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IN CHRISTO JESU

SACRED HEART SEMINARY, POONAMALLEE, MADRAS-600 056.

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FEBRUARY—1991

*To The Revered Memory
of*



REV. FR. CANDIDO VALLOGGIA, S.D.B.
[FATHER AND GUIDE]

1914 – 1988

THIS ISSUE

This issue of IN CHRISTO JESU is dedicated to the revered memory of our dear Fr. Valloggia. Several factors were responsible for the delay in bringing out this special number. But joy delayed is indeed joy increased ! And as we approach to celebrate the third anniversary of Fr. Valloggia's death on 20th February, may we be filled with happy reminiscences of this man who has become for us a legend embodying hard work, self-effacement, untiring patience and total union with God.

This issue contains some precious reading material. An ardent prayer that Fr. Valloggia wrote on the day before his priestly ordination in 1944, and a humble account of his life written by himself as personal reminiscences some time before his death are published here. These writings of Fr. Valloggia will certainly inspire us and draw us nearer to the ideals which he himself practiced. Fr. Jacob Mullore, of happy memory, a student of Fr. Valloggia, and later his colleague and next-room neighbour for over three decades, had written his own appreciation of his teacher and friend, just before his death. Fr. Mullore's article on Fr. Valloggia will not fail to bring us refreshing memories of both of them.

Fr. Valloggia's circle of admirers and friends is indeed vast. Past-pupils - Bishops as well as priests, successive Rectors as well as confreres, have only been too happy to share many an affectionate thought about their beloved Father and guide !

May we all find this issue of IN CHRISTO JESU a source of inspiration and guidance emanating from our dear Fr. Valloggia.

Fr. S. J. Anthony samy

FROM THE CHRONICLE

1. Elevations:

Mgr. S. L. Gabriel, of the Diocese of Tanjore has been appointed Bishop of Trichy. Having completed his Theology at SHS, he was ordained priest on April 27, 1955. He served his diocese under various capacities; above all, as Rector of the Minor Seminary, and Vicar of the prestigious shrine of Our Lady of Velankanni. The episcopal ordination took place on 30th December, 1990. We wish Bishop Gabriel all the best in his new ministry!

Fr. Thomas Polackal, S.D.B., of the province of Calcutta, who did his theological studies at SHS, and was ordained priest on December 19, 1965 has been appointed Provincial of the same province. Prior to his appointment as the Provincial, Fr. Thomas was the vice-provincial. Congratulations, and all the best to you Fr. P. S.!

2. Deaths:

Three of our past pupils have gone to their eternal reward during the past year. Mgr. S. Ignatius of the Diocese of Vellore, ordained in 1943, and belonging to the first batch of SHS priests died on 31st May 1990. Mgr. Ignatius served several parishes with Christlike pastoral zeal, and was last appointed Vicar General of the diocese, in which capacity he served for a period of seven years.

Fr. Matthew Kalpakassery of the Diocese of Vijayawada, who was ordained in 1957 passed away on 29th August 1990. He was taken ill some months ago and was operated twice at Vijaya Hospital Madras, before he expired. Fr. Matthew was a very successful missionary, and showed much interest in the education of poor boys.

Fr. M. Arockiasamy, also of the Diocese of Vellore, ordained in 1956 passed away after a heart attack. Fr. Arockiasamy was a dynamic personality, and was in charge of the Social Services of the diocese for a number of years, before he was absorbed by the C. B. C. I. centre at Delhi, to work for the Caritas. He died in Delhi, but his mortal remains were brought to his home diocese.

May they rest in peace!

3. Jubilees:

The following past-pupils of SHS celebrate the Silver Jubilee of their priestly ordination this year. Our hearty congratulations to them and best wishes for a continued fruitful ministry.

Ordained in April, 1965:

Fr. Albinus
Fr. Antony M. Therukunnel
Fr. John Bosco Vongsawat
Fr. Jose Kaimalett
Fr. Joseph P. Ezharath
Fr. D. Kiritti
Fr. Paul M. Kariamadam
Fr. Peter Mannala
Fr. P. Remigius (now Bishop of Kumbakonam)
Fr. Thomas Edamattam
Fr. A. Ubagarasamy

Ordained in December, 1965:

Fr. Balaswamy Yadala
Fr. George Joseph Vempeny
Fr. John Matthew Thengumthottam
Fr. Joseph Chalil
Fr. Joseph Cheruvil
Fr. Matthew Augustine, S. D. B.
Fr. Peter Surin
Fr. Terence D'Souza
Fr. Thomas George
Fr. Thomas S. Polackal, S. D. B.
Fr. Thomas Puducherry

4. Alumni Gatherings:

The first alumni gathering of the year was held at SHS Poonamallee on 12th September 1990, the first anniversary of the death of Fr. Mullore. Over 150 priests were present for the solemn Mass. Prior to the Mass we had a discussion on the Decade of Evangelization initiated by Fr. S. J. Anthony Samy.

Two other alumni meetings were convened, one at Gunadala, Vijayawada on 24th January 1991, and the other at Vellaikinaru, Coimbatore on 31st January 1991. We thank the convenors, Fr. K. M. Sebastian, S.D.B. and Fr. J. Puthenkalam, S.D.B.

Fr. Valloggia - Personal Reminiscences

(All those who knew Fr. Valloggia have been struck by one quality of his-namely, his great humility. He would never speak about himself, and he would very rarely refer to himself with the pronoun "I". Just a few months before he expired, Fr. Valloggia handed over an envelope to Fr. M. Rayappa SDB, the then Rector, telling him that it contained some writing about himself, and requesting him that it be opened only after his death. What the envelope contained was a manuscript wherein Fr. Valloggia gives an account of his life from his early childhood upto the time he laid down his office as Rector of the Sacred Heart Seminary. And characteristically Fr. Valloggia does not use the first person even here, but only the third person. Here is the account.....)

Fr. Candido Valloggia was born in the village of Santa Cristina, in northern Italy to Leopold Valloggia and Maria Mora, on 11th September 1914. He was baptized on the same day of his birth and was given the name of Candido. He was the third of four children, two boys and two girls.

His parents were poor; so the children grew up without special comforts: though they never experienced hunger, because in the house there were the products of their fields and vineyards. Leopold was a strong and hard worker. And he contracted a sickness when Candido was about eight years old. And that sickness took him to the grave three years later. The sickness and then the death of the father was a great blow to the family; but the mother a pious and courageous woman, managed the affairs of the family satisfactorily.

Candido's parents were poor with regard to material things, but rich in faith and christian virtues: so the children were given a solid christian formation, especially by the mother and she was helped in this by the grandmother.

The formation the boy received in the family was strengthened by the training he received from the self-dedicated lady-teachers of the elementary school and then by the two priests of the parish. These two zealous priests had full control over the parishioners and they were demanding co-operation and regularity to the sacred functions. All the children had to be regular for catechism class and daily Mass, and Vespers and Benediction on feast days. No boy or girl could escape from catechism class or the sacred functions: And the faith was strong among the adult parishioners. Many of them attended daily Mass very early in the morning: The parish of Santa Cristina was called "the Garden of the Diocese" even by the Bishop.

So the boy Candido grew in that healthy Christian environment. Having been endowed with a good memory, he came out first in catechism competitions. On one occasion the parish priest presented him with a heavy pocket-watch, as a prize, in the parish church in the presence of all the parishioners.

And gifted with a good soprano voice, and having been fond of music Candido joined the parish choir to sing for the sacred functions. Music was in his family: his father and his uncle were good singers, much appreciated even outside their parish. But the boy strained his voice too much and that affected him. And later on, he did another mistake: in fact, though his voice changed from soprano to tenor, he forced himself to sing as bass; and that had a bad effect on the voice. Later on complications set in. When he came to India, he was soon affected by colds that became chronic. Then a cyst grew in his throat, and he lost his voice for about two months. The doctors suspected cancer of the throat. He regained his voice gradually, after the cyst was removed; but his voice remained weak for the whole of his life.

It may be of interest to note here, that when Candido was at home as a boy, he seems to have been protected in a special way by God in particular circumstances. When he was five or six years old, one day, when sitting on an unloaded bullock-cart, in the front part, as it was moving on the road, he fell down. The cart was being pulled by two big cows. As the boy fell down, the cows stopped immediately; had they continued to walk the boy would have been crushed under the wheels.

Again when he was two or three years older, one day while he was running in the vineyard, with a sharp knife in his hand, used for cutting the clusters of grapes, he slipped and fell down badly. The knife cut a big wound in his right arm. No medical aid was given. An infection could have set in: but nothing happened, and the wound healed gradually: only a scar remained on his arm, quite noticeable for the whole of his life.

