-5, and Pellegrino, *SS. P. & Paul's Chron.*, p. 3. Some details differ in the two sources..

Meanwhile Father Piperni was making plans for a proper parochial school, and presented a proposal to the Superior Chapter. We read in the minutes:

Father Piperni writes to say that our parish church in San Francisco, California, has been rebuilt. He also makes a good case for building a parochial school now, a project which the archbishop supports and wishes to see realized. Father Rua will reply to Father Piperni, and will at the same time give Father Borghino instructions to move forward with the plan.⁸⁸

It appears that Archbishop Riordan wished indeed to develop the parish of SS. Peter and Paul. Earlier, when assessing the losses and conferring with Fathers Redahan and Buss, he had vowed: "I'll give my personal property if needs be, but SS. Peter and Paul shall be rebuilt." On December 6, 1906, he paid an extended visit, and in speaking to the children massed in the temporary church, he commended the Salesian on their work of reconstruction and made a promise: "I want to make SS. Peter and Paul the most prosperous parish in San Francisco."⁸⁹ It is with this backing that the Salesians began to look for a new and larger building site. An entry in the Chronicle for April 19, 1908 reads:

By the will of His Excellency Archbishop Riordan, a large property is bought on Filbert Street, fronting Washington Square, intended for the building of a new church, larger and more suited to the needs of this community.⁹⁰

In a letter to old and ill Father Lazzero,⁹¹ Father Piperni speaks of these new developments.

25. Father Raphael Piperni to Father Joseph Lazzero, San Francisco, October 31, 1909

In a friendly letter to aged and ill Father Lazzero, he conveys news pertaining to the reconstruction after earthquake and fire, and laments the presence of evil characters in the Italian community.⁹²

⁸⁸ Meeting of the Superior Chapter, May 21, 1907, *Minutes* II, p. 133, *FDR* 4,246 E10.

⁸⁹ Pellegrino, *SS. P. & Paul's Chron.*, p. 3, and Piperni, *Mission Memoir*, p. 6, give slightly different versions of the archbishop's pledge.

⁹⁰ Pellegrino, *SS. P. & Paul's Chron.*, p. 4.

⁹¹ Father Joseph Lazzero, who had been provincial of Venezuela, Northern Brazil and Mexico when the Salesian work was established in San Francisco, was by now seriously ill and in retirement at Mathi (Turin).

⁹² *ASC*, Works Established, *FDR* 3,347 E2-3. All in Father Piperni's hand. Some words are no longer legible.

San Francisco. Cal.
 1600 Dupont Str.
 October 31, 1909 [?]
 Dearest Father Lazzero,

What a beautiful, beautiful surprise this morning to receive your nice little letter. My dear Father Lazzero still remembers me, even though I seem to remember him so little. Please forgive me, dear Father Lazzero. Just forgive me. Thank you for remembering me so well. I am very happy to know that you are still alive. May you live *ad multissimos annos* [many many more years]. You may no longer be able to work with your hands, but your heart can still work. You are a most precious relic of our Venerable Father, as are all our dear Superiors who are still alive. Therefore you will always be an object of veneration, a living testimony, and an inspiration to good work and virtue. As for myself, I'm just getting old. I have stopped begging [the superiors] to send someone to replace me, for it seems useless now. No other house would want to receive a useless and bothersome old man like myself. Let all things be as the dear superiors dispose.

After the fire we put up a temporary little church and a house. We have bought the lot for the new church, a better site. It cost 47,000 dollars, and we had to take out a loan. It won't be long before work starts on the building. The church will certainly not come to less than 50,000 dollars.

After the fire, a flood of the worst characters swept over this city: socialists, anarchists, anticlerical people. Likewise, we are swamped by a plethora of the worst newspapers, local and otherwise. People just eat them up, regardless of sex or age [?]. The harm they do is enormous, with their adverse impact on people's religious life. This is how Italians have earned their unwholesome reputation. Here in America, more than in other countries, socialism and anticlericalism make no sense. People here are generally well off, and American newspapers have other things to write about. Here "Italians" and "disreputable people" are synonymous.⁹³

It is true, unfortunately dear Father Bergeretti has left us: *R.I.P.* [*Requiescat in pace*, may he rest in peace].

The confreres here send their best regards. Please remember me in your prayers.

Devotedly yours in Christ,
 Father Piperni.

San Francisco. Cal.
1600 Dupont Str[et]
Out[obre] 31. [19]09 [blur] [Archivist:] 1909?

Mio sempre amatissimo S[igno]r Don Lazzero

Che dolcissima sorpresa. che dolcissima sorpresa la sua letterina di qu[est]a mattina! Il mio buon Don Lazzero si ricorda ancora di me!.. Ed io così poco di

⁹³ Here as in a number of previous letters, Father Piperni describes, in his usual heavy-handed, pessimistic way, the anticlerical feeling which must certainly have been present in the Italian community.

lui? Ah! mi perdoni, il mio dolce Don Lazzerò: mi perdoni. Grazie, grazie delle sue ζ buone? [unreadable word] ricordanze. Mi consola grandemente che Lei vive ancora: e viva ad multissimos annos. Se non può ζ lavorare colle braccia, lavora il cuore. La sua persona è reliquia preziosissima, con quella dei cari nostri Sup.i Superstiti, del nostro Venerabile Padre: e perciò sempre venerata e sempre parlante e ispirante il bene e la virtù. Io qui, invecchiando. Ho cessato di pregare che mandino chi mi sostituisca, perchè ormai è inutile: in nessun'altra casa vorrebbero ricevere vecchi inutili e fastidiosi. / Vadano le cose come piace ai buoni Superiori. Dopo l'incendio, abbiamo rifatto una chiesuola provvisoria e casa. Abbiamo comprato il sito per la chiesa nuova, sito migliore: costò 47,500 scudi il sito, facendo debito. Tra poco cominceremo i lavori: la chiesa costerà certo 50 mila scudi. Dopo dell'incendio, piovve in qu[est]a città un diluvio di cattivi elementi; socialisti, anarchici, anticlericali: un diluvio di giornali pessimi locali e non-locali: italiani: e sono divorati da ogni persona. sesso ζ ed? [+unreadable word]

Il male è immenso: le conseguenze lagrimevoli in fatto di religione. Il nome italiano strascinato nel fango: perchè qui in America più che altrove, è un non-senso il socialismo e l'anticlericalismo: qui tutti hanno il loro benessere, e il giornalismo americano pensa ad altro. "Italiano e mala gente" qui suona lo stesso = Sì il caro D Bergeretti ci ha lasciati! R.I.P.

