



Chapter VI

THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

From the highest number of friars to the Napoleonic suppressions (1810)

Characteristics of the century. The priors general of the eighteenth century. Devotion to Servite saints and blessed and the canonizations of St. Peregrine and St. Juliana. Studies in the Order up to the *Methodus* of Fra Francesco Raimondo Adami. Servants of Mary about 1750. Effects of the European political situation on the Order up to the Napoleonic suppressions. Distinguished Servites of the eighteenth century.

Characteristics of the century

The events, men and the life of the Order in the eighteenth century look like a kaleidoscope of contrasting and even contradictory features. In the first half of the century the Servants of Mary reached the highest number of friars in their entire history. But the suppressions at the end of the century and in the first decade of the nineteenth century brought about the closing of a large number of priories and the dispersal of the majority of their friars.

The priors general of this century of the Enlightenment were men of renown. Some were later named bishops or cardinals.

But nearly all of them were appointed by popes and not elected at general chapters. In fact, although seventeen general chapters should have been held in the eighteenth century, only twelve actually met.

The first half of the eighteenth century was characterized, by a great vitality. There were various decrees and instructions for the improvement of studies in the Order. Devotion to Servite saints and blessed, including the Seven Founders, experienced a great growth and Peregrine Laziosi and Juliana Falconieri were canonized. In the eighteenth century some Servants of Mary took part in official missions of the Holy See. At the beginning of the century Fra Giovanni Domenico Fabris and Fra Sostegno M. Viani formed part of the legation of the Holy See to China in the controversial question of the Chinese rites. Toward the end of the century a former prior general, Fra Carlo Francesco Caselli, was a consultant to Archbishop Giuseppe Spina in the concordat negotiations between Napoleon and the Holy See. While Caselli was received with honours by Napoleon, another Servant of Mary, Fra Amadio Bertocelli, was executed by a firing squad on 16 September 1809 by order of Napoleon, and a third Servite, Fra Roberto M. Costaguti, bishop of Sansepolcro, refused to take the oath to Napoleon and declined the Legion of Honour which the Emperor had awarded him.



The eighteenth century did not lack friars taken up with secular interests. There were Attilio Ottavio Ariosti, a musician; Giuseppe Salvetti, a sculptor; Alessandro M. Bandiera, a man of letters; Giuseppe Giacinto M. Bergantini, a historian; Luigi Baroni, a man of many interests and talents; and Giuseppe Antonio Brusa, an outstanding student of aeronautical theory.

It is difficult to arrange the many events and dimensions of eighteenth century Servite life systematically, and so it seems best to deal with the material under the following headings: the

priors general of the eighteenth century; devotion to Servite saints and blessed and the canonizations of St. Peregrine Laziosi and St. Juliana Falconieri; studies in the Order up to the *Methodus* prepared by Fra Francesco Raimondo Adami; the effects of the European political situation on the Order up to the Napoleonic suppressions; distinguished Servites of the eighteenth century.

It should be noted that there are few historical studies on eighteenth-century Servite history, especially on the second half of the century. It is therefore necessary to pass over certain aspects of Servite life in silence or to present conclusions which are only tentative.

Priors general of the eighteenth century

Fra Callisto Lodigieri (d. 1710) succeeded Fra Giovanni Francesco M. Poggi, who was mentioned in the previous chapter. The new prior general had been a master in theology at the Ghent College in Rome, and several of his students later succeeded him as general. But in 1707, before he finished his term of office, he was named bishop of Montepulciano, and the pope then appointed Fra Giovanni Pietro Bertazzoli to succeed him. Bertazzoli was then confirmed by the hard-working general chapter of 1708, the first general chapter held in eighteen years. Bertazzoli is remembered for the construction of a beautiful church and monastery dedicated to Our Lady of Sorrows in the centre of his home town of Massa. He died shortly before the general chapter which he had convoked at Massa in 1714. The chapter was held in that year, but in Rome, where all the other chapters of the eighteenth century were held. It was at this chapter that Fra Antonio M. Castelli was elected prior general. He is remembered chiefly for his detailed instructions for the houses of study in the Order and, as was true also for many of his successors in this century, for the encouragement given to the devotion to Our Lady of Sorrows. He obtained permission to celebrate Mass and office of Our Lady of Sorrows on the Friday after Passion Sunday in all Servite churches.



