

## **The Diary of the Postulator General, Fr. Luigi Contegiacomo, C.P.P.S.**

From the past January 1951 until the Canonization, June 12, 1954 and beyond - there was a great deal of continuous work which, with the help of God and of St. Gaspar, I was able to bring to fulfillment without experiencing any damage to my health. I had, just a short time before this, undergone a serious illness. The activity which was executed can be summed up in the following phases:

1. Cause of Canonization
2. Life of St. Gaspar by G. De Libero
3. Preparation for the Canonization
4. The Canonization
5. The Film-documentary: "*Sotto il Segno Vermiglio*".

### 1. Cause of Canonization.

The principal things were the following: to have the "*Informatio*" printed; I bring it to the Promoter General and on February 18<sup>th</sup>, I receive the *Animadversiones* from the Promoter General; on February 19<sup>th</sup>, I bring it to the Advocate in order to get a *Responsio* to it. On the 23<sup>rd</sup> I already have the 1<sup>st</sup> part, on the 25<sup>th</sup> the 2<sup>nd</sup> part and on the 26<sup>th</sup> the 3<sup>rd</sup> part.

We worked at a much faster pace in order to be ready for the next preparatory meeting. On March 1<sup>st</sup> the *Responsio* is printed completely; the work of revision follows and then the binding of it etc. On March 6<sup>th</sup> I hand over the *Positio super miraculis* to the Promoter General etc. On March 30<sup>th</sup> that preparatory meeting was held in the Vatican building, dealing with the miracles of B. Gaspar, B. Dominic Savio and B. Giuseppe Pignatelli. The outcome was favorable and the Promoter General, when leaving the Vatican building, said to me that he would soon be giving me the *Novissimae Animadversiones*. In fact, these were available on April 8<sup>th</sup>. On April 10<sup>th</sup>, something shocking in the Congregation of Rites. The Holy Father had previously informed them that he would be available for the general meeting on the 1<sup>st</sup> of May and therefore, the *Tuto* could be issued for the 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> of May and by the 15<sup>th</sup>, the Consistory (this was assured for the two Blesseds whose causes were more advanced than ours: Chanel and Maria Crocifissa di Rosa). But then to these two, in the meantime, were added the three mentioned before, among whom was our Blessed, since their causes would be ready for the general meeting by the first day of May.

Then, Msgr. Carinci and Msgr. Dante said that news arrived from the Vatican saying that the Holy Father now was no longer granting the general meeting nor anything else, postponing everything, perhaps, until October. They said that the reason for this was the Holy Father's health. But that did not appear to be true since precisely in these last few days we had gotten sufficient official news that he was feeling much better than before. Msgr. Natucci, the Promoter General, was dismayed and felt that it may have been a machination of someone or other. At any rate, as soon as that news

broke, along with the Moderator General and Fr. Bianchini, the Postulator for Savio, we went to see Card. Cicognani, the Prefect of the Congregation of Rites. We got an evasive answer.

On April 11<sup>th</sup>, along with our Moderator General, with Fr. Toni, the Jesuit Postulator and Fr. Bianchini, the Salesian Postulator, we went to talk to the Secretary of State, Msgr. Dell'Acqua and Mgrs. Grano, to make our arguments known and to try to get some light on what could be done. In order to understand our concerns and the reasons for our actions, intended to obtain that general meeting for May first, it is necessary to keep in mind that already we had given information from the Vatican that there would be a canonization in June and that if the Holy Father was not well, he would in a single ceremony canonize together the five Blesseds mentioned before. The Moderator General had sent this message to America to give those who wanted to come the opportunity and the time to make reservations for air or sea travel plans. There were other reasons, likewise, among which was our upcoming General Chapter and that made the month of June a most opportune time for us. In addition, all of the programs in honor of the canonization were set up for the month of June. Lastly, if this date were to be lost, then there would be complete uncertainty since the Pope's condition of health was so unstable. Similar and even stronger arguments were proposed by the other Postulators.

