



## *Basilian Fathers Missions*

*Latin American Apostolate*  
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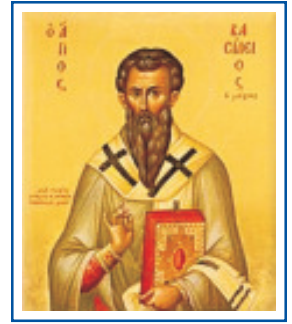


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# Basilian Fathers Missions Latin American Apostolate NEWSLETTER



P.O. BOX 708

SUGAR LAND, TEXAS 77487-0708

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NOVEMBER 2010

## Basilian Community in Colombia



*Basilian Annual Retreat, Benedictine Monastery, Bogotá*

**Back row (l to r):** P. Roberto Seguin, C.S.B., P. Felipe Platt, C.S.B., P. Pedro Miguel Mora, C.S.B., P. Frederico Carrasquilla (Retreat Preacher), P. Oscar Fernando Gómez, C.S.B., P. Juan Carlos Rojas, C.S.B., P. Rafael Lopera, C.S.B., and P. Francisco Amico, C.S.B.

**Center row (Scholastics):** Carlos Gutiérrez, C.S.B., Alexis Guerrero, C.S.B., Esteban David Valencia, C.S.B., and William Emiro Rubio, C.S.B.

**Front row (Postulants):** Camilo Dimaté, Santiago Vega, Wilmar Henao, Carlos Eduardo Marin, James Leonardo Yañez, Luis Edicson Sánchez, and Néstor Fabián Hernández.

*Father Bob Seguin reports about living with the Basilians in Colombia.*

Our year of postulancy began in January of 2010 in Bogotá with two young men, Camilo Dimaté and Nestor Hernández. Fr. Wally Platt, C.S.B. and myself accompanied them counting on the presence of Fr. Rafael Lopera, C.S.B., who is involved in different projects in Trujillo Valle and Cali Valle as well as in Bogotá. We are looking forward to the presence of Fr. Alejandro Romero, C.S.B. from Mexico who will be studying here in Bogotá in a two year program. In July, our numbers increased. We now have seven postulants. With the added presence of Luis Edicson Sánchez, Carlos Eduardo Marín, Santiago Vega, Wilmar Henao and James Yañez our numbers have increased. The postulants study Philosophy at the Redemptorist University FUSA here in Bogotá. They are also taking a course in English. Besides

their studies they are doing catechetical work in the local parish and will hopefully take part in small base communities also in the parish. On Sundays, we celebrate the Eucharist in a small chapel in the center of Bogotá. The postulants prepare the liturgy and the singing, and we celebrate with a community of about 70 people. It is certainly a highlight of our life together. Fr. Platt, C.S.B. celebrates a Sunday Eucharist for an English speaking community here in Bogotá.

As postulants, these young men are just starting out on their vocational journey. They are a fine group of young men. The postulancy is a time of discernment and growth, a time to learn how to live in community and to take responsibility for one's own development and growth in prayer and living in Christ Jesus. Please, keep them and all of us in your prayers.

Fr. Bob Seguin, C.S.B.



# History of the Missions

*"Fate of the Missions in the Balance"*

*Father John Collins relates his frustrations in being alone with all the responsibilities of keeping the missions viable, as we continue his unpublished autobiography.*

In July (1939), I anxiously awaited the new appointments. When they were announced, there was no additional priest assigned to the Missions. I was very sad and disappointed, but there was nothing to do but be patient and wait for Father Dillon to get well. In the meantime, the bank note on the house came due again and I went back to see Bishop Byrne. He told me he had expected me sooner, and he wanted to meet the new man Father Carr had promised to send to the Missions. I told him that no one had been sent.

Obviously disturbed, the bishop turned to me and said, "Well, you decide. Can you take it alone? You say the word and we will close the missions and the Basilians won't need to bother about them."

It was a hard decision to make; however, I replied, "It's been tough and still will be, but I think I can take it until they find someone else to send down to help out."

"OK," he said, "We will renew the note on the loan." He called in Irene Reichert, the secretary, and said, "When you see this man, Father Collins, come in, hide the checkbook!" Until his death, whenever he saw me the Bishop used to kid me by saying, "Hide the checkbook!"