Sometime after the death of his father, Candido became seriously sick. A certain moment came when he was in a critical condition. His people were worried. They were thinking of calling the parish priest to give him the extreme unction. They prayed fervently, and then the situation changed: he began to feel better, and in a few days he recovered his health.

Still some time afterwards, one day while he was climbing a staircase carrying on his shoulders a load of stones, he hit against a post projecting from the wall, lost his balance, and fell down some fifteen feet below on the cement steps. A serious fracture, and something worse still could have been the consequence of this fall. But he was unhurt: nothing happened to him.

As a boy Candido went through his elementary classes in his native place without any difficulty. Then he joined the High School. But then wishing to help his family he did sundry works with the masons serving in some family. He showed capacity for carpentry and mechanics. He liked to work and he had a taste for doing every work well; this quality he cultivated for the whole of his life. He always found it difficult to bear a work badly or carelessly done.

At that time a Salesian Father, by the name of Fr. Branda came now and then from the Salesian College of nearby Borgomonero to preach in the parish church, and to address the youth. He became interested in this young man, then about fourteen years old, and leader of the Catholic Youth Association. He spoke with him a few times, and one day he asked him whether the thought of becoming a priest had crossed his mind. As a matter of fact his mother had told him more than once, when he was still young, that she would be happy to see him a priest one day. And the two priests of the parish had sometime talked to him about the same thing. After reflection and prayer, the decision was taken and Fr. Branda helped him to join the Missionary Institute of Cardinal Cagliero at Ivrea on January 13, 1930; and Candido spent four years here preparing himself to go to the missions. In the Institute there was already another student, aspirant from Santa Cristina, Giovanni Mora by name. They studied together and then they came to India together.

His superiors understood that Candido was a rather timid boy and tried to encourage him. One good impression they got about him was caused by the fact that for two consecutive years he came out first in the Catechism competition that was held every year among the aspirants. As a prize he was asked to go and sit at the table of the superiors. But his timidity made him feel very small there, and he could eat but little there before those big Fathers. At the end of the fourth year of studies there came the solemn moment of the "Reading of the Obedience" as it was called. In the presence of the whole

community the Rector would read the name of the candidates and the place of their missionary destination : Brazil, Palestine, Thailand, Assam, Madras. Candido Valloggia and Giovanni Mora, together with three more clerics and one coadjutor were destined for Madras. The decision of sending Giovanni Mora and Candido Valloggia there was taken certainly because in Madras there was already Monsignor John Mora, who was the Vicar General of the Archdiocese. He was the uncle of the young Giovanni Mora. These young clerics made their vestition, that is, received their cassocks from the hands of Very Rev. Fr. Peter Ricaldone, the then Superior General on the 19th September 1933 in the chapel of the College.

On 7th October all those who left for the missions that year received the Crucifix from the hands of Archbishop Maurizio Fossati of Turin in a solemn function at the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians. Those new novices of Madras started for India from Genoa, in the ship Vittoria on 23 November 1933, and on the 11 December they reached Bombay.

The leader of this expedition was Fr. Emilio Daboe, who was returning to India after a period of rest in Italy. There was with them also Fr. Franca and one cleric who had learned English in England and came to India to be the assistant of the novices. In Bombay the the group went to the Salesian School at Tardeo where good Fr. Tornquist gave them a warm welcome. When it was time for meals, the young novices had an experience which they did not easily forget. The curry was terribly hot for them. They took the rice in a spirit of mortification and with some tears in their eyes. In Bombay the two Indian novices Bro. Rego and Bro. Fernandes joined them. They all started for Madras by train and they reached there on 6th December. Archbishop Mederlet and Mgr. Mora received them with open arms. Fr. Cinato, the new Provincial came afterwards. In Madras two more novices joined the group. Bro. Bagavantha Raju and the coadjutor Bro. Lazar. The ten novices left Madras for Tirupattur on 11th December 1933. At Tirupattur they were welcomed by the Novice Master Fr. Carreno, and on that day they began their novitiate. Fr. Carreno was a very capable and understanding man, and took great care in the training of novices who felt at home with him.

The work of Fr. Carreno was all the more important since he got very little co-operation from Bro. Assistant. This latter did not have the proper spirit. In fact, even before the end of the year of novitiate, he packed his things and returned to Europe.

The noviciate house was not a new construction but an old bungalow adapted for the purpose. Some needed things were not yet available; but the novices were quite willing to put up with some difficulties. For some months they wore only the black cassock which was not removed even during games and work. Fr. Carreno could infuse within them a lot of courage and enthusiasm with his accordion. After the year of noviciate the novices prepared themselves for their profession. The date of the profession had to be postponed to 29th January 1935, feast of St. Francis de Sales, and they made it in the hands of Fr. Cinato.

After their noviciate the newly professed began their study of Philosophy in Tirupattur itself. Fr. Meliga was their Philosophy professor. In the meantime a new batch of novices arrived from Europe. The community became bigger. Some new constructions were added and among them new lavatories of which there was much need. Bro. Valloggia was interested much with mason work. All the brothers had to do regular work, though the heat made them perspire profusely. They had the additional job of catching the numerous cobras found in the compound, driving away the many monkeys that destroyed the fruits, and the donkeys and the horses which disturbed the sleep of the community during the night.

After finishing Philosophy Bro. Valloggia received his obedience to go to the Sacred Heart Seminary, Poonamallee for his regency. He entered the Seminary on 23rd January 1937. In the Seminary there were twenty-four seminarists. Some of them had not yet passed their S. S. L. C.; so they were daily going for class to the Government School. There was only one priest, Mgr. John Mora, who was also the Vicar General of the Archdiocese. So for two or three days in a week he was away in Madras. There were first three and then four clerics. Bro. Valloggia was made the General Assistant. At times he had to be the acting Rector. He taught Latin and Music to the seminarists.

On 30th January 1938 Bro. Valloggia made his Perpetual Profession in the hands of Mgr. Mora, delegate of Fr. Provincial. It was a very private function; and the profession was made in the office of Mgr. Mora. No one else was present.

After the three years of regency Bro. Valloggia left Poonamallee for Shillong to study Theology. Leaving Poonamallee on 26th March 1940, he reached Mowlai on 29th March. There in Shillong he received his Tonsure on 16th December 1940 from Bishop Morrow of Krishnagar. He received the first two minor orders from the same Bishop on 4th June 1941, and the last two on 8th December 1942 from Bishop Stephen Ferrando of Shillong.

Bro. Valloggia had a sincere desire to study his theology well. And he applied himself seriously to this study. His professors always gave him full marks, more for his application to study than for his knowledge. He had one advantage over many of his companions, namely his knowledge of Latin. He knew Latin well because he had taught it for three years. Some of the text-books were in Latin. Often some of his companions came to ask his help to understand the difficult passages in the text-books.

He volunteered for manual work especially to enlarge the playground for the Institute. And when the war broke out with some of his companions Bro. Valloggia volunteered to dig small tunnels under the playground where all could hide, if the Japanese decided to come and bomb Shillong, a military centre.

Later on when Italy entered the war, all the German and Italian Fathers were taken to the concentration camp. Also all the Brothers were taken away. On 10th August 1942 they left Shillong and they were taken to the concentration camp of Deoli near Ajmer. In the camp there were other Fathers and Brothers belonging to different congregations: Jesuits, Franciscans, Carmelites, Dominicans. There were also two Bishops, Bishop Poli, a Capucin, of Allahabad, and Bishop Cialeo, Dominican from Multan. The students could study their Theology since they had been allowed to take their books with them. In Deoli Bro. Valloggia received his subdiaconate on 30th January 1943 from Bishop Cialeo.

All the Fathers and Brothers were in Deoli only for seven months. On 7th March 1943 they were all taken to the big concentration camp at Dehra Dun. In that camp there were also many civilians, but they were separated from the priests and Brothers. The Brothers could still study their Theology. The Provincial of the Southern Province, Fr. Cinato was also there. So Bro. Valloggia received his Diaconate on 8th December 1943 from Bishop Cialeo. And then he was ordained Priest on 30th January 1944 again by Bishop Cialeo.

After his priestly ordination, Fr. Valloggia could continue to study and prepare himself for his confession exams, and he gave those exams to Frs. Bacchinarello and corregia on 2nd August 1944. The life in the camp went on without special difficulties; daily roll-call; a walk now and then outside the camp with some restrictions; a visit now and then by some Bishop who said some encouraging words; work in the kitchen; washing ones clothes. Fr. Valloggia was one of those who volunteered to wash the clothes of others, especially of elderly confreres.