The replies of the Secretariat of State were equally vague, but still one could see that perhaps something could be worked out and that the decision to not have the general meeting did not depend on the personal attendance of the Holy Father, but on the Congregation of Rites or of the Secretariat, either one or the other. On April 12<sup>th</sup> (Monday of Holy Week), together with the Moderator General, Fr. Toni and Fr. Bianchini, we went to see the Promoter General, Mons. Natucci, who advised us to draw up a petition to the Holy Father, which we proceeded to do, and we also spoke to Fr. Leiber, S.J. who is frequently with the Holy Father as well as to Sister Pasqualina. This contact was taken care of by our Father General who knows both of those people. On the 14<sup>th</sup> (Wednesday of Holy Week) Msgr. Ferraro informed us that Msgr. Montini (Pro-Secretary of State) had telephoned the Congregation of Rites that the Holy Father in no way has any difficulty in attending that general meeting and that the date should be decided on by that Congregation. One now sees that our actions had achieved their end. On the evening of Good Friday (April 16<sup>th</sup>) Msgr. Dante himself telephoned me that the general meeting was set for May 4<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> for the Consistory. A similar telephone call was made to Piazza dei Crociferi by the Msgr. Secretary of Rites Carinci. Thus, with the help of God, this difficulty was overcome.

In the meantime, I had printed the *Novissimae* and the *Responsio*, given to me by the lawyer on April 14<sup>th</sup> and by April 21<sup>st</sup>. The *Novissima Positio* was in the hands of the Congregation for distribution to the Consultors. The Decrees for the approbation of the miracles were being prepared and Msgr. Carinci supplied me and the Moderator General with a rough draft of them. I suggested a few corrections. While waiting for the

general meeting, I completed the composition of the *Compendium* of the life of the Blessed for the Consistory. I had begun that already on April 8<sup>th</sup>. I had it translated into Latin by Fr. Egger of the Secretariat of Briefs and then had it printed. Before this, I also did the *Positio super Tuto*. Finally, on May 4<sup>th</sup>, the general meeting was held *coram SS.mo* with the intervention of nine Cardinals. This was the first time that the Pope attended a meeting after his recent grave illness. The miracles for the Canonization of the aforementioned five Blesseds were approved. By way of exception, the Decree was issued with the date of that day, in such a way that the *Positio super Tuto* could be readied immediately. In fact, on the day of May 8<sup>th</sup> the Decree of the *Tuto* came out without having been preceded by a meeting and this was another exception. On the day of May 20<sup>th</sup>, the Consistory was held (all three were included in the one) in the Vatican and the date for the Canonization was established, that is, June 12<sup>th</sup> in St. Peter's square and on the following day, the 13<sup>th</sup>, in the papal chapel in the basilica.

## 2. The Life of St. Gaspar written by Giuseppe De Libero:

This work turned out to be for me the greatest torment. I had already reviewed it twice, made an infinite number of observations, sent it back to the author for a definitive revision (end of September up to the 26<sup>th</sup> of October '53). He refused different sections, paying attention only to particular observations and completely of the general ones. On February 6<sup>th</sup>, gloriously and triumphantly, he sent me the first half of the biography, revised and corrected. On the day following that, he sent the second half along with a letter in which he was asking for 600,000 lire for his work. Then, after receiving my return letter, he was content with 460,000 lire. On February 14<sup>th</sup>, I began the third revision of De Libero's work. Applying myself indefatigably and with the greatest possible attention, I brought out quite a number of important corrections and I added quite a few particulars. My work was completed on March 24<sup>th</sup> and on the 27<sup>th</sup> I went to see De Libero and I presented him with all the corrections and revisions that I had made, which he would have no difficulty in fully approving. On the 31<sup>st</sup>, I sent a copy to the printers in Cesena, after a toilsome application of the scissors and some glue to give it proper arrangement and order. By April 22<sup>nd</sup> the work of proofreading the galleys, which also involved the services of Fr. Giuseppe Rinaldi who came from Albano precisely for this work, a work that resulted in a fourth revision, especially to avoid in particular the repetition of words and sounds. At the same time, I was making a way of the cross between our house and the office of Mons. Romani (Second man to the Promoter) in order to provide him, piecemeal, that is, hand to hand pieces of the galleys that arrived and his approval for printing it. The first and second galleys got crossed up and letters rushed back and forth nervously between Cesena and Rome. Finally, on May 22<sup>nd</sup> I sent the final galleys to the printers together with the chronology and the *imprimatur*. Still needed was the preface to be written by Cardinal Piazza, and he was making us wait breathlessly for it. He had begun writing it already from April 17<sup>th</sup> when, along with Fr. General, I went to wish him Easter greetings. Finally, on May 29<sup>th</sup>, he sent it and I rushed it off immediately to Cesena. *Deo gratias.*

### 3. Preparations for the Canonization

The committee in charge of the canonization, consisting of the members of the Curia along with Fr. Giuseppe Quattrino, the Provincial of the Italian Province, Fr. Vito Contegiacomo, the Director of the Pious Union of the most Precious Blood, met the first time on January 21<sup>st</sup> and then regularly each following Thursday until April 29, 1954. Discussions dealt with the things that were to be prepared, things that were then taken care of little by little, namely, whatever pertained to images (small – medium - large), medals, reliquaries and little relic cases. This work was placed in the hands of Fr. Vito Contegiacomo who, for this purpose, made trips to Genoa and Milan.