I Confratelli La risalutano di cuore: ed io mi raccomando alle sue preghiere.

suo dm [ζ devotissimo?] in X. [Cristo][,.]

Don Piperni

Excavations on the site were begun in 1912. The crypt was completed, blessed, and opened for worship on October 20, 1914.⁹⁴ The rest is history. Thus was SS. Peter and Paul re-born from its ashes, like the legendary phoenix, to begin its new meteoric flight.

IV. One Last Letter

Like Archbishop Michael Augustine Corrigan, who wanted a team of Salesians as missionaries to the Italian community at large in the New York area, so was Archbishop Riordan impressed with the work and the dedication of the Salesians, both in San Francisco and Oakland. At various times he asked them to broaden their sphere of activity to immigrants in need of pastoral care living out of the city, and even scattered far afield. In 1908 he made just such an offer, and this formed the object of the letter that follows.

⁹⁴ Piperni, *Mission Memoir*, p. 7.

26. Father Raphael Piperni to Father Michael Rua, San Francisco, June 27, 1908

He presents to Father Rua a proposal by Archbishop Riordan to take over a large and very needy Italian parish on a "peninsula," two hours by train from San Francisco.⁹⁵

San Francisco, Cal.
1600 Dupont Str.

June 27, 1908

To the Very Reverend Father Michael Rua,
Rector Major of the Salesian Society, Turin.
Very Reverend and Dear Father Rua,

I am writing this letter at His Grace, Archbishop P. Riordan's particular behest. He has [in his archdiocese] a large parish peopled entirely by Italian immigrants from the old soil. It is located out of the city, a two-hour ride by train, on a small peninsula on the Pacific coast. The Italians there are distributed in three centers, and both adults and young people are receiving no religious care whatsoever. The archbishop, of course, has had American priests in charge of the parish, since he had no Italian priests available, but they did not, or could not, have any success with the people. This must have been because they could not speak the language and were ignorant of Italian ways and customs. The present resident American priest has again and again petitioned the archbishop to be reassigned.

The Italian people in the area are farmers and ranchers, and in the middle of the three population centers there lies a small town inhabited by [English-speaking] Americans.

The archbishop is disconsolate and distressed at the sad [spiritual] condition of those people, and that is why he is turning to you. He begs you to send help so that those poor Italian immigrants may not give up the last vestiges of the faith to which they may still be clinging. The Protestants are making significant gains among them.

Two Salesian priests, endowed with pious zeal rather than knowledge, and a Salesian brother, would truly be godsend. His grace the archbishop has repeatedly said to me, "If Father Rua cannot send help, I am at a loss as to what to do for those Italian people."

He is ready to make any concession and to help in every possible way. It is a large territorial parish and extends over that whole small peninsula. It is situated in one of the most scenic spots in this part of the California coast. In your reply feel free to set down any condition you find desirable.

I should add that the archbishop would like to deal directly with Your Reverence and not with the provincial here. Off the record, the archbishop has little liking or esteem for the provincial. Our community here supports the proposal and hopes that it will be accepted.

Kissing your hand, I wish to convey Father Redahan's respectful good wishes.

⁹⁵ ASC, Letters to Rua, *FDR* 3,668 C1-2. All in Piperni's hand.

Your most humble son,
Father Piperni

[Notation in Father Piscetta's hand] Replied July 30, 1908. We cannot accept the proposal. This is not because we are unwilling to made sacrifices (Father Rua would make any sacrifice). The reason is absolute lack of personnel. Our present personnel resources are not sufficient even to maintain existing works. / Father Piscetta

Sa Francisco[,] Cal.
1600 Dupont Str.

Giugno 27. 1908

R[everen]d[issi]mo Sig[nor] Don Michele Rua.
Rettor M[aggior]e della Società Salesiana. Torino

Amatissimo e R[everen]d[issi]mo Sig[nor] Don Rua.

Le scrivo la presente per incarico specialissimo di Mgr. Arcivescovo P. Rordan. Egli ha fuori della città, a due ore di ferrovia, sulla costa del Pacifico, una vasta parrocchia (è una piccola penisola) tutta di puri Italiani, distribuiti in 3 centri: Italiani che sono realmente abbandonati, genitori e figli, in fatto di religione. Vi ha tenuto naturalmente parroci americani per mancanza di sacerdoti italiani, e non fecero o non poterono far niente di bene in mezzo a loro certam[ent]e per difetto di lingua e per non sapere usi e costumi italiani. Il Sac[erdote] americano che attualmente vi risiede, cerca continuamente all'Arcivescovo di essere rimosso.

In mezzo ai tre centri di Italiani, (de- / dicati all'agricoltura e all'industria del bestiame vaccino,) vi è una borgata di Americani. L'Arciv[escov]o è afflitto e mortificato per questo stato di cose e si rivolge supplichevole a V[ostra] S[ignori]a, implorando aiuto per quei poveri Italiani, affinché non perdano lo ultimo filo di fede che ancora rimane in loro. I Protestanti guadagnano campo fra loro.

Due Sacerd[ot]i Salesiani, che avessero più pietà che scienza, sarebbero una vera benedizione di Dio: e con essi un coadiutore. Mgr. Arciv[escov]o dice: "Se Don Rua non mi aiuta, non so che cosa fare per quegli Italiani."

Egli è disposto a fare tutte le concessioni possibili. La parrocchia, estesa, è territoriale: è tutta una piccola penisola, una delle più belle parti di questi contorni di California. In risposta, gli si scrivano pure le condizioni che si vogliono.

Dippiù egli vuol trattare direttamente con V[ostr]a S[ignori]a e non coll'Ispe[ss]ore, verso il quale (inter nos) non ha nè simpatia nè credito. Anche noi qui speriamo che sia accettata la proposta: e Le bacio le mani:

[Written on the slant on top of the page:] Le porgo i / rispettosi / saluti di Don / Redahan. / suo umil[issi]mo figlio[,] / Don Piperni

[Notation in Father Piscetta's hand:] Ris[osto] 30- 7- 08 / Non è possibile. Non si tratta di non poter senza / sacrificii (questi D[on] Rua farebbe) ma di

non potere assolutom[ente] / per scarsità di personale, omai insufficiente a / sostenere l'opere già assunte. / D[on] Piscetta

We know that nothing came of the proposal, but the letter's peculiar reticence will certainly set the wheels of the reader's imagination whirring. Where is this mysterious peninsula situated? Your guess is as good as mine. I just transcribed the document here as a parting shot before a brief closing paragraph.

