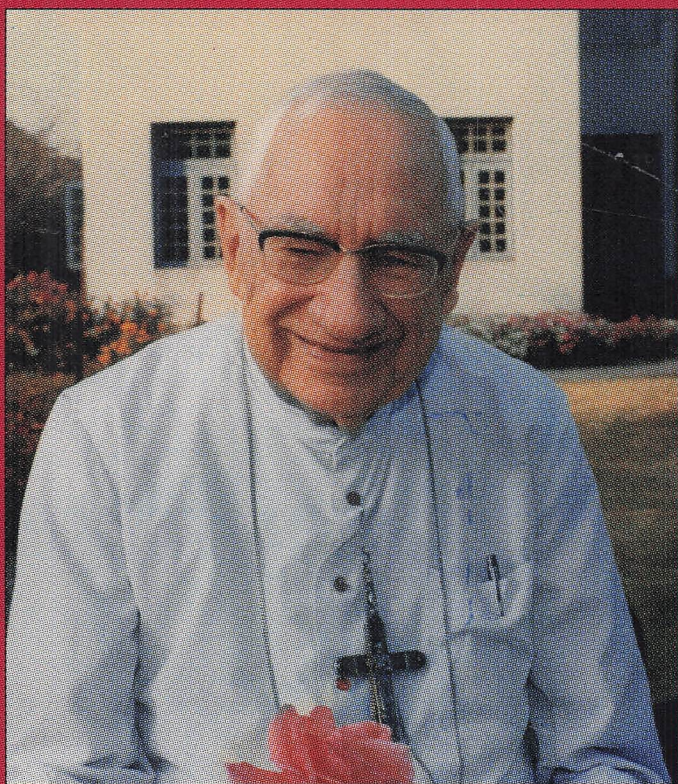


# *Reflections*

**on the life of Our  
Father Founder**



**Bishop Louis LaRavoire Morrow**

# **REFLECTIONS ON THE LIFE OF OUR FATHER FOUNDER**

**BISHOP LOUIS LARAVOIRE MORROW**

**24 December 1892 - 31 August 1987**

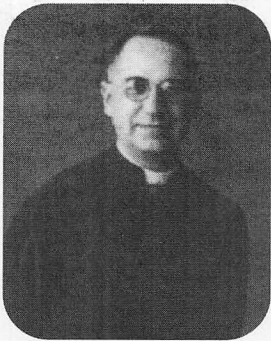


For our Community Reflection  
during the Last Week of August Each Year  
in Commemoration of Father Bishop's  
"Going Home" Day !



**Sisters of Mary Immaculate, Krishnagar,  
West Bengal, India  
2004**

(For private circulation only)



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# FATHER BISHOP

God's Gift to Us and to His Church

1892 - 1987

God, our most loving and tender Father, from all eternity designed to raise up our little congregation to love him and help others to love him. To this end, he chose our **beloved Father Bishop as his instrument**, just like Moses, to play a role in his plan of salvation. We now reflect on our Father Founder's life, his faith and trust in God, and the consequent good God accomplished through him.

## Birth and Infancy



Baby Louis at Weatherford,  
Texas - a few months old



Parents: Joseph LaRavoire and  
Isabel Morrow and Children:  
Frank, Louis and Margarita

**Bishop Louis LaRavoire** (pronounced La-Ra-vwàhr) **Morrow**, our beloved Father Bishop was born of an ecumenical marriage on **24 December 1892**, at **Weatherford, Texas, U.S.A.** His father **Joseph LaRavoire**, was a strong and ardent French Catholic who, as a youth, had aspired to the priesthood. His **mother, Isabel Morrow**, American born, was of Irish heritage, and a staunch New Jersey Episcopalian.



Louis at the age of four

God gifted Joseph and Isabel with three lovely children: Frank, Louis and Margarita. The arrival of Louis on the scene was greeted with great joy. He was **baptized** at one month on **22 January 1893**, in St. Stephen's church Weatherford and was named **Louis** as his father wished, for he had great love and reverence for the saintly King Louis IX of France. The boy, as he grew, completely stole the heart of his mother and of all, with his long curls, charmingly mischievous ways, and his vivacity.

## **Life in Mexico**

When Louis was five years old, for business reasons the family moved to Mexico City, Mexico, where Spanish is the native tongue. Here Louis was to spend the next 25 formative years of his life. Margarita, his only sister, was born in Mexico in 1901, gladdening the heart of her parents and brothers.

## **In the School of Our Blessed Mother**

In 1903, Luisito was enrolled at the **Boarding School of the Salesians of St. John Bosco**, in Mexico City, where he received a **very sound spiritual formation** that paved the way to his Salesian vocation.

In his Good Night talks, Father Bishop often recalled for us memories of his childhood delights. In one of his talks he said:

**I was really a 'Mamma's boy' at that age, because my Father was always working far away. Whenever he was free he would come home and those were real feast days for Mamma, Frank and me. Margarita was just a baby then. He would take us out, but Mamma stayed at home preparing his favourite dishes and delicious cookies. When we returned home, oh, how we enjoyed being together! He taught us how to make the Sign of the Cross, our Catholic prayers, and to sing the 'Our Father' in Latin, which he learned as a seminarian. He was very proud of his French origin.**

**I was very much attached to my mother and I owe my vocation to religious life and priesthood to her. So, when I came to school, I just naturally turned to our Blessed Mother and to Jesus. While a boy, I made a promise never to go for recreation without going to make a short visit to the Blessed Sacrament.**

This short talk throws some light on his delightful childhood, the loving family background, and the religious education that he received from his devoted parents. Never did Joseph LaRavoire realize that his Luisito would fulfill the aspiration of his own heart – to be a priest of God.



## **Attracted to the Little Way of Spiritual Childhood**

Luisito first heard of the devotion to St. Therese of Lisieux in 1906

**My dear children, it seemed providential how I came to know about the Little Way. I was about fourteen years old, and a pupil of the Salesians in Mexico, when I first learned of St. Therese of the Child Jesus. It was in the year 1906 to 1907. I had an opportunity to visit Lisieux in 1929, and speak to the three sisters of our patroness.**

**From what I heard of her life, I liked very much her simplicity in wishing to be merely a tiny little child of God. Later during my novitiate in 1912, I read her 'Story of a Soul.' I was deeply impressed by her Little Way, and from then on I started to practise it. But it was in the Philippines, especially because of her beatification in 1923, and her canonization in 1925, that I began to encourage devotion to St. Therese and to give away copies of her autobiography, 'The Story of a Soul' as presents.**

**When you started increasing in number, I was able to see clearly, as if inspired by our little saint, that she was to be our patroness, and her "Little Way of Spiritual Childhood" was to be our way of sanctification, as individuals, in our religious communities, and among the people we evangelize.**

**From the very beginning of our congregation we have given great importance to our charism, our Spiritual Way of Life. In the first edition of our constitutions, I wrote the introductory letter, dated 8 December 1950. It was scarcely two years after the foundation of our little institute. In it, there is a chapter on the Little Way.**

### **Called to be a Salesian**

Having completed High School, Luisito planned to go to New York to study electrical engineering. Then God intervened in the person of his dear mamma who persuaded him to go for one year to the Salesian Seminary at Puebla City. This was the turning point in his life. The example of the Salesians, their love for one another, and selfless hard work for the good of others inspired him to become an aspirant. He made a lifelong resolution: **“My special mortification is to observe always good and polite manners.”** This practice made him a fine and magnanimous personality all through his life.



As a seminarian

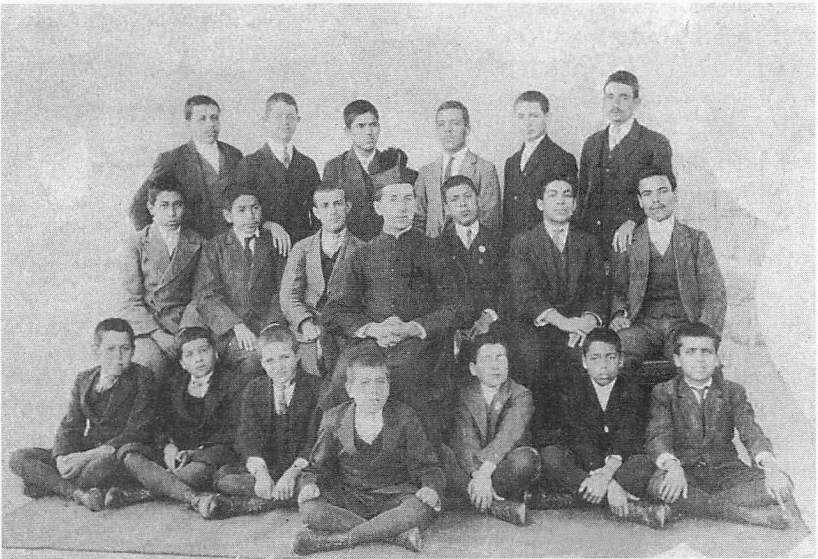
Don Bosco became the model for novice Luisito and the **Preventive System**, the driving force of his dedicated ministry among the youth. He loved and lived the motto of Don Bosco, **“Give me souls and take the rest,”** and the favourite maxim of St. Therese, **“Not a word, not a look, not even a thought if not to please our heavenly Father.”**

As a young Salesian in charge of the oratory, during his regency, by his charming and dynamic personality, vigour, creativity, and his passion for the souls of youth, he attracted hundreds of boys to the oratory of Puebla, Mexico. **His primary object, of course, was the teaching of catechism and religious instruction.** To that end he prepared a “Manual of Prayers” for the boys. To attract boys he made the oratory festive by organizing games, sports, quizzes, musical

programmes and dramas. He put his heart and soul into this apostolate following the advice of Fr. William Piani, his provincial superior, later Apostolic Delegate to the Philippines:

**Luisito, for the festive oratory you have to be like a clock, every day, whether there is sun or rain or whatever it is, as it is; and the children must know that you are there! You will make the festive oratory!**

From the ranks of these boys, many of them poor, there rose priests, bishops, missionaries, administrators, scholars, educators, and craftsmen. Many became staunch friends who later supported the poor mission Diocese of Krishnagar. Some gave their lives as martyrs during the Mexican revolution.



Brother Louis with his Salesian Aspirants, Puebla, 1917

As a major seminarian at the Pontifical University of Palafox, Luisito was placed in charge of the Salesian minor seminary, the liturgy and the choir. Liturgy was his life. He took pains to prepare and celebrate the daily liturgy solemnly and meaningfully.

### **A Faithful Custodian of the Blessed Sacrament**

During the period between 1914 and 1917 the violent Mexican revolution broke out. It was a time of challenge for Luisito. The young seminarian had to shoulder many serious responsibilities even at the threat of execution. It put him through a series of trials and hardships that proved his courage and depth of love and reverence for the Blessed Sacrament.

The city was first occupied by the rebel forces of Zepata and later by Government forces. All the priests who were foreigners were ordered to Vera Cruz. Cleric Louis LaRavoire had to let his moustaches grow and act as Director of the Salesian Seminary. From the windows of his school, Morrow could see the bodies of soldiers killed in the street fighting. When the Federal troops reoccupied the city, they commandeered the school building as their barracks, but exempted the chapel. A captain came soon afterwards and ordered Luisito to open the chapel as additional quarters for men and horses. The young Director, then only twenty-four, stood at the chapel door and refused to open it. The captain threatened to have him shot, and told him that he could have a few hours to change his mind. He replied quietly that the troops could enter the chapel "**over my body.**" Because of his refusal, Luisito was kept a prisoner in the school building, where twenty of his brothers were still living until William Jenkins, the American Consul ordered his release. Later the Consul urged Luisito to add his mother's surname, Morrow, to his father's name, LaRavoire so as to more easily prove his American citizenship.

### **A Unique Act of Self-sacrifice**

Being a promising cleric, the superiors had planned to send Luisito to Rome for higher studies. But he pleaded and stayed back in order to continue assisting a companion who was very poor in Latin. "Luisito, if you go away, I will never become a priest!" said the companion. After the ordination the two embraced each other with great delight.

## **Luisito's Ordination - A Dream Fulfilled**

On 21 May 1921, Brother Luisito was ordained priest in the magnificent Cathedral of San Miguel, Puebla. His Mamma who was present along with Mago was so full of joy and gratitude to God for having heard her prayers; and when she knelt before her son, Father Morrow, she fondly addressed him as “**Padrecito**” — “my little priest.”

## **A Promoter of Wholesome Literature and Media for Catechesis**

As a Brother in charge of boys, Father Bishop's attention and interest were in the formation of their character by imparting religious instruction and safeguarding them

from bad influence through papers and magazines. After his ordination he founded La Buena Prensa, “The Good Press”, to promote wholesome literature and cinema. He was authorized by the archbishop to screen the cinemas that were shown in the city. Later he established a criterion called “The White List” of approved films.



Brother Louis shortly before his Ordination

## The Call to the Philippines

In 1922 Father Bishop was appointed secretary to Archbishop William Piani, Apostolic Delegate to Manila, Philippines. The specified term of two years stretched to seventeen years! He was much more than a secretary. He founded the **Catholic Truth Society of Manila**; **began his career as writer of catechetical books** and illustrated textbooks, preached retreats and revitalized religious life and vocations.

## An Apostle of the Catechism

Father Bishop had a "catechetical charism". He prepared a series of catechisms to be used from infancy to adulthood, for the complete religious instruction of a baptized person. In 1929 he published ***My Friend***, a prayer book for children. This book was a quick and fabulous success. He then poured out a stream of other books, chief of which was ***My Catholic Faith***, later re-named ***OUR CATHOLIC FAITH***, and revised in the spirit of the Second Vatican Council.

