

Latin America CALLS!

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A TREMENDOUS GAP TO CLOSE

Latin America Roundup

The Church in Peru educates some 150,000 children, or 8% of the grade school population. Less than half of these attend free schools.

Most frustrating to Catholic educators is inability through lack of funds to reach more of the poor. Encouragement came in April when the Peruvian House of Deputies voted to allocate \$600,000 to Catholic education. If the Senate passes the bill, as is expected, the grant will be used for projects ranging from a new school for teachers in Arequipa to an experimental parish school in a town high in the Andes.

A Redemptorist on leave from his post in Piaui, Brazil's poorest state, had a word of advice for personnel headed for Latin America.

Don't pack in trunks, says Fr. Nicholas Governale—use discarded oil drums. They are cheap in this country but worth more than the finest luggage in an area where good drinking water is scarce.

Businessmen from 100 leading Caracas firms have formed an association to improve conditions among Venezuela's poor. Each firm has pledged from 2% to 5% of annual net earnings to betterment in education, housing, nutrition and similar areas. Thus a firm with a million dollar profit would make an average annual donation of \$30,000.

"Our economies cannot prosper until we have better social conditions," asserts Ivan Lansberg, one of the organizers of the Association of Voluntary Dividends for the Community. "Theorizers who argue the reverse do not grasp the problem. If businessmen in Latin America hold to their notion, we shall soon be out of business."



Luckier than millions of others in Latin America, some 500 children of the poor attend the tuition-free colegio conducted by Religious of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Cali, Colombia.

BEST GOOD WILL ENVOYS ARE U.S. MISSIONERS

"American priests, Sisters and Brothers are the best goodwill ambassadors between our country and the United States," a recent visitor to Peru was told by Cardinal Landazuri, Archbishop of Lima.

The condition of the Church in Peru is good, said Cardinal Landazuri although religious personnel needs are far from

satisfied. In Lima alone 10 to 15 new parishes a year are needed to keep abreast of a population growth of 32,000 per month.

As a sign of the vitality of the Peruvian Church, the Cardinal pointed to the many joint undertakings of the Bishops in education and social reform. Thanks in part to the Catholic Information Center, operated in Lima by U.S. religious and PAVLA Volunteers, these activities are well known among the people, who regard the Church as true Mother of the poor.

The present high level of the Church's influence in Peru the Cardinal attributes in good part to U.S. priests and religious who responded when the need was desperate.

"When the Communists want to speak against you or your country, the people say, 'that is not true,' because they have seen what the American priests and religious have done," the Cardinal said.

Figures Show Lack of Parish Priests

Paraguay, with a population of 1,820,890 and an area larger than the state of California, has 379 priests—one for each 4800 inhabitants—according to figures recently published.

However 193 of Paraguay's priests are engaged in non-parochial work. The number of inhabitants per parish priest is 9790.

The continental average ratio of population per parish priest is well over 10,000.

ILLITERACY IN LATIN AMERICA

Out of 56 million children of grade and middle school age in Latin America, 27 million are without schools to attend.

Two rooms in a construction shack without sanitary facilities or water to drink serve as school for children of 500 families in a Cali, Colombia, housing project. The families average five children each.

The lack of schools is even more grave in Colombia's rural areas, where more than two-thirds of the population live. Illiteracy among the country people runs as high as 80%.

Rural Schools

A typical rural school is a one or two room structure without running water. A large clay bowl on the floor holds the drinking supply.

There is rarely more than one blackboard though lessons in the main consist in copying from the board what the teacher writes. In the copybook the pupil himself creates his only textbook.

Campesino children have little experience of play. A few rural schools have a small level area that could be used for games but they lack the simplest equipment—even a ball is a rarity. Moreover, the

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THOUGHT OF THE MONTH

"Persevere and increase in the name of the Lord! Our blessing extends to all who . . . embrace and advance the work of fraternity and solidarity in behalf of the beloved nations of Latin America."

—Pope Paul VI
February 1964

WHERE COMMUNISTS ARE STRONGEST SO IS THE CHURCH!

Difficulties facing the Mexican Church are grave and urgent, yet "in some respects the movement of the Church in Mexico is more advanced than in the United States," reports Father Edward Bertz, Papal Volunteer Director for the Diocese of La Crosse. "The ironic thing is that U.S. priests, religious and lay volunteers are playing an important role in this 'new look'."