#### a. Banners for St. Peter's Basilica

Two banners were made for the procession and two of the miracles. The one depicting the miracle at Campoli was painted by Prof. Bedini for 150,000 lire and we provided the canvas. The miracle of Sezze was painted by Prof. Galimberti for 150,000 lire and we provided the canvas. The first of the processional banners (St. Gaspar, Apostle of the Divine Blood, was done by Prof. Barberis. The second one was ordered (St. Gaspar preaching about the Madonna). Both paintings cost 515,000 lire. With regard to the second processional banner, I recall that at first a request for a sketch was made to Prof. Emilio Lazzaro. We met with him (the Moderator General, Fr. Quattrino and I) on February 3<sup>rd</sup> and then invited him to our house on the 8<sup>th</sup> in order to give him details of our idea for the painting. On the 22<sup>nd</sup>, he brought two designs as his idea of the painting and on the 11<sup>th</sup> of March the sketch was presented in color with the design that we had selected. Certain observations and suggestions for changes were made and on the 18<sup>th</sup> the revised sketch was brought in. In the meantime, he informed us that for him to do the large painting, he was asking for 300,000 lire. The committee, at the meeting held on March 25<sup>th</sup>, decided to discharge Prof. Lazzaro since they were not at all pleased with his second sketch and that the price he was asking was too high. Furthermore, we had not made any definitive commitment with him for the execution of the painting. On March 29<sup>th</sup>, I telephoned Lazzaro to inform him of our decision and I sent his sketch back to him. He then began throwing tantrums and demanded 100,000 lire as an indemnity and threatened to have recourse to the law. On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, a letter arrived from Lazzaro's lawyer calling for 100,000 lire.

There followed a period of silence during which we thought that Lazzaro would not wish to continue to press charges for his request. (He even invited me to see one of his personal exhibits and along with Fr. Neumeyer and Fr. Quattrino, I went). However, at the beginning of June, with just a few days left before the canonization, a citation arrived with the request for 200,000 lire as an indemnity. This situation then was presented to our lawyer, Dr. Silvestri who, before this, had already sent a response to the letter of April 2<sup>nd</sup> in our name. Repeated efforts for a compromise were made in order to avoid a court case. There was also quite a harsh encounter between me and the Moderator General who was backed up by Neumeyer and Behen, since I was holding to the position that in every way possible it was necessary to avoid a court case.

Rather, they wanted me to confront him (I say me since it was I who had dealt with Lazzaro and it was I who was personally cited). I kept insisting and making known all the applicable reasons which stood in the way of getting involved in a court process. Furthermore, it was not altogether fully evident, even in the judgment of our own lawyer, that Lazzaro was entirely in the wrong. Hence, we might even be opening up ourselves to a condemnation, though limited, or maybe a warning. All these things are to be avoided for the honor of our Institute.

Ultimately, after a number of meetings with our lawyer and with Lazzaro himself, having first accepted and then rejected the idea of calling in an arbitrator as well as requesting the intervention of Cardinal Costantini, a friend of Lazzaro, we came to an agreement, that is, that we would pay him 125,000 lire and they would withdraw the citation to appear before the Tribunal in Rome. This whole mixup was for me a very bitter experience. - Everything was concluded in the month of September of 1954.

In regard to the processional banners, I must add here that after the canonization, the one representing St. Gaspar as the Apostle of the most Precious Blood was given as a gift to the Teutonic Province and the one representing the Saint as he preached about the Madonna was given as gift to the American Province. - The two banners depicting the miracles remained with us and were given to the Italian Province to be used in the festivities in the various houses.