On 1st September 1944, Fr. Valloggia with a small group of confreres was freed from the camp; so he came to Madras together with Fr. Paviotti. He was again destined to the Sacred Heart Seminary. But at that time the community of Poonamallee was in Yercaud at Our Lady's House, because the buildings at Poonamallee were still occupied by the military. Fr. Valloggia was made assistant of the Seminarists, and remained so for four years. He was asked to teach Philosophy and Latin. His knowledge of Latin helped him to read as many text books of Philosophy as possible. And he did not find it difficult to teach it. He also taught Music and Greek. As an assistant he demanded of the seminarists regularity, punctuality and hard work.

On 15th June, 1947 the community of Yercaud returned to Poona-mallee. Fr. Valloggia became the Prefect of Studies for four years; and then he became the Catechist and Confessor. In July 1961, Fr. Mauri the Rector of the Seminary died. Archbishop Mathias spoke with the Provincial and they elected Fr. Valloggia as the Rector. Mgr. Mathias presented him as Rector to the community on 20th July 1961. Fr. Valloggia was elected Rector for a third term also; but later after two years, he asked to be relieved, and Fr. Joseph Thekedathu was then appointed Rector.

(Here ends the manuscript. Did Fr. Valloggia write this in 1971 immediately after he laid down office as Rector? Or did he write it some months before he died, aware that his end was coming soon? In fact he used to be telling jokingly that he would soon die. Anyway from 1971 till his death on February 20, 1988, Fr. Valloggia served the Seminary as confessor, spiritual director, and social worker, besides ofcourse taking care of the garden and the trees in the campus)

AT HIS FIRST MASS

(Graces and Favours that Fr. Valloggia asked of Jesus in his first Holy Mass. This document was written by him in Italian on 29th January 1944)

O Lord Jesus, in this first Holy sacrifice and also in the following ones,
I ask you:

The grace that I may become a holy priest, a great saint, a saint soon.

The grace to be able to celebrate all the holy Masses with the fervour of the
first and always more still.

The grace of not offending you ever seriously, O Jesus, and possibly also not
venially with deliberation.

The grace of a holy death and of not being afraid of it.

I would desire martyrdom, O Jesus, to show you my love; in which case,
give me the grace to bear it.

The grace to be able to do perfectly my duty until death.

The grace of a great love for you, O Jesus, through the most Holy Mother
Mary, Don Bosco, the Church, the souls.

The grace to be able to acquire and preserve a perfect chastity, sacerdotal
virginity. The grace of great humility and charity towards all. The grace
of understanding and affection for me as a priest and from my part for
the souls who will be entrusted to me to that I may be able to do good
to them.

The grace of saving many souls with my work; and at least not to be
overcome by discouragement if my work were to be always ineffectual.
The grace of the efficacy of the word in preaching, counselling,
admonishing, correcting. Jesus, I ask of you a special blessing and
special graces for the following dear persons: my mother, my brother, my
sisters, my relatives, Fr. Carlo, all the persons who have been good to me.
Jesus, a special blessing also for the following: the major superiors of
the congregation, Fr. Provincial, Fr. Rector, Fr. Bacchiarello, all the
confreres who are in this camp; in a particular way for each one of the
philosophers; the Prefect, the Catechist, the Prefect of studies of our
house, my companion Fr. Mora, Fr. Cogliandro; my five companions who
will be ordained with me; my novitiate companions; Cleric Bili; those
who have asked me or those who will ask of a special remembrance like
clerics Clovel, Rota, Marchesi, Di Fiore, Fr. Fontana and all the others.

Jesus, a special blessing for all the Salesian confreres of India and in a special manner for Mons. Mathias and his Archdiocese, Mons. Scuderi, Mons. Carreno, Fr. Uguet, Fr. Mariaselvam, Fr. Mora and the whole seminary, Fr. Sandanam and the house of Vellore, Fr. Maschio and the house of Bombay, Fr. Gutierrez and the house of Tirupattur. I recommend to you, O Jesus, in a special way all the missions of India and all their particulars needs, all the missionaries, all the catechists, all the Christians; I recommend to you, O Jesus, all the souls who will be entrusted to my care.

O Jesus, I ask of you for special mercy for the dead; my father, my grandparents, all my departed relatives; all the departed confreres; all the souls who have died and who are dying in this terrible war. Jesus, I ask your compassion for all the poor, the dying of each day. Jesus, I ask for a special blessing for the Holy Father and for the whole Church, Jesus, I ask your special blessings for my poor country that is being so severely tried and for the whole world. O Jesus, may this terrible war cease and may a lasting and just peace ensue.

O Jesus, have mercy on us all. O Jesus, a special remembrance for all those who are in this camp. Jesus, bless in a special manner the Bishop, Mons. Cialeo and his diocese.

O Jesus, I ask you to bless in a special way all those persons whom I wish to remember now or I ought or whom I will remember afterwards; all those persons towards whom owe gratitude and love; all those persons who have been good to me or those to whom I have done some harm.

Jesus, I ask for me those graces which I have mentioned above, the others which I have in mind to ask. Then, Jesus, I beg you, grant me all those graces that I stand in need of: those graces which are useful and convenient for me, even if they are all different from those I have written above, Jesus, you know, you see, you can, you wish. Jesus, I submit everything to you.

Fr. Candido Valloggia, S. D. B.

Dehra Dun,

29—1—1944.

The Last Days of Father Valloggia

7th Feb. 1988: He was up as usual by 4 a.m. and went to the chapel. He was not well and so by about 6-15 a.m. he rushed back to his room, and as he reached the door he began to vomit blood. Fr. Mullore who lived next door noticed it and Fr. Valloggia was then rushed to St. Thomas Hospital, St. Thomas mount. It was discovered that Fr. Valloggia had ruptured a vessel near the aesophagus. He was given medicine and advised complete rest.

8th Feb.: He showed some signs of Improvement, but at 10 p.m. he vomited blood again. At 11-50 p.m. he was removed to the Vijaya Hospital. He remained there for 3 days undergoing several tests. It was found that he had gastroenteritis problems.

11th Feb.: Fr. Valloggia was shifted to Lady Wellington Nursing Home on the advise of some experts who advised surgery. But Fr. Valloggia continued to vomit blood, and surgery had to be postponed. For the next three days all efforts were made to arrest bleeding.

14th Feb.: He was moved to the intensive care unit. Various intravenous injections and transfusions were given to coagulate the blood, so as to stop the bleeding. But it was all in vain. and as a last measure the doctors decided to operate upon him.

18th Feb: The operation was fixed for 6-30 p.m. but he had a cardiac arrest at 5-00 p.m. The doctors handled it and made the heart beat through massage. Then he has on artificial respiration.

20th Feb: Fr. Valloggia breathed his last at 1-40 p.m. The body was taken to the General Hospital for embalming.

21st Feb: The mortal remains of Fr. Valloggia reached Poonamallee and were laid in state at the chapel of the Sacred Heart Novitiate. In the evening they were carried in procession solemnly to the Sacred Heart Seminary and a Solemn Mass was celebrated by the Salesian Provincial. The body lay in state the whole night in the Seminary Chapel.

22nd Feb: Priests, sisters, and crowds of poor people from the neighbourhood began to arrive to have a last glimpse of their beloved Father and Friend, and to take part in the final ceremonies. At 4-00 p.m. the mortal remains of Fr. Valloggia were carried in procession to the playground where the Holy Mass was to be held. Dr. Casimir, Archbishop of Madras-Mylapore, along with four past-pupil Bishops, and well over 300 priests concelebrated the solemn liturgy. The campus was filled with people. And Fr. Valloggia was solemnly laid to rest in the cemetary which he had himself prepared in the garden close to the entrance of the Seminary.

Fr. MULLORE ON Fr. VALLOGGIA

(This Article was written by Fr. Mullore just before his death)

It has been my singular privilege to have lived with the late Fr. Valloggia for nearly forty years. Looking back, I am more and more convinced that Fr. Valloggia was a special gift of God to the Sacred Heart Seminary, Poonamallee. Seminary is the training ground for future priests who should reflect Christ to the world. Hence, God sent a man who, in all his life, strove to imitate Christ in a very remarkable way. He could very well say with St. Paul: "Imitate me just as I imitate Christ".

Fr. Valloggia, the Priest

The priest is a mediator between God and men. He is a man of prayer, bringing down God's blessings on himself and an others.