Father Bertz is one of a team of PAVLA directors for midwestern dioceses who last month covered 2000 miles in a ten-day tour of Mexican dioceses in which Papal Volunteer projects are either operating or have been requested.

Glamour on a Barriada Street

A regular stop on the rounds of Mission Helpers of the Sacred Heart in Barcelona, Venezuela, is the women's jail. In most cases imprisonment for a mother means imprisonment for her children as well since there is no one else to care for them.

In this eight-year-old diocese on the Caribbean coast—with 12,000 inhabitants per priest—both religious and social ills are rife.

Since their arrival in 1962, the Sisters have acquainted themselves with the people and their misery through systematic house-to-house visitation under direction of Bishop Angel Perez Cisneros. The Bishop himself visits the men.

Classes in Jail

In the small frame house that serves as jail, the Mission Helpers found a swarm of women and children facing day after day with nothing to do. Classes in sewing for the women and religion for the children were joyfully received. Visual aids used in the children's classes so fascinated the women that they insisted on attending them too.

"The field in Barcelona is not an easy assignment," writes Sister Joan, Superior of the Mission Helpers in Venezuela. "Those who come to this area must be willing to spend a long time preparing the ground, sowing the seed and watering it. They may have to forego the satisfaction of evident results. The reaping may be for others."

"Nor should they look for 'glamour', unless it be the 'glamour' that comes from knowing that through them Christ walks up and down the unpaved streets of the barrios."

Purpose of the tour was a close range study of Church needs with a view to strategic placement of Volunteers for maximum effectiveness.

In face of a staggering shortage of priests and religious, Father Bertz explains, the Mexican Bishops, "wishing to extend the Church's doctrine and sacraments, are concentrating on training lay leaders in catechetical programs and in all areas of life such as hygiene, economics and community development. In one diocese of nearly 150,000 Catholics, there are only 15 priests. The Bishop took five of these priests and has them working exclusively in the Social Secretariat to develop lay leaders in credit unions, cooperatives and labor unions."

Goad to Communists

Communism is a major factor in Mexico, says Father Bertz. But "where the Communists are strongest, so is the Church! Where there are active Catholics, the Church is alive, vibrant, and incorporating the social encyclicals with the aid of the laity. Rather than concede to the positive steps the Church is taking, the Communists have stepped up their activities."

"In these areas, the Church is winning," Father Bertz declares. "But the road to victory comes at great sacrifice. If only Catholics in the U.S. would realize this!"

'NO VACANCY' FOR VAGRANT BOYS

"I left home four days ago to look for my mother, who went away with the two babies," the little boy in the back of the police van told the officer. "It is all the fault of my father, who is always drunk and beats us for nothing."

The story of Hector Perez is a history typical of the thousands of vagrant children who roam the streets of Santiago. Few have had more than a year or two in school since they are forced to earn their bread or find it in a refuse heap.

Hector is an exceptionally bright boy who managed to reach the 5th grade, when he was expelled for lacking a notebook. Surprisingly, his spirit has survived the primitive world of the vagrant.

He is one of the lucky 70 boys who have found shelter in the government operated *Comisaria de Menores*. For each of

the 70, hundreds have been turned away for lack of room.

According to one of the uniformed "model fathers" who have charge of the boys, the first group brought to the shelter in 1962, believing they had been thrown in prison, raised a chaotic uproar. In an effort to calm them, the officers drove the boys to a farm outside the city.

As they disembarked, the small "prisoners" were quiet and formally polite. "Then they disappeared like smoke," the officer recalls. "We were able to capture only ten, and we all had long faces. But in a day or two the others came back, one by one. Now each day we must tell many boys, 'We have no vacancy'."

A small classroom in the old building serves all the children in primary grades by rotating classes. The older boys attend neighboring schools. In the two years of operation no boy has failed a class.

Through cooperation of nearby industries, the boys are supplied with tools and taught manual skills. Some earn as much as \$30 per month. With this they buy clothing. Many send regular sums to their families. The remainder is placed in the bank.

Members of Catholic Action in Chile have organized a national drive to establish additional shelters in Santiago and other cities where small boys must forage for food and sleep in the streets.

A Commitment By Every Catholic For Latin America!