Envoi and Conclusion

The above, perhaps over-extended, presentation of archival documents was meant to tell the story of the founding and early development of the Salesian work in the Bay Area. But at the same time it tells the story of the pioneers who gave their all to make the mission a success. This is primarily a story of total commitment and fidelity. For what is most striking about these letters is that they reveal the mettle, the courage, and the spirit of self-giving of the men who took up the challenge against incredible odds—of those even who are apt to be forgotten as secondary characters in the saga. In Appendix II below, I present a brief factual profile on *each of* the Salesians who gave their best years to establish and develop the work. But some of those pioneers have been altogether outstanding. They were not perfect human beings, to be sure. But they were, each in their own way, radically committed and totally available for the mission of furthering the kingdom of God in the spirit of Don Bosco. I would like to name some of them by way of envoi and conclusion:

Father Raphael Piperni, the ebullient preacher and tireless seeker of souls;

Father Charles Bernard Redahan, the creative youth minister and bold social worker;

Father Valentine Cassini, the saintly parish priest and self-effacing servant of the people;

Father Felix Andrew Bergeretti, the man of the Church and the multi-faceted animator;

Father Joseph Galli, the priest with "a heart" and the bearer of God's love to young and old.

These and other standard bearers beckon to us to follow in their footsteps.

**Appendix I. Salesian Personnel San Francisco-Oakland
1897-1910**

V-Pr = Vice-Provincial; Pr = Provincial; P = Priest; D = Deacon; S = Seminarian; LB = Lay Brother; L-Nov = Lay Novice
Italics = first appearance; < = from; > = to; **b**> = back to

SS.Peter-Paul SF (Mar 1897)	Corpus Christi SF	St. Joseph Oakland
1897		
<i>P Raphael Piperni</i> <i>P Valentine Cassini</i> <i>D Joseph Oreni</i> <i>LB Nicholas Imielinski</i> [Anselm Petazzi]		
1898		
P Raphael Piperni P Valentine Cassini <i>P Charles B. Redahan</i> [<Tur 2/17/98] D Joseph Oreni LB Nicholas Imielinski [Anselm Petazzi]	<i>[Corpus Christi, Apr. 1898]</i> [Cassini]	
1899		
P Raphael Piperni P Valentine Cassini P Charles Redahan D Joseph Oreni LB Nicholas Imielinski [L Nov] Anselm Petazzi	[Cassini]	
1900		
P Raphael Piperni P Charles Redahan D Joseph Oreni [ord P 12/8/900] LB Nicholas Imielinski [L Nov] Anselm Petazzi	P Valentine Cassini <i>D Daniel Mac- Carthy</i> [<Venezuela]	

SS.Peter-Paul SF	Corpus Christi SF	St. Joseph Oakland
1901		
P Raphael Piperni P Charles Redahan P Joseph Oreni [>Ven 6/1901] D Daniel MacCarthy LB Nicholas Imielinski	P Valentine Cassini <i>P Charles Buss</i> [<England] <i>LB Anselm Petazzi</i> [<SS. P & P]	
1902		
Vice-Prov of St. Philip Apostle created — Fr. Michael Borghino, V-Pr		
<i>V-Pr P Michael Borghino</i> [9/5/1902 < Bahía Blanca, Argentina] P Raphael Piperni P Charles Redahan D Daniel MacCarthy [back>Ven 9/02] LB Nicholas Imielinski <i>P Joseph Galli</i> [<Portugal] <i>S Joseph Simeoni</i> [<Italy Venice]	P Valentine Cassini> P Charles Buss LB Anselm Petazzi	<i>[St. Joseph's, Oakland, Sept. 11, 1902]</i> <i>P Felix Andrew Bergeretti</i> [<Ven] <i>P Emil Pavan</i> [<Brazil] <i>LB John Baptist Bovio</i> [<Italy Turin]
1903		
Province of St. Philip Apostle created — Fr. Michael Borghino, Pr		
P Raphael Piperni P Charles Redahan S Joseph Simeoni LB Nicholas Imielinski	Pr P Michael Borghino P Charles Buss LB Anselm Petazzi [P Cassini back>Argentina]	P Felix Andrew Bergeretti P Emil Pavan P Joseph Galli [<SS. P. & P.] LB John Baptist Bovio

SS.Peter-Paul SF	Corpus Christi SF	St. Joseph Oakland
1904		
P Raphael Piperni P Charles Redahan <i>P Thomas Deehan</i> [<Jamaica Ven] [>Transfiguration NY 7/4/1904] S Joseph Simeoni LB Nicholas Imielinski	Pr P Michael Borghino P Charles Buss LB Anselm Petazzi Pr P Borghino [>Troy,NY]	P Andrew Bergeretti P Emil Pavan P Joseph Galli LB John Bovio
1905		
P Raphael Piperni P Charles Redahan P Charles Buss LB Nicholas Imielinski S Simeoni [>Troy NY 3/5/1905]	P John Piovano LB Anselm Petazzi	P Andrew Bergeretti P Joseph Galli LB John Bovio
1906 [Earthquake & Fire]		
P Raphael Piperni P Charles Redahan P Charles Buss LB Nicholas Imielinski	P John Piovano <i>P Alfred Pauc</i> [<Troy NY] LB Anselm Petazzi	P Andrew Bergeretti P Joseph Galli LB John Bovio
1907		
P Raphael Piperni P Charles Redahan P Charles Buss LB Nicholas Imielinski <i>P Filomeno Ferrara</i> [<? - 1/16/1907]	P John Piovano P Alfred Pauc LB Anselm Petazzi [LB Petazzi >Troy NY]	P Andrew Bergeretti P Joseph Galli <i>P Henry Ferreira</i> [<Turin 1/16/1907] LB John Bovio
1908		
P Raphael Piperni P Charles Redahan P Alfred Pauc [<Corpus Christi] P Filomeno Ferrara LB Nicholas Imielinski	P Charles Buss P Joseph Simeoni [b from <Troy,NY]	P Andrew Bergeretti P Joseph Galli P Henry Ferreira LB John Bovio