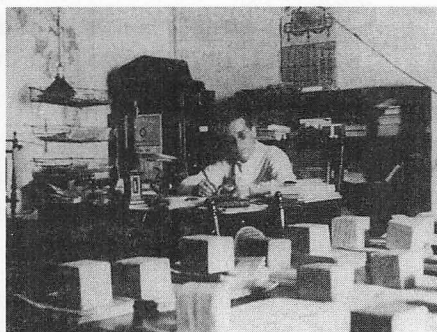
## A Great Organizer

Fr. Morrow took a most active part in organizing the **International Eucharistic Congress in Manila, 1937**.

His God-given talent in music stood him in good stead as director of the huge singing assembly. He had indeed a great capacity for work, learning, reasoning, writing, organizing, inspiring, and for persevering in hard work, to attain success for the glory of God, and for souls.



With Archbishop William Piani, Apostolic Delegate to Manila, Philippines;



A writer of Catechetical Books

## **Father Morrow, Bishop of Krishnagar**

On 25 May 1939, Father Morrow was appointed Bishop of Krishnagar. In astonishment he exclaimed:

**I never dreamed of being bishop, nor of coming to India. I knew very little of conditions in great India. My mission love was first for Mexico and later for the Philippines. ... I did not know where Krishnagar was, perhaps in Africa! ... It was a great change in my life.**

**Later a letter came that I was to be consecrated bishop in Rome by His Holiness Pope Pius XII on the feast of Christ the King, 29 October.**

## **Father Bishop's First Visit to Krishnagar**

In spite of the alarming rumours of an imminent World War II in 1939, Father Bishop was eager to see his diocese before his Episcopal Ordination. Against the advice of the German and Italian consuls, his good friends, he booked his passage to Rome via Bombay.

**Good Msgr. Piani was sad and worried over the situation, but assured me that the good Lord would take care of me.**

**I left Manila on the evening of 26 August. ... Many friends were at the ship to bid me farewell. I lost sight of the famous Manila Bay with the thought that I may not see it again.**

But due to the threat of war, the ship returned to Manila after three days. War broke out on 1st September. War or peace, Father Bishop had to go to Rome. So on 5th September he boarded an American ship "President Harris". From Singapore he flew to Calcutta and landed on 13th September, on the Hooghly River very near the incipient Liluah Salesian School.

During his nine days' stay in Krishnagar, he visited the various institutions and spoke with his missionaries. He could foresee that

his appointment as Bishop of Krishnagar would mean a great change in his life. **“Everything seemed to me to be so different from what I was accustomed to, in the U.S., in Mexico, and in the Philippines. ...”** He was in bed with influenza for four days. Since he was still very weak, Msgr Scuderi accompanied him to Howrah Station on 21 September. They parted with love and tears.

### **Episcopal Ordination in Rome**

In Rome the consecration ceremony was grand and impressive. It was presided by Pope Pius XII in St. Peter’s Basilica. Father Bishop recalls:

**The 29th of October, Sunday, feast of Christ the King, was one of the happiest days of my life, because I was about to receive the fullness of the Sacrament of Holy Orders, from the hands of Christ’s Vicar. ... I forgot completely all the horrors and anxieties of the war threat, and also the difficult work that was expected of me. I offered myself completely to the good Lord. My prayers, the Mass, all were for my little diocese, the people, priests, brothers, and sisters.**

The Holy Father presented Father Bishop the pectoral cross with a prophetic message, **“This cross is the least heavy. I am sending you to an extremely poor place. Be a father to all!”** Father Bishop always cherished it and fulfilled that mandate to the letter.

### **Visit to Mamma**

From Rome Father Bishop first went to meet his Salesian superiors in Turin, then to U.S.A. to his beloved



Young Bishop Morrow



Mamma and sister who could not be present for the ceremony in Rome due to the war. His Mamma did not at all approve of her son becoming a bishop, fearing that, as a bishop, he would put on airs. But he convinced her that he was still her Luisito, and he ate with her in the kitchen as he always had.

With characteristic optimism and absolute confidence in God, he begged for funds in the U.S. and the Philippines for his poor diocese.

### **Back to His Flock**

Upon his arrival in Krishnagar on 25 October 1940, he set his heart on the formation of a solid Christian community educated and well mannered, visiting his flock in the villages, and focusing on the progress of the *Don Bosco boarding and Industrial schools for boys and Holy Family School for girls*. **His primary plan for opening the educational institutions was to impart Christian education.** He would entice, induce or even compel the parents to send their children to the boarding schools. Often he himself would bring them in his own jeep to the boarding schools so that every child may have an opportunity to attend at least the primary classes. As a result the literacy rate which was 4 ½ % in 1940 rose almost to 100% by the time of his retirement in 1969. He was not only a spiritual leader but also a loving father who was keenly interested in the total well being of his people.

### **Family Communion on New Year's Day**

In 1945 Father Bishop introduced the practice of **Family Communion on New Year's Day**, which is continued zealously in the Diocese of Krishnagar to this day.

### **A Timely Action against the Decree of Internment**

Father Bishop was a man of action with undaunted courage and determination. Nothing could shake him from his deep trust in God. As a true son of Don Bosco he had imbibed the spirit of intelligent foresight, of hard work and sacrifice, to do the best possible in every endeavour.

During the **Second World War, in 1942**, the British authorities in India decreed that all Italians be interned at Dehra Dun, north of

Delhi. At once he swung into timely action. He told the local British authorities that they could cut off his right arm if they found one of his Italian priests doing anything detrimental to the war effort. He hurried off a telegram to the Governor of Bengal in Kolkata, and another to the viceroy in New Delhi. In desperation he sent a cable to her Majesty the Queen of England, at Buckingham Palace. **"You"**, he cabled, **"are the mother of all people in distress. I beg you not to let this group of missionaries be interned. I beg you in the name of God, to intercede!"**

On the day the priests were to start on their trip to the internment camp, Father Bishop received a forty-eight hour reprieve. At last a letter came from the Home Minister of the Government of India, telling him that because of his **"splendid work"** the British had decided to let him keep the Italians at Krishnagar. Father Bishop believed it was the only exception of its kind granted to any Catholic Mission in India. Two Italian Bishops, 300 Italian priests and forty Germans were interned at Dehra Dun for the duration of the war, while Father Bishop's staff remained untouched. **"Congratulations, Bishop"**, the chief of Police of Bengal said when he visited Krishnagar soon afterwards, **"You were always one step ahead of us; why, you even sent a message to the Queen!"**

### **The Disastrous Famine of Bengal**

After the war, Father Bishop walked into a crisis – the disastrous famine of Bengal in 1943-44, which engulfed Krishnagar, along with the rest of stricken Bengal. He girded himself with faith and total dependence on God, to tackle the crisis.

Father Bishop did not believe in the word **'impossible'**. To him everything was possible with the help of God. His constant saying was, **"We have to do good, we have to spread love!"** He and his devoted priests shared all they had with the people. He was chosen Chairman of a voluntary Citizens' Food Committee, the only Christian among forty-nine members. He begged by mail day and night from benefactors, and in Kolkata in person, for war surplus food from Indian, British, Australian and U.S. Officers. Father Bishop, and his staff endured with the people, kept vigil with them in their homes, helped to bury them if they were Christians, and **almost died** with

them during that nightmarish year of famine.

Father Bishop recalled how in the beginning he tried to adapt himself to the new routine of living as well as to the poor conditions. In their poverty he, the priests and Brothers used to carry their chairs from the church to the dining room and back.

### **Catholic Relief Services (C.R.S.)**

In Bengal's time of great distress – famine, flood, epidemic and partition, while coping with the stream of refugees that poured into Krishnagar, Father Bishop approached the Catholic Relief Services in New York for food supplies. With the cooperation of the Government authorities thousands of school children as well as adults benefitted by this scheme. At that time the CRS had no representative in India. Accordingly from 1944 to 1959 Father Bishop served as their representative for North East India, until a permanent office was opened in Calcutta.

### **Partition of India**

In 1946 Father Bishop was to face still another crisis, the partition of India. This resulted in the sudden amputation of two-thirds of his diocese and more than half of its population; an influx of refugees across the new frontier. In his fatherly love and concern for the threatened people, he gave them refuge on the basis of pure need without reference to caste, creed or any other factor. During that troubled period, Father Bishop's all-embracing love, reconciling presence, and timely help resulted in a diminution of the violence that marked other border areas. He truly followed the Master in reconciling people and was a power in the community.

### **Independence Day Celebration in Krishnagar**

The following is an extract from his speech given at Krishnagar Town Hall Maidan during the Independence Day celebration in 1947:

... On this historic occasion I am as happy as you are  
... From today a great responsibility has fallen on  
each of us to dedicate ourselves as you did during the

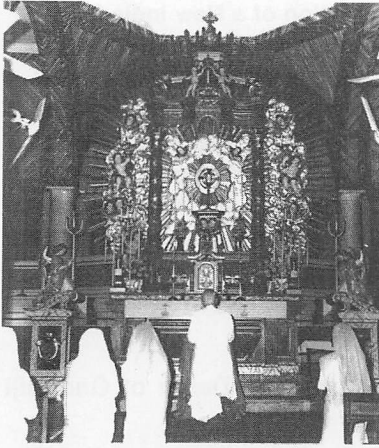
**freedom movement, for the creation of a New India in her material development, and revival of her ancient spirituality and universal brotherhood... I am an American; all of you know about it, but I live in India. I live in this beloved city of ours and I shall ever live among you. I choose India to be my homeland... In times of need whatever it may be, I will stand by you, and promise to do whatever I can. In return I ask nothing from you but a tiny 18-square-foot plot of land where I can have my eternal reward. May God bless you all! Jai Hind!**

### **Father Bishop Mourns with the People the Death of Gandhiji - 1948**

When Mahatma Gandhi, 'father of the nation' was assassinated in 1948, and 15 thousand mourners of Krishnagar assembled on the banks of river Jalanki for a memorial service, Father Bishop was one of the three invited to speak along with a Hindu and a Muslim. In his address he stressed how Gandhiji, the father of our nation, had offered his life as a sacrifice for the peace of India. He died forgiving his assassin. Certainly Almighty God would reward him. Father Bishop begged the people to follow Gandhiji's example and work for the welfare of India always.

### **Contribution to the City of Krishnagar**

In 1952 Father Bishop was elected as **commissioner** of the Municipal Board of Krishnagar, on which he **served for 13 years**. He took up various measures, to promote development and progress in the city. During that time a long overdue extension of the city's **waterworks** scheme was financed. Through his initiative a **telephone system** was installed in Krishnagar and the city's T.B. Clinic received an **X-ray machine** from the U.S. He served as **official visitor to Nadia District Jail and to the Government Hospital, and consultant of the Indian Red Cross Society of West Bengal**. Pope Paul VI responded generously to his appeal in 1967 for help towards the erection of **Krishnagar Stadium**. He also made handsome contributions to the Children's Park, Rama Krishna Pathaghar (City Library), and Sri Aurobindo Bhavan (Students' Health Home).



Father Bishop in Adoration of the Eucharistic Lord at the Altar of Cathedral Shrine, Krishnagar

### **A Great Lover of the Blessed Sacrament**

Father Bishop lived in the Eucharistic atmosphere. The chief emblem in his coat-of-arms was the Holy Eucharist, source of the spiritual life of the Church. His ardent desire was to make Jesus openly and solemnly adored in the Blessed Sacrament. For this he built the beautiful Cathedral Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament. In 1960 when the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration left Krishnagar, he entrusted to us, the great privilege of the care of this Shrine, and named it our **“Power House!”**

**My greatest consolation is to know that Jesus will be corporally present in the tabernacle of my little cathedral, and in every grass-roofed and grass-walled chapel of the diocese. What can we do without our Eucharistic Lord?**

### **A Vigorous Council Father at the Second Vatican Council**

As a Council Father at Vatican II, Father Bishop was most active and greatly influential in the move to introduce vernacular in the liturgy; also in modifying the law of abstinence and the Eucharistic fast. He left no stone unturned in helping our people to benefit from the Holy Mass, the centre of our worship.

### **The Foundation of the Sisters of Mary Immaculate**

On 12 December 1948, Father Bishop according to the will and plan of God founded our little congregation with **its spiritual and apostolic charism: The Little Way of spiritual Childhood and Evangelization and Catechesis, and the motto, “To love God and help others to love God”**.

Our first constitutions were prepared by him, and were approved by the Holy See in 1954. At tremendous sacrifice he financed our religious and professional education for the benefit of the people. He wanted us to be well

prepared and up-to-date to meet the challenges of the times, to be effective in our apostolate, to win the whole world for Jesus.