To meet their huge problems, Latin American bishops turned to the Holy See for aid from beyond the seas. Thus was born in Rome the Pontifical Commission for Latin America, with its Papal Program for Latin America.

The response in our country was the creation by the U.S. hierarchy of the Bishops' Committee for Latin America with Cardinal Cushing as its chairman, and the establishment of the Latin America Bureau to carry on the work of implementing the Papal Program in the United States. (Address: Latin America Bureau, NCWC, 1312 Massachusetts Ave. NW, Washington, D.C., 20005).

The Statement of Purpose issued May 26, 1962, by the Pontifical Commission for Latin America lists five major goals for its program:

1. Recruitment and training of clergy, religious and lay volunteers;
2. A religious education program to eliminate religious ignorance;
3. Strengthening of Catholic schools for the needy;
4. Adequate Catholic programs to fight suffering and poverty;
5. Press, radio and cinema to deliver the Catholic message.

Diocesan clergy from more than 40

dioceses are already in Latin America. A large number have gone as members of the St. James Society of Boston.

The Religious Communities

As an ideal, the Holy See has proposed that each religious community of men or women send to Latin America by 1970, 10 per cent of its membership as of 1960. According to their circumstances, the religious communities make great sacrifices to approach this ideal.

The Papal Volunteers

The Papal Volunteers (PAVLA) represent an umbrella movement which embraces both lay sending societies and diocesan teams of volunteers. Up to the present, 100 bishops have named PAVLA diocesan directors (who also serve as directors for Extension Volunteers). Some 280 men and women in more than 50 teams are at work in 11 Latin American countries.

The PAVLA National Secretariat is located at 1300 South Wabash Avenue, Chicago 5, Illinois.

The total aim is a commitment, small or great, by every Catholic citizen of our nation to give help to the Church in Latin America in this hour of its desperate need.

TALK . . . and ACT!

THIS
MONTH
PLEASE!

Circulate a VICTORY CARD to build the Latin America Victory Fund, directed by Cardinal Cushing. Give or gather eight quarters (\$2.00) this month and in future months! Use this coupon to join us!

H. E. Richard Cardinal Cushing, Latin America Bureau, NCWC
Box 6066, Washington, D. C. 20005
Dear Cardinal Cushing,

Recognizing the gravity of the Church's struggle in Latin America, I wish to join you in the fight. Enclosed please find \$_____ for this month's LATIN AMERICA VICTORY FUND.

Without any commitment binding the future, I propose to give or gather the money to fill _____ Victory Cards each month at \$2 per card. Please send me the necessary cards.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CIASP PROJECTS AID SOCIAL AWARENESS

Catholic students in the San Francisco Bay area are tutoring underprivileged children and working among the poor in slum areas.

What has this to do with Latin America? The students are members of the Conference on Inter-American Student Projects (CIASP) preparing for summer work in Mexico.

Authorized Agency

CIASP is authorized by the Mexican Bishops to coordinate Catholic student projects in that country. Work sites are selected in cooperation with the Mexican Hierarchy and are assigned to appropriate groups by the CIASP Secretariat in Davenport, Iowa. Projects include teaching, construction, agriculture, community planning, irrigation and hygiene.

An intensive five-day orientation course in Mexico City will mark the students' final preparation.

The lasting significance of the movement, say CIASP representatives, is the spur it provides to development of a social consciousness among the students. Said a spokesman:

"If the work stirs up an awareness of the poverty that exists in our hungry world, it will have achieved its purpose."

Norbertines Launch Many-Faceted Plan

In the Balconcillo district of Lima, Peru, three Norbertine priests from the United States have completed the first stages of a 10-year plan to provide integrated parochial care for some 8000 Catholics, most of whom are members of the new middle class. More than 500 families, however, are dwellers in recently built *corralones* (one-story row houses) or in huts of matting thrown up against the concrete *corralon* walls.

According to Father Julian Resch, O.Praem., Superior, the plan calls for erection within 10 years of a primary school with 28 classrooms, a 48-room secondary school, convent for Sisters, parish house, medical dispensary, social service center, church and gymnasium auditorium.

Only partially complete, the primary and secondary schools opened in April for some 300 students.

The primary school, for which land was granted by the government, is a free school for the parish. Both the Norbertine parish and the one from which it was separated in July of last year (Our



Confidence and understanding are exchanged as an Indian mother counsels her daughter on a street in La Paz, Bolivia's capital city. The family rests near the colorful outdoor marketplace.