## 1. Tapestry

In regard to the tapestry that was to be hung from the external loggia of St. Peter's, notwithstanding all five of the Blesseds to be canonized, I recall that it was paid for by the five postulations together. For that reason, meetings between the five postulations for the causes of the five Blesseds were held at the headquarters of the Jesuit Fathers' postulation. In addition to that tapestry (which was done by Prof. Galimberti for the sum total of 250,000 lire), it was decided also to have printed a common flyer (foldout) to be distributed in St. Peter's square during the canonization. During the final days, still working together, we proceeded to the obtaining of tickets from the Pontifical Office in order that we might have public posters made for the people of Rome etc. At this point I now recall the names of the other Postulators: Fr. Teodoro Toni, S.J. for Blessed Pignatelli; Fr. Giulio Bianchini, Salesian Father for Blessed Savio; Fr. Umberto Giannini, for N. Chanel; Fr. Nicola dell'Assunzione, Trinitarian Father, for Blessed Maria Crocifissa of Rome.

### c. The urn for the body of the Saint

The urn was done by the sculptor Mistruzzi at the cost of 2,000,000 lire, including the base and the shipping. I must say that at first the idea of the statue depicting him lying over the urn did not please me because we had always spoken of a statue representing him already dead. I then was the very one to support this view, that is, not to represent the saint already dead, but rather, in the act of offering his life for the welfare of souls ("I want to die on the platform, while preaching") and therefore to

represent him as promising perennial assistance to his Congregation, (“*oblivioni detur etc.*”). This concept of the urn was mine and I communicated it quickly to Fr. Quattrino and then we both went to explain it to Mistruzzi who found it to be very, very appropriate. I must also say that this idea of the statue being expressed in this fashion came to me as an inspiration and I even suggested that the above-mentioned quotations be written there (as well as the words of the attending physician: “*mori’ vittima di carita’*”) - (“he died a victim of charity”) at the base of the monument. That, however, was not able to be actualized. Among all of the art produced on the occasion of the canonization, the urn won unanimous approval because it really turned out to be a work of art.

#### d. painting of the Saint

A painting was also made by Prof. Missori for 150,000 lire. It represents the Saint in the act of offering the chalice of the most Precious Blood. From that painting, which was destined for the Generalate house, was taken the small holy cards for the sanctification. Other small holy cards were drawn from the old painting done by Francisi, which is found on Piazza dei Crociferi.

#### e. The compendium of the Life of the Saint

The compendium of the Life of the Saint with illustrations done by Barberis (already in existence) written by Fr. Fedele Gorga, but corrected and almost redone by Fr. Quattrino, was printed in Rome at the I.G.A.P. establishment and for this I had no problems, except for the bother of getting a view of the Vicariate and because of a shortness of time.

#### f. Canonical acknowledgment

On May 10<sup>th</sup> in the afternoon, the Canonical acknowledgement of the relics of the Blessed was initiated. The old urn, resting in the church on Piazza dei Crociferi under the altar dedicated to the Blessed, was removed from that altar and transported processionally to the chapel in the Mission House. It was then opened in the presence of the Promoter General of the Faith, Msgr. Natucci, the Chancellor of the Sacred Congregation of Rites, Msgr. Orazio Cocchetti, the superiors of our Congregation and of the Institute of the Sisters, representatives from our Missionaries and students. The body of the Blessed, that is to say, his bones and “*esuvie*”, were found to be in the best condition of preservation. Then, after dismissing all of those who were not pertinent, the Promoter General had Prof. Dr. Lorenzo Sympa begin the removal of the bones and the careful watch over them. In order to complete everything, several sessions were held as can be seen from the minutes that have been preserved in the archives. Finally, the sacred relics were put in order in a little case made of brass, duly sealed, and later found its place near the base of the new monumental urn near the Saint’s head.

Here it is opportune to point out that, because of a desire expressed by Fr. Moderator General, in addition to the different little pieces of ribs and small bones

intended to be used in the small reliquaries to be given to the faithful, also taken from the body were the bones of the entire right arm. The bones of the forearm, that is, the ulna and the radius were sent afterwards to the foreign province and the bone of the right arm remained in the Generalate House. In particular, the ulna was given to the American Province and delivered to America by Fr. Robert Neumeyer who left Rome in the month of September and officially consigned the relic on December 3, 1954 to the seminary of St. Charles in Carthage. The radius was given to the German Province and was delivered to Germany by Fr. Otto Flu"ck.

#### g. Reliquaries

Still to be remembered is the reliquary made of silver for the Holy Father and the smaller reliquaries for the Cardinals. These were made by the Del Vecchio company and Fr. Provincial, Don Quattrino, more than anyone else, was in charge of this.

