

# DIOCESANS AT WORK IN LATIN AMERICA

By Father Paul Freemesser  
La Paz, Bolivia

It really seems that it should be easy to compose a brief and printable promotional piece to help the Courier-Journal publicize the May 25 diocesan-wide collection for our Latin American apostolates.

After all, I'm surrounded by human-interest items all day long in the streets of our parish; that's material enough for a book. And the Editor has promised me space and a big audience all over the Fr. Freemesser diocese.

But, truly, the subject of what we are doing for Bolivia and what this mission in the slums is doing for us, is almost too complex to put into words.

If I could fly home tonight and bring back a few hundred pictures it would take a 6-hour, illustrated lecture to unravel the impressions and report our experience adequately.

The most important impression we've gained is that people are the same the world over and all are lovable if we want to take the time and effort to understand and know them as human beings. The tremendous import of the Christian message is simply that love conquers all barriers but love comes at a high price—the gift of yourself open to all that God has made and done. This fact alone makes worthwhile what we're trying to do.

As men we are brothers in Christ and somehow we have to find a way to share that

love and concern responsibly with the whole world

Bolivia is a land of contrast: beauty and squalor, life and death, wealth and poverty, hope and despair, education and ignorance, progress and retardation, success and failure.

We've learned that if we look to the people to realize their destiny then we must accept them as equal in the States we educated the Negro, but we didn't accept him and so we failed ultimately in the role of real education—that men share the same dignity the world over and to survive men must live and cooperate with one another.

In Bolivia we have a long way to go. We need money, teachers, schools and idealism. But the people MUST be a part of this. Otherwise it's exploitation and what is worse, destruction of their dignity as human beings. Do we give out pity and superiority (a comma fault of Americans)? This is not what we need.

This nation needs political maturity and stability. Geographically it is divided by its regions and climates, the educated from the uneducated, the poor from the rich. It has great potential which could be realized if we would take the people for what they are and not for what we think they ought to be.

Right now religion for our poor Bolivians is little more than cultic superstition, but the Spirit is alive here in the people. The missionaries—the men and women involved—are full of zeal and understanding, trying to fan the spark of the Holy Spirit to a flame. We're searching for a way to bring Christ to His people—breaking down the old and building the new.

The welfare of 25 Sisters and priests from the Diocese serving in Bolivia, Brazil and Chile, will be the target of a first collection for the Latin American Missions of the Rochester Diocese on Sunday, May 25. Pictures and stories on this page, and an illustrated tabloid to be handed out at all churches on May 18, will set the scene of the three apostolates which need massive financial help.

I surely could amuse you with my experiences in the many months of working at the language school we all have attended in Cochabamba. Or I could rave about the holiday trip I enjoyed, just before Lent, when I visited Rio de Janeiro, Buenos Aires, and saw the Rochester Mercy Sisters during a several day stopover in Santiago.

But those items will come in a future article, perhaps. It seems more important right now to write seriously about our work.

Our Parish of St. Joseph the Worker is a heavily populated area (barrio) with 30,000 people living within an area of about 4 square miles. The majority of the people are immigrants from very small farming communities in the barren altiplano (the upper hills). When they move into the city of course they face the grave problem of unemployment. When they do get work the income is not enough to supply the basic necessities of life. There is a large percentage of artisans and workers in our parish

whose standard of living is very low.

One of the difficulties in the work is that the majority of the people use their original language, Aymara, and follow the customs and values of this aboriginal group. As simple, formerly rural people, they have a strong conservative attitude. This is a great obstacle to the modernizing of the country.

Because the needs of the basic human man are in evidence, we are involved in programs of social concern such as The Brick Co-op, aimed at giving work to the unemployed. We also have a Savings and Loan Cooperative.

In the beginning our program focused on community development, because we knew that the characteristics of the neighborhood demanded an upgrading of the level of daily life before we could offer any effective evangelization and sacramentalization. This work was done by contacting the leaders of the community.

Unfortunately, it is very difficult to continue these relations because of the chaos in which the community organization exists. They demonstrated a frank opposition. Because of this we decided to intensify our work with the youth and families until we can create a climate of better understanding and direction of the leaders of the neighborhood.

The characteristics of the whole parish are those often connected with very low income, with unemployment and all its consequences. We see tragic disintegration of family life since heads of families are not able to provide the common necessities, unable to maintain a home.

This failure often drives the men to abandon their families, many taking refuge in alcohol. Others walk the streets seeking but not finding work.