After the death of Castelli in 1716, the pope selected the well-known preacher, Fra Angelo M. Ventura, to be vicar general until the general chapter of 1720 when Fra Sostegno M. Cavalli was elected prior general. Both Ventura and Cavalli worked for the improvement of studies in the Order. During their generalates the three large volumes of the second edition of the *Annales* were printed, bringing them up to the year 1725. Cavalli commissioned the annalist Fra Placido Bonfrizieri to prepare a *Diario sagro* with all the Servite saints, blessed and servants of God, and he urged all the friars to read and study it. He proclaimed Blessed Alexis Falconieri patron of students in 1724 and in 1725 the altars of Our Lady of Sorrows in all Servite churches were declared "privileged" each day. One year before the end of his term, Cavalli was named bishop of Gubbio, where he died in 1747.

Benedict XIII appointed Pietro M. Pieri to succeed Cavalli as prior general. He held this office for nine years (1725-1734) until Clement XII created him a cardinal. Well known as a scholar and member of various Roman Congregations, Pieri was highly regarded by the Holy See and was able to obtain various privileges for the Order. These included: the exemption of Third Order sisters from the jurisdiction of the local bishop and the placing of them directly under the Order; the right "in perpetuo" of the Servants of Mary to have a consultor in the Sacred Congregation of Rites; the approval of the Constitutions of the Germanic Observance (1727); the extension of the office of Our Lady of Sorrows on the Friday after Passion Sunday to the universal Church (1727). During Pieri's generalate St. Peregrine Laziosi was canonized and the canonization of St. Juliana Falconieri was

prepared, but this had to be postponed until 1737 because of the death of Benedict XIII. Rossi claims that the Order was never so well known or respected as in the period when Pieri was prior general.

The following priors general were also named directly by the pope: Giuseppe M. Inghirami Curti (1734), Giovanni Pietro Fancelli (1744), and Giuseppe Antonio Rossi (1756). Fancelli is remembered for his promotion of studies in the Order, a commitment which, after the generalate of Girolamo M. Vernizzi (1762-1768), was intensified by Francesco Raimondo Adami (1768-1774), the author of a *Methodus* or program of philosophical and theological studies in the Order which for many years remained as the *Ratio studiorum* of the Order.

The suppression of the Congregation of the Hermits of Monte Senario took place during the generalate of Fra Sostegno M. Fassini (1774-1780). The eremitical life on Monte Senario and at San Giorgio in Lunigiana ceased in 1778 and at Cibona and Monterano in 1780.

Difficult negotiations to open a college and school in the priory of Mendrisio in Switzerland were brought to a successful conclusion by Fra Pier Francesco Costa (1780-1786), Fassini's successor.

Fra Gregorio M. Clementi, preacher and scholar, was prior general from 1786 to 1792. He was also the author of a still unpublished biography of the Servite theologian, Caesar Shguanin, who died in Rome in 1769.

Fra Carlo Francesco Caselli, of whom more will be said later, was elected with the almost unanimous vote of the general chapter held in Rome in May of 1792.

The other priors general of the turbulent Napoleonic period were Filippo M. Cerasoli (1798-1801), who was named by Pius VI, Filippo M. Vallaperta (1802-1804), who was an apostolic vicar general appointed by Pius VII, and Luigi Bentivegni (1804-1814), elected at the general chapter held in Florence in 1804 but deported to France by Napoleon in 1809.