SS.Peter-Paul SF	Corpus Christi SF	St. Joseph Oakland
1909 Pr Fr. Michael Foglino (Hawthorne, NY) [Borghino > Venezuela as Pr]		
P Raphael Piperni P Charles Redahan P Alfred Pauc P Filomeno Ferrara [b>East 7/15/09] LB Nicholas Imielinski	P Charles Buss P Joseph Simeoni	P Andrew Bergeretti P Joseph Galli P Henry Ferreira LB John Bovio [Bergeretti RIP 9/9/1909]
1910		
P Raphael Piperni P Charles Redahan P Alfred Pauc P Joseph Simeoni [<Corpus Christi] LB Nicholas Imielinski	P Charles Buss <i>P Paul Zolin</i> [<Hawthorne,NY]	P Joseph Galli P Henry Ferreira LB John Bovio

Appendix II : Biographical Sketches

Sources:

Eugenio Valentini, Amedeo Rodinò, *Dizionario Biografico dei Salesiani*. Torino: Ufficio Stampa Salesiano, 1969 [*Diz. Biogr.*]

Missionari Salesiani: I Rimpatriati e i Defunti al 31 Dicembre 1977 (CSSMS, Sussidi 6). Roma: SDB, 1978. [*CSSMS, Suss. 6*]

General Directory of the Salesian Society [Elenco Generale] and Murphy, *Database*: used as required; no reference given.

Additional sources as noted.

Bergeretti, Andrew (Felix Andrew), born July 15, 1846, diocese of Turin (Italy). He was ordained on June 3, 1871. Having opted for the missions, he was assigned by the Congregation of the Propagation of the Faith first to the diocese of Sydney, Australia, and subsequently to Sri Lanka (Ceylon, India), where he worked for eleven years and established many missionary stations. An architect of great ability, he built several churches, including the great cathedral in the capital city of Colombo. When the Sri Lanka missions were assigned to religious congregations, Father Bergeretti joined the work of the Holy Family of Bethlehem, and thereafter, with Father Anthony Belloni and Father Raphael Piperni, of the same congregation, joined the Salesian Society and made his profession on September 25, 1894. He worked in Venezuela from 1895 to 1901, as founder and director of the Salesian house of Valencia. He was decorated for his charitable work during an epidemic, and subsequently expelled by the same government. In 1902 he was sent by Father Michael Rua to San Francisco and assigned to St. Joseph Portuguese Church in Oakland, as director and pastor, serving in that capacity until his death on September 11, 1909. [*Diz. Biogr.*, s.v. Bergeretti; *CSSMS*, Suss. 6, p. 10; Ferreira, *St Joseph's, History*, pp. 18-19]

Borghino, Michael, born November 22, 1855, Vigone (Turin, Italy). He made his profession as a Salesian on September 15, 1877. He left for the missions in South America and was ordained in Montevideo (Uruguay) on February 26, 1879. After initial assignments to the schools of Villa Colón and Las Piedras (near Montevideo, Uruguay) he became director of the first Salesian foundation in Brazil, at Nichteroy (or Niteroi, near Ríó de Janeiro) and served in that capacity from 1883 to 1887. He was then recalled to Uruguay, and in 1890 assigned to Argentina, where he worked as pastor and director for some 12 years. It is from such a post in Bahía Blanca that he was assigned to the United States as vice-provincial (1902) and as provincial (1903-1908). Next he served as provincial in Venezuela. After this assignment he returned as director to Bahía Blanca

(Argentina), where he also served as visitor for the superior general. He died in Turin on November 14, 1929. [*Diz. Biogr.*, s.v., Borghino; *CSSMS*, Suss. 6, p. 15]

Bovio, John Baptist [Lay Brother], born May 4, 1872, Rodello (Alba, Italy). The reading of Salesian missionary literature and a pilgrimage to Rome fired him with the desire to become a religious and a missionary in the Salesian Society. He entered the novitiate in 1901, and made his first profession on August 1, 1902 at the (then) Missionary College of Valsalice (Turin). Later that same year, with Father Andrew Bergeretti, he was assigned to the mission of St. Joseph Portuguese Church in Oakland, where he remained until his premature death. He made his perpetual profession on January 31, 1906, and during his fifteen years at St. Joseph's he worked faithfully as cook, sexton, caretaker and house manager. Often under doctors' care, he finally suffered collapse of the lungs and died at Providence Hospital in Oakland on January 9, 1917. [Ferreira, *St. Joseph's, History*, p. 23; *CSSMS*, Suss. 6, p. 17]

Buss, Charles Louis, born April 4, 1873, West Battersea (London, Great Britain). Having entered as an aspirant in 1890, he was sent to Italy for his novitiate and made his profession as a Salesian at Foglizzo (Turin) in 1891. He spent the next few years at the office of the *Salesian Bulletin* in Turin, and on the English-language staff of the superior chapter. In that capacity, during the period of the San Francisco negotiations, he acted as Father Rua's secretary for the latter's correspondence with Archbishop Patrick Riordan. He was ordained in 1897, after which he returned to Battersea. In 1901 he was assigned to San Francisco. Father Charles Buss worked at Corpus Christi from 1901 to 1904, after which he served as assistant at SS. Peter and Paul from 1905 to 1907. In 1908 he returned to Corpus Christi as director and pastor. At this time he asked Father Rua for permission to return to England. We read in the minutes: "Father Foglino is writing to say that Father Charles Buss would like to return to London. He may do so. Father Simeoni might take his place as director [and pastor at Corpus Christi]." [Meeting of the Superior Chapter, September 26, 1909, *Minutes* II, p. 252, *FDR* 4,248 E9] However, he stayed on at Corpus Christ until 1913. Having taken ill, he returned to England in 1914. "Apparently an invalid [...]," he experienced a "miraculous cure from all his maladies immediately upon the news of his appointment as a military chaplain, early in the war." [Dickson, *Dynamics of Growth*, p. 198] The First World War over, he was director in Battersea, London, from 1919 to 1923; then he returned to the United States. He served as director and pastor at Holy Rosary, Port Chester (1923-1925) and at St. John's, Albany (1926-1934). After one-year stays at New Rochelle and at St. Patrick's in Los Angeles, we find him at St. Anthony's, Paterson, NJ, where he died on August 18, 1938. [*CSSMS*, Suss. 6 p. 18; *Obituary* by Father Modesto