### **Father Bishop's Vision for the Future of the SMI**

Father Bishop loved his little congregation dearly and had great concern for every one of his children and for the vital growth of our institute. He took infinite pains for our expansion in the diocese, and to other parts of the world, and to ensure that our training be effective in the Church. With the foresight of a sagacious father, he built several houses and provided for us the best education possible. He envisioned for us a future with infinite possibilities for the growth of the kingdom of God through our sisterly witness, evangelization, and catechesis. The arrival of every new candidate thrilled him with great hope, and he himself gave them a warm welcome and took a fatherly interest in seeing them grow in grace, virtue and wisdom. He was ever ready to make any sacrifice on our behalf and when we did well, he took great pride in us. When we failed to live up to our SMI ideal, it pained him immensely. Like a mother with endless love and patience, he taught us many little characteristics of ladylikeness and Mary likeness. Certainly, he also went through great spiritual and mental anguish on our behalf, in silence, and constant supplication before God as a proof of his genuine love for us. He said:

**"It is essential that you as catechists, witnesses of Christ, be well prepared."**

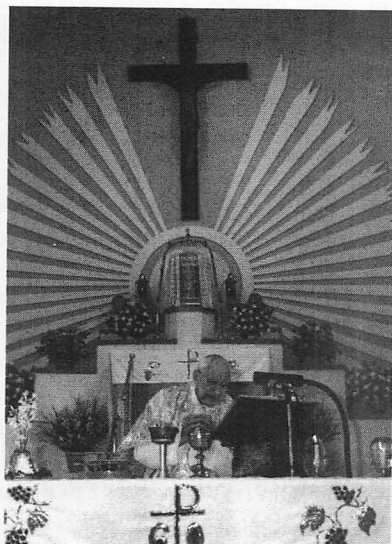
However, he emphasized:

**It will be useless to become learned theologians, famous catechists, and the like, if you do not show love for one another. People, it is true, will admire your learning, appreciate your medical care, your social uplift, etc., but they will not understand your preaching of Christ. They will not see Christ in you. And therefore, your work of evangelization will be frustrated.**

**... My dear children, we must become Christlike. That is the purpose for which we have consecrated ourselves entirely to God... we have the source, the constant spring of our strength: the daily offering of the Holy Mass.**

## **Motherhouse Chapel - Our Father's Precious Gift to Us**

As we increased in number, Father Bishop envisaged the need of a spacious and beautiful chapel for us. The inspiration came to him during the Second Vatican Council in Rome. On return it was realized and blessed on 19 April 1965. He said, **“This is your Motherhouse where many of you will gather. I thought it is my duty to provide you with a nice chapel.”** An infirmary was also conveniently made adjacent to it with practical wisdom, foresight and fatherly concern for our spiritual growth and preparation for a happy return to our Father's Home.



Father Bishop celebrating the Eucharist at the Motherhouse chapel he built for the SMI. The Eucharist was always the centre of his life

## **Post Retirement Mission**

After retirement from the diocese, Father Bishop continued his apostolate of the printed Word, updating his books, and distributing copies of the Holy Bible in English and Bengali. He activated us in our apostolate of carrying the living Word of God to all!

## **An Advocate of Women's Rights**

He was an ardent advocate of women's rights, convinced that justice and peace cannot prevail until and unless women have an equal voice in legislative assemblies throughout the world.

## **Father Bishop's Last Days with Us**

Our father was able to offer Holy Mass daily until his fall on 23 May 1984, which resulted in a fracture of the left femur. For three-and-a-quarter years he bore this condition smilingly, ever showing his

appreciation of our loving care. He received Holy Communion daily and in his own way participated in the Mass heard through a speaker extension in his room.

Gradually our father was weakening. We celebrated his feast on 25 August 1987, with our usual gusto. On Friday, 28 August, he had a serious spell of lung congestion and was anointed. The Blessed Sacrament was exposed and our fifty-seven novices knelt in fervent supplication. He rallied until Monday morning, the 31st, when he became noticeably weaker. His confreres and we gathered around our beloved father for the last time. **As we were singing and praying he left us at 9.35 a.m. in perfect peace to go to his Father in heaven**, which was his cherished longing, to hear from his beloved Jesus "Come blessed of my Father! Enter the kingdom prepared for you, from the foundation of the world."

### **Final Farewell**

In no time our sisters and people from all walks of life arrived to view their beloved father, friend and shepherd of past years, now laid out in our motherhouse in his Episcopal vestments. For three days prayerful vigil was kept, and Holy Mass offered every few hours by visiting priests. On Thursday morning, 3rd September, the cortège began to move, in our father's last journey to the cathedral. People came streaming in with floral offerings and candles to pay their tribute.

The solemn funeral Mass was at 1.00 p.m. Our father's mortal remains were laid to rest in the Cathedral crypt in the side chapel of Mary Help of Christians. We entrusted our beloved father to the care of our Blessed Mother. We fondly venerate the resting place of our father founder, and pray for a double share of his spirit to carry on the mission he has entrusted to us.

We believe our father's great and generous soul is truly resting in peace. But not simply resting, for he has assured us in writing:



**I shall remember you in heaven  
as much as I shall be given permission.**

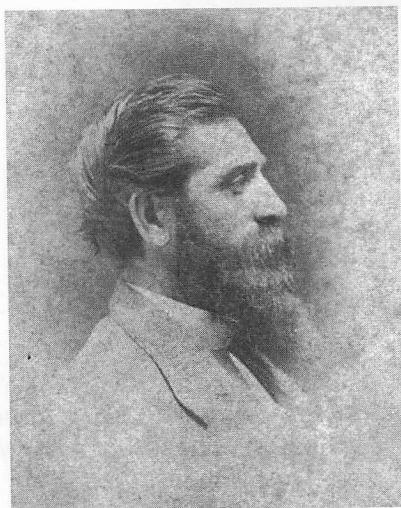
We know our Father Bishop is with us in spirit, praying for us and exhorting us to be faithful to our Way of Life and to do all the good we can till we reach our Father's Home in heaven along with the many souls we have served here on earth.

We treasure the motto our father has given to us as a precious legacy:

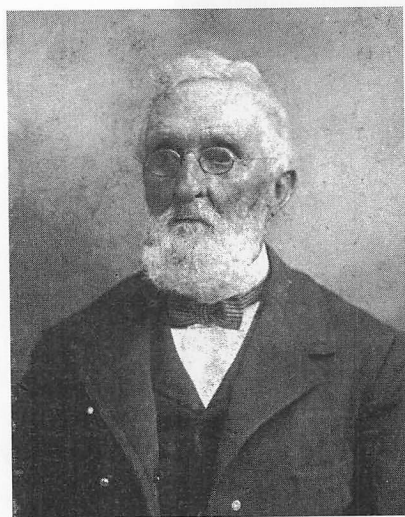
**TO LOVE GOD AND HELP OTHERS TO LOVE HIM !**

\* \* \*

## FATHER BISHOP'S LIFE AT A GLANCE



Father Bishop's  
great grandpa  
(mother's father's father)



Father Bishop's  
great grandpa  
(mother's mother's father)  
- William Sayre



Father Bishop's  
grandpa (maternal)  
- John Harry Morrow



Father Bishop's  
grandma  
(maternal) -  
Elizabeth Morrow



Father Bishop's father - Joseph LaRavoire as a little boy. He stemmed from a long line of French Catholics in the town of Rumilly in the foothills of the French Alps. A tiny village nearby bears the name of Father Bishop's ancestors, "LaRavoire."



Father Bishop's mother - Isabel Morrow (2 or 3 years old), born on 1st December 1867. She was from north-of-Ireland and New Jersey Episcopalians. In 1887 the two lines met and merged in Weatherford, sixty miles west of Dallas, by a standard American practice. Both families had come to this little frontier town of 2,000 people to seek their fortune.



Isabel as a young girl. She was the eldest of the four children (Isabel, Grace, Maudie and Nan) of John Harry and Elizabeth Morrow.



Aunt Nan



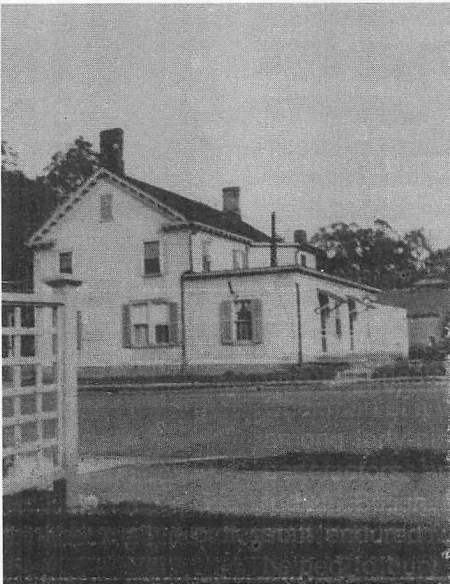
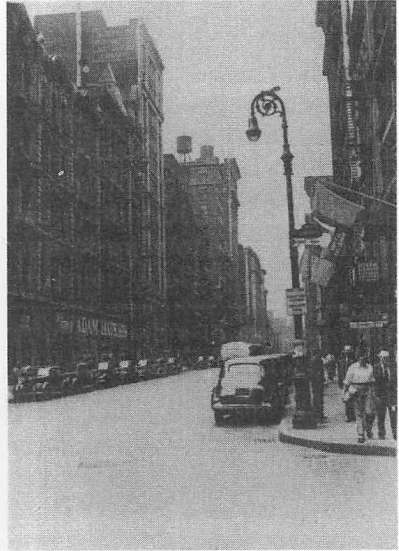
**Beloved parents of Father Bishop:**  
Joseph LaRavoire and Isabel Morrow

In the 1880's Mr. J.H. Morrow went to Weatherford and bought some cotton fields, a venture at least as daring for a New Yorker in those days as his entry into microscopic photography. The family moved to Texas with their two young daughters, Isabelle and Grace.

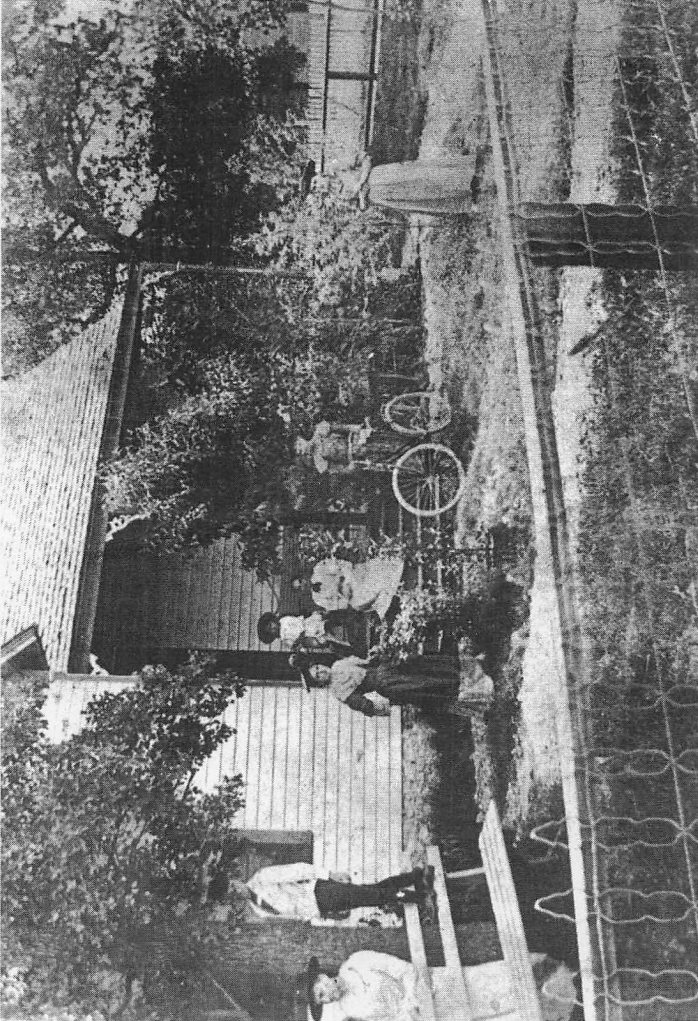
Joseph LaRavoire had come to the United States as an emigrant and found a job in Weatherford and a room with board in the big two-story frame house of Mr. and Mrs. J.H. Morrow. The eye of the dashing young French border fell on the dark-haired Isabelle, and they were married.

**Former place of business** of John Harry Morrow. Father Bishop spent few of his first years here.

The Morrors had moved to Texas from New York, where Mr. Morrow had run a studio specializing in microscopic photography at 661 Broadway, a few doors from the old Broadway Central Hotel



Father Bishop's **mother's home in Madison**, New Jersey (side view). "My mother and I were both born in that house," writes Belle M. Morrow, Father Bishop's mother.

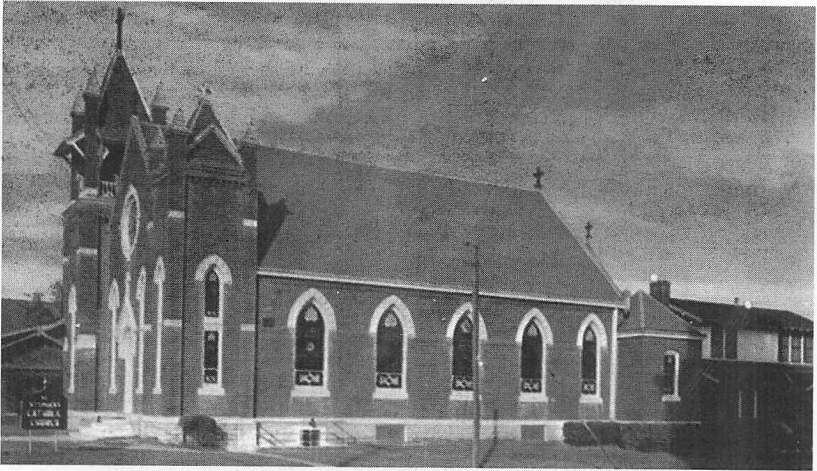


At grandmother's house in Weatherford, Texas (1894-95)

Left to right: Grandma, Frank, Aunt Grace, Baby Louis - 2 ½ on the horse, Mamma, Aunt Maudie with her cycle, and Aunt Nan.