Devotion to Servite saints and blessed and the canonizations of St. Peregrine and St. Juliana

Interest in Servite history in the first decades of the eighteenth century and the second edition of the *Annales*, together with Bonfrizeri's *Diario sagro* were contributions to and also indications of a remarkable growth in devotion to Servite saints and blessed.

In his work on the saints and blessed of the Province of Romagna, Aristide M. Serra OSM summarizes the succession of events leading to the canonization of St. Peregrine in this way:

"The first diocesan process on the existence of devotion St. Peregrine from time immemorial began on 30 July 1608 with the canonical recognition of the remains of the saint. The cause then went to the Congregation of Rites where it was given to St. Robert Bellarmine. On 21 March 1609 a favourable reply was given. The following 15 April Paul V permitted the name of Bl. Peregrine, together with that of Bl. Joachim of Siena, to be inserted in the martyrology. The first requests for the canonization were presented, to Urban VIII in 1644 by the Venetian Republic and the Duchess of Mantua. Only in 1696, however, did Innocent XII authorize the beginning of a second diocesan process which was concluded between 19 and 21 June of the same year and approved by the Congregation of Rites on 26 August 1702. The decree on his heroic virtues was published on 23 August 1720 and that on his miracles on 4 December 1724. Peregrine was then canonized on 27 December 1726 together with St. John of the Cross and St. Francis Solano."



The entire octave of the canonization was celebrated with great solemnity in Rome. This can be seen from the documents in the conventual archives of San Marcello in Rome, showing the payments made to artists, craftsmen and others who contributed to the celebration.



The death of Benedict XIII postponed the canonization of St. Juliana Falconieri for eleven years. Davide M. Montagna OSM notes: "A true liturgical devotion began only with the canonical approval (beatification) in 1678. Before this an unsuccessful attempt was made to open the process in the early years of the seventeenth century. The cause for the canonization was introduced in 1694 and was concluded only in 1737, and included the examination of two spurious documents said to be from the fourteenth century."

The eighteenth century also saw an increase in devotion to other Servite blessed. In 1717 approval was given to devotion to Blessed Alexis, the last of the Seven Holy Founders, to be followed in 1725 by the approval of devotion to the other six Founders. In 1728 a proper Mass and office of the Seven Founders were granted and their feast day was assigned to 11 February. Approval of devotion to Blessed John Angelo Porro and Blessed Francis of Siena was obtained in 1737 and 1743 respectively. The cause of the canonization of the Seven Founders would have been successful had not Pope Benedict XIV required miracles for each of the Founders individually. The cause was thus blocked until 1884.

In the second half of the eighteenth century approval was obtained for devotion to Blessed James Philip of Faenza (1761), Blessed Thomas of Orvieto (1768), and Blessed Jerome of Sant'Angelo in Vado (1775). These and similar approvals of devotion from time immemorial were more or less equivalent to beatification.

The fifth centenary of Blessed James Philip's death was marked in 1983 by celebrations and conferences in Faenza and the publication of some fine studies. The monograph on Blessed Jerome, published in 1982, has already been mentioned.

Studies in the Order up to the Methodus of Fra Francesco Raimondo Adami

A doctoral dissertation which Pietro Benassi submitted to the faculty of political science at the University of Padua in October 1980 was dedicated to the cultural formation of Fra Carlo Francesco Caselli (1740-1828). It gives a detailed summary of documents relating to the state of studies in the Order in the eighteenth century. The dissertation first presents the actions of the priors general Antonio M. Castelli (1715), Pietro M. Pieri (1725) and Giuseppe M. Inghirami Curti (1734). It then cites the decrees and instructions about studies made by the general chapter of 1750, the decree of the general chapter of 1762 and finally the detailed program of studies (*Methodus studi philosophici et theologici...*) prepared by Fra Francesco Raimondo Adami in 1769. Taken together, these constitute a true and proper *Ratio studiorum* of the Order around the middle of the eighteenth century.

The criteria established for studies, the predominant cultural patterns and the rigorous programme of examinations for students make it possible to describe some general characteristics of the cultural life of the Servites in the eighteenth century.