Valenti in Archive of San Francisco Province; and William John Dickson, *The Dynamics of Growth [...]* (Roma: LAS, 1991), *passim*]

Cassini, Valentine, born April 10, 1851, diocese of Casale (Italy). As a young man he was enrolled at the Oratory as an apprentice and later as a student. He made his religious profession as a Salesian on September 22, 1871, and was ordained on October 2, 1875. As a newly ordained priest, he was detached from the working boys' community which he directed, and was chosen for the Salesian mission to South America. He left for Buenos Aires with the first missionary expedition of ten Salesians, and later served as director in Salesian schools in Argentina. He revisited Italy with Bishop John Cagliero in 1887 as Don Bosco lay dying. On March 11, 1888, Father Michael Rua placed him at the head of a band of six other missionaries bound for Uruguay. He revisited Italy again in 1896 to see his aged mother and for a period of convalescence. It was at this time that he was recruited for the San Francisco mission, led by Father Raphael Piperni. After one year at SS. Peter and Paul, he was assigned to Corpus Christi Church as curate and then as pastor. In these capacities he served from 1898 to 1903. Never well in health, in 1903 he returned to Argentina, where he worked in a Salesian School in Bahía Blanca and later as associate parish priest in Buenos Aires. He died there in 1922. [*Diz. Biogr.*, s.v. Cassini; *EBM* XI, p. 349-350; *CSSMS* Suss. 6, p. 23; *Ceria, Annali* I, p. 253; II, pp. 20, 589]

Deehan, Thomas, born October 27, 1874, Cloghan (Offaly, Ireland). After his novitiate at Burwash (Great Britain) he made his religious profession in 1896 and perpetual vows in 1899. For one year he served as secretary in the office of Father Michael Rua, and in 1901 he was assigned to the mission of Montego Bay (Jamaica, Province of Venezuela). He was ordained there on May 7, 1902. When that mission was closed, Father Deehan came to San Francisco in December, 1903. Archbishop Riordan requested Father Rua to re-assign him on grounds that neither his Italian nor his English could be understood. [Archbishop Riordan to Father Rua, December 16, 1903, *FDR* 3,806 B4] He left San Francisco for New York on July 4, 1904 with visiting Bishop James Costamagna and his secretary. There he served as associate pastor at Transfiguration Church. In 1907, Father Deehan came to the Superior Chapter's notice: "Father Thomas Deehan is asking for \$300 a year for his family or else to be released from his vows. The vice-secretary [Calogero Gusmano] is to reply: [Father Deehan] may go right ahead and look for a benevolent bishop. But while negotiations with the bishop are in progress, let him remain under obedience." [Meeting of the Superior Chapter, November 26, 1907, *Minutes* II, p. 164, *FDR* 4247 C5] Father Deehan remained at Transfiguration Church until 1911, then in September of that year he returned to California for reasons of health and worked at SS. Peter and Paul

Church in San Francisco with Sunday school and other youth activities until 1923. After one year at St. Francis School, Watsonville (CA), recently entrusted to the Salesians, as spiritual director, he was assigned to St. Joseph's, Oakland, where he served as associate from 1924 to 1934. After a couple years at SS. Peter and Paul, he was appointed director and pastor of St. Patrick Church in Los Angeles where he served from 1936 to 1940. For the years 1941-1945 we find him again at SS. Peter and Paul. In 1946 he retired to St. John Bosco School in Bellflower (CA) in poor health. Stricken with a cerebral hemorrhage on December 8, 1951, he lingered till he died on October 7, 1952. [Obituary by Father Alfred Broccardo in Archive of the San Francisco Province; *CSSMS*, Suss. 6, p. 37; Pellegrino, *SS. Peter and Paul, Chronicle*, passim; Ferreira, *St. Joseph's, History*, p. 21]

Ferrara, Filomeno, born November 5, 1874, San Biase (Italy). Already a priest, he entered the novitiate on June 19, 1905, at St. Joseph's Salesian College, Troy, New York, and made his religious profession on October 7, 1906. In January 1907, in triennial vows, he joined the SS. Peter and Paul staff as associate. In July 1909, he left SS. Peter and Paul for New York, re-assigned by Father Michael Foglino, newly appointed provincial. Father Ferrara died by drowning in Lake Mahopac, New York, on July 14, 1910. [Pellegrino, *SS. Peter and Paul, Chronicle*, pp. 4-5; Piperni, *Mission Memoir*, p. 7; Philip Pascucci, "Out of Our Past [...]" *Journal of Salesian Studies* 7:1 (1996), p. 139, note 18 and related text]

Ferreira, Henry, born March 30, 1881, Salvador da Lama (Barcelos, Braga, Portugal). Orphaned at the age of 8, from 1891 to 1897 he was a boarder at the Salesian school in Braga, whence he entered the novitiate in Lisbon. He made his religious profession as a Salesian on March 15 1899, Father Michael Rua presiding, and his perpetual vows on April 15, 1902. He was assigned as a teacher first in the novitiate and later in the Salesian vocational school in Lisbon. In 1904 he was called to Turin as a Portuguese-language editor of the Salesian Bulletin and as a secretary in Father Rua's office. While so engaged, he completed his theological studies, and was ordained on March 31, 1906. He was then assigned to St. Joseph Portuguese Church by Father Rua, and arrived in Oakland on January 16, 1907. At St. Joseph's he served as associate to a number of pastors in succession: Father Bergeretti (1902-1909), Father Joseph Galli (1909-1932), Father Louis B. Galli (1932-1938), Father Matthew Cravero (1938-1940), Father Guido J. Divina (1940-1943). During Father Galli's tenure, Father Ferreira served as pastor of Mary Help of Christians Church, established for the Portuguese in East Oakland (on East Ninth Street and 26th Avenue) from 1918-1923. He returned as associate there from 1946 to 1950. Apart from two brief stays at SS. Peter and Paul in San Francisco, he spend the rest of his days

at St. Francis School, Watsonville. He died on March 15, 1975. [Autobiographical Sketch in Ferreira, *St. Joseph's Hist.*, p. 20; *CSSMS*, Suss. 6, p. 43]

Fogolino, Michael, born December 22, 1858, Nizza Monferrato (Italy). He made his religious profession as a Salesian on September 27, 1876. He left for Uruguay with the fourth missionary expedition in 1879, and was ordained there on February 17, 1883. He then served as director of Salesian schools in Paysandú (Uruguay) and São Paulo (Brazil), before being appointed provincial in Venezuela in 1902, and in the United States in 1909. In 1912 he was relieved of office due to serious illness, and spent the rest of his life as a patient in Salesian nursing homes. He died at Piosasco (Turin, Italy) on October 26, 1938 [*Diz. Biogr.*, s.v. Fogolino; *CSSMS*, Suss. 6, p. 46.]