All of the work which has been summarized here was taken care of from January to June and they were memorable days because of the overlapping of the diverse occupations and the scurrying around in all directions. In all truth, I must say that the Postulator, helped in a particular way by God with reference to his health, was involved in all the work and in a great part the weight was exclusively on his shoulders. As an historical document, I have preserved the pages of the calendar from January to June 1954 in which one is able to see what I have done on those days. *Soli Deo omnis honor!*

#### 4. The Canonization of St. Gaspar

The task of obtaining tickets from the Pontifical Anticamera and the distribution of the few that were granted among the many, many requests for them, was the final job that occupied the days preceding the ceremony. Invitations were sent to bishops and to people of note. From the Pious Union, many pilgrimages were organized. Many of our own Missionaries came from Germany, America and almost all of our men from Italy. To be noted is that since immediately after the canonization the General Chapter would be held for the revision of our constitutions, also present for the canonization were all the delegates from the various provinces.

June 12, 1954

In the afternoon in St. Peter's Piazza the Holy Father declared Saints the 5 Blesseds whom we have cited before - *Alleluja!* The piazza of St. Peter's, however, was not full as we had expected! For me it was a bitter disappointment! Furthermore, among the pilgrimages, there was to be one from Putignano in which my mother, with Chiarina, had reserved a place. Well, it was just this pilgrimage, because of a breakdown of the bus, which did not arrive for the ceremony. It got here only that night when everything was finished! Patience: there is no rose without thorns!

June 13, 1954

The papal chapel in the Basilica of St. Peter. Cardinal Tisserant is the celebrant. The Pope assisted at the throne. In the Tribunal of the Postulation, in addition to the ones who had received miracles, there was my mother and Serafina Bianco, whom I sought from among the people of Putignano to accept the reservation of a place. She also received a miracle through St. Gaspar but it was not recognized as such! That, however, was the stimulus that moved me to seek out in the archives the other two miracles which had already been worked by the Saint.

After the services in St. Peter's basilica, there was a dinner for all of the Missionaries - Americans, Germans, Italians and the Brothers - in the Tivolese Restaurant! Much joy . ...

June 14, 1954

The Marian day for our Congregation in St. Mary Major basilica. Fr. Fedele Gorga is the preacher.

June 15, 1954

The opening session of the General Chapter for the Revision of the Constitutions, the Mass of the Holy Spirit. The sessions were postponed until the 21<sup>st</sup> p.v. --- From this day until the first half of the following July, there was a distribution of the biographies and the relics as an homage to the Cardinals, Bishops, Roman Congregations, the Pontifical Anticamera (1000 biographies here alone!) as can be noted in the archives. - I was assisted greatly in doing this work by Fr. Giuseppe Rinaldi and student Gaspare Giuffreda.

June 26, 1954

The installation of the relics of the Saint in the new urn under the altar of St. Gaspar in the church of S. Maria in Trivio. An unpleasant occurrence: one of the seals of the case was broken. On the following days, I had to have recourse to Mons. Cocchetti in order to have the seals done over and set better.

July 2, 1954

Together with the Moderator General and Fr. Giuseppe Rinaldi, we went to see the Secretary of State and offered to Msgr. Montini the silver reliquary for the Holy Father who, because of the state of his health, had suspended for quite some time all of his private audiences. Because of that, not even before the ceremony of canonization

was he there for the reading of the Decrees regarding the miracles and that of the *Tuto*, so that an expression of gratitude could be made by the Postulator in the presence of the Holy Father. Thus, also in this regard, did we experience disappointment. But, I repeat, there is no rose without thorns.

The silver reliquary depicts the Madonna of the Precious Blood with the Child Jesus who is offering the chalice to St. Gaspar (the design was made by Barberis and it was executed by Del Vecchio). So we offered, instead, the usual gifts, the sum of one million lire and the biographies of the Saint with special binding.

#### 5. The documentary film “Sotto il Segno Vermiglio”

Soon after the General Chapter (July 1954) an extraordinary and unusual activity began for me which was then protracted almost uninterruptedly up to the end of June of 1955: the film about St. Gaspar. Ever since the meeting of the Committee for the canonization of St. Gaspar held on February 11, 1954 there was talk about the opportunity to have, as a reminder of the canonization, a documentary cinema of the ceremony of canonization and also, in brief form, the Life of the Saint. The task of investigating the cost was given to Fr. Vito Contegiacomo and he came up with the following replies: for a documentary of 300 meters, in black and white, of the ceremony in St. Peter's Square: Incom would charge 3 million to 3 and a half million lire; Luce would charge 1 million to 1 and a half million lire.