First of all, it seems that the mandated restructuring of the Order in the second half of the seventeenth century resulted in a better organization of the Order, especially in Italy, and gave priority to houses of formation by sending more friars on for higher studies. Secondly, analysis of the *Methodus* drawn up by Adami (subjects to be studied, authors to be used, errors to reject, new trends to accept, the type of questions to be given in the examinations at the end of the course) reveals the prevalent eclecticism and openness of studies in the Order. "From the *Methodus* of

Adami it is clear that, in keeping with the traditional prerogative of the Order, Servites were not obliged to follow any one particular theological school. But where precise indications were given, positive and historical theology prevailed."

There is a great variety in the famous Servites of the eighteenth century. This confirms the fact that openness prevailed over rigidity of direction and that individuality surpassed any "school" even at a time when many Servites held important teaching positions in the principal Italian universities.

The contribution of the friars of the Germanic Observance in the fields of theology and asceticism deserves special mention in any discussion of a renewed commitment to studies.

Servants of Mary about 1750

The following table is based on a list of provinces and priories, and the number of friars in each, as found in volume 20 of the *Monumenta Ordinis Servorum sanctae Mariae*. It has already been noted that the number of friars increased during the century following the restructuring of the Order in 1652 which closed eighty-four priories in Italy. The figures given here probably represent the largest number of friars of any one period in the 750 years of the Order's history.

Province	Number of friars	Province	Number of friars
Tuscany	289	Naples	106
Rome	195	Corsica and Sardinia	98
Romagna	205	Germany	348
Lombardy	224	Bohemia	110
March of Treviso	96	Provence	22
Veneto	167	Spain	203
Mantua	395		
Genoa	206	Hermits	67
Total			2731

Effects of the European political situation on the Order up to the Napoleonic suppressions

In the hundred years from 1770 to the fall of Rome in 1870 the Order experienced a series of suppressions which decimated its presence in Europe. These suppressions, beginning in the eighteenth century, were part of a general policy directed against religious orders first in the France of Louis XV, then in the Hapsburg Empire, and finally under Napoleon Bonaparte. The suppressions in the Hapsburg lands were part of the Church-State system, known as Josephinism, worked out under the Empress Maria Theresa of Austria and implemented by her son Joseph II who succeeded her in 1780 and gave his name to the system. The suppressions continued in the nineteenth century under the liberal governments in Spain, the Kingdom of Sardinia, and then that of the unified Italian state; these will be discussed in the following chapter. Since the, Servants of Mary at this period were found only in those countries where policies against religious orders prevailed, the effect on the life of the Order can be easily imagined.

The duration of the suppression in some of these regions helps to explain, at least in part, why the contents of the conventual archives have been scattered and records are consequently difficult to find today. As a result, there has been little study of the relatively scanty documentation concerning the history of the Servite Order beginning with the late eighteenth century. Some information has been collected and published by several Servite writers, such as Graziano M. Casarotto and Davide M. Montagna for the priories of Veneto, Manlio Pasculli and Roberto M. Fagioli for the Roman Province, and Gabriele M. Rocca for the priory of Our Lady of the Ghiara in Reggio Emilia.

Finally it must be said that the fate of many priories during the suppressions is complex. At times some "secularized" friars were able to remain in the Order; at other times they became diocesan priests, even if the properties of the friars were confiscated and sold. The recently discovered case of Fra Pietro Ricasoli of the Tuscan Province is an illustration of this. He sided with the French troops and then was forced to go to France where in 1816 he was parish priest in Villemomble, a small town northeast of Paris. By a strange coincidence the Servite Sisters of the London Congregation have had a community in this same town of Villemomble since 1928. In some instances, especially in Italy, the effects of the suppressions were less severe because of local circumstances.

With these premises in mind, some sufficiently clear conclusions can be drawn.