I returned to Rosenberg and wrote to Father Carr about the visit with the Bishop. Being irritated and disappointed, I wrote a very bitter letter. I told Father Carr that he was an illogical man. His being a world-renowned philosopher made it more

difficult to understand. Here I was, all alone, trying to save thousands of souls and there were hundreds of Basilians doing nothing during the summer, yet none were sent to stay with me. And yet, he had just sent six men to Europe to study for higher degrees. I told him that with all these souls to save, he sent one priest to Rosenberg to save thousands and a half dozen priests to prepare to teach a few so-called "brains" at the Institute. I told him of the decision I had been forced to make with the Bishop, to go it alone, and then I told him I had no money.



( Some of the children at New Gulf - May 28, 1939 )

*At this time, I organized a summer catechism school at New Gulf which proved very successful. I gave all the kids tickets for attendance and promised prizes after two weeks. We averaged over one hundred children each day.*

Well, the only answer I got from Father Carr was, "I like those letters – they are sincere – write some more!" But he sent no money, answered no questions and left things as they were – in a fog! I felt like "blowing my top," but God was good and I didn't. I figured I had done my duty telling Father Carr what the situation was.

There was so much work to do and no money to do it with, that

I started working "full steam" myself. I started to build a garage out of some old lumber and tin and fix up some windows, etc. in the house. Then I figured a garden would be a good thing; so one of the parishioners and I started a garden. It didn't turn out very well. The rains came, and the heat came after and destroyed the garden, and anyway, the parishioner took what was left. It was, however, a noble experiment!

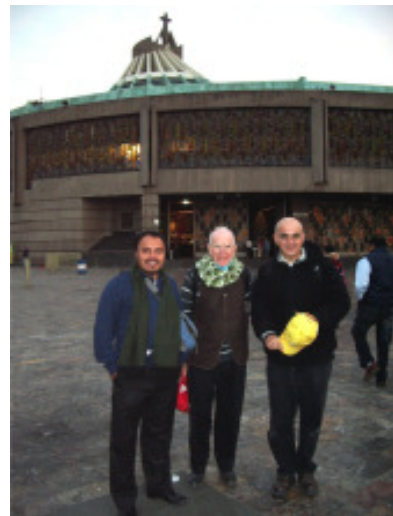
At this time, I organized a summer catechism school at New Gulf which proved very successful. I gave all the kids tickets for attendance and promised prizes after two weeks. We averaged over one hundred children each day from four to six p.m.

# Mission in Mexico

San Lorenzo Parish in Tehuacán was entrusted to the Basilian Fathers in 1978. Through the years, we have been busy building a new church to replace the small, aged 17<sup>th</sup> century building, and constructing the chapels Santa Cecilia and San Juan Diego in Vista Hermosa.



*San Lorenzo Church*



*Fathers Alejandro Romero, Tom Dugan and Alberto Ferrara in front of the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe*

Mexico City to concelebrate The Eucharist at the Main Altar.

A Parish Council has been formed to work with the Basilian Fathers as companions in the Parochial Plan.

A Parish Center has been established where medical, legal,



*A young girl's health problems are tended by Dr. Javier Noriega at the Parish Center*



*Volunteers packing cartons of necessities at the Parish Center for the poor*

psychological, and other services are offered to those of limited material resources. The poor come from their colonias to receive healthcare and packages of items for cooking, household, and personal use, prepared by volunteers at the Parish Center. Many supplies, such as the stethoscope and blood pressure cuff used by Dr. Javier Noriega, are purchased with profit distributions from Saint Basil Coffee.



*The Children's Day festivities*



*Father Alberto Ferrara offering a religious reflection on the radio*

On Children's Day, April 30, local children are treated to a day of fun, food, and festivities.

Once a week, one of the Basilian Fathers goes to the local radio station in Tehuacán, "Radio Popular", 1420 on the AM Band, to offer a religious reflection over the airwaves.

Father Tom Dugan is active in the Parish Social Ministry, visits the infirm at local hospitals, and teaches Catechism to the children. Father Alberto Ferrara also teaches at the local Diocesan Seminary.



*Father Tom Dugan teaching Catechism to the children at San Juan Diego*