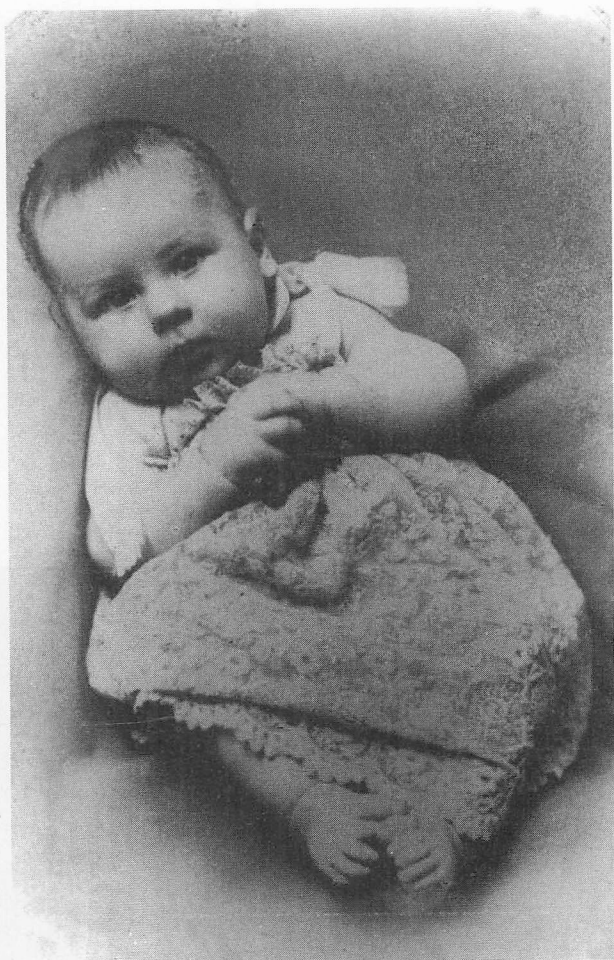


Frank  
as a baby



St. Stephen's Catholic Church, Weatherford, Texas, where Louis was baptized on 22nd January 1893. The little wooden church burnt down and this church was built on the same site in 1902.





Baby Louis George Rene LaRavoire Morrow, a few months old - 1893. He was born at Weatherford, Texas on the eve of Christmas, 1892



Frank and Louis in 1896



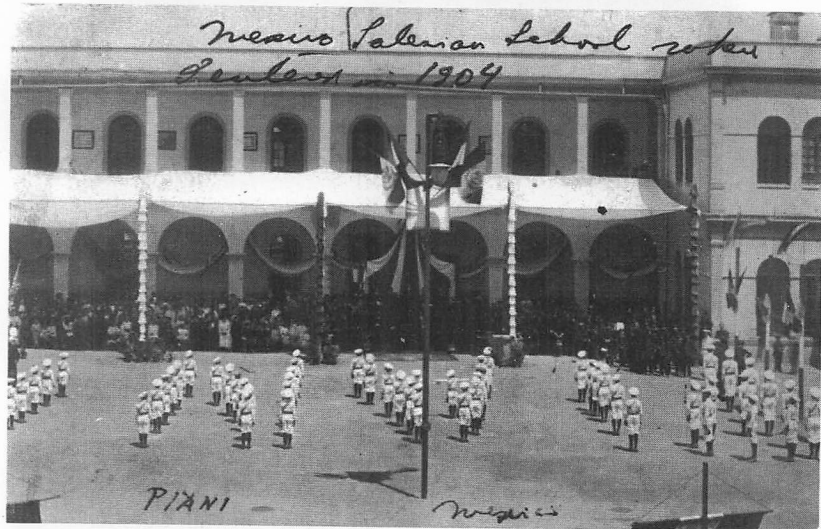
Margarita (Mago), their only sister at the age of 2 or 3. The family moved to Mexico in 1897. Mago was born there on Aug 22, 1901



Mago with another little girl



The Coronation ceremony of Children of Mary at the Salesian School, Puebla, Mexico - December 1904. Louis is seen 3rd in the first row (standing)



Santa Julia Boarding School of the Salesians on the outskirts of Mexico City in 1904 when Louis entered.



Mother's reception into Catholic Church, 10 Sept. 1905. On his First Communion day, 8th December 1904, the feast of Mary Immaculate, Louis prayed for this grace for his mamma. He rejoiced exceedingly to see it granted. Mamma in turn prayed for the priestly vocation of her beloved Louis and encouraged him to follow Jesus whole-heartedly giving up his worldly ambitions of becoming an electrical engineer. Frank had passed away on 6th July 1908. On 10th October of the same year, Louis became an aspirant in the minor seminary of the Salesians of Don Bosco.



Mamma and Aunt Mago in Mexico -1912. The photo was sent to Louis with the endearing words, "To our dearest Louis with much love and good wishes from his loving mother and sister." His father, Joseph LaRavoire passed away in San Francisco in 1913, when Louis was 21. Mamma and his fifteen- year-old sister Margarita returned to the U.S. for good in 1915. Louis stayed in Puebla alone as never before, a foreigner in a revolutionary land, to complete his studies for priesthood at the Catholic University of Palafox.

Louis as a seminarian

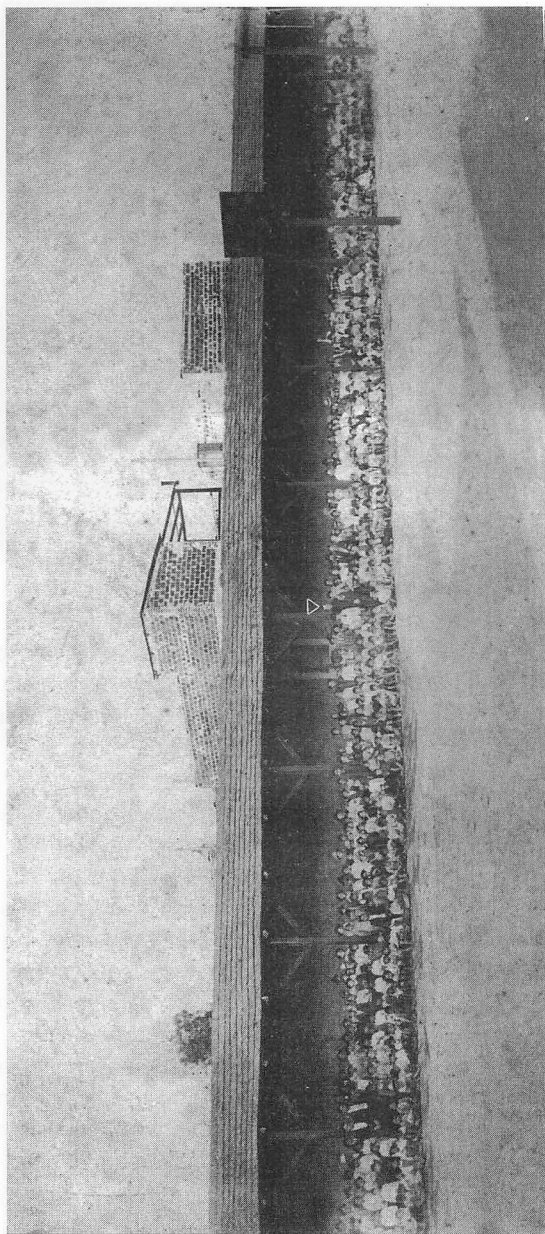
"I was doing my studies at the University, going on the bicycle, making all kinds of sacrifices, and dreaming with the children to bring them to God."





Louis with his oratory boys, Puebla, Dec 1918 (The photo was sent to mamma).  
"Msgr. Piani was then our provincial. He told me, 'Louis, for the festive oratory, you have to be like a clock, everyday like the sun - no matter if it rains, whatever the weather may be, you take it as it is - in that way you make the oratory festive....' "

" I am proud of my years at the oratory before and after becoming a priest. They were the glorious years of my priestly work, because I was just dreaming to be the best priest in the whole world."



The Oratory at Puebla, Mexico. Fr. Louis and about a thousand oratory boys in 1922

As a Father in charge of boys, his attention and interest were in the formation of their character by imparting religious instruction and safeguarding them from bad influence.

"It was about two years before I was ordained. In the evenings we had about 600 - 1000 boys and young men. I was all alone with them. ... I had to reach everywhere. But all these boys and young men were helping... How our

Lord blessed them!"





The altar of the chapel of the Festive Oratory at Puebla 1921. This is the first chapel built by Father Louis.



Mr. and Mrs. Jenkins with one of their daughters. During the Mexican Revolution of 1910 - 1920, Mr. William Jenkins, the American Consul rescued Louis from the Federal troops, who imprisoned him. He then urged Louis to add his mother's surname, "Morrow", to his father's name, "LaRavoire" so as to more easily prove his American citizenship. The Mexican revolutionaries were careful to confine their reprisals to their own people. Later Mr. Jenkins became one of the *padrinos* of Louis during his Ordination and a good benefactor in his mission.

INVITACION

MRS

*Dear Mother*

El que suscribe tiene la dicha de participarle que su ordenación sacerdotal se efectuará el día 21 del presente mes, en la Santa Iglesia Catedral, a las 6.30 a. m.

Deseará su Primera Misa en el Santuario de María Auxiliadora, el Domingo 22 a las 7 a. m., y continuará solemnemente la Misa el día 24 a las 10 a. m., fiesta de María Auxiliadora, en su mismo Santuario.

Puebla, Mayo de 1921.

ALTO, Y S. S.

Louis LaRavoire Morrow, S. S.

FATHER BISHOP'S INVITATION TO HIS ORDINATION  
ON MAY, 21, 1921 AT 6.30 A. M.

Translation of the Invitation

It gives me great pleasure to inform you that my Sacerdotal Ordination will take place in the Basilica Cathedral Church on Saturday May the 21st at 6.30 a.m.

I am offering my first Mass at the Sanctuary of Mary Help of Christians on May 22nd, Sunday, Feast of the Most Blessed Trinity. And on Tuesday, May 24th, Feast of Our Lady Help of Christians at 10.00 a.m. - I will offer in the same sanctuary my first solemn High Mass. You are cordially invited.

Puebla, (Mexico) May 1921

Sincerely Yours in Christ  
Louis LaRavoire Morrow, S.S.

The Ordination invitation



8445

Quam dilecta  
 tabernaculis  
 tuis, super  
 uilla.  
 Ps. 87

# RECUERDO

de  
 Mi Primera Misa

celebrada en el  
 Santuario de María Auxiliadora,  
 el 22 de Mayo,

Solemnidad de la Santísima Trinidad

PUEBLA, COLEGIO SALESIANO, 1921.

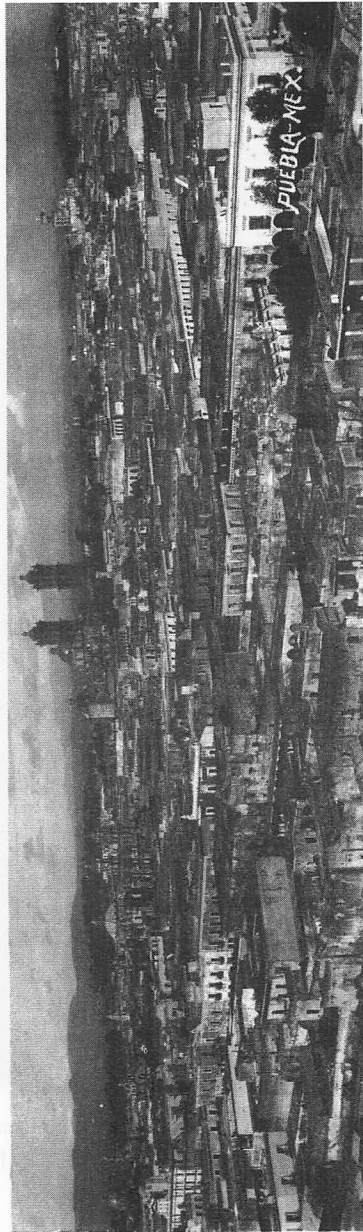
Louis La Raviera Morrow,  
 S. S.

D. M. A. C. T.

65-2-25

"I remember my Ordination, my First Mass, as it has been yesterday. It made such a big impression on me. My mother and sister came from Cincinnati, U. S. A., and were present. Then the next day I offered my First Holy Mass assisted by Msgr. Piani, the provincial superior." Mamma was so full of joy and gratitude to God for having heard her prayers.

Souvenir of the Ordination



A panorama of Puebla in 1931. The twin towers of the Cathedral of Puebla where Louis was ordained are visible.



The magnificent sixteenth-century cathedral of San Miguel, Puebla, where Louis was ordained on 21 May, 1921, by Archbishop Henry Sanches Parades of Puebla.

## TO THE PHILIPPINES



Archbishop William Piani, Apostolic Delegate to Manila, Philippines, and his Secretary Fr. Louis La Ravoire Morrow (1922-1939). "He asked me to go with him for two years and I was with him 17 years."



Father Morrow as a young priest at his desk in the Philippines. Father Morrow took his first steps in the literary field. He founded the Catholic Truth Society, Manila, Philippines to spread Catholic literature in order to counteract the growing materialism and worldliness. He launched a campaign to collect old Catholic periodicals from Americans interested in missionary work. They responded generously.



Father Morrow, the champion of Catholic literature, distributing used magazines to poor boys







Father Morrow, a writer of catechetical books

He wrote a series of catechisms and illustrated textbooks, chief of which was MY CATHOLIC FAITH, later re-named OUR CATHOLIC FAITH. In this he showed unmistakable leadership and a charismatic quality to associate others with his work.

