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# *Native Clergy For Mission Countries*

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The Right Rev. Mgr. Joseph Freri, D.C.L.

*MISSIONARY APOSTOLIC*

Press of the Society  
For the Propagation of the Faith  
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THE NATIVE CLERGY OF THE FAR-EAST

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There are 60 Native Priests in Japan and Corea;  
830 in China;  
700 in Indo-China;  
850 in India and Ceylon;

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Total: 2440 Native Priests in the Far-East

PLEASE HELP INCREASE THE NUMBER

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## NATIVE CLERGY FOR MISSION COUNTRIES.

IN the August number of THE ECCLESIASTICAL REVIEW, 1917, I wrote, at the request of several missionary Bishops, an article under the above title. It may interest those whose attention it attracted to know the results obtained by that short paper.<sup>1</sup>

### LACK OF PRIESTS IN THE FAR EAST.

In answer to the oft propounded question: Why is not the evangelization of the world making faster progress?, I singled out as one of the causes, the altogether insufficient number of workers, which is and always has been out of all proportion to the task to be performed. In Japan, for instance, there is one priest for the conversion of 220,000 infidels.

The present war, which affects the Church in every part of the world, is seriously threatening the very existence of its missions in pagan countries. Not to mention the missionaries who were forced by it to leave their posts, the war has emptied the mission schools of Europe; the number of workers to be expected from the United States is small as yet; and now that we ourselves are engaged in the great conflict, our seminaries may soon be similarly affected. Therefore, humanly speaking, the situation bids fair to be hopelessly out of hand within one generation if missions are forever to depend on outside sources of supply.

The only possible way to solve the problem is to increase considerably the number of native clergy. It is in keeping with the spirit of the Church, that as soon as Christianity has obtained a certain footing in a country, seminaries be established to train and prepare natives to preach and minister to their countrymen. This is what was done by St. Paul, the patron and model of all missionaries. After announcing the good tidings and forming what we may call a congregation of Christians, he would ordain some of them to minister to the rest whilst he went on and began the work in some other place. "Non misit me Christus baptizare sed evangelizare . . . Vae mihi si non evangelizavero!"

<sup>1</sup> Persons who have not read that article may obtain it, free, by addressing THE PROPAGATION OF THE FAITH PRESS, 343 Lexington Ave., New York, N. Y.

This example and the instructions of the Church have been followed to some extent, and there are native priests in every part of the Far East, in Japan, China, India. The candidates are selected as with us and their clerical education is practically the same as that given in our seminaries. The Bishops agree that they make pious, devoted, learned, and zealous priests; in fact, that they compare favorably with the clergy of any American or European country.

Such being the case, the question which naturally occurs to the mind is the one which Archbishop Perez of Verapoly (India) answers as follows: "We have not a sufficient number of priests for our parishes; we have not in our seminaries a sufficient number of students to increase their ranks. The reason? Lack of funds to educate the candidates!"

The aim of my former article was to interest American Catholics, and especially my brother priests, in the most deserving charity of giving to the missions means to increase the number of their priests. Before relating the results obtained I beg leave to quote some of the numerous letters received from the heads of missions, commenting upon my undertaking.

#### VIEWS OF THE HIERARCHY ON THE SUBJECT.

There are sixty native priests in Japan and Corea. Bishop Combaz, P.F.M., who has a large number of them in his diocese of Nagasaki, wrote as follows:

I read with the greatest interest your article and do not know how to thank you for it. I will consider it a duty of gratitude to have it read by all my missionaries, and I will ask them to pray that your appeal may be answered.

Corea is the land of martyrs and for many years its clergy and people underwent frightful persecutions; a number of native priests shed their blood for the Faith. Bishop Mutel, P.F.M., of Seoul wrote:

Your information on this complex and delicate question is accurate and to the point; one might believe that it came from a veteran missionary. . . . The future looks dark and would be desperate but for the well-grounded hope we have in our Corean priests.

China numbers about 830 native priests. Here are a few testimonials from the Bishops of that immense field:

From Bishop Van Dyck, P.F.M., of S. W. Mongolia :

I received your interesting pamphlet in behalf of a native clergy for the missions, and I agree with you that present circumstances have made this work necessary. The number of our converts is growing so rapidly that we had to enlarge our seminary in order to prepare priests for these neophytes. We read with great joy your appeal to the American clergy and people. Americans are now the admiration of the world for their charity to war-stricken Europe. May they also come to our rescue.