Although in 1772 there were already some sporadic signs of what was to come, the Servite houses in the territories of the Austrian Hapsburgs felt the most severe repercussions between 1781 and 1783. This was the time of the so-called "Josephinist assault" on religious houses, that is, the second wave of suppressions after the death of Maria Theresa of Austria in 1780. Even before this, in 1772, there were suppressions of Servite priories in the Republic of Venice, and in 1770 the priories in Provence were suppressed. But, as Conrad M. Bortrager OSM notes, the decree of suppression of the French priories in Provence merely "declared the evident and inevitable."



The number of priories and convents suppressed in this second wave was high. Concretely, taking into account also the later restrictive decrees of Joseph II, the three provinces of the Germanic Observance (Tyrol, Austria-Hungary and Bohemia) lost about half of their priories, which at that time numbered almost thirty. But josephinism also weakened these provinces from within, bringing them to the point where they received almost no new vocations.

Some houses in Lombardy were also suppressed, and the suppressions by the Republic of Venice have already been mentioned. After the outbreak of the French Revolution and during the Napoleonic period the Hapsburgs enforced the josephinist laws less severely.

The Napoleonic suppressions occurred in several phases. The first phase coincided with Napoleon's first campaign in Italy, the second with the establishment of the Roman Republic, and the third with his decree of 17 April 1810, which suppressed all religious orders of both men and women in all territories occupied by the French army. An increase in severity marked each phase. First there was simply the expulsion of "foreign" religious, that is, religious who were not natives of the place where they were residing. Then the properties owned by the religious were confiscated and the religious given a type of pension. Next, the religious houses themselves were suppressed, unless there were at least three "native" religious present; these cases were not frequent after the expulsion of "foreigners." Finally in 1810 there was the general suppression whose gravity was lessened only by its relatively short duration, that is, until the end of Napoleon's reign.

Superiors were also subject to the laws concerning the "natives" and "foreigners." It was therefore impossible to hold any provincial or general chapters. The confusion within the Order was great especially during the second and third phases mentioned above, for then the Papal States had also fallen to the French army and religious houses there were therefore subjected to the laws of suppression. The treatment which Pius VI and Pius VII received well reflects the general situation.

Odir J. Dias writes as follows about what befell the prior general between 1809 and 1814: "Only five days after the annexation of Rome, 10 June 1809, the prior general Luigi Bentivegni,

together with other superiors general, was forcibly detained at Castel Sant'Angelo, but he was still able to carry out some activities of his office. On the following 10 July Napoleon wrote from Schönbrunn to his minister of finance: 'Write to General Miollis and the Council to send the generals of all the monastic orders to Paris, taking this entire influential group away from Rome.' The group, composed of Bentivegni and the superiors general of the Franciscans, Conventuals and Carmelites, left Rome on 14 August. They passed through Florence, Genoa and Alessandria, and arrived in Paris on 19 September.

"At this same time Bentivegni, expelled from Rome and forced 'to start off for Paris,' asked that the faculties obtained, on 22 April 1808 be extended until he returned: that is, that he could continue to exercise his office in whatever place until he was given a successor or the Holy See disposed otherwise, and that he could subdelegate all faculties for the government and administration of the Order. This was granted on 2 September. He named procurator general Fra Filippo M. Dini vicar general. Dini was considered vicar general at least from 28 September and with this title he governed the Order until June 1810, when religious orders in the Papal States were suppressed."

A register of the Roman Province recounts the happenings of those years in this way: "No one has ever seen or suffered all that we have in our times. In 1809 the French army under Emperor Napoleon I invaded Rome and almost all Italy. They imprisoned and then deported the Sovereign Pontiff Pius VII and imprisoned or dispersed the cardinals, bishops and prelates. With his decree of 17 April 1810 Napoleon suppressed all the religious orders of both men and women in the territories occupied by his armies. And who can adequately retell the story of the collapse of provinces and priories in such a calamitous and hapless age? Their holdings were in great part dispersed and sold, and their buildings reduced to ruins; they had been left abandoned and awaited destruction. This is the reason that this register of our province was suspended from 1810 until the present [1814]."