Fr. Valloggia prayed unceasingly. He was the first one to come to the Chapel in the morning and the last one to leave it at night. He had the key of the Chapel. Formerly he used to open it at 4-00 a.m. In recent years he anticipated the time; from last year he started opening the chapel at 3-00 a.m. He was there from 3-00 a.m. to 7-00 a.m. at night also he would spend at least one hour praying, before he closed the chapel at 9-30 p.m. Besides these long hours along with God, Fr. Valloggia was quite regular and punctual to all the community practices of priestly. His sermons, conferences and Good Night talks were clear, practical and coming from the heart - reflection of his life. Fr. Valloggia spared no effort to inculcate decorum and cleanliness in the church. As confessor and Spiritual Father he was always available and the efficacy of his ministry was evident from the fact that the great majority of staff and students would go to him for confession and spiritual direction.

Fr. Valloggia's love for liturgy was not confined to the four walls of the seminary. He constructed new Chapels or renewed existing ones in several villages around Poonamallee, Paruthipet, Lourdupuram, Bathirimedu, Senneerkuppam, Chembarambakkam, Kizhmanagar are examples. He also saw to it that masses, Religious instructions, Feasts etc., were regularly conducted in these villages.

Singing is part and parcel of liturgy. Fr. Valloggia could sing well and he was equally good in playing harmonium. He took care to teach church music to the seminarians. For a number of years Fr. Valloggia was incharge of Marian sodality. He used this opportunity to inculcate solid Marian devotion.

Social Work : Realizing the role of Social work in bringing people to God, Fr. Valloggia undertook a number of activities which brought solace and hope to very many people.

- 1) **Dispensary :** Which was started many years ago, continues to serve a good number of people, especially the poor, every day.
- 2) Most of the poor people live in thatched huts which need repair and renewal every year. These people found in Fr. Valloggia a ready helper. He was also at their service in setting up water pumps, water tanks and similar essential needs.
- 3) **Laper's Colony :** Another very praise worthly service Fr. Valloggia did was the support of a colony of lepers near Avadi.
- 4) **Visiting Prison :** Fr. Valloggia regularly visited the inmates of the prison in Poonamallee bringing them moral comfort and material help.
- 5) Fr. Valloggia got bails of clothes from abroad and distributed them freely to the poor. It was his custom to buy sarees and dothies and distribute them to the poor during Christmas season.
- 6) In recent years he started supplying note books and school uniforms to school going children.
- 7) **Care Camp :** Fr. James Perepadan has written about Fr. Valloggia's deep concern for the poor people in the Care Camp near Paruthipet.
- 8) **Oratory Work :** Fr. Valloggia was a father and friend of the children and youth and this apostolate found a ready outlet in the Oratory work. He not only visited Oratories, but also liberally spent money for the success of the Oratory Day.
- 9) **Cultural Club of Poonamallee :** Not many may remember that together with Fr. Emmanuel Kottaram, Fr. Vollaggia founded and nurtured the Social and Cultural Club of Poonamallee, in which practically all the elite of the locality were members. It was a useful forum in which people of all religions and all walks of life could meet and exchange ideas. Although the Club ceased to function after the transfer of Fr. Kottaram, Fr. Valloggia's influence with the elite continued to exercise its beneficial fruit.

Fr. Valloggia, the Victim

"And those who belong to Christ Jesus have put to death their human nature with all its passions and desires" (Gal 5/24) Fr. Valloggia's life was a continual crucifixion. Some of his crosses were sent by providence; others were imposed by himself.

Crosses sent by Providence

His many ailments formed a heavy cross. Among them I may mentioned the following :

- 1) **Fileria** : Many do not know that Fr. Valloggia was suffering from this disease for more than twenty-five years. Because of it both his legs were swollen, and it also brought with it frequent fever, besides the difficulty in moving about.
- 2) **Asthma** is another ailment which troubled him frequently and for long time.
- 3) **Tooth ache** Owing to frequent tooth ache he suffered much.
- 4) **Stomach complaints** Also brought him much suffering.
- 5) **Inevitable mental sufferings** caused by different mental attitudes in the community.

These were enough to make Fr. Valloggia a real Victim; but in his generosity he added his own.

Voluntary Crosses;

It has been rightly said that community life is the best penance, for it demands constant and heroic self-discipline to live in a community doing one's duties well and without hurting the feelings of others. Fr. Valloggia achieved this to a very great extent.

Punctuality :

It is not at all easy to be regularly punctual. Fr. Valloggia could be seen doing everything punctually. It was a common saying in the community that one could adjust one's watch nothing the movements of Fr. Valloggia; his life was so well organized.

Attention to minute details: In whatever he did Fr. Valloggia strove to do it as perfectly as possible. To give one example, he was particular that trees and plants should be planted in straight lines. A tree—even a big one—it was found to be out of the line he would uproot it and plant it in line. One of the things which gave him pain and annoyance was the casual manner in which some in the community did their work.

Manual Work: Visitors to the S.H.S. are impressed by the sight of numerous trees and plants which adorn the campus. All those plants & trees bear eloquent testimony to the hard work of Fr. Valloggia. Every day from 3-00 to 5-00 p.m. he would be working in the garden. It was a matter of great edification to all, inmates and visitors. In the hospital he confided to me that the day before he was taken ill, he had tried to lift a big stone, and that might have caused rupture of a blood vessel, causing excessive haemorrhage. Fr. Valloggia understood and practised well the law of work given to man by the creator.

Man of Obedience: Fr. Valloggia's religious superiors will attest to his sense of prompt obedience. Even in most trying circumstances, even in things which went against his inclinations, he willingly obeyed. His last journey to Vijayawada was a typical case. It was just a month before his death. Fr. Valloggia was not quite well. On the other hand, the past pupils of S.H.S. in Andhra region were anxious to see him. Fr. Rector explained this to him and requested him to undertake the journey. Inspite of his ill-health, Fr. Valloggia agreed and he went. In fact, his visit gave much joy to the Fathers. To be a true disciple of Christ costs much; Fr. Valloggia paid the price gladly.

Man of Mortification

However tired or sick, Fr. Valloggia refused to take siesta at noon. During the siesta time he either wrote letters or mended his old, torn clothes. He used no easy-chair, though, as an asthma patient, he could rest better on an easy chair. I have never seen him using warm clothes even in the coldest days. Fr. Valloggia ate very little and for the last many years avoided meat and egg.

For most of us sleep is a most refreshing experience. In regard to Fr. Valloggia I doubt whether he ever slept soundly. Owing to asthma sleeping on the cot was difficult. Even the few hours of rest he allowed himself on bed were broken; he would wake up at the slightest noise. Although he could be seen nodding in his room, in the Chapel etc., he was ever alert and awake to be in time for everything.

Man of Poverty :

Fr. Valloggia remained men of the hermits of ancient times. Though he got money and things from India and abroad, he did not use them for himself, but for helping others. He was satisfied with the minimum and ordinary things. Objects like Radio, Transistor, T. V. set, Tape recorder never found entrance into his room for his use; he supplied such articles to institutions nearby.

No holidays : Even during summer holidays Fr. Valloggia remained in the seminary. His holidays usually coincided with the days of spiritual retreat. Even during summer holidays he kept up the usual schedule of work.

Man of Patience

Daily many came to Fr. Valloggia asking for help, some really deserving, others not so deserving. He listened to all with great patience and sent all away satisfied. Some times his face and gestures showed the annoyance he felt, but he would not let any harsh words to escape his lips. No small self control was needed to practise such patience.

In conclusion, Fr. Valloggia, gave all his life for the growth of S.H.S., and he gave it totally and joyfully. Generations of past pupils will remember him with love, admiration and gratitude. Four aspects of his example stand out :

1. Deep and constant union with God in prayer.
2. Tender love and compassion for the sick, poor, needy - the children.
3. Genuine love and concern for the past - pupils with whom he loved to keep contact through correspondence, visits and material help whenever requested.
4. Spirit of hard work and self - renunciation.

Fr. Valloggia was a bright light shining in the horizon of the S.H.S. Poonamallee. May he continue to inspire and guide priests for years and years to come.

Final Farewell to Fr. Valloggia

Dear Father Valloggia,

We, the community of SHS, the salesians of the province of India, the salesian family in India, the members of the religious institutes in and around Poonamallee, the parisheners, past - pupils, the poor whom you helped and all others here present, are gathered around you for the last time to say goodbye to you.

We miss you very much, dear Father. Your departure is so sudden that we find it very difficult to accept and yet we bow to God's ways.

You were a living history of the seminary. You know her from its beginning upto 20th of this month when the angel of death plucked you away from our midst.