The families, having such a low income, are limited in the food they can buy, and thus many suffer deficiency in nutrition. This deficiency is of all degrees. The accumulation of all these things—low income, unemployment,

the break down of family life, alcoholism, malnutrition, have also facilitated promiscuity.

Finding solutions is very difficult because of the very limited sources of employment. The partial solution is managed by coordinating forces with existing institutions.

We have discovered how difficult it is to make these people aware of their prob-

lems and to awaken in them an interest in seeking solutions to these problems. Often these people, because of the constant frustration met in the passing of their lives, become beings without aspirations, assuming an attitude of conformism in the face of the situations.

The entire parish team—the priests, doctors, nurse, dentist, social worker and auxiliary personnel—direct

their forces to this task, coordinating functions and helping with their knowledge and experiences to better our services to the people.

The process of change is very slow and needs much force and perseverance to obtain favorable results. We have confidence that within a few years, we may come to the solution of some of these problems.

## Roster of Religious At Latin Missions

- SISTER CELESTE BERCHER**, S.S.J., daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Bercher of St. Mary's, Elmira. Former assignments: Nazareth Hall and St. Monica's, Rochester; St. Jerome's, East Rochester and St. Mary's, Auburn.
- SISTER SOPHIA BOVE**, S.S.J., daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Emil Bove of St. Patrick's, Seneca Falls. St. Agnes High School, Nazareth College and Nazareth Academy of Rochester.
- SISTER MARIE BARBARA BURGMAYER**, S.S.J., daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Karl Burgmaier of Our Lady of Lourdes, Utica. St. Monica, St. Anne, Most Precious Blood, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Nazareth Academy and Nazareth College, Rochester; St. Rose, Lima.
- SISTER GILMARTY CARDINAL**, S.S.J., daughter of Mr. and Mrs. J. Edward Cardinal of St. John the Evangelist, Greece. St. Mary's, Elmira; St. Mary's, Canandaigua; St. Anne's, Palmyra.
- SISTER JANET CAUFIELD**, R.S.M., daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. John E. Caufield of St. Monica's, Rochester. St. Louis, Pittsford; St. Vincent's, Corning; St. Mary's, Bath.
- SISTER MILDRED COUGHLIN**, S.S.J., daughter of Mr. and Mrs. James Coughlin of Immaculate Conception, Rochester; Nazareth Hall, Mother of Sorrows, St. Joseph's Villa, Rochester; St. Jerome's, East Rochester.
- FATHER PETER A. DECKMAN**, son of Mrs. Clarence W. Deckman and the late Mr. Deckman of Our Lady of Good Counsel, Rochester. Former assignment: St. Thomas More, Rochester.
- SISTER BRENDA DEWEY**, S.S.J., daughter of Mrs. Mary Estelle Dewey and the late Mr. James Dewey of Sacred Heart Cathedral. Former assignments: Nazareth Hall and St. Monica, Rochester; St. Jerome's, East Rochester; St. Mary's, Auburn; St. Rose, Lima.
- FATHER PAUL J. FREEMESSER**, son of the late Mr. and Mrs. George Freemesser of Blessed Sacrament, Rochester. Former assignments: St. Anthony's, St. John the Evangelist, Rochester; St. Alphonsus, Auburn.
- SISTER MARILYN GERSTNER**, R.S.M., daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Emmett Gerstner of Sacred Heart Cathedral. St. Thomas the Apostle, St. Cecilia, St. Salome's, Rochester; Holy Family, Auburn; St. John's, Clyde.
- FATHER EDWARD GOLDEN**, son of Mr. and Mrs. Francis Golden of St. Mary's, Elmira. Former assignments: Blessed Sacrament, Rochester; St. Stephen's, Geneva.
- SISTER JOAN THOMAS GUTBERLET**, S.S.J., daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Gutberlet of Holy Rosary, Rochester. St. Monica, St. Anne, St. Ambrose, Rochester; St. Mary's, Elmira; St. James-Waverly; St. John's, Greece.
- SISTER ROSE ALMA HAYES**, S.S.J., daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Hayes of St. Mary's, Elmira. Former