As will be seen in the following chapter, the Order was able to some degree to recover from this critical situation only after 1815. But about a half century later further suppressions by the Italian government dealt the Order a new and very serious blow.

Distinguished Servites of the eighteenth century

This special section is dedicated to the distinguished Servites of this period so as to give greater unity to the general view of Servite life in the eighteenth century.

Mention will be made of the following: Giovanni Domenico Fabris and Sostegno M. Viani and the role they played in the legation of Carlo Ambrogio Mezzabarba to China; the annalists, Luigi Garbi and Placido M. Bonfrizieri; Ugucione M. Dias Quaresma, a Brazilian, and the projected foundation of the Order in Brazil; the missionary activity of Filippo M. Serrati in China; Sister Maria Electa ab Jesu, foundress of the convent of Servite nuns in Munich; the Third Order Bishop Manuel Fernandez de Santa Cruz and the spread of the Third Order in Mexico; Carlo Francesco Caselli and Amadio Bertoncelli; the foundresses of convents of enclosed Servite nuns in Rome and Reggio Emilia; and some outstanding scholars and artists such as Attilio Ottavio Ariosti, Alessandro M. Bandiera, Giuseppe Giacinto M. Bergantini, Luigi Baroni, Giuseppe Salvetti, Giuseppe Antonio Brusa and others.

A recent unpublished doctoral dissertation by Fr. Tarcisio M. Mascagni OSM has thrown new light on the figure of Sostegno M. Viani. The voyage of Viani to China took place in the context of the Chinese rites controversy, which was not finally settled until the time of Pope Pius XII. The question

was whether or not the prayers of Chinese Christians and Christian funeral ceremonies could borrow words and rites, in form but not in substance, from Chinese religion, especially from Confucianism. At the beginning of the eighteenth century Rome to reconcile the division among the missionaries themselves by sending Carlo Tommaso Maillard De Tournon, later a cardinal, to

China. His mission was unsuccessful and in 1710 he died in prison in the Portuguese colony of Macao. In 1719 Rome sent a second legate, the thirty-four year old Carlo Ambrogio Mezzabarba, - patriarch of Alexandria and future bishop of Lodi. Mezzabarba chose two Servite friars as part of his retinue, Giovanni Domenico Fabris and Sostegno M. Viani, future provincial (1734-1737) of the Province of Genoa (later called the Province Piedmont). Viani kept a journal of the Mezzabarba legation to China. In addition to the original of the journal, there are several copies of it dating from about this same period. Viani's journal, even if written for himself and, almost certainly, for his friend Mezzabarba, who wanted a faithful account of the facts to use in the interminable discussions on the Chinese rites controversy, has proved to be a dispassionate and objective text.

Right after Viani's death in 1739 the publisher Lami printed a mutilated version of the journal. It was based on this incomplete edition that Pastor in his *History of the Popes* accepted without criticism the biting insinuation of some authors that Viani's writing was merely "slanderous fiction" or "a one-sided report." The journal, on the contrary, is of great interest and shows the noble, learned and versatile personality of Sostegno M. Viani, not to mention the delightful account of Mezzabarba's adventurous voyage to and from China, described with realistic detail and rich with valuable geographical information.

The second edition of the *Annales* of the Order (the first edition, in two volumes, had been published by Fra Arcangelo Giani in 1618-1622) was prepared by Fra Luigi M. Garbi and Fra Placido M. Bonfrizieri and was published in three volumes in 1719, 1721, and 1725. The second edition brought the *Annales* up to the year 1725 and was in part also a revision of Giani's first edition. But any changes or additions made to the part previously written by Giani were clearly distinguished in the second edition. Fra Luigi M. Garbi, professor at Pisa and twice (1701-1704 and 1719-1722) provincial of the Tuscan Province, undertook numerous journeys after his appointment as annalist of the Order, a position he held from 1712 until his death in 1722. Fra Placido M. Bonfrizieri (d. 1732), a man of broader interest and former hermit of Monte Senario, was the author of numerous works on moral and ascetical theology. He also wrote the biography of Pierre Paul Pierrer Dupré, "the holy doorkeeper, which has already been mentioned. Bonfrizieri was also secretary to Prior General Callisto Lodigieri.