How many priests have been helped by you in their formation; Their presence today in big numbers is a clear testimony that they love you and are appreciative of your role in their lives. How many of them were inspired by your holy priestly life. How many poor people in and around Poonamallee found their comfort in you. Perhaps the seminary had never seen so many poor people and school children who came to pay their respect to your mortal body and to pray for you. They are numberless. They too miss you very much. The religious Institutes around here could count on your priestly ministry any time of the day or night.

Your day would start very early by 3-30 a.m. You used to begin the day in the Church, in the presence of the Lord whom now are seeing face to face. You used to be so punctual in ringing the bell for the community to rise from sleep. You were always regular like a clock at various community practices, whether it be for prayer, classes, meals and so on. After a hurried break-fast, you would go round the campus of the seminary instructing the workers what they should do for the day. If the compound is so green and beautiful, it is mainly due to your hardwork and love for the seminary, Thank you, dear Father.

You used to go to visit the villages, poor people, the neighbouring institutes on bicycle forgetting that you were no more young. You even peddled to St. Thomas Mount at this age: You were more active at 73 than several of us who are in our twenties. You did not know to take rest. You took seriously the saying of Don Bosco: 'work, bread and paradise'. Like the good Shepherd you forgot yourself and only thought of the sheep that were in need of your help and assistance.

The number of letters you used to write everyday to your benefactors and friends to get help in order to render service to the poor and needy will not be so easily erased from our memory. Work was your passion. Even though you were getting old, you would never forget even the least thing that you were entrusted with. You did not know to say 'no' to any request made to you. Your death is a big loss to the people around Poonamallee to the salesian congregation, to the Church and to the Society.

How much repair work you used to do around in the seminary, cementing the broken floors, levelling the playgrounds, setting straight the plants and trees. You expressed once the desire of making calvary grotto for which you had been gathering stones. You are leaving us before realising your plan.

We miss you as confessor, teacher, spiritual director and a good companion. We used to tease you. We miss your gentle smile. Finally, dear Father, you are going to rest in the cemetery you prepared when you were Rector of the seminary. I remember you planned it all...there was no architect, no contractor but you were the all. With two masons, you constructed it. You were my Rector for 4 years when I came here in 1967 to join the teaching staff. During the past 8 years, you were my spiritual director, confessor and guide. I miss you. A BIG "thank you" for all that you have done for me and for all of us.

Help us all with your prayers to be good, responsible, of common sense (how often you used to repeat this word to the students in the goodnights) and dedicated citizens, christians, religious, seminarians and priests.

Good bye to you, dear Father Valloggia, till we meet in heaven.

22nd February, 1988.

Fr. Rayappa, S. D. B.

Rector.

As we knew him — Rectors, Colleagues

I did notice a difference between Fr. Valloggia that I saw in 1975-77 when I was Dean of Studies and Fr. Valloggia that I saw in 85-88. He bore the scars of many sufferings and ills. What I admired was that he knew to bear them silently and with a spirituality.

The day and night long procession of people of all walks of life from in and around Poonamallee who came to pay their last respects to Fr. Valloggia laid in state in the seminary chapel before his funeral was a monumental witness to their love and gratitude towards him. This bespeaks the great love, kindness and Christian compassion that he had borne for them during his life time and which he showed forth in humble, silent and untiring service. In this he was a living and vibrant example of Christian concern and neighbourliness, specially to the poor, the needy and those in difficulties. He has thus laid the foundation and continues to be the inspiring figure for the involvement of the seminary and the seminarians with their neighbourhood now. Of this the Fr. Valloggia Kalviyagam is a witness.

Fr. Joseph Jaswant Raj, S. D. B.

I lived and wored with Rev. Fr. Valloggia for 17 years in the seminary where this gem of a Salesian priest moulded hundreds of ministers of Christ for India, Sri Lanka and Thailand for nearly half-a-century. Some of the sterling qualities of this priest-maker in my view are: gentleness, great and caring concern for the poor, authentic spirit of detachment, mortification, recollection and silence, a deep spirit and practice of prayer, hospitality, unwavering fidelity to the magisterium, indefatigable work. He was a living Gospel for everyone to come closer to Christ.

These outstanding qualities to which others could be added do not mean that he was totally free from all human weakness, no one ever was, is, or will be. He was reluctant to take decisions, particularly unpleasant ones, oversensitive to criticism and quite unwilling to accept newways. But these easily pardonable traits in no way tarnish the strikingly suave, amiable and ascetical figure that all those who came into contact with him have of this great apostle. Dear to God and man his memory is a great treasure.

Fr. Abraham Kadaplackal, S. D. B.

Fr. Valloggia practised the virtue of poverty to a heroic degree. Though he received money and other things from India and abroad, he never used them for himself but gave them away to others. He was satisfied with the minimum of ordinary things. His room was simple. Objects like radio, T.V., tape-recorder etc., never found a place in it, although he supplied such articles to institutions nearby. His religious superiors will attest to his sense of prompt obedience. Even in the most trying circumstances, even in things which went against his inclination, he willingly obeyed once the superior had asked him to do a thing. His last Journey to Vijayawada is a typical case. It was just a month before his death and he was not quite well. But the past-pupils of the seminary in the Andhra-region were anxious to see him. When the Rector explained this to him and requested him to undertake the journey, despite his ill-health, he agreed and went, thus giving much joy to the past-pupils, for whom he had a genuine love and concern and with whom he loved to keep contact through correspondence, visits and material help whenever requested. He joyfully dedicated most of his life (45 years) to the formation of the seminarians. Generations of past-pupils will remember him with love, admiration and gratitude. To be a true disciple of Christ costs much and Fr. Valloggia paid this price gladly.

Fr. Valloggia's life was a continual crucifixion. Some of his crosses were sent by Providence, others were self-imposed. He suffered from filaria for more than twenty-five years. Consequently both his legs were swollen and he had frequent bouts of fever, besides the difficulty in moving about. He suffered from asthma, an ailment which brought him much pain and discomfort. Besides, he used to suffer from toothache and stomach troubles. Unwilling to go to doctors unless obliged to do so by his superiors, he would suffer all these silently and treat them himself.

Fr. M. Rayappa, S. D. B.



In my five years with him, I have never seen him refusing to go for a spiritual ministry, whether it was mass or sacraments or ministry of the word, and that too at any time irrespective of any place, though he had a preference for S. H. Novitiate.

He was always ready to help people, especially the poor, but he felt much when people were ungrateful, he would even mention the fact.

He could joke even at trying times and when tired; after returning from Bangalore by Brindavan Express and practically standing in the crowded bus from Central to Karayanchavdi. I met him as he was entering the Seminary. "Oh Father you look so tired" I said, "Was there any one travelling with you?"—I meant any confreres or friends to help him. 'There were so many people travelling with me in the compartment' came the ready answer and he laughed.

Fr. P. D. Thomas, S. D. B.



The thing which struck one most regarding Fr. Valloggia was his readiness and ability to forgive immediately any harsh remark or disrespect or injury. I have seen him speak in a most friendly way to people who had insulted him just a few minutes earlier. It looked as if he had never heard anything! This was a regular thing with him.

His piety was most obvious. He used to be the last to leave the Chapel in the night, and he would be up very early in the morning every day and spend at least an hour in the chapel before the rest of the community would begin to go in.

His love for the poor was also very evident. For their sake he was ready to bear humiliations.

Fr. T. J. Joseph, S. D. B.



My association with Fr. Valloggia lasted only for two years between 1967 and 1969. During which he was my Rector and I was the bursar of the seminary. In those days the bursar was also the vice rector. I found him to be a man of God and a Father to each and everyone of us. He accepted his position as the head and leader of this important institution of the Church as an opportunity given by God to render his humble service to both the members of the staff and the seminarians. Often I used to see him in the evenings walking up and down the corridors accompanying a

seminarian to give his spiritual direction. He was not satisfied with merely giving advice and directions. But in his priestly life and pastoral ministry he revealed his strong conviction in the values he tried to inculcate in future priests. He practiced with great joy what he preached to others.

Fr. P. Christie, S. D. B.

I met Father Valloggia when he was already in the evening of his life. His glorious youthfulness was a thing of the past. His creative and contributive adulthood had weaned. The crescendo of his creative period was growing more and more feeble. Nevertheless, he was weighed down with a vision; a vision which moved him resolutely to seek his MASTER not in the spectacular and extraordinary but in the poor, hungry, thirsty, naked, diseased, alone in the least of his brothers and sisters.

It was a pleasure to note that all his life he had stressed the need for gracious living and generous giving—two factors which enriched his life. In fact, he was rich. His richness lied in his humanness.