Galli, Joseph, born April 18, 1877, Varese (Milan, Italy). He entered the Oratory in Turin for his secondary studies and then the novitiate, and made his religious profession as a Salesian on October 3, 1893. He immediately made petition for the South American missions, but Father Rua assigned him to the house of Braga (Portugal), where personnel was urgently needed. He was very popular with the youngsters both in the classroom and on the playground. After spending eighteen months in military service back in Italy, he returned to Portugal and spent a year with the novices in Lisbon. After completing his theological studies, he was ordained by the Patriarch of Lisbon on March 15, 1902. Called to his mother's bedside for her last rites, he was about to return to Portugal, when Father Rua assigned him, with Father Bergeretti and Brother Bovio, to St. Joseph's in Oakland [Rua to Archbishop Riordan, August 5, 1902, Archive of the San Francisco Province, from Archive of the Archdiocese of San Francisco]. The Directory for 1903 places Father Galli at SS. Peter and Paul, but all sources (including the SS. Peter and Paul Chronicle) agree on Father Galli's Oakland assignment. Father Galli remained at St. Joseph's for nearly thirty years, first as associate to Father Bergeretti, then at the latter's death in September 1909, as director and pastor until 1932. Father Ferreira, who had been a pupil of his in Portugal, and was his coworker at St. Joseph's from 1907 on, gives this touching testimony: "He was a very popular and successful pastor, endearing himself to the various nationalities and to all classes of people. He was the founder of many of the parochial organizations, and always acted as their chaplain. He accomplished much with his untiring zeal." [Ferreira, *St. Joseph's Hist.* p. 20] From 1933 to 1941 he served as pastor, and for a time also as director, of SS. Peter and Paul in San Francisco, where "during the great economic depression with untiring zeal and energy, he brought to completion the work of his predecessor" by extinguishing the debt on the church. In 1942 Father Galli was transferred to Mary Help of Christians, in Watsonville, CA. as pastor where he

repeated the pastoral exploit of Oakland and San Francisco. Stricken with a heart attack, he died at the hospital in nearby Santa Cruz on May 19, 1952. [Obituary by Father George Salbeck; Ferreira, *St. Joseph's Hist.* pp. 19-20; *CSSMS*, Suss. 6, p. 50] [Varying ordination dates: *Obituary*, March 15; *Ferreira*, May 7]

Imielinski, Nicholas [Lay Brother], born December 4, 1875, Dombrowa Gornicza (Kielce, Poland). He made his religious profession as a Salesian on September 22, 1896. Unable to continue his priestly studies because of chronic illness, he asked to remain as a brother. In 1897 he joined the group led by Father Raphael Piperni. At SS. Peter and Paul, he served for a time as cook, and then as sacristan until his death on May 26, 1948. [Obituary by Father Joseph Costanzo in Archive of the San Francisco Province; *CSSMS*, Suss. 6, p. 61] Shortly after the group's arrival, Father Piperni wrote: "Our good confreres, Seminarian Oreni and the Polish brother are doing very well. The latter turned out to be a good cook." [Piperni to Rua, San Francisco, March 21, 1897, in *FDR* 3,347 C2]

Lazzero, Joseph, born May 10, 1837 in Pino (Turin, Italy), He was one of the co-founding members of the Salesian Society in 1859, and one of the first professed on May 15, 1862. After his ordination on June 10, 1865, he served as [vice-] director of the Oratory, and as councilor on the superior chapter from 1874 to 1898. He was the first to hold the office of vocational councilor, and in 1885, released from the director's post at the Oratory, he was put in charge of missionary correspondence. In 1893 while continuing as a member of the Superior Chapter, he was appointed provincial of the Salesian province of Mexico and Venezuela. Father Eugene Ceria [Eugene Ceria, *Profili dei Capitolari Salesiani* (Colle Don Bosco: LDC, 1951, pp. 163-172) states that in 1897 illness forced him into permanent retirement at Mathi (Turin). However, as the Salesian Directories show, he held the post of provincial of the Province of St. Luke for Venezuela, Northern Brazil and North America, until 1901. Hence from 1897 to 1901 the Salesian houses in the United States were under Father Lazzero (Venezuela). When the mother province was divided in 1902, the United States became an independent [vice-] province under Father Michael Borghino [Cf. above]. [*Diz. Biogr.*, s.v. Lazzero; *CSSMS*, Suss. 6, p. 66]

MacCarthy, Daniel, "came from Ireland, and was received [as an aspirant at Battersea, London] on Aug. 13th 1890." [William John Dickson, *The Dynamics of Growth*, p. 114]. He was transferred to San Francisco from Caracas, Venezuela, and is listed in the 1900 and 1901 Salesian General Directory as a member of the SS. Peter and Paul community. He is no longer listed after 1901. From a Rua-to-Cassini letter of October 9, 1900, it appears that he was assigned to Corpus Christi as an assistant to Father Cassini, but that his performance was not

satisfactory. [Letter No. 7, above] This is confirmed by Father Piperni who writes: "I dare not take a decision regarding McCarthy [*sic*] without express instructions from Your Reverence." [Letter No. 18, above] In September 1902 Deacon MacCarthy returned to Venezuela [Pellegrino, *SS. P. and Paul's Chron.* p. 2]. No further information is available.