WHAT LATIN AMERICA NEEDS: A PEDAGOGY OF ACTION

A "pedagogy of action" is required for the all-important task of re-educating the Latin American masses in religious doctrine and Catholic social teaching. So states Father Bernard Meyer, M.M., veteran of a lifetime in the missions.

As vehicle and focal point for his systematic training plan, Fr. Meyer employs a traditional devotion, the Family Meeting of the Pilgrim Virgin. The custom of bringing the Virgin to a different home each evening for community rosary is widespread in Latin America, especially in May.

"Social reform must involve a change in the multitudes who compose society," Father Meyer observes. "If the masses do not have some notion of the direction change should take, they become a mob, subject to whatever demagogue promises them most."

The confidence and sense of responsibility of the people have long been eroded by the

Lady of Guadalupe Parish) will use the secondary school. When completed it will accommodate 2000 students.

Fees from the inter-parochial secondary school will be used to employ teachers for children of the *corralones*. Night classes for adults and a summer school will be conducted by the Fathers.

Population of the rapidly growing parish is expected to reach 18,000 within five years.

"patron system," under which the landholders assumed both responsibility and control of the lives of their workers, Father Meyer explains.

Every Latin American parish should have a program to raise the level of family life and stress mutual help among neighbors from religious motives. Starting from "the basic Latin traditions—love of family and faith in God," such programs would lay the basis for concrete self-help by instilling a sense of personal and social responsibility.

Develop the Latins' Skills

U.S. lay and religious personnel in Latin America must never lose sight of the paramount importance of helping the Latin Americans to help themselves, Father Meyer emphasizes.

While a volunteer's term of service may be too short to train many experts, each can in some way share his skills. For example, a registered nurse can train practical nurses simply by encouraging the women to work with her.

Fr. Meyer has in preparation a manual with outlines of over 50 suggested discussions for neighborhood gatherings.

"A group devoted to some common interest that is close to them, like the family, will always have roots in life," says the Maryknoller. "The next step is to point them to the needs of other families."

Papal Volunteers Meet in Peru

The first retreat-convention held in Latin America for U.S. and Latin Papal Volunteers brought together in Lima some 30 delegates from groups in Bolivia, Chile and Peru. A primary aim of the meeting was evaluation of their programs, methods and accomplishments.

Conclusions were summarized and sent to the PAVLA National Secretariat and to diocesan directors in the United States. Highlights of the report were:

Psychological environment is more important to the Volunteer in the field than physical environment, though the latter must be adequate. Of prime importance is a clear cut job to do.

There is need for more Volunteers in secondary schools, universities and teacher training institutes. Apostolic possibilities here are tremendous.

Volunteer Replacements

For the sake of effective continuity in youth and social work projects, replacement Volunteers should arrive three months ahead of departure of those returning to the U.S.

Latin American Volunteers can greatly assist those from other countries in orientation through instruction in local customs and attitudes. They might also give advanced and refresher courses in Spanish or Portuguese.

Leadership Training

Formation of local leaders involves more than personal contact and a good example. Pre-training of Papal Volunteers in the home diocese should include a course in leadership techniques.

A Volunteer who has completed his term of service should feel a moral obligation to make the program and the needs in Latin America better known in the United States.

Convention delegates recommended 22 years as minimum age for service in Latin America, with a requirement of one year's previous working experience at home.

L. A. FAMILY INCOMES

Income per Month	Number of Families
\$ 55	20,000,000
\$ 200	18,000,000
\$ 800	1,200,000
\$1600	800,000

(UN Economic Commission)

"Go to
Latin
America;
help
OTHERS
Go!"



Washington 5, D.C.

Latin
America
Bureau
NCWC

CALLSI

Latin America

A basic economic weakness in Latin America is the distance which often separates natural resources. Markets likewise are seldom found near mining areas.

Huachipato, Chile, is an area which supplies coal. But limestone to make steel must be brought 900 miles' distance from an island in southern Chile. Iron ore comes a similar distance by boat from the north.

A steel plant at Pas del Rio, Colombia, is in the one spot on the continent where iron ore, coal, limestone and water can all be found. But difficult access to market offsets this advantage.