The Brazilian Antonio (Fra Ugucione M.) Dias Quaresma (1681-1756) was another unusual Servant of Mary. He came from Brazil to Rome seeking indulgences for a confraternity in Bahia called "The Slaves of Our Lady." He met the Servite Prior General Pieri and after a short stay at the priory of San Marcello in Rome as a tertiary he was received into the novitiate at the age of fifty-two. In 1733 he was ordained a priest at Gubbio by the Servite bishop Sostegno M. Cavalli. He left Rome in 1734 with special constitutions approved by Pope Clement XII for a Servite Third Order Regular to be established in Brazil, of which he was named superior and vicar general. He founded a hospice in Lisbon open to religious, but he did not obtain permission from the Portuguese government to return to Brazil. He died in the Portuguese capital in 1756.

Fra Filippo M. Serrati is often mentioned as a Servite missionary in China. Sostegno M. Berardo OSM has dedicated several pages to him in his book, *Le Missioni dei Servi di Maria* (The missions of the Servants of Mary) written in 1925 but still useful today.

Filippo M. Serrati was born at Lodi in 1703 and completed his studies at the Ghent College in Rome, while residing at Santa Maria in Via. In 1732 he was able to fulfill his desire to go to China as a missionary. The prior general, Pietro Pieri, named him vicar general for the countries to which he would go, giving him faculties to establish the confraternity of Our Lady of Sorrows, to give the habit to tertiaries, to bless and indulgence rosaries, to found priories and receive candidates as Servite novices. Father Serrati left Italy at the end of 1732 with a group of missionaries of another religious order. He went first to Macao and then to Peking and finally in 1738 to Lu-gan-fu in the province of Shansi, where he remained until 1744. Exhausted and ill, he had to return to Italy. Father Serrati's missionary activity in China found no successor.

Sister Maria Electa ab Jesu, a fine example of a Servite cloistered nun, was foundress of the Servite convent in Munich. She was born in Dresden, Saxony, in 1671 of a noble Lutheran family

and entered the convent of the Servants of Mary at Santa Maria del Pianto in Venice. In 1715 she left Venice to found a convent in Munich the following year, where there would be perpetual adoration of the Blessed Sacrament both day and night. The convent, which still exists in the heart of the Bavarian capital, was able to survive the period of suppressions and the difficulties of World War II without interruption of its contemplative life. The nuns took their inspiration from the Hermits of Monte Senario, as is clear from their Constitutions of 1729. The influence of the Hermits can also be seen before this time in the Constitutions of the convents of Venice (1669) and Arco (1699).

The foundation of the Servite Third Order in Mexico toward the end of the eighteenth century warrants separate treatment. As early as 1687 there was a "Society of the Seven Sorrows" in Mexico City, which was recognized ten years later by Prior General Giovanni Francesco M. Poggi. It was soon necessary to respond to questions about these far away Italian friars who dedicated themselves to the spread of this particular form of Marian devotion. And so in 1699 a "short account of the origins of the Order of Servants of Mary" was printed in Mexico City. This was almost certainly the first book about the Servite Order to be published in the Americas. It should be noted that in the eighteenth century Pope Pius VI granted permission to the diocese of Mexico City to celebrate the Mass and office of Our Lady of Sorrows according to the ritual proper to the Servite Order (1777). A list dating from the early years of the eighteenth century contains names of illustrious Spanish members of the Servite Third Order. Among these is the name of Manuel Fernandez de Santa Cruz, bishop of Puebla. The bishop was Spanish and there were already various Third Order groups in Spain, beginning with the one founded in Barcelona in 1663. A group was organized in Segovia and it was precisely in that city that Manuel Fernandez de Santa Cruz had been a canon before he was named a bishop in Mexico. In Puebla he fostered devotion to Our Lady of Sorrows and the Confraternity of the Seven Sorrows. Research done by Fr. Damian M. Charboneau OSM shows that toward the end of the century there was already a flourishing presence of the Servite Third Order in Mexico, even though there were no foundations of Servite sisters or friars. The first priory of friars in Mexico was not established until 1948, almost three centuries later.