Oreni, Joseph, born in 1874, Treviglio (Bergamo, Italy). He made his religious profession as a Salesian in the early 1890s and was a seminarian at Valsalice (Turin) in 1897, when he joined the group leaving for San Francisco. He was ordained a priest at SS. Peter and Paul on December 8, 1900. Shortly thereafter, in June 1901, he was transferred to Caracas (Venezuela) where he served as teacher, as parish priest, and as secretary to the provincial. He left the Congregation in 1915. [Pellegrino, *SS. P. and Paul's Chron.* pp. 1-2. Directories]

Pauc, Alfred, born December 21, 1874, Paris (France). Alfred became a Salesian in Paris at the age of twenty, making his religious profession on December 8, 1894. His early Salesian life as teacher and seminary student was lived in turbulent times. Those were the times of the Dreyfus Affair (1894-1906) and of the separation of Church and State (1901-1905). The Associations Law (1901), enforced with thoroughgoing anticlerical conviction by the ministry of Émile Combes, led to the closing of some 3,000 religious schools and the dissolution of religious communities involved in education. [Cf. Ploetz-Langer, *An Encyclopedia of World History* (NY: Houghton Mifflin, 1940), pp. 648-649] The Salesians of the Paris province were among 54 communities which applied for recognition and were denied. The Salesians of the Marseilles province went underground. The Salesian Directory carried no listing for French Salesian foundations until after World War I. Many French Salesians left France at this time or were dispersed. It was under these circumstances that Alfred Pauc, ordained to the priesthood on April 25, 1902, left France. After a brief stay in Turin (Italy), in 1903 he sailed for the United States. His first assignments were at Transfiguration Church in New York (1903-1904) and at St. Joseph Salesian College in Troy, NY (1905). In the same year he was assigned to San Francisco (in time for the great earthquake) and he is listed as associate pastor at Corpus Christi in the Directories for 1906-1907, and at SS. Peter and Paul for 1908-1913 in like capacity. Father Pauc, in his wryly self-deprecating fashion, would on occasion speak of his vocation crisis when he asked for dispensation from vows. The minutes of the Superior Chapter have the following: "Father Alfred Pauc of the community of San Francisco, California, is requesting dispensation from vows. Let Father [Paul] Albera encourage him to persevere." [Meeting of the superior Chapter, March 2, 1909, *Minutes* II, p. 222, *FDR* 4,248 C3] Apparently Father Albera, who as provincial in France had known him in earlier years, did encourage him! The SS. Peter and Paul chronicle notes that Father Pauc was added to

the staff on February 21, 1908 and left in August 1913 for New York City. In effect he was associate at Transfiguration Church (1914-1915) and at Mary Help of Christians (1916-1925). From New York Father Pauc returned to California in 1925, and (except for two brief periods at St. Francis School, Watsonville), from 1925 to 1948 he worked in various capacities at SS. Peter and Paul and at Corpus Christi, with a 10-year period at the Salesian Junior Seminary in Richmond in between. In 1949 he returned to Richmond in quasi-retirement, but still active through his sunset years. Stricken with illness in December 1963, he died at the hospital in Santa Cruz, CA, on March 13, 1964. [CSSMS, Suss 6, p. 87; Pellegrino, *SS. Peter and Paul, Chronicle*, pp. 4-5; *Obituary* by Father Michael Ribotta in Archive of the San Francisco Province]

Pavan, Emil, born April 7, 1868, Casale di Scodozia (Padova, Italy). At the age of 14, he emigrated with his father to São Paulo (Brazil), where they worked together as bricklayers. He attended the Salesian school in that city, and later applied to join the Salesians. He made his profession on January 18, 1892. After several assignments and completing his priestly studies, he was ordained on April 1, 1900. Not long thereafter he took sick and was sent back to Italy. In 1902 he was assigned to St. Joseph's, Oakland, as associate to Father Bergeretti. Because of illness, he again returned to Italy in 1904, and after much suffering died at the Cottolengo hospital in Turin on June 12, 1921. [CSSMS, Suss. 6, p. 87; Ferreira, *St. Joseph's, History*, p. 19. Ferreira adds: "He himself told me his life's story in Italy where I met him in 1904."]

Petazzi, Anselm [Lay Brother], born August 8, 1877, at Menaggio (Como, Italy). He emigrated to the United States in 1894 and lived in Boston, where he worked as a fruit vendor. He had known the Salesians in Italy, and having heard that Salesians were coming to the United States, he wrote to Father Rua who asked him to meet the party in New York. There he joined Father Piperni and confreres on their trip to San Francisco. (A different version of the story, according to which it was Archbishop Patrick Riordan who asked Petazzi to meet the arriving Salesians in New York, is given by Father Piperni in a letter to Father Rua [Piperni to Rua, March 2, 1897, *FDR* 3,790 D7. Cf. Lenti, *Founding*, pp. 25-26]) Anselm made his novitiate under Father Piperni and Father Cassini and his profession on August 15, 1900, his being the first Salesian profession in the United States. His first assignment as a Salesian was at Corpus Christi where he served from 1901 to 1907. The Directory then places him at St. Joseph's College, Troy, in 1908, and in 1909 at Columbus College, Hawthorne, New York, where he worked until transferred to Holy Rosary Church in Port Chester, New York, in 1919. At Holy Rosary he found the environment and the opportunities for a fruitful apostolate among teenagers and adults. Religious instruction and sacramental preparation were the ministries he loved best, even as his health

began to decline. He died in 1941. [*Obituary* by Father Dominic Cecere, with corrections in the hand of Father Eneas Tozzi, in Archive of the San Francisco Province; *CSSMS*, Suss. 6, p. 89]

Piovano, John [Charles], born May 25, 1863, diocese of Turin (Italy). He made his religious profession as a Salesian October 7, 1882. In 1884, as a seminarian, he was assigned to the Salesian province of Rosario (Argentina), where he was ordained on June 28, 1887. In 1904, according to the Directory, we find him at Transfiguration Church in New York as director and pastor. The *SS. Peter and Paul Chronicle* [p. 3] after July 4, 1904, notes: "Father M. Piovano has been assigned to this house; however, he remains but a short while because of illness." For the years 1905-1907, he is listed at Corpus Christi Church in San Francisco as director and pastor. He therefore succeeded Father Michael Borghino, who (as provincial) resided at Corpus Christ in 1903 and 1904 in that same capacity. Father Piovano was succeeded at Corpus Christi by Father Charles Buss in 1908. After some years in the Bolivia-Peru province, for the year 1922 he is listed in New Rochelle, NY, where he died in 1923. [*CSSMS*, Suss. 6, p. 90; Diamond, *Corpus Christi*]