He had not organized seminars and held round-table conferences on how to eradicate poverty, nor had he written any book or made any convincing public speech, nor had he walked in-protest against the injustices of the oppressive structure in society. Still he offered a plan of action!

Fr. Gerri, O. M. I.

As we knew him — Alumni Bishops

As spiritual director and confessor for all the years of my seminary life he has been my guide. I continued to get his advice and counsel even after leaving the seminary by spending long time with him whenever I happened to go to the seminary. That was always a few times in a year. Even as bishop he continued to be my spiritual guide. I spoke to him plainly of my difficulties and plans and asked his advice and prayers.

I think of him as a holy priest who was an example to follow. His getting up early and going to prayer touched me much. I too followed him all my life in rising early at 4-30 or 5-00 a.m. and saying my prayers and meditation before the mass. His love for work both spiritual and material helped me very much to be always busy and active. I started imitating his kindness and sympathy for the poor and continue as much as I can. All his life he stood before me as a model priest to follow.

I could see him only for a few minutes at the hospital when he prepared himself for his last journey. He asked me "are you going back to Cuddapah?" He meant that I should remain with him or near by. Such was his love for me. He loved and thought about me more than I did about him. Even now I feel that he is closer to me since he is with God.

Bishop Aruliah, Cuddapah.



Looking back to the seminary life in Poonamallee about 30 years ago I cannot help recalling these fond memories and fine impressions on our dear and beloved Father Valloggia.

He was a man of steadfastness and regularity. He was always with the community at the right time for prayers, confessions, meals and classes. He knew how to combine 'pray and work' pretty well, e.g., he was always the first in the chapel long before dawn to commune with God, and he spent his leisure time in the evening with much sweat in the fields and in the gardens. Above all his great heart was overwhelmingly filled with

Christlike love for the poor. Amidst the poor he looked very happy like fish in the water. His main concerns of his last few years were just for the poor. He sacrificed his sleep every night to write letters to benefactors abroad to beg for charity for his beloved poor. Meeting him at the grand celebration of the Golden Jubilee of the seminary in September 1987 I gave him US \$100. in cash as a gift. He said, "Thank you, your, excellency, this is the practical real gift that I can make use of for my poor ones.

Bishop John Bosco Manat, Ratchaburi, Thailand.



I had the unique privilege of having Rev. Fr. Valloggia as prefect of studies, professor, confessor and rector. He was a model in every field. I joined the seminary in 1949. Full of energy, prone to anger at the least provocation, I was formed and moulded by Rev. Fr. Valloggia. True, I am not the masterpiece but the fault is not that of Fr. Valloggia but mine. I still remember the gentle way he would correct us when he was prefect of studies. With a disarming smile expressive of his child-like innocence he would tell me "Brother Mathew, it is not convenient that you look back and side...try to concentrate on your studies...In the football court, try to keep your place. Kindly follow the table manners - eat slowly etc".

What has impressed me most in Rev. Fr. Valloggia were his qualities of mind and heart. His love and concern for others and his extreme sensitiveness not to hurt anyone were proverbial. All that St. Paul speaks of love or charity in his letter to the Corinthians can be well applied to Rev. Fr. Valloggia.

Bishop Matthew Cheriankunnel, Kurnool.



I would like to recall two episodes about Fr. Valloggia.

One of them took place soon after my assuming the job of Plumber in the seminary. After starting the motor, on that particular day early in the morning I was passing by the side of the Chapel and I saw him reciting the Breviary. Nothing distracted him when he was immersed in prayer. My stepping inside the Chapel and standing very close to him, nor the big mosquito, sucking his blood, made any movement in him.

The other instance took place after his becoming Rector of the seminary. One of the first year Philosophy students went to request permission to go to the Central Station to meet his uncle, who did not have the time to visit the seminary due to the short duration between the connecting trains. This seminarian, not knowing that Fr. Valloggia's vocabulary did not have the word 'NO', instead only "is it convenient Brother", quickly responded, "very convenient, Father; Thank you Father", and left the room and proceeded to Madras.

Bishop Remigius, Kumbakonam.



My recollections and impressions go back to the year 1950, when I joined the seminary to start my Latin course. These are bound to be similar to the experiences of my companions, as well as all lived together in the same place with the same people. These experiences cover not only the span of 10 years of my seminary life but also the later period as priest and Bishop.

When I joined the seminary, he was the prefect of studies and as such he was in charge of all curricular and extracurricular activities in the seminary which gave him the opportunity to work closely with the seminarians and influence them with his saintly life. We never found him angry-he always swallowed it. Whatever he did, he did it with great charity and delicacy. He would not command any one but only kindly remark; "Brother, it is not convenient to do" and that was enough; the brother would not do it. That touched his heart more deeply than a harsh command.

He practiced to the full the preventive method of Don Bosco, not only by his omnipresence but above all by the good example of kind and holy life. He was like a good spirit that moved on the verandahs of the seminary following every one to help, to guide, to correct and I believe, also to prevent mischief. So it was the saying in the seminary: "If you want to meet Fr. Valloggia, remain stationary, he will come to you". Be sure he was there in a few minutes' time. He was always in search of our welfare.

Bishop George Mamatassery (Tura)

As we knew him — Alumni Priests

When one speaks about Rev. Fr. Valloggia, and says 'He has been always a Religiously Religious and a Priestly Priest' everything is said. Nothing more, nothing less can be said of saintly Fr. Valloggia.

Fr. A. Fernandez, Vellore.



Only a man who has learnt the art of being happy always, in all the situations of life, can beam an innocent smile. If one's interior life is filled with tensions and worries he cannot be cheerful. Fr. Valloggia is one who was cheerful and has an innocent smile. He had a sack for cracking jokes. Let me narrate two incidents.

After my ordination, I bloated and put up some weight. When I went to the seminary, for the 'New Priests Day', seeing my figure, Father Valloggia said, "Father, where do you get rice, father? (Imagine the tone, the movement of head and hands, the smile on his lips, with which he usually speaks). I just smiled. Then he continued to say", what do the people say, Father? When they look at you, don't they say some thing?" I had a big laughter.

Fr. Joseph Raj, Pondicherry.



Rev. Fr. Valloggia had written me a letter on 15th July '87 the extract of which is given below:—

"You must be satisfied with the rain you had. Here the drought is continuing. There is no rain. The condition of many people is really pitiful. The heat gives me also continuous stomach pain. This is going on for the past three months. When will heavens give us some rain?"

From the above you can make out that he was suffering from stomach pain for nearly 10 months.

For me he was a very kind & understanding priest. He was always available to us. In a special way he took great interest in the oratories and the poor people of the locality. For me he must have gone straight to heaven.

Fr. John Samala, S. D. B.



We cannot think of the Seminary without Fr. Valloggia, its lifegiving soul. That light is no more, but the brightness of this star will ever shine in the horizon of Poonamallee. How affable, how dutiful, how hard working Fr. Valloggia was, a shining example of a saintly priest. How Christ like he was in helping the poor and the down trodden. I am sure that the heroic virtues he practised left lasting impression in the minds of hundreds of priests who had their training under him.

It is of course a wise decision to have his burial in the seminary itself. We, the past pupils will have a chance to visit his tomb whenever we visit the seminary.

Fr. Joseph Palakkattukunnel, Palai.



If I am a Priest today it is because of the encouragements and counsels, Fr. Valloggia gave me during my trials, difficulties and doubts. He had a soft corner for me. Though he was most busy, he was ready to spend any amount of time to help me.

Fr. Valloggia taught me for 10 years (1 year of Latin till Priesthood), I have never seen him getting angry or showing resentment. If he does not approve of something he will calmly say, "Brother, is it convenient .. ?" but never an angry word came from his mouth. When he pointed out a mistake he did it with love, affection and understanding, telling "Brother, try" Though Father Valloggia had to take classes daily without any free-period, he never sat down while teaching. I have never heard him speak about himself. He spent his life fully for others.

Fr. P. M. George, Madras - Mylapore.

It was only with great sorrow that I could hear the news about the death of our most dear and ever loving Father Valloggia. Here we got the telegram very late so none of us could go and take part in the funeral service and have a last look at him. Though we could not be there physically we were there with our spirit and heart. We the Fathers and Brothers lost a great Father, Kind, loving, a friend, a saint; and the poor people around Poonamallee lost a compassionate father. We said Mass for him and prayed in a special way though he does not require our prayers. I remember the good old days when I worked with Fr. Valloggia during games time, making path, planting trees and making the crooked trees straight. In fact, last time I came to Poonamallee for his jubilee he told me that the trees we planted are now very big. I could not forget those old days. I often speak about Fr. Valloggia to my companions.