- assignments: Nazareth College, St. Agnes High School, Rochester; DeSales, Geneva.
- SISTER JANE KENRICK**, R.S.M., daughter of Mrs. James Kenrick and the late Mr. Kenrick of Immaculate Conception, Ithaca. Former assignments: St. John the Evangelist, Rochester; Good Shepherd, Henrietta.
- SISTER ANNICE KLOSTER**, S.S.J., daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Kloster of St. Peter's, Lowville. Nazareth College, St. Joseph's Villa, Rochester; St. Joseph's Hospital, Elmira.
- SISTER JANET KOHR**, R.S.M., daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jerome Korn of Sacred Heart Cathedral, St. Thomas the Apostle, Rochester; Our Lady of Lourdes, Elmira.
- SISTER ADELAIDE LAFERTY**, S.S.J., daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Leo Laferty of St. Augustine, Rochester. Corpus Christi, Sacred Heart, St. Monica, St. Bridget, Rochester.
- SISTER BARBARA McGRATH**, R.S.M., daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John McGrath of St. Margaret Mary's, Rochester. Former assignments: St. Cecilia, St. Helen's, Rochester.
- SISTER JOGUES MCKAY**, S.S.J., daughter of Mr. and Mrs. George McKay of St. Anne's, Rochester. Former assignment: Mt. Carmel High School, Auburn.
- SISTER BARBARA ORCZYK**, S.S.J., daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Orczyk of St. Stanislaus, Rochester. Former assignments: St. Stanislaus, Blessed Sacrament.
- SISTER MARIANA PILOT**, S.S.J., daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Pilot of St. Charles Borromeo, Rochester. Former assignments: St. Monica, St. Anne, Most Precious Blood, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Nazareth Academy, Nazareth College, St. Rose, Lima.
- SISTER MICHAEL MARYA POPOWICH**, S.S.J., daughter of Mr. Michael Popowich and the late Mrs. Popowich of Corpus Christi, Rochester. Former assignments: Immaculate Conception, Holy Childhood, St. Agnes High School, St. Agnes Convent School, Rochester; DeSales High School, Geneva.
- SISTER REGIS SARKIS**, S.S.J., daughter of Mrs. Frances Sarkis and the late Mr. Wady Sarkis of St. Nicholas, Rochester. Former assignments: St. Stanislaus, Blessed Sacrament, Rochester.
- SISTER LOYOLA SCHMITZ**, S.S.J., daughter of Mrs. Helen Schmitz and the late Mr. Henry Schmitz of St. Alphonsus, Auburn. Former assignments: Sacred Heart Cathedral, Mother of Sorrows, Rochester; St. Michael's, Penn Yan.
- SISTER MARGARET ANN SPELLECY**, R.S.M., daughter of Mrs. Francis Spellecy and the late Mr. Spellecy of St. Ann's, Hornell. Former assignments: St. Charles, St. Helen's, Rochester.



Latin American Indian women gather at a town market-place.

## First, You Must Know the Language

Sister Sophia, a Sister of St. Joseph, based in Bon Jesu parish of Uberlandia, Brazil, writes here about an experience every mission Sister and priest of the diocese has had: 12 long and hard weeks in language school. The St. Joseph Sisters attend training school in Anapolis, Brazil.

By SR. SOPHIA BOVE, S.S.J.

What does it mean to take a 12-week "crash" course in Portuguese? It means to sit in a small classroom with one or two other students for five hours, five days a week, and to repeat over and over the sounds, words, and phrases that we need to know in order to converse with Brazilians.

We have no mechanical aids—no earphones, tapes or recorders—just our ears and our voices and our memories. At the end of the course, when we have covered 18 units of grammatical principles and memorized dialogues, we still have achieved only a limited fluency that we hope will develop under the demands of everyday living.

But our classes have brought us close to more than just language. The 19 of us in the course—priests, Sisters, seminarians from Allegheny, Camden, Illinois, St. Louis, Graymont, etc.—have shared first impressions of Brazil together.

We have drawn close to our teachers, all of whom are young women about 17-24 years old. During our "intervals" and coffee breaks, informal conversation with them has taught us colloquial expressions as well as customs. Every one of them seem to have an "amoroso" (boy-friend) away studying, who:

weekend visits she anticipates with great fervor.

On Monday, we can always tell for whom "Tudo e azul" ("Everything is blue," a phrase of great joy) and for whom the weekend was "Abacaxi" ("Pineapple"), an expression which means "rotten," although the pineapple here is delicious.

We have visited at the homes of our teachers also, and one family entertained us royally with a dinner of fried chicken, spaghetti, pizza, onion souffle, meat patties and fruit puddings. (No, I'm not writing from Italy!)