The cost looked to be much and Neumeyer then proposed (February 18, 1954) to have recourse to a private technician. I remembered someone like that, a certain Domenico Bordoni, concerning whom the pastor of Castel S. Elia, Fr. Domenico Antonazzi, had spoken to me, telling me that he was a man who was occupied in making documentaries on religious monuments. So, the above-mentioned Bordoni was contacted and invited by us. He came on the afternoon of February 18, With the Moderator General in attendance, I explained to Bordoni our desire and he quickly accepted the offer to prepare for us a most appropriate estimate. As a matter of fact, on the following day, February 19<sup>th</sup> he came back with his promised estimate: a film of 1200 to 1500 meters (a time duration of about an hour and a quarter, he said!!!), in color, about the life of the Saint and the ceremony of the canonization = 2 million to 2 and a half million lire. This offer appeared to be acceptable and the decision to have this film made followed. On February 26<sup>th</sup> all the members of the Curia went to view a documentary on the Mamertine Prison produced by this same Bordoni, and, being satisfied with that, we gave Bordoni our definitive answer. He, on March 1<sup>st</sup>, brought us the signed commitment for the above-mentioned film in accordance with the aforementioned estimate and price. It was agreed that the whole thing was to be ready soon after (around 15 days) the canonization which was foreseen for June...

In the meantime, Bordoni said the it was necessary first to write the script and that was to be done by us. But, since there was so much to do, I asked whether in the meanwhile we could begin to take outdoor shots of the places where the Saint gave missions and at a later time write the script in view of the fact that also, in general, we

knew the life and the activity of the Saint from the very beginning. He said that this could be done and I, still ignorant of and unacquainted with cinematographic procedures, was happy about this and I gave him first an itemized list of the places related to the life of the Saint in north-central Italy and later also of Rome and south-central Italy. In time, he first made a tour of north-central Italy so that he could give a report of his findings. When he returned on March 14<sup>th</sup>, he planned to begin work on the following 18<sup>th</sup>. On the 19<sup>th</sup>, he departed to take shots of the place in the north; this concluded on the 25<sup>th</sup> of March and on the 26<sup>th</sup> he returned with his report. Then on the 31<sup>st</sup>, he set out for the south to take shots of the places there, following more or less the itinerary that I gave him. He returned to Rome on April 4<sup>th</sup> and on the 6<sup>th</sup> came to see us. To be noted is that on these trips, Bordoni, and those who accompanied him, were hosted in our Houses whom we had alerted beforehand.

In the meantime, Fr. Quattrino and I, after having compiled a listing of the material to be printed and necessary pictures for the documentary, we went to the Director of the Museum in Rome on April 5<sup>th</sup> as well as to the Napoleonic Museum in order to get permission to use in the documentary the aforementioned materials. On April 15<sup>th</sup> we, together with the Moderator General, paid a visit to the Museum of Rome and we found a great deal of material that we could use. On the 23<sup>rd</sup>, I went back there again along with the Provincial and on the 24<sup>th</sup>, this time with Bordoni, to make a choice of the items. From this came the idea of amplifying the documentary in order to make use of the treasure of the great material of the 1800's found in the Museum of Rome. As a result, Bordoni asked for an additional half million lire. At the Napoleonic Museum, where I went on April 29<sup>th</sup> with Fr. Quattrino and Bordoni, we found nothing serviceable for our documentary.

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, Bordoni showed us the shots that he had taken in the north and the south (part of them were in color) and I noted that they were entirely too long and that they occupied by themselves almost all of the length that we had agreed upon and there was still lacking the essential part, namely, the life (Rome, the things that he had printed, and pictures of the 1800's). What he had made for the film up to the day of the canonization is documented in the report of Tanzini, annexed to the souvenir album of that film preserved in the General Archives. On my part, I thought of having the artist Barberis do 10 water colors on the life of the Saint which would be inserted into the documentary. He wanted 8,000 lire for each one. On second thought, I ordered other water colors and colorings of designs already done.

On the days immediately preceding the Canonization, I went to the Vatican with Bordoni in order to request permission to film the ceremony in St. Peter's Square. Of that ceremony which was the primary point of interest for the entire document, he took only 180 meters of film!!! That is to say, only one or the other sequence and furthermore without using any zoom lens and with only one camera. Just imagine that on the preceding days, he had come to collect a huge amount of money from the Moderator General (that is, the Economist).