Piperni, Raphael, was born July 26, 1842, Casacalenda (Capobasso, Italy). After completing his priestly studies in the diocesan seminary, he was ordained on April 6, 1867. After some priestly and teaching activity in his diocese, he attended the Missionary Institute of the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, and in 1876 as an apostolic missionary he joined Father Anthony Belloni at the orphanage the latter had founded in Bethlehem, which became known as the Work of the Holy Family. Between 1877 and 1889 he traveled throughout Europe and the Americas to raise funds for Father Belloni's charitable undertaking. When the Work of the Holy Family was taken over by the Salesian Society in 1889-1900, Father Piperni (with Father Belloni and Father Bergeretti) joined the Salesian Society and made his profession on October 8, 1892. As a Salesian Father Piperni (with Father Piccono and others) started the Salesian work in Mexico in 1892. It was from the orphanage of Puebla which he founded and directed, that Father Rua called him to Turin in late 1896 to lead the missionary group to San Francisco, where they arrived on March 12, 1897. [March 12: Piperni to Rua, March 15, 1897, *FDR* 3,790 E1; March 11: Piperni, *Mission Memoir*, 1914] His distinguished service as director and pastor at the Church of SS. Peter and Paul extended over a period of 30 years. In association with Father Charles Bernard Redahan and others, Father Piperni oversaw the reconstruction after the earthquake and fire of 1906. In 1924 he presided over the dedication of the new SS. Peter and Paul on Filbert Street. In 1927 Father Piperni retired to Richmond, CA, where he died on November 15, 1930. [Piperni, *Autobiographical Memoir* in Archive of the San Francisco Province; *Obituary* by Father Or-

estes Trichieri, *ibid.*; *Diz. Biogr.*, s.v. Piperni; *CSSMS*, Suss. 6, p. 90; Rufillo Uguccioni, *Un missionario di tre continenti: don Raffaele Piperni salesiano* (Lecture Cattoliche, No. 1160. Torino: SEI 1949); Pellegrino, *SS. P. and Paul's Chron.*]

Redahan, Charles Bernard, was born February 28, 1862, Corglass (Langford, Ireland). He was recruited in Ireland with other Irish young men for the missions by Archbishop John Joseph Lynch of Toronto, Canada. The group was placed at the Oratory with Don Bosco for their preparation. Charles Redahan (together with Francis O'Donnellan, Patrick O'Grady, and Patrick Diamond) became a Salesian instead. He made his religious profession on October 6, 1883 and was ordained on December 22, 1888. He served as financial administrator of the motherhouse until 1898, when Father Rua sent him to San Francisco where an English-speaking priest was needed for youth work. He worked indefatigably and with distinction at SS. Peter and Paul from 1898 to 1914. He immediately began an "Americanization" program and English classes for Italian immigrants, preparing many for citizenship. Under his direction, the religious instruction program flourished, with as many as 2,000 children enrolled. When a rumor spread in the city that Father Redahan was going to be removed, Archbishop Riordan lodged a protest with Father Rua. We have the latter's reply, assuring the archbishop that no such move was contemplated. [Cf. Letter No. 24, above] After the earthquake and fire of 1906, as financial administrator of SS. Peter and Paul, Father Redahan in conjunction with Father Raphael Piperni raised the funds and directed the reconstruction. In 1914 he was named director and pastor at Corpus Christi where he served until 1917. During his brief administration parish life flourished, and a social hall was built adjoining the church. After two years at Holy Rosary in Port Chester, NY, in 1919 he returned to Corpus Christi as director and pastor. He died there after a series of heart attacks on February 15, 1920, [*Obituary* by Father Emmanuel Manassero and *Redahan File* in Archive of the Salesian province of San Francisco; *CSSMS*, Suss. 6, p. 97]

Simeoni, Joseph, born October (November?) 7, 1881, Bussolengo (Verona, Italy). He made his religious profession as a Salesian on April 18, 1898. He received Father Rua's call to come to the United States, and he arrived in San Francisco on September 5, 1902, in the group led by Father Michael Borghino, newly appointed provincial. He was a seminarian brother in practical training at the time and remained part of the SS. Peter and Paul community for the years 1903 and 1904, while continuing his theological studies. On March 5, 1905 he transferred to St. Joseph's Salesian College, Troy, NY, to complete his theological studies. He was ordained in Albany, NY, on September 23, 1905, but remained at Troy before returning to San Francisco and being assigned to Corpus Christi as associate for 1908 and 1909. On August 10 of that same year, he was

reassigned to SS. Peter and Paul Church, replacing Father Filomeno Ferrara as associate pastor. After a couple of years, on June 10, 1912, Father Francis Garrassino (from Transfiguration Church, New York) was assigned to SS. Peter and Paul as associate pastor, thus freeing Father Simeoni (living at SS. Peter and Paul) for his far flung ministry of mission preaching. This was to be his life's work, a ministry which took him far afield by land and by sea (he was shipwrecked off the California coast) and for which he received official recognition. Except for one year at the Salesian College, Aptos, CA (1953), and in Richmond (1954-1957), SS. Peter and Paul remained his base of operation throughout. Active to the last, he died in San Francisco on December 10, 1967. [Obituary by Father Gabriel Zavattaro in Archive of the San Francisco Province; CSSMS, Suss. 6, p. 109; Pellegrino, SS. *Peter and Paul, Chronicle*, pp. 3-5 and passim]

Zolin, Paul, born July 21, 1879, Vicenza (Italy). He made his religious profession as a Salesian on October 3, 1898. He came to the United States and studied as a seminarian at St. Joseph's Salesian College, Troy, New York in 1906 and 1907. He was ordained in Albany, New York, on December 23, 1907. The Directory places him as a priest at Troy (1908) and at Columbus College, Hawthorne, New York (1909). Assigned to San Francisco, CA, he served as associate pastor at Corpus Christi (1910-1914). From 1914 to 1938 he was active in the New Rochelle province in various capacities, mostly as director and pastor: Hawthorne (1914-1918), Philadelphia (1919), Transfiguration, New York (1920), Mary Help of Christians, New York (1921-1937), New Rochelle (1938). In 1939 he was appointed secretary to the Apostolic Delegate in the Philippines. During World War II he was arrested by the Japanese for being an American citizen. Toward the end of the Japanese occupation of the Philippines just hours before prisoners were to be executed, they were rescued by American paratroopers. Father Zolin lived and worked in Adelaide, Australia, from 1946 until his death in Melbourne on August 21, 1963. [Pascucci, "Out of Our Past," *op. cit.*, p. 136; CSSMS, Suss. 6, p. 126]