Fr. Joseph Kochayankanel, M. S. T.



It was in the year 1964 that I met Fr. Valloggia for the first time. Soft and gentle was his voice. Kind and loving was his look. Generous and understanding was his heart. In October 1985 I saw him last at the seminary premises. His memory was vivid and he never forgot any one of his students. He was always concerned about the welfare of all and would patiently listen to everything.

No one was afraid to approach him and Fr. Valloggia was able to allocate time for everyone to meet him. Whenever I think of Fr. Valloggia it is his kindness and tender love that appear before me. It was a shock for me when I saw the telegram announcing his death. It is hard to believe that he is dead. He lives in our memory always. May he rest in peace.

Fr. Nicholas, (Jaffna).



I wanted to write to you as soon as the sad news reached us. Fr. Valloggia is no more in our midst. A life-time spent in the S. H. S. - really a glorious and holy example. He was like a patriarch, now gathered to his ancestors. Let us pray for him, rather pray to him.

Fr. Kurian Valiamangalam, M. S. T.

The saintly soul of Fr. Valloggia is gone to heaven to receive his eternal reward. Though he is no more physically with us, nevertheless he is and he will be always with us in spirit. His death is not only a great loss to us the alumni of the seminary or the Salesian congregation, but also to the people around us especially the poor and needy who find themselves utterly deprived of their loving father and great benefactor. Every sand he has trodden, every plant and tree he planted is mourning and weeping with its leaves and flowers at his departure. The past pupils including his colleagues and students will have many things to say about this heroic and saintly son of Don Bosco. Hence I leave this job to my fellow priests and companions.

Fr. Kuriakose Pallikunnel, V. C.

Corrections without a word:

Fr. Valloggia used to go round to see that everything was done properly. We used to say: "Do not look for Fr. Valloggia, you will never reach him. Instead stand stationary in a place, you are sure to meet him. While going round he will come that way."

Naturally, he would be just there when we played some pranks or mischiefs. It was in the year 1950 or 1951 "one of the Bros. was fooling one of his companions calling him funny names, and going after him. His companion got annoyed, and gave a good hit on his back saying; "Do you follow me harassing." Just as he turned he saw Fr. Valloggia smiling at them. He did not say a word but walked off. In those days, it was a rather serious offence. This happened between 4-00 and 5-30 p.m. Soon everybody knew it. At supper the same day, we were speculating as to what punishment the offenders could be given. As far as I know the very presence of Fr. Valloggia was the correction. There were not called, if I am not mistaken.

Once we went for a picnic. We wanted to cover the whole of Yercaud hills by evening. Fr. Valloggia was also with us. We left in small groups. My companions were feeling thirsty. I too. No fruits were seen. Finally, on the way, I saw an orange tree with a few fruits on the top. I climbed up, plucked them and was dropping them into the hands of my companions. Just then Fr. Valloggia passed that way. He looked up, smiled and continued his journey. That was all, nothing more.

One day, he began the good night with a story: A preacher was preaching the retreat in a parish. The hearts of everyone were touched and all started weeping. There was only one person who was not weeping. So the preacher called him and asked him: "Why is that you were not touched." He said: "I do not belong to this parish."

Then came the application: "Sometimes spades and pickaxes are seen abandoned in the garden. I ask the Brothers nearby: why are those implements left there! They say, it is the gardener who is to take them to the store-room," All had a good laugh. The lesson was never forgotten.

Fr Anthoney Mookenthottam, M. S. F. S.



"Brother Sebastian, difficulties are to be overcome, and not to be escaped", said Fr. Valloggia to me was I tried to escape a difficult duty assigned to me by him, when I was in the S. H. Seminary, Poonamallee. Recalling my memory about Fr. Valloggia, I see him as an exemplary priest. Often I have asked myself, what Fr. Valloggia would do in a situation in which I was, and I would imitate him. Such was the force of his life-example in my priestly formation.

Fr. Valloggia was the first to be in the Seminary Chapel every morning. His devoted posture and concentration in prayer was an example for all. During the day he was regular to the Visits to the Blessed Sacrament and Community Prayer. He would be the last to leave the chapel at night after night prayers.

Not only in chapel but also in all places where common prayer was said, his spirit of prayer was evident. He appeared to be always in communion with God. His serene appearance of re-collection and transcendence always emanated the divine presence. He was always tuned to the wave-length of God.

Fr. Valloggia is a legend. His life was reminiscent of the life of a saint. During my seminary days, I used to be sceptical about saints. But having encountered Fr. Valloggia, I was faced with a living saint. And against facts we have no arguments! Self-sacrifice, self-effacement, unostentatiousness, untiring patience, deep humility-was his style of life. I used to wonder how people could be so humble.

When I had some personal problems with some members of the staff, to get his favour and support, I used to voluntarily opt for manual work with him instead of games. But when I saw him working so arduously and incessantly, sometimes gasping for breath while digging big ditches unmindful of himself and his health, I joined him in the manual work for reasons other than the above mentioned. Fr. Valloggia had an uncommon ardour for manual work. During the games time Fr. Valloggia spent in digging big ditches to plant coconut trees and other trees. He is the only Salesian I know who spent time in manual work during the games time.

Fr. George Therukattil, M. C. B. S.



Fr. Valloggia is no more with us but he leaves behind him the great values he stood for—hard work, which included at least an hour of manual work every day (to which he was faithful till the day he had to be taken to the hospital), gentleness, simplicity of life-style and boundless love for the poor.

Fr. Lawrence Pius, Madras-Mylapore



Final three days on his death bed, at the Wellington Hospital-Madras, Fr. Valloggia gave a spectacle of Jesus, agony on the cross, — extreme suffering, eyes closed, not a whisper on his lips and hands extended a little.

Everyone at the first glimpse of Fr. Valloggia was well impressed as a person of gentle, meek, humble, simple natured and we may even say a divine atmosphere about him. True to his founder, St. John Bosco's way of life, Fr. Valloggia impressed in the way of sanctity and holiness of life to all those who came his way.

This bears witness at his funeral day mass. Thousands of people from all walks of life and creed, came in haste to have a final look at him, as he journeyed to Eternity to his Lord and Master. Specially the five hundred priests and Bishops from all parts of India, whom he trained in the school of love of Christ and Mary The Blessed Mother came to the Eucharistic celebration to bear witness of their loyalty and love to him.

Fr. P. T. Arulappa, Madras-Mylapore

Fr. Valloggia never liked to say 'NO' to any one who approached him. I can never forget his use of the word 'Convenient' to do that?" He taught us to be magnanimous. He would never hurt the feelings of others. He was a living saint.

Fr. Valloggia could predict events. On the day his mother passed away he told us in the class that she would die that day. He had no previous information. Last January when he came to Gunadala to see his past pupils he predicted that it would be his last visit,, and it came true. He actually passed away just one month afterwards, I was glad that he ate the Custard apple I had brought from my garden. I am sure he is praying for all of us from heaven.

Fr. Job Kottoor, Eluru.



He was a man for the poor and the downtrodden. I have been many poor people approaching him freely and getting some financial help or some consoling words from him. He identified himself with the poor. He has special love and affection for them.

He spoke little and listened more to the people. Just as a father listens to his child, he listened to others patiently. I can say that he enjoyed listening to others.

In spite of his heavy work, he was always available to others. At anytime, we could approach him and he received all joyfully.

We could feel the spiritual atmosphere in his presence. No doubt he was a man of prayer. Very often he was found in the Church and in the confessional. He gave first importance to his priestly duties.

Fr. Joji, Guntur.

I recall the service that he had done to the government Care Camp, the place where the poorest of the poor are forced to live for three years or so in fulfilment of court sentence. Will there be any independence day celebrations there this year ? In the past Fr. Valloggia was there to see to the celebrations there. He spared no pains to make them happy on the day. I had the unique fortune to be associated with him in his work there. Whenever I approached him for Care Camp he never said 'no', He used to visit them often and they to felt at home in his presence, His sole motive was to see them happy and cheerful. This great quality of love for the poor did attract me very much. Together with his love for the poor and needy his devotion. to duty is remarkable' In his charity coupled with his sense of dedication he stands out as a model and as a guide to me in my life. May his soul rest in peace and may his life continue to inspire many people in the years to come.

Fr. James Pereppadan, Ernakulam.



I knew Fr. Valloggia as spiritual father for four years during my stay at Poonamallee. As everyone else I also recall him as one of self-sacrifice; One whose thoughts and deeds were always for the spiritual welfare of others. I had also an opportunity to work with him as a deacon in the neighbouring sub-station. His example and words still inspire me.