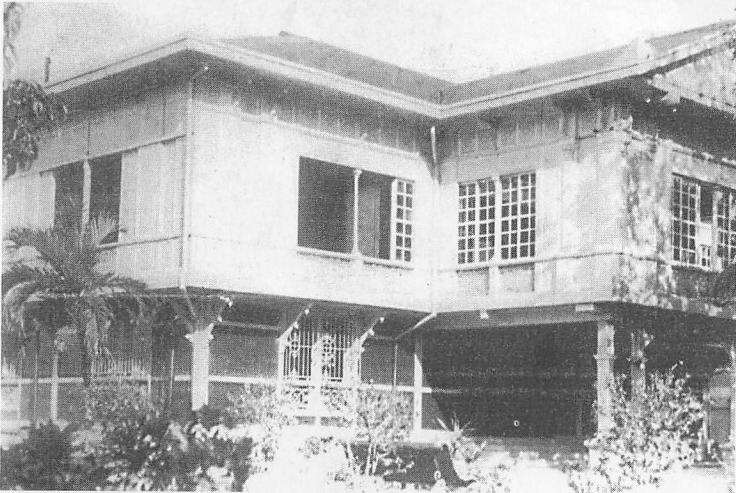
Miss Natividad Marquez (Nati), Father Bishop's Filipina secretary, from one of the most prominent families of Lucena, who took her Doctorate of Philosophy when only 18 years old, and received a gold medal as the top-ranking student of the University of the Philippines.

Father Bishop first met her upon preaching a mission retreat in her hometown of Lucena, Philippines, in 1928. At that first encounter, she asked if she could help him with the proof reading of his publications. Father Bishop accepted her offer at once. And since then he had her scholarly and dedicated assistance until her death in Krishnagar in 1957

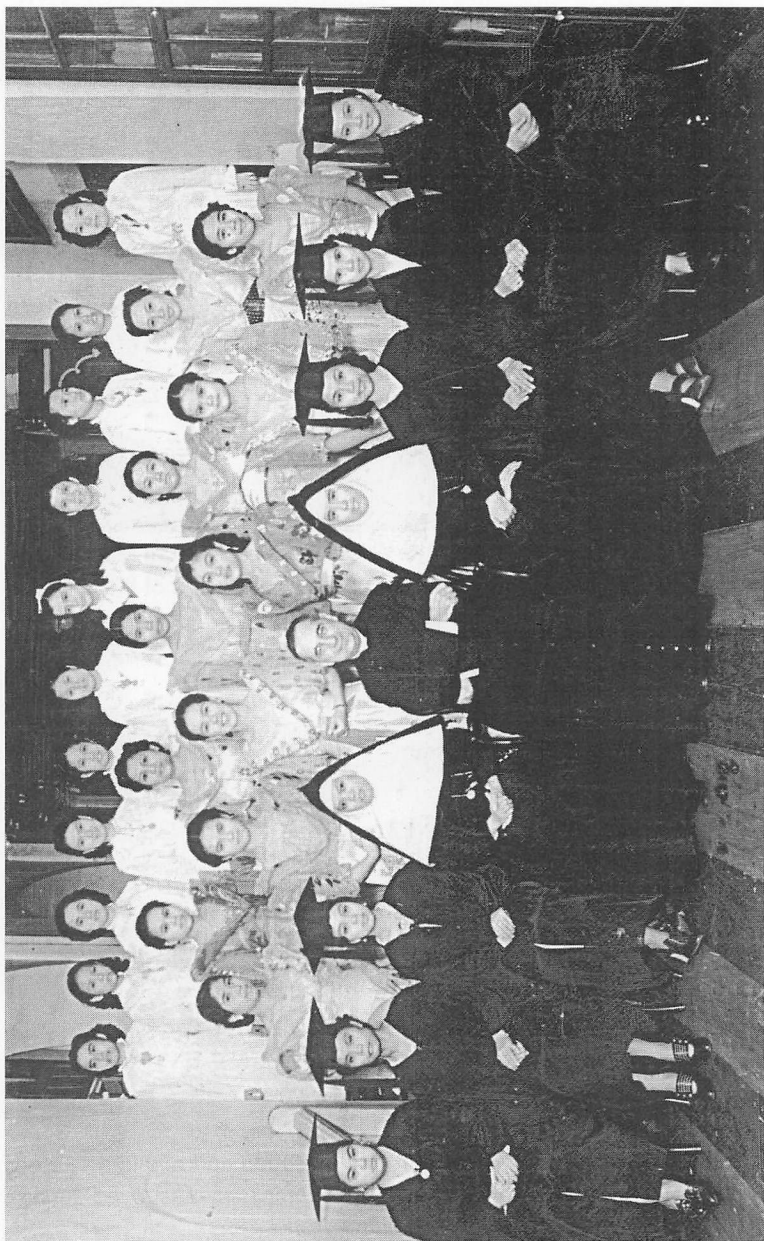




Msgr. Piani and Fr. Morrow in the Apostolic Delegation at Manila, organizing for the first time the Society for the Propagation of the Faith in the Philippines - 1926.



The Apostolic Delegation House after it was extended and repaired. Father Morrow's office is on the left. The house was completely destroyed during the Second World War



With the graduates of the Beateris College, Manila, Philippines - 1937

**Fr. Morrow was much more than a secretary.  
His apostolic zeal took him to distant stations  
for pastoral visits.**



Visiting the tribes in the mountain - 1926

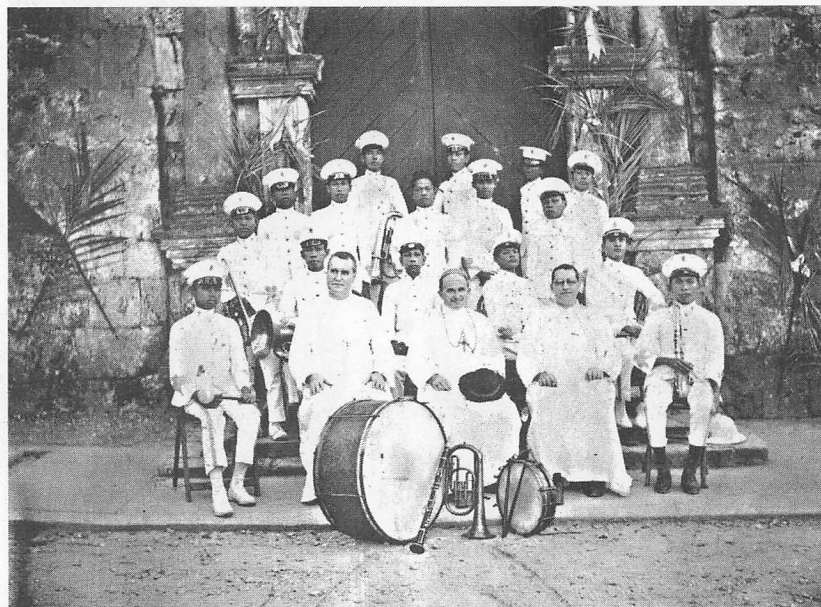


Visiting the missions in the Philippines.



Visiting the Missions





With the band of the leper colony of Cullion - Fr. Villalonga, S.J., Msgr. Piani and Fr. Morrow - 1926.



Seminarians and professors of San Jose Seminary at the Apostolic Delegation, Manila, 1926.



Father Morrow pinning the papal medal to the Catholic Action Flag of the college



Students and staff of St. Theresa's College, Manila with Msgr Piani and Fr. Morrow - after pinning the Papal Medal to the Catholic Action Flag of the college - 1927.



Fr. Morrow was sponsor for the first Mass of Fr. Baez Pail, a Filipino. Referring to the picture he writes to mamma, "Here we are starting from the house of the new priest to the church accompanied with band music, etc., etc., to say the First Mass.

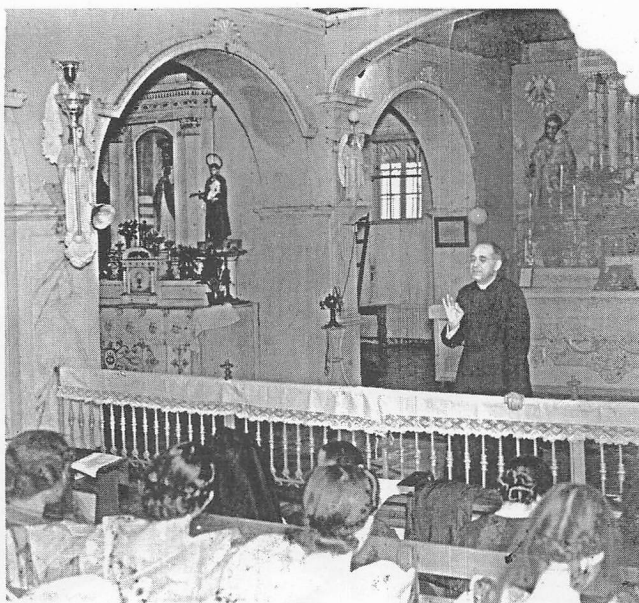




Fr. Morrow at meditation

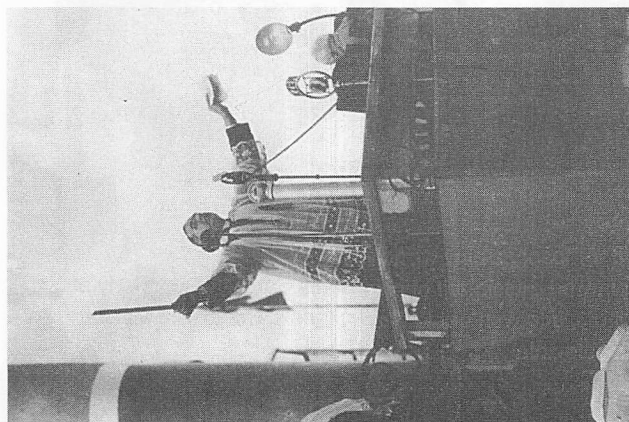


With the boys of a Filipino family - 1928

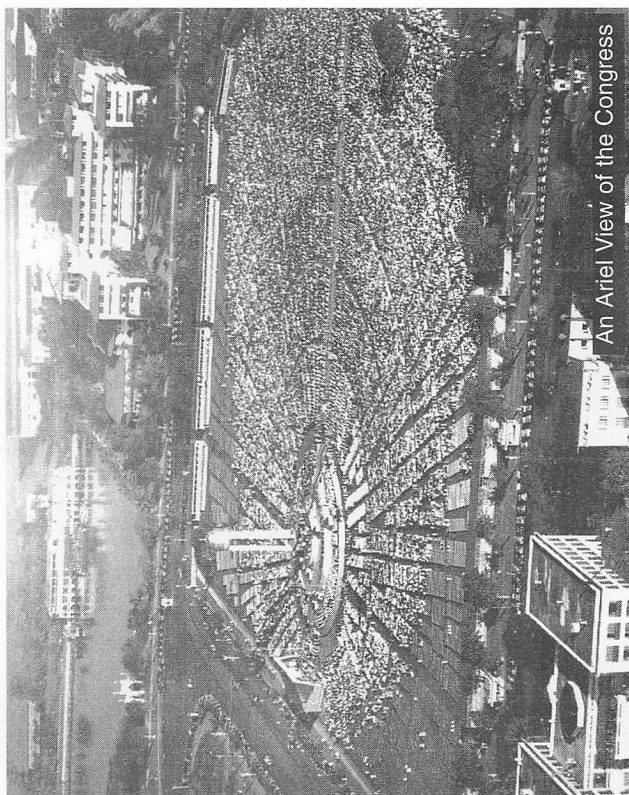


**MISSION**  
CONDUCTED BY  
**Father MORROW**  
Secretary to the Apostolic Delegate  
For All  
HIGH SCHOOL AND INTERMEDIATE  
Teachers and Students  
AND FOR ALL  
ENGLISH - SPEAKING  
YOUNG MEN AND YOUNG WOMEN  
Monday to Sunday, December 2-8, 1935  
Every evening at 5:30  
AT THE  
**Catholic Church**  
**CONFERENCE**  
IN ENGLISH  
WITH CONGREGATIONAL SINGING  
SAN FERNANDO, LA UNIÓN, 1935 EL PARROCO

Mission conducted by Father Morrow - 1935  
During those years Fr. Morrow revitalized the religious life of the entire region by his popular booklet QUESTIONS ON VOCATION and his dynamic spiritual retreat conferences for students.



A great organizer at the XXXIII  
International Eucharistic Congress,  
Manila, February 1937



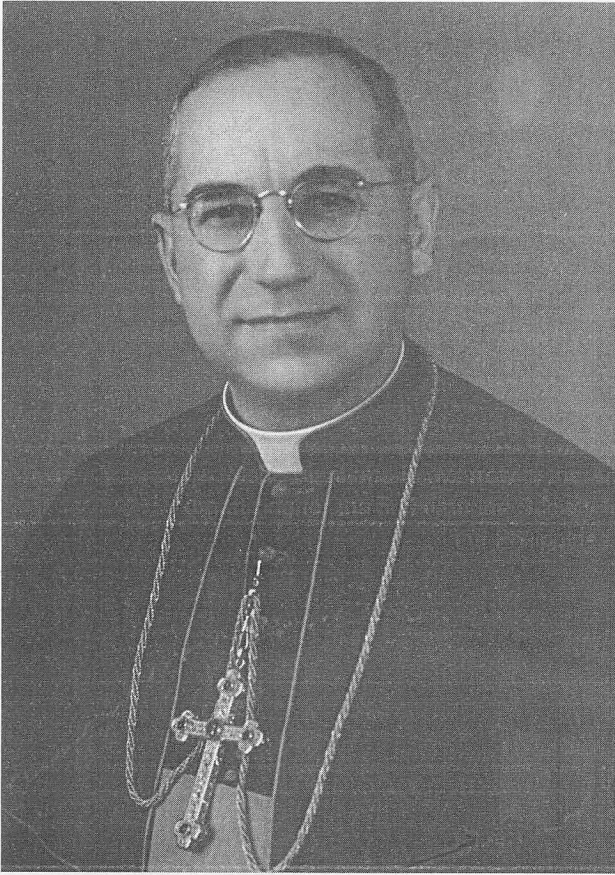
An Ariel View of the Congress

The biggest crowd ever gathered in the history of Philippines met during the Congress. All the events of the Congress were carried through magnificently, with deep devotion, and perfect order and peace.