From Bishop Prat, O.P., of Amoy :

Ever since I took charge of this mission it has been my desire to have a well organized seminary and I have written many letters begging for help, but so far without much success. Nevertheless I have already ten native priests who are doing good work, and I thank you with all my heart for your efforts to increase their number.

Bishop Ibañez, O.F.M., of Northern Shensi writes in Latin :

Quid dicam de opusculo " Native Clergy for Missions Countries " ? Rogo Deum dignetur effundere gratiam suam in corda eorum qui opus perlegerint. Verissimum est quod " the reason why the native clergy is not more numerous in the Far East is not the lack of vocations, but the lack of funds to educate the candidates ". Vicariatus meus, inter pauperes pauperrimus vitam suam incepit anno 1911, sine clero indigena. Et quidem inter Christianos nostros minime desunt juvenes, qui bono spiritu ut videtur ducti petunt ut admittantur ad studia ecclesiastica. Faxit Deus quod necessaria media obtineamus ad hoc sanctissimum opus absolute necessarium.

From Bishop Mondaini, O.F.M., of S. Hunan :

Your appeal for a native clergy for the Far East is most opportune ; it is necessary. It was undoubtedly inspired by Almighty God and, as all that comes from Him must needs be fulfilled, I have full confidence that your and our desires will be realized. American Catholics have generous hearts ; they are supporting many good works outside of their own country, despite their heavy burdens at home. I have no doubt, therefore, that they will have pity on China and help to give priests to that poor country, the prey of the evil one for so many centuries.

From Bishop Seguin, P.F.M., Vicar Apostolic of Kui-chau :

Your article says exactly what was to be said on the question and I have full confidence that, with the grace of God, it will incite the charity of American Catholics toward such an essential work.

Bishop Henninghaus, S.V.D., of S. Shantung, whilst admitting our conclusions in a general manner, takes exception to one of our statements. I had said that the young men preparing for the priesthood were always selected from among families that had been Christians for several generations. Bishop Henninghaus declares that such cannot be the case in the new missions. He writes in Latin as follows :

Maximo gaudio accipi et perlegi libellum de educatione cleri indigenae ab Amplitudine Vestra editum. Brevibus verbis optime dixisti quae dicenda erant ad excitandum zelum eorum quibus evangelium per totum orbem propagandum cordi esse debet. Optimum et uberimum exitum operi tuo adprecor, atque minime dubito quin talem effectum habiturum sit.

In aliquo puncto praxis nostra non concordet cum iis quae scripsisti. Dixisti enim ad seminarium nonnisi admitti illos quorum parentes per plures generationes jam fidem amplexi sint. Hoc principium valere solet in antiquioribus missionibus, sed longo tempore, etiam in Sinis, neo-christiani ad sacerdotium admissi sunt, dummodo in fide et vita christiana confirmatos se ostenderent. Sic etiam nos in nostra missione in qua nonnisi neo conversos habemus, exceptis paucis familiis antiquioribus, admittere debuimus pueros ex neoconversis familiis ; imo inter 23 sacerdotes qui ab initio missionis ex seminario nostro prodierunt, plures sunt novi Christiani. Necessitate instante etiam hos admisimus confidentes gratiam Divinam suppleturam esse, quae aliunde forsan deficient.

Bishop Henninghaus's remark is most welcome, as it confirms our thesis in a singular manner, by showing that the Bishops of the Far East are in such need of priests that they confer the holy priesthood even on converts from paganism, and that they have done so repeatedly with good results.

From Bishop Massi, O.F.M., Vicar Apostolic of Central Shensi :

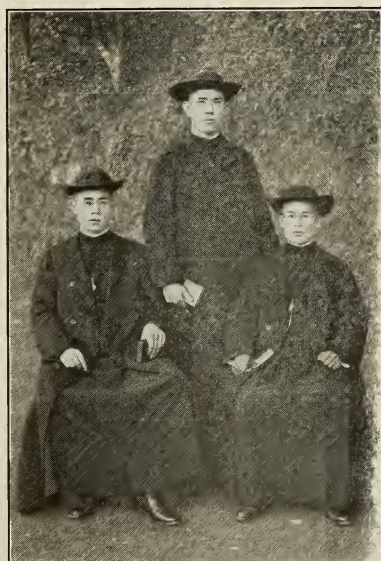
Your pamphlet shows your great and practical knowledge of the state of affairs in the missions, and I have no doubt it will do much good. It is the mustard-seed which will grow and bring forth in due time abundant fruit.