Fr. S. Amalraj, Salem.



Good Fr. Valloggia was a combination of a loving father and a tender mother. When one was in mental trouble he was there to console and encourage. When one was physically sick he was ready with some good medicine. In my own case I could have been very miserable at times if good Fr. Valloggia was not there to guide, encourage and make me happy. I reproduce here what he wrote to me on 10—12—87 just to show how concerned he was about every seminarian who had contact with him. "Dear Father, how is life going on ? You are keeping well? You can still do much work. I am old, but I am kept busy in the Seminary and outside."

I have framed this letter along with his photo and hung it in my room. Whenever I see this I am encouraged to carry on my duties with new vigour. We have really lost a great man who was an inspiration to everyone in the Seminary. May his soul rest in peace.

Fr. I. Lourdusamy, Coimbatore.



Father Valloggia was a man of understanding and great patience. This patience and understanding was the out-come of his great charity which is the fulcrum of Christian life.

If today I am a priest, it is because of the understanding of Fr. Valloggia, for which he had never to repent. To explain this I have to type pages after pages and not necessary also. Let us try our best to follow the good example of Fr. Valloggia to serve Him and His people.

Fr. M. P. Joseph, Warangal.



Fr. Valloggia a man in whom all good qualities were blended.

- man of prayer,
- man of hard work,
- man of simplicity,
- a good professor,
- man of sacrifice,
- man with a child-like heart,
- man of poor people,
- a good musician,
- man who could adjust himself to any situation,
- man who imitated Don Bosco closely,
- a good confessor and spiritual father.

Fr. Vincent Paulraj, Ooty.

In our life we meet countless people. Among these we may single out just one or two how influenced us most. Late Rev. Fr. Valloggia was such a rare individual. He has impressed me as nobody else had done.

Which of his characteristics has impressed me most? His invincible patience? His heroic penance? His love for study? His struggle against obstacles? Yes, all these and many more! But I think I should say his eminent saintliness has impressed me most.

Fr. P. M. Joseph, Tanjore.



Father Candido Valloggia was Rector of the Seminary all through the seven years we were there. He was a Priest detached from money and things, and was generous and understanding to the poor. On one occasion one of the seminarians found someone stealing money from Fr. Valloggia's room and reported the matter to the Superiors, Fr. Valloggia had no unkind word about the man. Just a few days before his death Fr. Valloggia came to Vijayawada to meet Fr. John Lens and the Poonamallee past pupils. He asked for some change and coins at the railway station because he wanted not to disappoint the many poor people who detected the flowing white beard and cassock, and rushed to him for a smile and a few coins. Once on his seat in the train one could notice him immediately starting the rosary sitting in a very composed posture which he always kept, even when working in the garden of Poonamallee.

The understanding and insight of Fr. Valloggia is the reason for fostering and saving so many Priestly vocations. The patient and trustful way he conveyed his corrections inspired confidence and helped change hearts and correct motives. Although one might have been confused in the oral examinations when he used to insist on foot notes, the convincing way he taught Spiritual Theology rings in one's ears even after so many years. Father Valloggia continues to be an inspiration and model in spirituality, which alone matters in the long run.

Fr. C. V. Alexander, Vijayawada.

When I think of Fr. Valloggia, the first thing that comes to my mind is his capacity for hard work. He was ready to do any job, even manual works. He was not lazy at all. We, priests should busy ourselves also with manual work.

Fr. Maria Arul Vianney, Ooty.



It was something special of Fr. Valloggia that he was everywhere with you as a Guardian Angel. He was near you whenever you needed him. He was behind you when you tried to do something not so good. He was hearing you whenever you talked something not proper. He was there not to catch and punish you but to assist and prevent you from doing anything bad. He was all sympathy and kindness even when correcting you. He was always a FATHER!.

The life of Fr. Valloggia was most exemplary and inspiring. He often spoke by deeds than by words. It was really edifying to see him working with spade, his cassock dirty with soil, to teach the value of manual work. He was spending long hours in prayer inspiring you to pray well. He was leading a life of great mortification by denying himself even the ordinary comforts of life, like using of fan when hot. He was so patient and kind that it was almost impossible to make him get angry. I still remember him taking us for long walks through steep hills any thorny bushes telling us when we complained "as future missionaries of Assam we should get used to such hard life".

Fr. Cherian Moolamattam, Tezpur.



I am convinced that Fr. Valloggia is a saint. He was Christ-like. Among the many virtues which shone in his life I would like to point out the following in a particular way.

His great love of the poor and children; his humility; his innocent smile! his spirit of hard work concern not to hurt anyone; his admirable patience (he has demonstrated that one can be a Rector of a big seminary for ten long years without getting angry !)

Because of these qualities every body had only good words to speak about Fr. Valloggia.

May he be raised to the honours of the altar one day !

Fr. Mani Vazhacharikal, Tellicherry



Fr. Valloggia was a zealous priest. He practised what he preached; he was not a hypocrite. He was simple and humble and at the same time, serious enough to follow the Gospel minutely. This is what I felt in my contact with him.

Fr. Kuriakose Thekeparambil, Tellicherry.



I really don't know what to write about Fr. Valloggia, for it is difficult to choose; everything in his life was remarkable. Because of this, he is the person whom I quote in my talks as an example for holiness, sense of dedication and hard, very hard work. I wish I had even a fragment of these qualities he had. May he rest in peace !

Fr. Sebastian Chelat, Manipur.



Fr. Valloggia is gone, but not forgotten. My association with him was more than intimate. As the Catechist of the House, he looked after me carefully, when I was sick. As my Confessor, he listened patiently to my troubles, guided me spiritually and encouraged me in my vocation. As the Director of Social Action, I drew inspiration from him for my Sunday apostolate. As the Rector he was kindness personified. His spirit of dedication and hard work needs no mention. Above all, I had the privilege of assisting him as his secretary. How can I ever forget him ? May he continue to inspire us from above !

Fr. Jacob Alukkal, Shillong

Fr. Valloggia for me was a living saint, now a saint in heaven. He fostered my Vocation, as Spiritual Director, Rector, and confessor. He suffered a lot but never pained others. He was a man of prayer, humble, and simple and austere.

May his cause for beatification be taken up in the nearest future.

Fr. Balaswamy, Vijayawada.



It is no exaggeration to say that God in his wonderful Providence sent Rev. Fr. Valloggia to the Seminary of Poonamallee for a considerable long time with a special purpose. He was sent there, I am sure, to give good training, good edification to all the priests and seminarians who come in contact with him. I am sure all those who passed through this institution had the golden opportunity to imitate this living saint as he was called by many of us at that time. He gave us good example of humility, obedience, chastity and charity. I am very happy to say that in my 7 years of training at Poonamallee—Rev. Fr. Valloggia was my spiritual Director and confessor and I really thank God for giving me such an exemplary priest, in the person of Fr. Valloggia. In my 27 years of priestly life I have tried to imitate him in many things, though I may not have succeeded in many things.

Fr. N. C. Thomas, Vizag

Fr. Valloggia's work for the Franciscan Sisters of St. Joseph

A new era had dawned for the Congregation of the Franciscan Sisters of St. Joseph at the time of Archbishop Louis Mathias. He had a special predilection for the Congregation from the time of its humble beginning and began to show much interest in its well being and growth. When his last days were approaching, he had chosen Fr. Valloggia and entrusted this Congregation to his paternal care. In order to carry out the mission which had been entrusted to him by Archbishop Mathias, he wholeheartedly lent a large share of his time and attention towards the formation of our sisters. During his 50 years of life in the seminary he dedicated a part of his life for the betterment of our Congregation. Forty years of his tireless and selfless service enabled us slowly take deep roots and grow and have an identity.

Though Fr. Valloggia was a foreigner he became a man of the soil and above all became one among us. He led an exemplary and challenging life which made the sisters to accept him as their confessor and spiritual director. He helped to establish the Novitiate for the formation of our sisters. For building up this house, he himself worked hard. A beautiful chapel was built for private liturgy and community prayers. With the help of some of our sisters he ran a dispensary in a small building near the seminary. Eventually he built a permanent dispensary and made arrangements for distribution of free medicines and medicines at concessional rate. In order to better the situation of uneducated girls from poor families Fr. Valloggia started a Tailoring Institute. His intention was to train them for self employment. The Juniorate building is his last symbol of love for our congregation. It is sad that he did not live to see the completion of this building.

As a conclusion to his dedicated service to the Congregation it is significant that his body from the hospital was first brought to the Sacred Heart Novitiate.

Sr. Shirly, F.S.J.