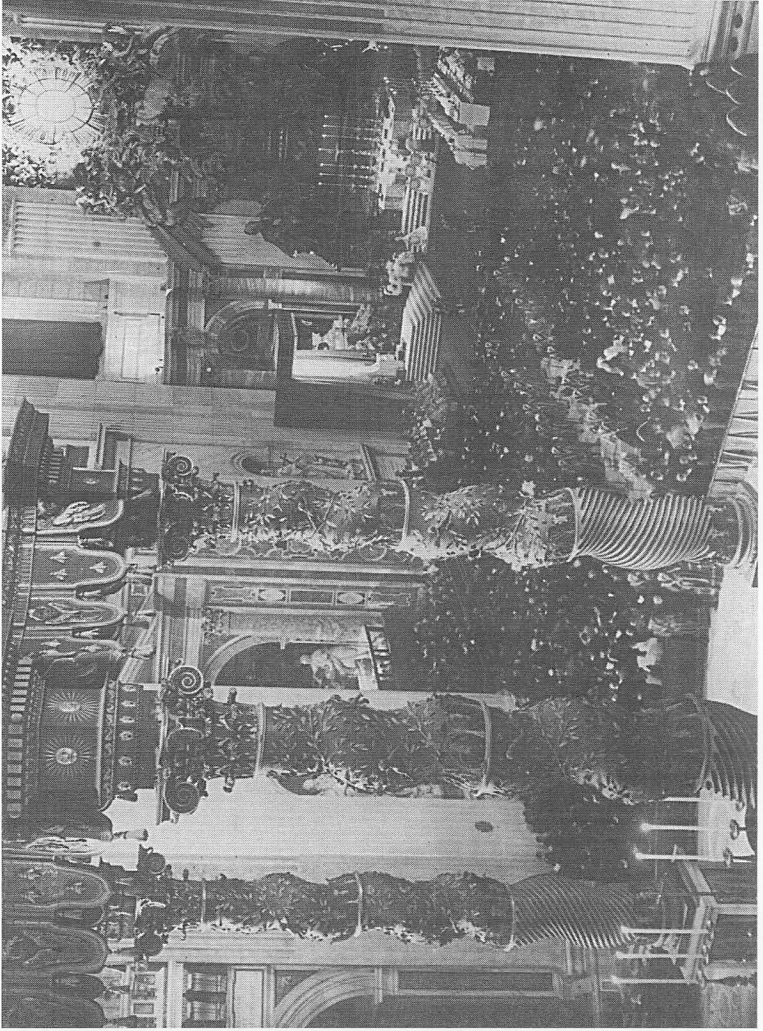
Fr. Morrow assisting His Eminence Dennis Cardinal Dougherty of Philadelphia, Papal Legate to the Eucharistic Congress, Manila, 1937.

## **APPOINTMENT AS BISHOP OF KRISHNAGAR,**

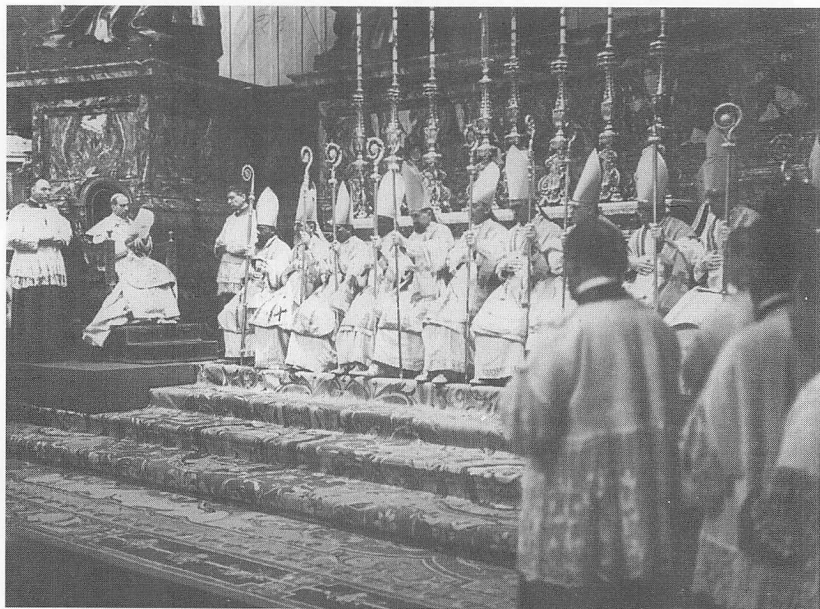


Just before his Episcopal Ordination in the Basilica of St. Peter.

Most Rev. Louis L.R. Morrow was appointed Bishop of Krishnagar on 25 May 1939. The Ordination took place in Rome in the Basilica of St. Peter on 29 Oct 1939, Feast of Christ the King - by his Holiness Pope Pius XII. The ceremony began at 8.00 a.m. and ended at 1.30 p.m.



The Episcopal Ordination of the 12 bishops in St. Peter's



The 12 Bishops seated before the supreme Pontiff, Pope Pius XII in the Basilica of St. Peter. From the left: The second in the row is Father Bishop.

The Pope ordained twelve new bishops of almost as many nationalities who have been assigned Sees in mission territories.

Most Rev. Louis LaRavoire Morrow, D.D. is the only American in the group, who has been named Bishop of Krishnagar, Bengal, India.





Father Bishop as the new bishop

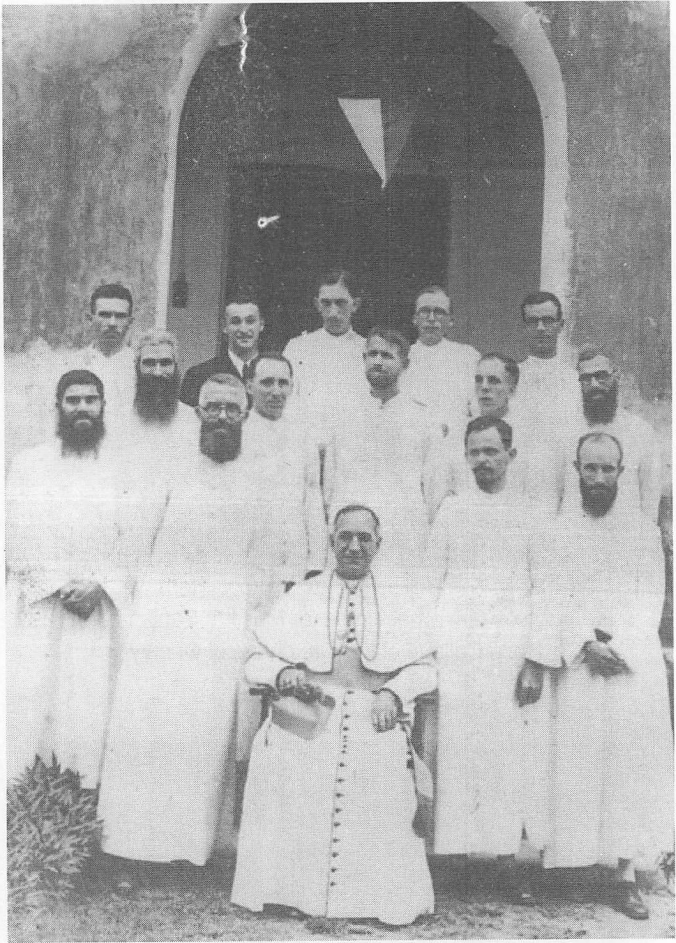


Revisiting Philippines as Bishop. Here we see him preaching after Mass at Santa Rosa College of the Daughters of Charity, Manila, 1939



Another visit

**IN KRISHNAGAR** — Among his flock



With his missionaries - 27 Oct 1940:

1st Row: Frs. Francis Convertini, Syrus Righetto, Louis Ribaldone,  
Vincent Lazzaro

2nd row: Frs. Cesarius Sergi, Marius Bianchi, Humbert Bianchi, John  
Trzietatowski, Egidius Pauletto

3rd row: Bro. Ernest Ferraris, Wolfango Venturini, Frs. Louis Amcodo,  
John Schilder and Bro. Anthon Doro



With his priests and parishioners of Krishnagar - 1940



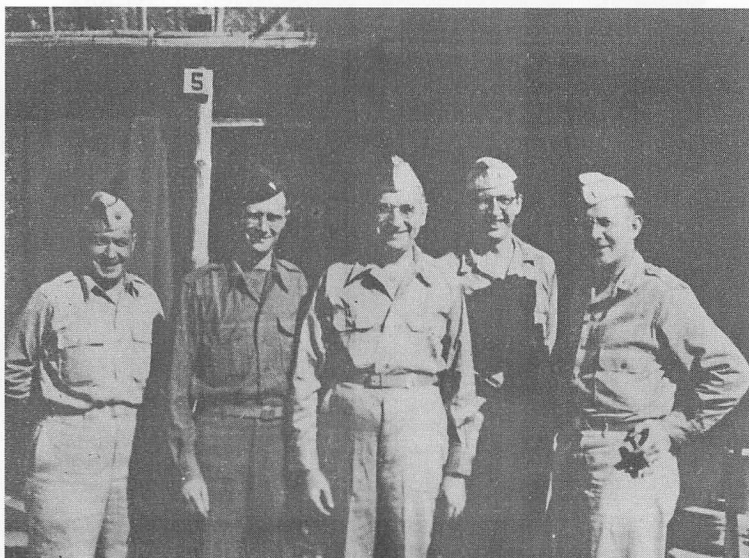
With the Sisters of Charity and the *bhoginis*



Father Bishop with his catechists



Women leaders after their annual spiritual exercises at the Cathedral,  
Krishnagar -1943.



In charge of the army chaplains of North India, Assam, during the World  
War II, - 1943



A short visit to Jesus at the main altar of the Cathedral of  
Krishnagar



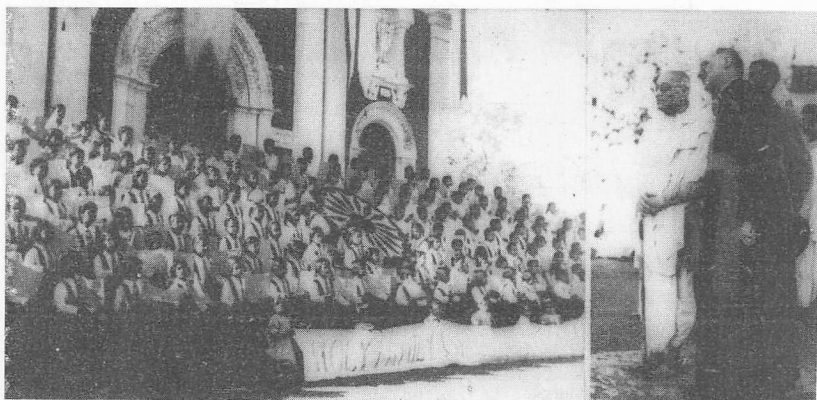
The disastrous famine of 1943-44. In 1943 the great famine that swept Bengal included Father Bishop and his diocese as well. Once while returning from Calcutta, he nearly tripped over bodies on the platform - bodies of some thousands who flocked to Calcutta from the villages in search of food. Father Bishop gave away everything he could lay hands on. The American Army Camp at Ranaghat was of great assistance to him and his missionaries in alleviating the widespread famine. The Governor of Bengal, Richard G. Casey supported the mission and the people and saved many lives.

In 1947-48, just as Bengal was beginning to recover from the ordeal of famine and epidemic, the partition of India and Pakistan took place. A flood of refugees began to pour into Bengal, especially Krishnagar, just 15 miles from the border of East Pakistan. The tender father of the poor began distributing the food supplies he received to as many as possible



When Mahatma Gandhi, the Father of the Nation was assassinated in 1948, and 15,000 mourners of Krishnagar assembled for a memorial service on the banks of river Jalanki, Father Bishop was one of the three invited to speak along with a Hindu and a Muslim. He and his confreres walked to the meeting place at the head of a procession of their thousand school children.



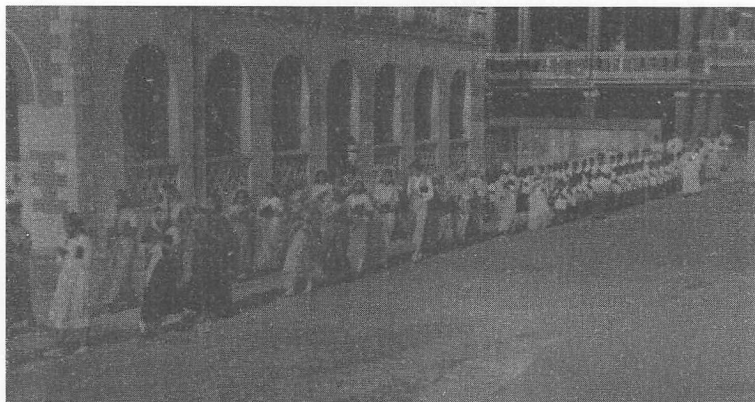


Reception of Shri C. Rajagopalachari, Governor General of W. B in front of the Cathedral, Krishnagar, Jan 1948. It was his first official visit to the mission.