Illiteracy

(Continued from page 1)

fact that each group in the classroom must wait while others are being instructed leaves little time for recreation.

Though Colombia's problems in education are gigantic, some other Latin American countries face greater ones. Eleven have higher illiteracy rates than Colombia's, placed at 38% in a 1961 report by the United Nations.

"With an estimated 70 to 80 million of Latin America's population unable to read or write—and half of these more than 15 years old—there is a tremendous gap to overcome," wrote former U.S. Senator William Benton in 1961.

Bridging the Gap

More than one way of bridging the gap is being tried by the Church. With Radio Sutatenza in Colombia originated a now widespread movement for mass education by means of radio. Strong efforts are being made to in-

A DETERMINED BISHOP WINS HIS COMMUNITY

What one might regard as a long and tireless contest of wills reached a happy outcome last August when five Ursuline nuns from the Puebla, Mexico, community, opened a convent in the little town of Iguala, in the Chilapa Diocese. The event marked the end of a year under siege for the community.

A group of the nuns had spent their 1962 vacations teaching religion in Iguala. Each week thereafter brought one or more telephone calls from Bishop Cortez, urgently pleading with the Mother Provincial for a foundation. In December the calls accelerated: the Bishop had learned that a visit from the Assistant Superior General was imminent.

Assault Climaxed

The day of the superior's arrival, the Bishop's assault reached its climax with a call from Merici House in Mexico

crease the number of parochial schools.

A major handicap to Church and government efforts is the critical shortage of qualified teachers. In 15 Latin American countries, at least six of every ten grade school teachers possess no certification.

Among requests for personnel on file at the Latin America Bureau, requests for teachers are nearly as numerous as requests for priests.

Dr. Gabriel Betancur, Colombian educational expert with UNESCO, expresses the concern of Latin American leaders regarding the problem:

"Education is the soundest cure for poverty, discontent and every form of violent revolution. A country's most costly error is failure to educate its sons and daughters adequately."

City. Bishop Cortez was *there*, reported the agitated Prioress, and had assured her he would not leave without the promise of both the Provincial and the visitor to accompany him to Iguala next day.

Bouncing along in the Bishop's jeep, the two nuns were a captive audience. Capitulation was all but assured by the end of the journey.

Children Lacked Guidance

Iguala is a backward city, Bishop Cortez explained, yet an educational center of sorts. Children and young people from a wide surrounding area came to attend government schools in the city. They lived in rented rooms with no one to watch over and guide them. Iguala's own children lacked religious formation.

In short, the Bishop needed Sisters to conduct a hostel for young women and to train catechists to work with the grade school children.

Decision Difficult

Actually, the decision for the Ursulines was a difficult one since their community in Mexico is gravely short of personnel. They do not lack vocations, but many candidates are without a primary education and require four years' preparation before they can assimilate the training of the novitiate. This means expansion of quarters for novices and students that the Ursulines, primarily engaged in teaching the poor, find it difficult to finance.

Nevertheless, the determined Bishop and his forsaken children could not be refused.

Bishop Cortez has pledged the community at least 12 postulants within a year. The nuns wish they had his persuasiveness to turn on some potential donor of a novitiate.

Doctoral Program In L.A. Studies

A doctoral program announced by St. Louis University provides a new example of U.S. university cooperation with Latin America.

The program is designed to prepare North Americans to teach in Latin American universities and to supply qualified teachers of Latin American studies for U.S. institutions.

To qualify, a student must complete all doctoral requirements in the humanities or social sciences in addition to a program of Latin American area studies. He must demonstrate fluency in Spanish or Portuguese.

The University will assist in placements in Latin American institutions either as students, student-teachers completing doctoral research, or as fully qualified teachers.

Diocese Progresses Despite Poverty

San Pedro Sula, a diocese since 1963, is a region of rugged contrast. Though the see city lies in the Rio Ulua valley, the diocese embraces some of the most difficult mountain terrain in Honduras.

Without sizable industry the people subsist by primitive farming and cultivation of meagre cotton crops.

Vincentian Bishop Jose Garcia has accomplished much for his people despite their poverty. The 11-parish diocese boasts a minor seminary, 13 secondary and parochial schools, a night school and two hospitals, one of which is training nurses.

Radio broadcasts of religious instruction now lighten the load of the 32 priests who care for the 300,000 Catholics of the diocese.