Lectures on the Church past and present in Brazil, Masonry, Spiritism, the family, economic problems, and on the history and geography of this land have given us facts valuable for our apostolate, but the totality of living here gives us a far greater appreciation of the nuances of this complex culture than our necessary but incomplete classroom knowledge could ever give.

The society in which we will work is undergoing a painful transition from rural, agricultural to semi-urban and industrial, a transformation which the U.S. achieved many years ago. But at the same time, Brazil faces the same questioning of traditional values and concepts of authority, family and the Church, that goes on all over the world today—nearly 80% of the population here is under 25.

The Church itself though many leaders are filled with zeal, is miserably understaffed. There are only 10,000 priests here, a third of them foreign, for the 30-million

nominal Catholics. As elsewhere in the world, priestly vocations are declining, a dangerous situation anywhere, but here, catastrophic.

However, the foreign missionary who is so greatly needed sometimes finds himself unhappily classified as an "intruder." This is especially true for Americans, since the Americans' economic presence here is a sore blister on Brazilian national pride.

Padre Fernando Melo, Coordinator of Foreign Missions in Brazil, talked to us recently about this problem. The Bishops of Brazil faced it objectively at their meeting last July, and came up with these conclusions: foreign missionaries are necessary and desired in Brazil because:

1. The human race is one, and its needs transcend national boundaries.
2. Foreign presence can very well be an enrichment of national culture, not necessarily a distortion of its true ethos.
3. It is obviously necessary for Brazil to have help in certain regions and areas of activity.
4. The Church is missionary by nature. Padre Melo considers our presence here as a "blood transfusion," which will one day enable the patient to live again on his own strength.

Serious thoughts? Yes. But interwoven with these days of steady Portuguese and thought-provoking lectures are the picnics in the rain, guitar Masses on Wednesdays with other students, mail-calling, singing around a bonfire on our "festa" weekend, buying

presents for our "secret friend" for a class party, dashing around in the dark looking for candles when the electricity goes out, visiting the homes of the Brazilian Sisters of Allegheny whom we have come to know and love—living the lines of our favorite song today: "Today is my moment and now is my story—I'll laugh and I'll cry and I'll sing!"

### Bishop Asks: What Shall I Tell the Pope??

VICTORIA, B.C. — (RNS) — Questionnaires, parish meetings and a call-in radio program are being used here by Bishop Remi De Roo to read the pulse of his diocese.

Bishop De Roo participated in a six-hour radio program in which the views of the listening audience were recorded. Spot announcements and newspaper advertisements informed inactive Catholics that their views also were being sought.

The largest reaction came in response to a questionnaire. Some 7,070 persons responded in this survey which included this open-ended question: "What would you like me to tell the Pope about our diocese in my report?"