CATHOLIC MISSION AND SEMINARY AT NAGASAKI, JAPAN.



THE REV. JOSEPH FOU, ORDAINED IN 1917  
WITH HIS FATHER AND MOTHER  
W. CHEKIANG, CHINA.



JAPANESE PRIESTS ORDAINED IN 1918  
AT NAGASAKI.



BISHOP DEMANGE AND THE NATIVE CLERGY OF THE VICARIATE OF TAIKOU, COREA.



THE STUDENTS OF ST. THOMAS' SEMINARY AT FOOCHOW, FOKIEN, CHINA.



The question of a native clergy has made more progress in Indo-China than in any other part of the Far East. There we find some vicariates with a larger number of native than of foreign priests.

Bishop Eloy, P.F.M., of S. Tonkin, has 119 native priests against 32 European missionaries. He writes as follows :

As you may see from the figures of my report, we are actively engaged in the formation of the native clergy. I have already 119 Tonkinese priests and they are doing most valuable work. We shall be extremely grateful for anything you may do to help us increase their number.

Bishop Marcou, P.F.M., of Maritime Tonkin, has 40 missionaries and 88 Tonkinese priests. He writes :

In helping the formation of native priests, you are doing a pre-eminently apostolic work, because you will give those new churches a steadfastness they will acquire only through a numerous, devoted, and well-instructed native clergy.

In East Cochin China there are 52 native priests and the Bishop, Mgr. Grangeon, P.F.M., writes :

Your appeal in behalf of a native clergy for the Far East has been for me like a ray of the bright sun in a cloudy sky. Let us be among the first to be benefited by this splendid work.

There are 850 native priests in India and Ceylon; and there, as elsewhere, the heads of missions feel the absolute need of increasing the number if the Church is to be extended in that immense country. Here are a few testimonials :

From Mgr. Aelen, E.F.M., Archbishop of Madras :

I see from your writings that you are strongly in favor of a numerous native clergy, and I endorse every line you have written on the subject; but please tell me what is a bishop going to do when he has not the means to educate the students?

From Mgr. Teissier, P.F.M., Bishop of Mysore :

Allow me to thank you and congratulate you on your article. . . . You have understood not merely the usefulness but the absolute necessity of a native clergy if we are to establish the Church on a solid basis in these infidel countries.

Mgr. Clerc, S.S.F.S., Bishop of Vizagapatam, writes :

All the missionary Bishops of the Far East will owe you a heavy debt of gratitude for your foresight in trying to procure for them the means of forming a native clergy. In this is the future of the Church in these countries.

Mgr. Cardot, P.F.M., Bishop of Rangoon, writes :

I am doing all I can to help the cause for which you plead, and it will be a great consolation at my last hour to think that I have contributed to give a native clergy to this diocese.

Mgr. Joulain, O.M.I., Bishop of Jaffna, Ceylon, writes :

I am most pleased with our native priests, they make excellent missionaries and the Church has every advantage in increasing their number ; that is what we are trying to do as far as we can bear the heavy expenses it entails for the missions.

Bishop Perini, S.J., of Mangalore introduces a new argument, the desire of the Hindus to have priests of their own nationality :

You have done us an immense favor in taking up and pleading the cause of the formation of a native clergy. I am convinced that the future prospects and progress of our missions will always be disappointing as long as the work has to be carried on almost exclusively by a foreign clergy. This is so especially here in India where the spirit of "Home Rule" and self-government is becoming so strong and begins to affect even our Catholic communities. The cry for more Hindu priests is universal.

