

Former superior of Jesuits dies

ROME (CNS) — Father Pedro Arrupe, superior general of the Society of Jesus from 1965 to 1983, died at the Jesuits' Rome headquarters Feb. 5 following a long illness.

The 83-year-old priest, who survived the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, Japan, had a severe stroke in August 1981. He also suffered from a serious liver problem.

Jesuit Father Patrick Burns, president of the 4,700-member U.S. Jesuit Conference, said Father Arrupe had been "the right man in the right job at the right time" during his tenure as head of the society.

Father Arrupe was elected the 28th superior general of the Jesuits on May 23, 1965, at the age of 57.

After his stroke, he sought Pope John Paul II's permission to resign as superior general of the world's largest order of priests and brothers, but the pope asked him to postpone the resignation. In October

1981, the pope named Jesuit Father Paolo Dezza, an Italian, to head the society until a new superior could be elected.

Father Arrupe resigned Sept. 3, 1983, at the 33rd general congregation of the Jesuits. That congregation elected his successor and the current superior, Father Peter-Hans Kolvenbach.

During his early years as superior general, the Spanish Jesuit faced rebellion within the order. Dutch Jesuits raised a challenge to church authority in the fall of 1968 when Jesuit Father Josef Vrijburg, a chaplain at the University of Amsterdam, announced that he intended to marry.

When Father Arrupe, in response, forbade the priest to exercise his ministry, two other Jesuit chaplains at the university supported the dissident. One of them called publicly for an end to obligatory celibacy.

In April 1969, Father Arrupe dismissed the two chaplains from the order. Later,

the Jesuits' Dutch provincial and the administrator for northern Europe left the order in protest over the dismissals.

In a February 1972 letter to the order, Father Arrupe called for increased loyalty to the pope and took to task Jesuits who had damaged "the public image of the Holy Father."

In 1974-75 he called the Jesuits' seventh extraordinary congregation to address major issues facing the order.

In a speech to the general congregation, meeting in Rome, Father Arrupe rebuked some Jesuits for spreading false gossip about himself, Pope Paul and officials of the church's central administration.

In a December 1980 letter to Jesuit superiors in Latin America, where a serious church debate over liberation theology and Christian uses of Marxist analysis had been raging for more than a decade, Father Arrupe said some elements of Marxist social



Don Doll, SJ

Father Pedro Arrupe, SJ

analysis were acceptable to Christians, but the major principles of Marxism were anti-Christian.

Like St. Ignatius of Loyola, the founder and first general of the Jesuits, Father Arrupe was a Spanish Basque.

He was born Nov. 14, 1907, in the industrial city of Bilbao in northern Spain.

In 1922, after attending secondary school in Bilbao, Father Arrupe entered the University of Madrid to study medicine. There he joined the St. Vincent de Paul Society and spent many hours visiting the poor.

When he was 20 years old, Father Arrupe entered the Jesuit novitiate at Loyola, near the birthplace of St. Ignatius.

He continued his studies in Belgium and then in the Netherlands, where he was ordained Oct. 30, 1936.

After ordination, Father Arrupe went to the United States to finish his theological and medical courses.

In September 1938, Father Arrupe was assigned to the Jesuit missions in Japan. He learned Japanese and became superior of the Jesuit novitiate in Hiroshima.

Father Arrupe was at the novitiate Aug. 6, 1945, when the United States dropped the atomic bomb about four miles away.

"It was 8:15 when a magnesium flash rent the blue sky and a dull continuing roar — more like a cataract than a bomb — was heard with frightening force," he later wrote. "It was like an earthquake."

Father Arrupe led the first rescue party into the devastated city and turned the novitiate into an emergency hospital for survivors.

"With iodine, aspirin, fruit, salts and bicarbonate, the only things I could find, I went out to aid the victims who were waiting," he recalled.

Like the Japanese, Father Arrupe said he did not know what had hit the city. The explosion and the radiation sickness that followed were shocking, he said.

Priest-president faces deep problems

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (CNS) — Haiti's priest-president, Father Jean-Bertrand Aristide, began his new political role facing deep economic and political problems in his impoverished country.

The president opened his term by offering to slash his own salary and demanding the retirement of several top army officers.

Father Aristide is an advocate of liberation theology and has often clashed with the country's bishops. Expelled from the Salesian order because of his political activity, he now faces major challenges in the

Western Hemisphere's poorest nation.

Haiti's per capita annual income is only around \$375, most people are illiterate and the soil is largely eroded.

He also faces entrenched corruption in the public and private sectors, and sometimes violent opposition from associates of former dictators Francois "Papa Doc" Duvalier and his son, Jean-Claude "Baby Doc" Duvalier.

The younger Duvalier was toppled in a popular uprising and fled Haiti before dawn on Feb. 7, 1986.

In one of his first official acts, Father

Aristide presided at a Feb. 8 ceremony at Fort Dimanche, a former army post where political prisoners were held during the repressive 29-year Duvalier family dictatorship.

The fort, a hated symbol of the Duvalierists, will be turned into a national museum.

Thousands of Haitians sang, danced and celebrated into the night, jamming the capital city's streets hours after the slender 37-year-old priest was inaugurated Feb. 7.

The mood was festive despite a Duvalierist coup attempt in January and scattered violence that included an arson attack at an orphanage Father Aristide founded.

In his speech, the new president called on the army commander to retire most of his top officers. He identified six generals and a colonel he wanted out, and named seven other officers he would like promoted to replace them in the top army posts.

The 37-year-old cleric-politician acknowledged that the constitution gave him no right to order any changes in the army. Instead, he pleaded with army commander Gen. Herard Abraham to implement the proposed changes.

Most of the officers Aristide named for retirement are closely identified with the Duvalier family dictatorship or with subsequent military regimes that have condoned Duvalierist terrorism.

At least one was widely suspected of being party to a Jan. 7 abortive coup attempt by former members of the Tontons Macoutes, a feared civilian militia that terrorized the population during the Duvalier regime.

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