### CATHOLICS TO USE PROTESTANT BIBLES

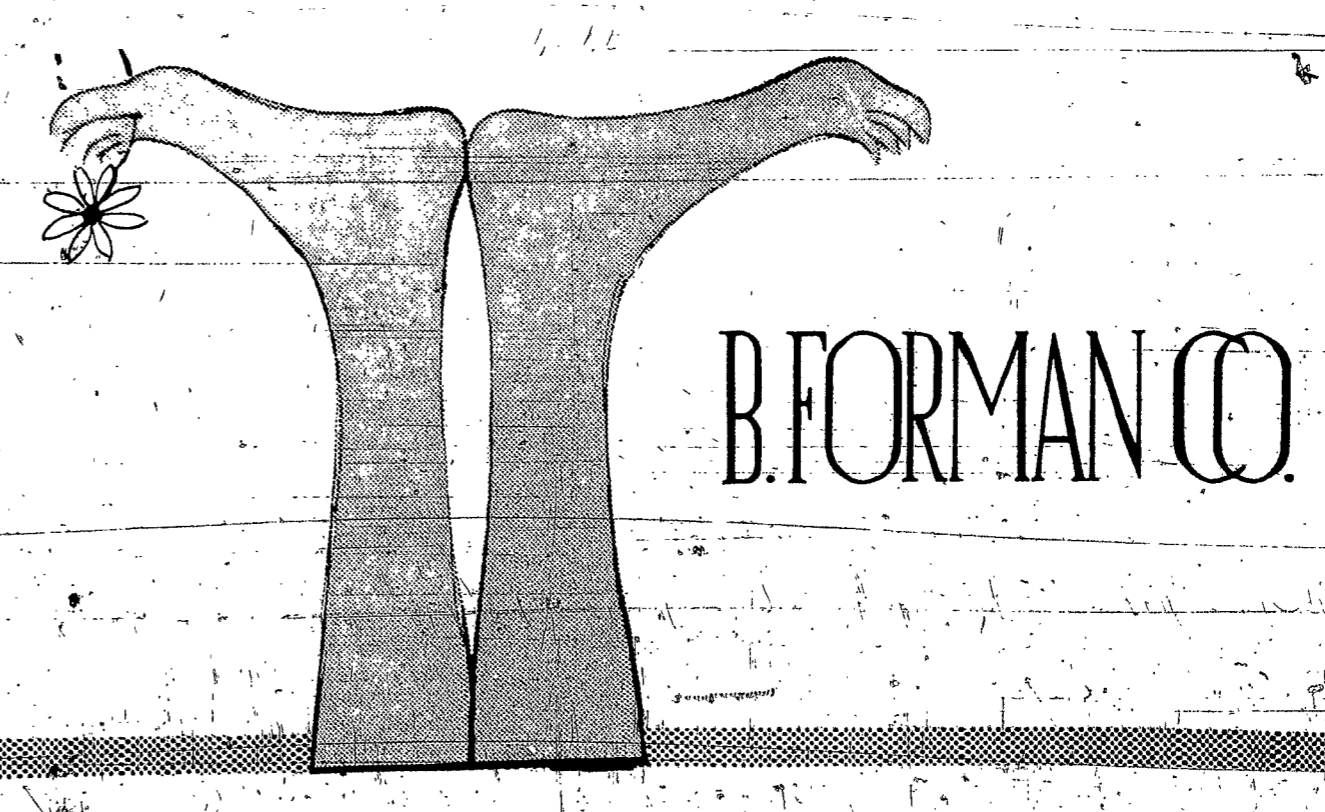
Sao Paulo, Brazil — (NC) — The nation's predominantly Roman Catholic population has been permitted to use the Protestant's new "Almeida Bible."

Why go without? The shoes you've had your eye on are here! **SHOE CLEARANCE**

EVINS • LEVINE • GELLER • PALTER-DELISO  
DELISO DEBS • AMALFI • JERROLD • GAMINS • JACK ROGERS  
OLDMAINE • CAPEZIOS • DEMURA • ETC., ETC.

were 12.00 to 47.00  
**NOW 8.90 to 34.90**

Shoe Salon, Floor One, Midtown and Pittsford; Fat Cat, Floor Three, Midtown; Culver-Ridge and Pittsford



B. FORMAN CO.

## Nun Expelled By Ni...

Philadelphia — (NC) who brought more than 150 African American victims with that nation recently Biafra."

Sister Mary Winifred, who had served for years as a missionary in the Biafra area, had been expelled by the Biafran government after she returned to relief supplies from States.

Sister Winifred, residence at her home in the suburbs of Philadelphia, was accused of belonging to the "Pro-Life" committee.

"No," Sister Winifred the official, "I was Biafra—immediately—but I've brought of Nigeria than those in Biafra."

Sister Winifred—led several hundred over difficult roads from the front lines areas where of needy refugees was then told: "You ing and asking others success of Biafra."

"I never said a

## Fo...

New York — (RNS) population of Biafra nutritional tightrope most Doran, C.S.S. view here. Relief shipments reduced said, but any interest to widespread starvation.

The Holy Ghost of the chief organs of the medical shipments Biafrans, was cited in a report based on observations in Biafra.

## WI...

(Continued)

canonization only tury. Pope Urban the whole invest...

But what of canonized or venerated? The same even if they had canonized they created as saints if generated from This came to be canonization."

Pope Benedict century, maintaining formal canonization involves infallibility zation does not. popes learn from vestigation that "equivalently" can deserve such veneration "withdraw him Have we so soon happened in the men" in the ear...

This is where comes in. He and "dubious" persons ancient persons there is little or mentation. (Only from the 13th ce are from between fifth centuries.)

St. Christopher ated as a martyr of his identity, he and circumstance entwined with le, absolutely nothing his biography.

Now what atit towards these "far as I can get news despatches,

1. These may saints on a local feastsdays may still their Masses, Th cated to St. Ch continue to observe this at least for

2. They still n private devotion, tice.

## Non-Christian Catholic S...

Birmingham, E Non-Christian A Roman Catholic trial Midlands of vitation of Arch rick Dwyer of B

The archbishop teers who can t children their o schools. In this integration will the religious co grants are respect