Another Bishop of India who, for obvious reasons, desires that his name be not published, develops at length Bishop Perini's remark and gives a view of the religious condition of that country which perhaps is not suspected by many :

Of late years the national spirit has grown considerably in India, and the European war is giving it a new impetus. There is a general distrust of foreigners ; they are believed to be unable to understand the natives or sympathize with them ; in a word, they are no longer wanted. They are accused of despising the Hindus and keeping them purposely in inferior positions. You may have heard this from the public press, but probably suppose that it does not apply to our Christians and the European missionaries, who have done so much for

them. Well, such is not the case, and we have an evident proof of it in a press campaign which took place several months ago in the Madras Presidency. Naturally it was not the work of the masses but of members of the upper classes who thought it proper to vent certain feelings, little Catholic, and even hardly reasonable; nevertheless those unwholesome lucubrations did not meet with the blame they deserved on the part of the Catholic population. A Catholic, an employe of the government, wrote in a daily paper that the time had come for European missionaries to let the native clergy take the direction of the missions and become their auxiliaries. They want native priests, native bishops, and the more radical would gladly see the missionaries leave the country at once. I regret to say that some Hindu priests entertain such ideas. It is therefore an obligation for us to prepare for any emergency and multiply the native clergy, and we must do it at once.

After stating, like all his confrères, that the main obstacle to a larger native clergy in the Far East is lack of funds to educate the candidates, the Bishop continues:

You are right in affirming that the natives of India make good priests. Although I would not say that they are equal in every respect to Europeans, they can stand comparison in speculative questions. What they lack mostly is initiative, precision, and a practical turn of mind. But I know of Hindu priests in charge of large parishes who administer them very well; some of them belong to castes to which the gates of the sanctuary were closed only thirty years ago.

As an American you will be shocked to hear that the members of certain castes are excluded from the priesthood; yet such is the fact, and it is not the fault of the missionaries. How can we admit in the seminary a young man with whom the others will refuse to sit? How can we ordain men whose ministry will be rendered impossible because of their caste. Some time ago the Bishop of Mylapore ordained a Pariah; he has been at a loss to know what to do with him ever since!

Caste prejudice offers a great difficulty for the Church of India when it shall have become self-governing. It is decreasing, but slowly; it seems to be in the very blood.

We could quote a hundred more letters from as many heads of missions in the Far East. The foregoing, written by bishops of different nationalities and countries, members of various religious orders and mission societies, will suffice to demonstrate that, whilst it is most desirable to send as many missionaries as possible to the Far East, the future of the Church there

depends on a numerous native clergy. They all assure us that now is the time to increase it; vocations are plentiful; results are satisfactory; the only obstacle is lack of means.

In the presence of those facts I issued an appeal in behalf of the formation of native clergy for the Far East<sup>1</sup> and here are the results obtained up to date.

#### RESULTS OF FORMER APPEAL.

After gathering much information on the subject from bishops and superiors of seminaries, I was able to state that a sum of \$60 a year, or \$360 for a course of six years, will about suffice to support a native student in the department of Philosophy or Theology of almost any seminary in the Far East. I stated also that \$1,000 would found a burse in perpetuity for that purpose. I foretold that attempts to "underbid" us in those figures would be made, and they were made. A priest "advertised" burses in China for \$800 and a bishop said that he would accept them at \$700. I could have answered the former by saying that, if it were true that \$800 would suffice in certain parts of China, in other parts of the Far East \$1,200 or even \$1,500 would be required, as in India, for instance. I simply took an average. The bishop referred to had in view the support of boys in the preparatory college, who were not likely to become priests, if they persevered, for a dozen years. My appeal was made in behalf of students in Philosophy or Theology.

Up to date (Oct., 1918) 48 burses and 4 scholarships have been founded. Twenty-eight persons have pledged themselves to pay \$60 a year or more for the support of a student. In addition, a fund of \$30,000 has been established which, after the death of the donor, will be employed for the foundation of burses in seminaries; in the meantime the interest of the sum is used for the same purpose.

Since the movement was started, therefore, the Society for the Propagation of the Faith has been instrumental in securing the means to educate eighty seminarians in the Far East, and has promised of more. This is a good beginning, but only a beginning, as I am convinced that our clergy and people could easily provide funds for the yearly maintenance

<sup>1</sup> The question of a native clergy for Africa will be treated separately.



BISHOP RAYSSAC AND NATIVE PRIESTS OF THE VICARIATE OF SWATOW, CHINA.