Once the General Chapter was concluded and in agreement with Bordoni, a few days were

allowed to pass (a week or two) for the continuation of the work since the artist Barberis had not as yet completed the final water colors which had been consigned to him around the middle of July. Some days later, I telephoned Bordoni to come to an agreement to bring the work of the documentary to an end before celebrations were underway in honor of St. Gaspar in the various Houses in Italy. I got the answer that he was outside Rome. I phoned and phoned again and again, every 5 or 6 days throughout all of July and August and even into the middle of September and never managed to have the good fortune of speaking to him. Yet, he kept sending me picture-postcards from different parts of Italy. I wrote him, I do not remember now, three or four times to urge him to come and provide me with the list of shots that he had taken, so that I could compose the script to be used by the speaker. But all was in vain. The whole situation began to smell suspicious...

In the meanwhile, I was working precisely on putting together the script for the speaker. In fact, before the canonization, Bordoni had brought a text (which turned out to have been written by Claudio Tansini, a producer in his service: but Bordoni never told me this and presented it to me as his own text). But that text was altogether inadequate. I redid the entire work using another criterion, namely, making use of the shots already taken which were summarily annotated in the margin in the Tansini text and noting those which still had to be taken. It was a long and worrisome work. During this same period of time, I visited many times various shops for antiques and the Fontanella Borghese market in order to procure for myself the works of Pinelli and others who made illustrations of Roman scenes and customs of the 1800's as well as episodes from the period of brigandage. I bought several of them and I had Fr. Quattrino color them.

Finally, on September 15<sup>th</sup> Mr. Bordoni showed up in person and came to visit me along with another person whom he introduced to me then and there for the first time as the Producer of our film, Prof. Claudio Tansini. That is how I got to know of the existence of the Producer. In fact, up to that time, Bordoni had always come alone and had dealt with me as though he himself were the technical and artistic producer of everything. Not only did he not speak to me about Tansini, but he also spoke in the first person. Now, on the other hand, I had come to realize that everything that pertained to the technical work and the artistic presentation was the labor of Tansini who was the one who made the original outline, taken on the cameramen, hired cameras, bought films etc. and that Bordoni was nothing else than an intermediary between us and the Producer, a sort of impresario who in regard to cinema knew little or nothing at all. - All of this later came to be clearly understood. On that day (September it was agreed with Bordoni and Tansini to begin on the following 23<sup>rd</sup> to take shots of the pictures and prints in order to bring this whole project of the documentary to a close.

On the 20<sup>th</sup> of September, when Tansini telephoned Bordoni in order to make some plans, he got the reply that Bordoni had left Rome. Then, on the 21<sup>st</sup> a telegram came to me from Bordoni himself in which he said that he had arranged for those shots to be taken on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. The 23<sup>rd</sup> came and passed without Bordoni being seen or

having telephoned. We let another four days go by in vain and finally, in order that this matter would not be postponed until doomsday and because the cameraman Marelli had a week free, having later to be outside Rome for who knows how long, it was decided together with the Moderator General to go forward with the takes on our own, with the understanding that we would discuss afterwards with Bordoni the finances involved. As a matter of fact, Bordoni, already from June 10, 1954 had collected the last part of the sum agreed upon for the Documentary (a total of 3,000,000 lire). Hence, on July 2<sup>nd</sup> we had Fr. Neumeyer (under the title of a loan, for just a few days) to give us the sum of 250,000 lire. Thus, Bordoni was indebted to us, besides for the continuation and fulfillment of the film, also for this amount of money, which he still has not restituted.

On September 28<sup>th</sup>, therefore, along with Claudio Tansini, the producer (who will ultimately bring this entire project to completion with determination and commendable honesty), the work of making those takes of the prints and the pictures was carried out in the Generalate house. In the diary written by Tansini (which is found in our Archives in the album: *ricordo del film*) the whole procedure is recorded as well as the development, without rest, of the work until its completion which turned out to be July of 1955. Everything that was done went through my hands: From September 28, 1954 and thereafter, Tansini did not take a single step without my presence and my collaboration. I was there with him at the *moviola* for the cutting and splicing ( a lengthy work which required the sacrifice of my afternoon rest, something indispensable for me because of the condition of my health; but the Lord was my help). I accompanied him to the various towns (Campoli, Sonnino, Giano, Albano, Ostia, Giano-Bolsena). With him, I made a review of the photographs, I helped with the coloring of the prints and pictures, etc. Upon my shoulders alone weighed the not-unimportant task of gathering and editing the various materials needed and the preparation of the pertinent text (something that I finally accomplished with the collaboration of Tansini). In short, these have been epic days! It was a favorable situation that Neumeyer was away in America and in that way we were able to use the automobile and were able to put in late hours in the Generalate house, especially when we were doing the coloring of the prints and pictures, without having to deal with his fastidiousness which is so characteristic of him.