St. Joseph's Dispensary near the Cathedral under construction. Bro. Charles Castelli who worked with Father Bishop for many years as an architect in Krishnagar diocese is seen on the terrace.

## **THE FIRST CLOTHING DAY OF THE SMI - APRIL 1952**



The entrance procession emerging from the Bishop's house



Novices who received the habit:

From the left: Novices Margaret Cheriakakramcherry, Regina Biswas, Teresina Gonsalves, Julia Narayan, Honorine Esper, Lena Puthussery, Angela R. Sarkar and Monica Das

THE FIRST CLOTHING DAY OF THE SMI  
- APRIL 1952



The First Clothing Day of the SMI in the Cathedral which was enlarged by Father Bishop

## PASTORAL VISITS IN THE VILLAGES



To a village across the river



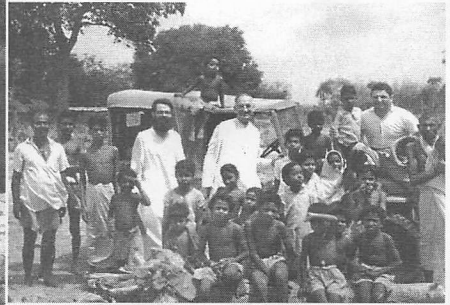
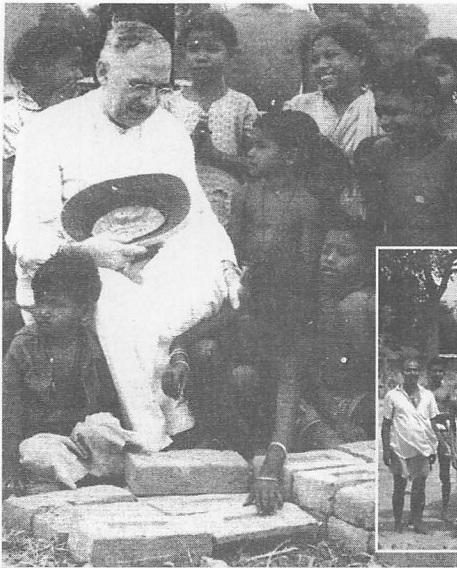
Getting ready for the celebration of the Eucharist at the end of the mofussil



A royal reception by his little flock, typical devotion to their loving shepherd

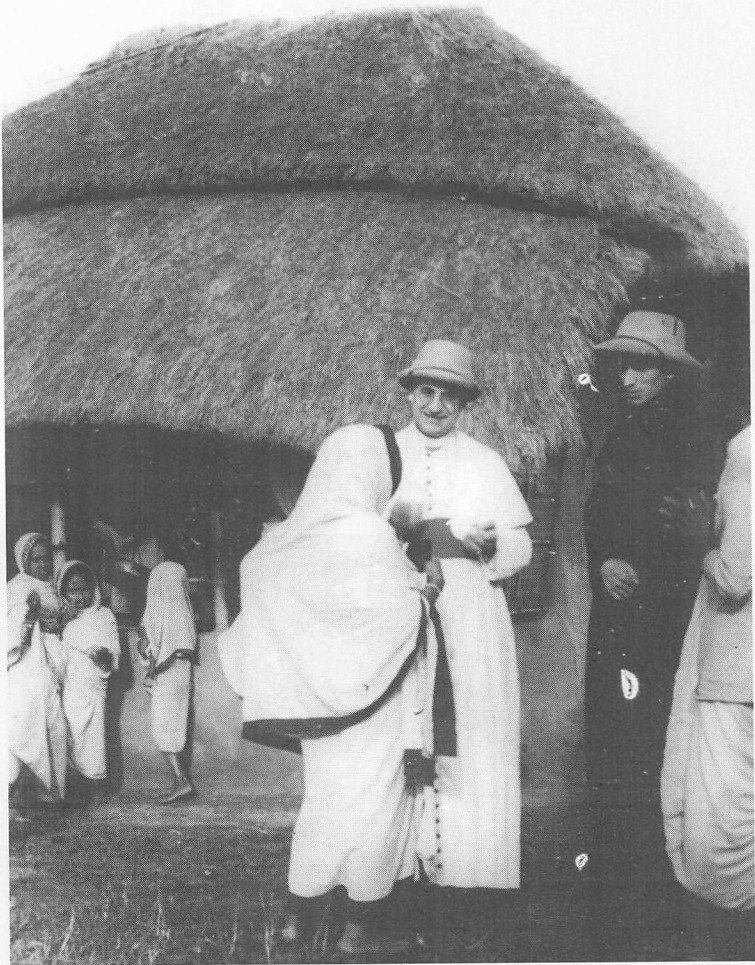


The cultural programme after the Mass. Father Bishop distributes sweets to everyone.



With group of children and Brother Castelli, sdb, Father Bishop took pains to bring to the boarding school, children such as these from remote villages, at times in his own vehicle, and provided them with opportunities for a better future.





Visiting the families after Mass

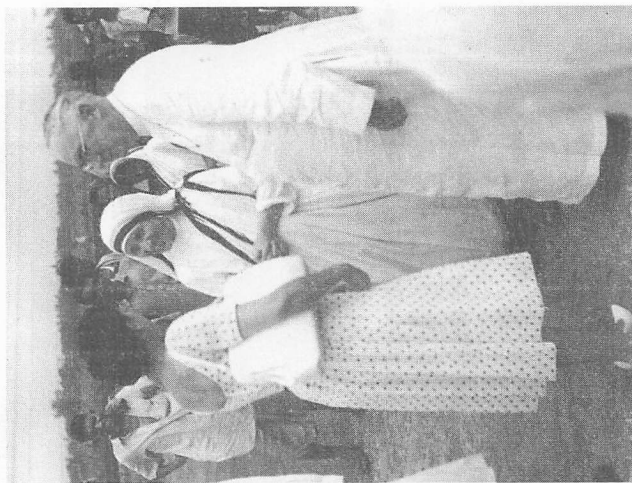




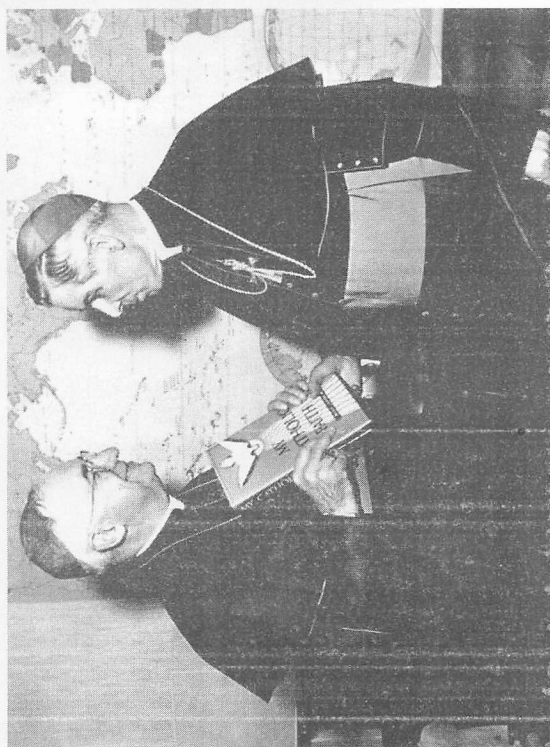
Father Bishop visits his mamma - Nov 7, 1954. She passed away on 19 July 1957.



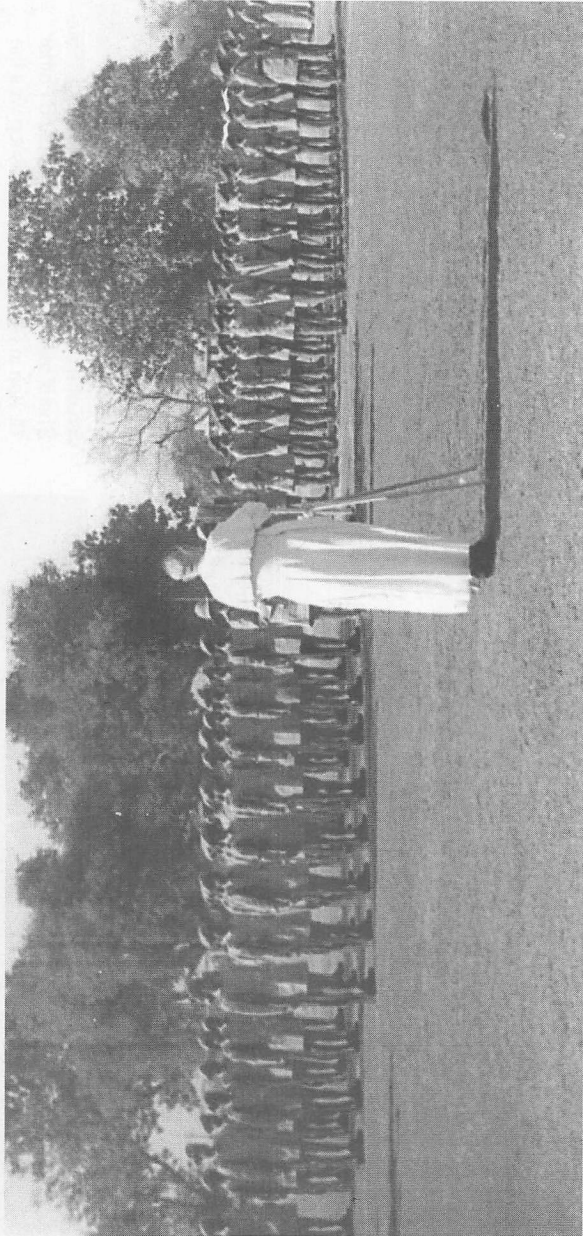
In his office at the Bishop's house - 1956



Visit of a delegate of CRS - USA in Oct 1960  
She is talking to Mother Teresa and Father  
Bishop in Calcutta. Father Bishop was the  
"Catholic Relief Services" representative for  
Northeast India from 1944 to 1959, when a  
permanent office in Calcutta was opened.



Father Bishop and Bishop Fulton Sheen - two world famous writers of our  
Mother Church



At Krishnagar College ground parade - Jan 26, 1964. Father Bishop is taking the pictures. He encouraged his school children to take part in the parade.



Conferring the Sacrament of  
Confirmation at Ranabondo -  
9 Feb 1964



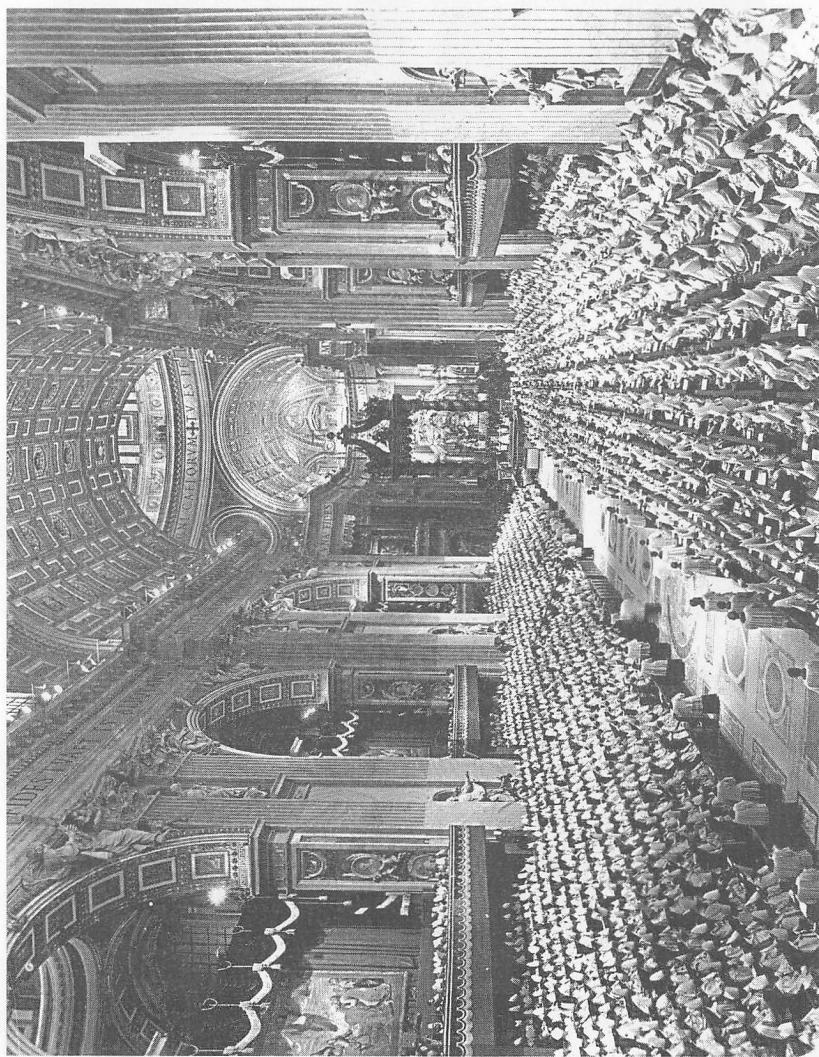
Father Bishop, offering the Mass (pre-Vatican II style) in the SMI chapel  
(present library), assisted by Fr. Louis Gobetti, sdb. As his devoted secretary  
from 1945 - 1969, Father has been a great help to the SMI in many ways.



Father Bishop with Mr. and Mrs. Ferdinand and Delia Kuhn, Authors of The Texas Bishop of Krishnagar when they visited Krishnagar in March 1978



Father Bishop visits Mons. Vincenzo Cimatti, sdb, shortly before his death. Born at Faenza, Italy in 1879, he became a Salesian and pioneer missionary in Japan, which he loved with all heart as his second motherland. He passed away on 6 Oct. 1965. He was known as "The Don Bosco of Japan. Father Bishop says, "He was a saint and likely to be canonized."