BISHOP MENICATTI AND SEMINARIANS OF N. HONAN, CHINA.



FIVE ANNAMITE PRIESTS ORDAINED IN 1917.



STAFF OF PROFESSORS (O.C.D.) AND NEWLY ORDAINED PRIESTS AT THE PAPAL SEMINARY OF PUTHENPALLY, INDIA.

of 500 seminarians, and after some time that number of priests would be added each year to the apostles of Japan, China, India, etc.

It will be of interest to know the seminaries where the burses have been founded in accordance with the intentions of the donors :

JAPAN: Taikou, 6 Burses; Seoul, 3 Burses; Nagasaki, 1 Burse.

CHINA: Kien-tchang, 3 Burses; N. Honan, 3 Burses; Kui-chau, 2 Burses; E. Shantung, 2 Burses; E. Kiangsi, 2 Burses; 1 Burse in each of the following: W. Che-kiang, Maritime Chi-li, S. Hunan, E. Hupeh, N. Hupeh, S. Kiang-si, S. Manchuria, C. Mongolia, E. Mongolia, W. Mongolia, N. Shensi, S. Shensi, E. Si-chuan, S. Honan.

INDO-CHINA: S. Tonkin, 2 Burses; 1 Burse in each of the following: E. Cochin China, W. Cochin China, C. Tonkin, U. Tonkin, W. Tonkin.

INDIA: Verapoly, 2 Burses; Pondicherry, 1 Burse.

If the names of certain vicariates well known or dear to the reader do not appear in the foregoing list, it may be due to the fact that the bishops declared that they had sufficient funds for their seminary, as is the case of the Vicariates of Kiang-nan and S. E. Chi-li in care of the Jesuits, and of S. Shantung, in care of the Fathers of the Society of the Divine Word. The sum demanded for a burse foundation by most of the bishops of India is so high that it was impossible for us to meet their demands. Finally, a number of bishops did not answer our invitation to make application, either because they have no seminary or because their students are educated at some general seminary like those of Pulo-Pinang (Malacca) or Kandy (Ceylon).

On the other hand, if it appears that certain seminaries received several burses, it is because they are in special need of help, being of recent foundation, like the one of Taikou, or, again, because we were so directed by the donors.

#### THE PLAN FOLLOWED.

The Society for the Propagation of the Faith aims at carrying out implicitly the intentions of its benefactors. Every donation received for a designated mission is forwarded im-

mediately and directly to its destination, even if, in our own estimation, it would have been better placed elsewhere. Although we had absolute confidence that bishops who accepted foundations for their seminaries would apply them according to the instructions given, we thought it wise nevertheless to bind them by a regular contract, which would be a guarantee to the benefactors, the beneficiaries, and the Society. Needless to say, the form of contract had first been submitted to the Ordinaries and unanimously accepted by them. It is as follows:

I, the undersigned, . . . . . Bishop of . . . . ., do hereby acknowledge receipt of \$. . . . . (U. S. currency) from the National Office of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, 343 Lexington Avenue, New York, N. Y.

This donation, which is due to the generosity of . . . . ., of the Diocese of . . . . ., is accepted under the following conditions, which we pledge will be faithfully complied with by ourselves and by our successors in office:

This sum of \$. . . . . will not be spent but invested as safely as possible and the yearly interest derived therefrom will be employed exclusively for the maintenance, in perpetuity, of a student in Philosophy or Theology preparing for the priesthood in our Seminary and intending to join the secular clergy of this Diocese.

The student beneficiary will be designated by us and his photograph sent to the founder of this burse.

We also agree to mail him every year a report showing conduct, health, and scholastic standing of the student.

The beneficiary will be required to pray for his benefactor daily and to offer, within one month after his ordination, three Masses for his intention, and thereafter one Mass each year, as well as three Masses for the repose of his soul in the event of his demise.

After the first beneficiary has been ordained the burse will be transferred to another student in Philosophy or Theology, and so on indefinitely under the same conditions.

If the beneficiary dies before reaching the priesthood or gives up his studies, the burse will be transferred to another student of the same rank, if possible, and also under the same conditions.

In either case notice will be given to the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, which will inform the donor.

This burse will be known by the name of . . . . .