I was able to make progress in the work of necessary editing with the help given from time to time by Tansini. These things did not cause as great a feeling of alarm as did the financial problems. The expenses kept increasing quite a bit because of the necessity of bringing the work of photography to completion in keeping with the prepared text (which, in all conscientious truth, it seemed to me could not be reduced any further if one wished to give an idea of the Saint's life); also, because an effort had to be made to allow the speaker a bit of rest and also to give the music a bit of play; likewise, because there was need for redoing many of the takes (amongst other things, cameraman Gaetano Moccattelli sent us around 300 meters of poorly done film – his takes were almost all horribly done and they had to be retaken). I tried to get help here and there, I even did a bit myself, but that was much too little.

When Fr. Neumeyer returned, the bulk of the photographic work was finished and on February 2<sup>nd</sup> of 1955 the silent projection of the work was made. It was decided, in a general way, to move forward. But, when Tansini presented the estimate to get to the first copy in color, sound and speaker, he foresaw a expense of around 3 million lire which was a rise in scudi in the judgment of Fr. Neumeyer and Behen at the meeting of the Curia on February 9<sup>th</sup>. They maintained then that it was no longer feasible to continue with the project which would be of interest only to the Italian Province and not the others, and, that in any case it was necessary to get the opinion of the American Provincial as well as the German Provincial as to whether this expense should be made. In short, things became very complicated as can be seen from the minutes of the Curia meetings of February 14, 1955 and February 15, 1955.

It was then, that is, on February 15, 1955, that I had recourse to our Provincial, Fr. Quattrino and I proposed the idea to him to continue the work on this film at the Italian Province's expense (not by anticipating the sum, as had been proposed beforehand by the Moderator General - "a matter that raised difficulty with Fr. Neumeyer") but simply taking upon itself all of the expenses, with the safeguard of a proportionate adjustment, if the other Provinces should come to the decision that they too would like to have a copy of the film. Fr. Quattrino, as an honor to our Saint, accepted the proposal to complete the work that was awaited by all of our Houses. Let it be written, as an honor to the Italian Province, that the completion of this document could be continued. It was a beautiful gesture, deeply appreciated, though perhaps with gritting teeth, by the other General Definitors.

And so the work was resumed. It was on June 23, 1955 that we arrived at the point of having the projection of the first complete copy. But the problems were not over with since there was some reworking that was still needed. It was decided to remove an entire section regarding the development of the Congregation (keeping it aside as a separate document). That was done in order to avoid an overweight of material in a document which was already quite long. Likewise, that part that was removed was made up mostly of enlargments from 16mm film and even 8mm film (Brazil) which, artistically, were inadmissible. On July 7<sup>th</sup> the English copy (reduced 16mm) was ready and the Moderator General took it with him to America. Unfortunately, because of the hurry involved, it did not turn out well. On August 2<sup>nd</sup>, there was a projection of the definitive copy with invitations sent from the General Curia to the Curia of our Sisters as well as to several Missionaries and Sisters, and this took place at the *Stabilimento Tecnostampa Fratelli Genesi, Via Albalonga*, where all the work on the film had been done.

And what about Mr. Bordoni? He never showed up again. I wrote him two letters, and finally he did send a reply asking to be excused and suggesting a resumption of the work, but not right away (this reply was received on November 11, 1954), but by that time all of the facts were put into the hands of Lawyer Silvestri who, however, did not get anywhere at all with this good for nothing. The Moderator General and Fr. Neumeyer went at times to Bordoni's house to speak to him in order to settle things in a

friendly manner and to urge him at least to go to our lawyer's office for a settlement ... but all was useless. According to the calculation derived from the daily record kept by Tansini, Bordoni must have spent in his work on the film at most one million and a half lire. Hence, he must retribute to us the other one and a half million plus the 250,000 seized from the economist.

--- How will this all end up?