A very active  
participant at the  
Second Vatican  
Council: October  
1962 -  
December 1965.



Another view of the council. Father Bishop is seated in one of the front pews.



The Salesian Bishops attending the First Session of Vatican II, with V. Rev. Fr. Ziggotti, Rector Major, at the Salesian Institute Teresa Gerini, Rome, Nov 1962



Father Bishop celebrates his Episcopal Silver Jubilee during the Council. The 12 Apostles were privileged to concelebrate the Holy Eucharist at the very place on the anniversary of the very day of their Ordination.





Father Bishop with His Holiness Pius XII - 2 July 1958  
(His Holiness ordained him Bishop in Rome, October 29, 1939).

On that most solemn occasion of his Episcopal Ordination in Rome,  
Pius XII gave a heart-rending message to our dear Father,  
*Son, the lightest of crosses, I give you. Be a father to all.*

*I am sending you to a place extremely poor. Be a father to all!*

Father Bishop engraved it in his heart as a mandate,

Prayed over it often and recalled it fondly

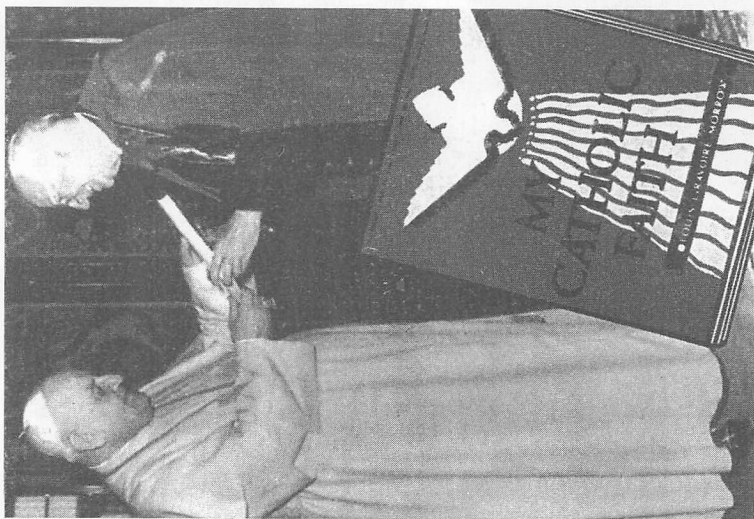
Whenever he was among his flock or addressed them, saying,

*Amar priyo sontangon, ami tomadigoke bhalobashi !* ("My dear children, I love you!")

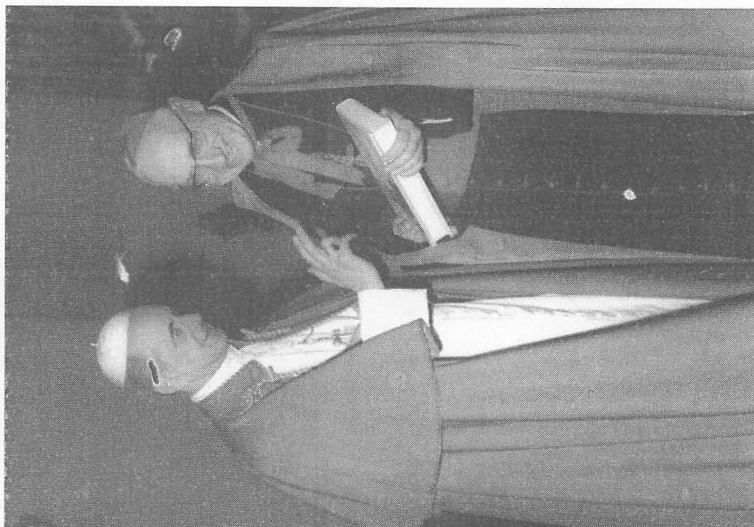
It was the best sermon they loved and registered in their hearts

And would flock to him over and again to hear it said, as though

It was a message from Jesus Christ himself - The Good Shepherd!



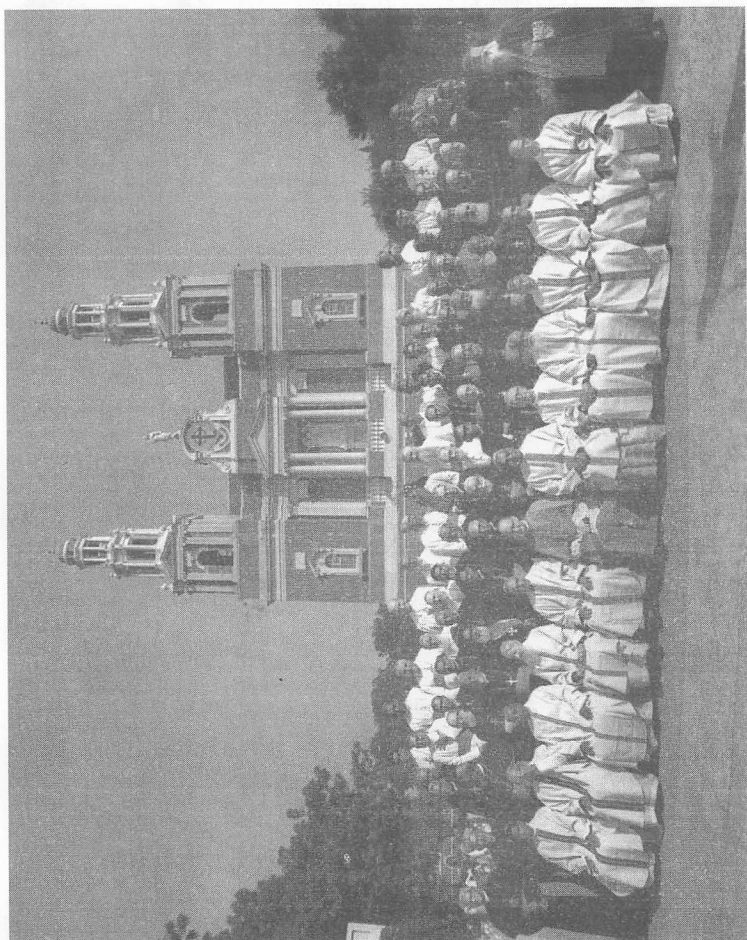
With His Holiness John XXIII



With His Holiness Paul VI - 1966



With Dr. Radhakrishnan, President of India while attending the CBI meeting in New Delhi - 1966



With his Brother Bishops at the CBCI Meeting in New Delhi - 1966, Father Bishop is in the centre of the second row.

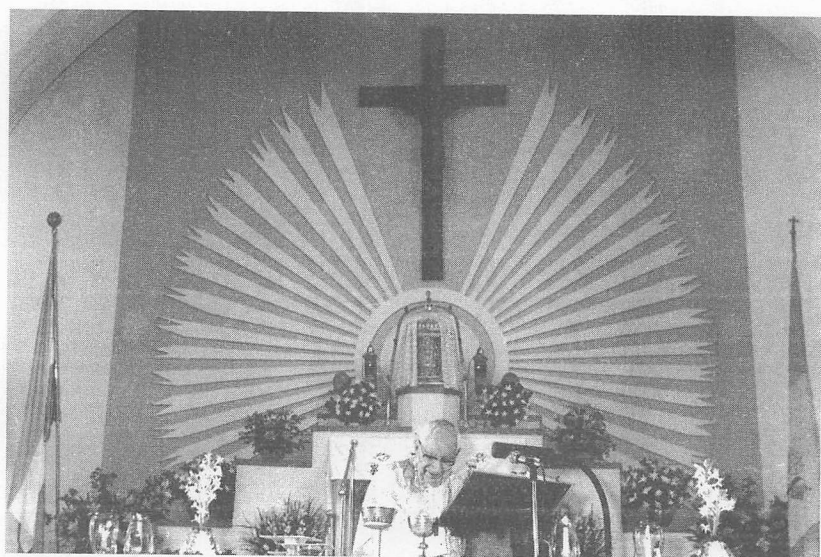


Father Bishop with some of his brother Commissioners of Krishnagar Municipality and prominent citizens of the town (at the Bp's House, Krishnagar) - 1961. In 1952 he was elected commissioner of the Municipal Board, which he served for thirteen years (1952 - 1965).

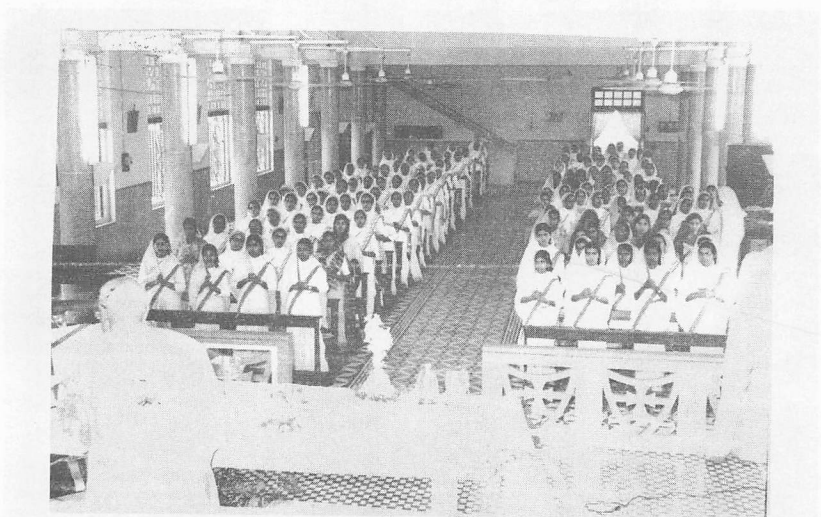
Father Bishop during the famine in 1943-44 was chosen as the chairman of the food committee in the town of Krishnagar. The secretary of this committee was the Chairman of the Municipality. After India became independent, prominent citizens of the town requested Father Bishop to enter his name for election as a Commissioner of the Municipality. The first election took place in 1952. Father Bishop succeeded in this, and was re-elected in 1955, 1959, and 1962 consecutively. At one of his meetings in 1965, because of the demands on his time for the work of Vatican Council II, Father Bishop begged his brother Commissioners to excuse him from candidacy for re-election. At this meeting he thanked them for all their past kindness.



The farewell: Photo in front of the Municipality office with his brother Commissioners - Jan 1970



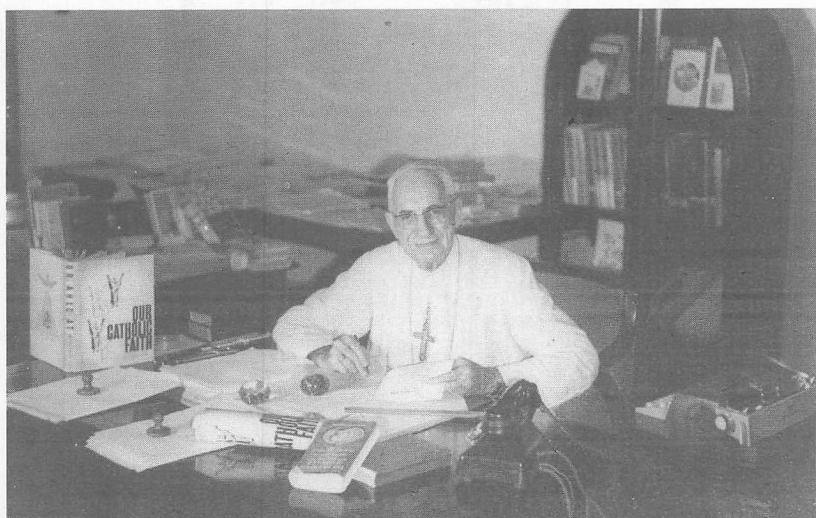
Celebration of the Diamond Jubilee of his priestly ordination in the Motherhouse chapel 21 May, 1981, the chapel meticulously planned, constructed, and blessed by him on 19 April, 1965.



The participants: Sisters and formees at the same Mass



Diamond Jubilee of Father Bishop's priestly Ordination - 1981: The Solemn Eucharistic celebration in the Cathedral.



In his office at the Motherhouse working on his catechetical books



Christmas Day at the Cathedral



Visit of Aunt Mago to her dear brother at the Motherhouse 24 Dec, 1972. She visited him last - in Aug - Nov. 1984, after his fall.

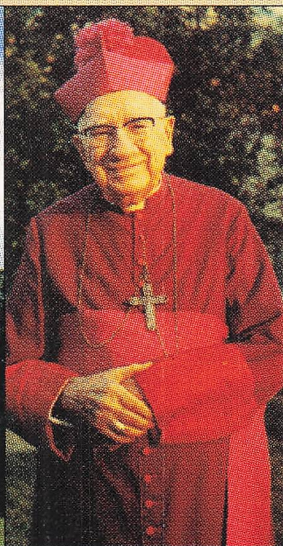




Vocations from East Africa - A Vision realized:



The first visit of our first four East African SMI to Krishnagar  
Srs. Deodata Ignas Mkinga, Yustina Edward Maganga, Eltruda Simon  
Kimati, Magdalene Gasper Lyaruu.



Cathedral, the crypt and the Smi praying at his tomb



Resting close to his beloved people at the place designated by him in the Cathedral of Krishna Nagar.

"In time of need whatever it may be, I will stand by you, and promise to do whatever I can. In return I ask nothing from you but a tiny 18-square-foot plot of land where I can have my eternal reward. May God bless you all!"

"I shall remember you in heaven as much as I shall be given permission."