The original of this document is sent to the donor and copies deposited in the archives of the Diocese of . . . . . and of the National office of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, 343 Lexington Ave., New York, N. Y.



For all the foundations made the conditions imposed have been scrupulously adhered to and the contracts returned by the Ordinaries. As requested, they were accompanied as often as possible by the photograph of the beneficiary and a letter of thanks written in Latin. The following addressed to a Baltimore lady, foundress of a burse, will serve as a sample of gratitude expressed by an Oriental mind.

TO MY MOST NOBLE BENEFACTRESS:

Your generosity is a great surprise to me. You are unknown to me and I am unknown to you. We are separated by thousands of miles, and nevertheless you have come to the assistance of your poor servant. What mercy! What kindness! What generosity!

How can I justly recognize your goodness? Since I am quite powerless to do so, allow me to use the only means the poor have to repay their benefactors, viz., prayer. Every day I will pray for you and on the first Sunday of every month I will receive Holy Communion for your intentions. God, who has promised to reward charity a hundredfold, will bestow his favors upon you and your name will be written in His Sacred Heart.

Your generosity will make the way smooth for me. I am poor in the goods of this world, and so far it is only through the charity of others that I have been able to pursue my studies. Thanks to you I have now the assurance of being able to reach the object of my desires, the Holy Priesthood. I always endeavored to prepare myself to be a useful servant in the mission of Honan; I will do it now with renewed zeal to show my gratitude to you, O noble Lady!

Knowing well that without the grace of God I can do nothing, I beg of you to obtain for me, through your prayers, from the Father of All Light, diligence in my studies and progress in the path of virtue.

Out of your good heart accept with benevolence these few words; they come from the bottom of my heart.

AUGUSTIN KUO,  
Student in the seminary of  
Siao-tchuang, N. Honan, China.

I am glad to state that this plan has received the entire approval of the donors, one of them, a gentleman of the far West, expressed his satisfaction in the following terms:

I am delighted with the Latin letter which the beneficiary of the burse wrote me. Curiously enough I remember just about enough of that dead lingo to be able to read it, and never before appreciated

quite so much the value of having even a slight knowledge of Latin. In this connexion I wonder how many seminarians in this country in their first year of theology could write as readable a letter in Latin as this young Chinaman can do. I imagine they would be very few and far between.

The picture of the youngster shows him to be a mighty manly-looking chap. I will write him sometime and he will probably have to worry over getting my English words into some language that he can digest.

I assure you that this whole matter has given me the greatest pleasure, and particularly the businesslike way in which you handle such things. Doing something in such cases becomes not at all an act of charity but a precious privilege. I only hope things may turn out so I can be of further service, and show my appreciation again of the splendid setting-forth of the subject of native clergy made by you.

This benefactor has carried out his promise and, since the foregoing was written, has founded another burse.

It now remains for me to offer again to the donors our heartfelt thanks for the generous answer they gave to the appeal, and to express the hope that they will have numerous imitators. The heads of the missions are unanimous in stating that the Church will be solidly planted in the Far East only when it has its native clergy. They assure us that vocations are plentiful and that *now* is the time to cultivate them. They turn their suppliant eyes toward us, American Catholics, as being the only ones who for the present can afford to furnish the means for carrying out this noble undertaking. Its success will be one day the glory of the American Church.

Let us not remain deaf to the entreaties of our distant brethren, but share with them the blessings Providence has so abundantly bestowed upon us. To our daily petition, "Thy Kingdom come," let us add an act of charity. It will prove the sincerity of our desire and make it more acceptable before God. "The harvest indeed is great, but the laborers are few: pray therefore the Lord that He may send laborers into His harvest." Do some thing more; send a harvester to work in your name and he will share with you the fruits of his labors. As the saintly Pope Pius X said, "He who comes to the assistance of an apostle shall receive the reward of an apostle."

JOSEPH FRERI,

*National Director of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith.*

The Society for the Propagation of the Faith will give further information to charitable persons interested in the training and support of native clergy for mission countries. It will assume all responsibility for the transmission of donations for that object and will see that the intentions of the donors are faithfully carried out.

Address: RIGHT REV. JOSEPH FRERI

343 Lexington Avenue

New York City