Two Servites connected with Napoleon, but for different reasons, are Fra Carlo Francesco Caselli and Fra Amadio Bertoncelli. The first was theological consultant to Giuseppe Spina and later to Cardinal Consalvi in the negotiations for a concordat between Napoleon and the Holy See. He was esteemed by the French Emperor who also offered him the archbishopric of Paris. The esteem was mutual, for he did not turn away from Napoleon when the Emperor fell into disgrace, but until Caselli died in 1828 he remained a counsellor of Napoleon's second wife, Marie-Louise of Austria. Marie-Louise had become the duchess of Parma, the diocese where Caselli, now a cardinal, was bishop for twenty-four years. It might seem strange that Caselli was not involved in another matter which directly touched the

Order during the period in which he enjoyed Napoleon's favour. Caselli's confrere, also a master of theology and a well-known preacher, Fra Amadio Bertoncelli (1769-1809), had finished a series of Lenten sermons in Vienna and returned to Italy with a letter from the papal nuncio in Vienna for the pope. He left Vienna on 6 May 1809 and as soon as he arrived in Senigallia he was arrested and imprisoned, because, as the indictment stated, he was in possession of alarming correspondence with the Holy See. The French executed him in Ancona on 16 September 1809. He went to his death with religious dignity and courage. The following is the text of a letter he wrote just a few hours before facing the firing squad. It was addressed to his friend and confrere Fra Girolamo Tonelli of the priory of San Lorenzo in Budrio (Bologna). The letter says:

Fra Alessandro M. Bandiera (1699-1765), a former Jesuit, man of letters and translator of Cornelius Nepos and Cicero, was esteemed even by Giuseppe Parini, the noted eighteenth century Italian author and poet. Fra Luigi Baroni (1723-1809), bibliophile and coin collector, was much sought after as a valuer and reviewer of books and organizer of libraries. He fled from France after the French Revolution and returned to his priory of Lucca where he established a rich library of manuscripts and rare editions.

Fra Giuseppe Giacinto M. Bergantini (1691-1774) was a historian of note, but many of his writings were destroyed in the fire at the priory of Venice in 1769. He was a Sarpian scholar and defended the Venetian Servite.

The list could continue so as not to neglect other illustrious Servants of Mary, as for example: Giuseppe Antonio Brusa, forerunner with Luigi Poletti in the field of experimental aeronautics; both were from Bologna and students of Fra Girolamo Malisardi (d. 1796); Carlo Antonio Tassinari (d. 1731) for many years the spiritual director of St. Veronica Giuliani; Carlo Traversari (1739-1818) a theologian; Roberto M. Costaguti (1732-1818), first rector and organizer of the University of Malta, and then for forty years bishop of Sansepolcro; and the noted Tyrolese theologian Caesar M. Shguanin (1692-1769).

Dates to Remember

- 1712 Death of Sister M. Arcangelo Biondini, foundress of the convent of enclosed nuns at Arco.
- 1714 The priories of the Germanic Observance are divided into two provinces: Germany (subdivided in 1756 into Austria and Tyrol) and Bohemia.
- 1719 Foundation of the hermitage of Monterano.
- 1719-1723 The Servites Giovanni Domenico Fabris and Sostegno M. Viani take part in the legation of Carlo Ambrogio Mezzabarba to China.
- 1719-1725 Second edition of the *Annales* of the Order, edited by Luigi M. Garbi and Placido M. Bonfrizieri.
- 1726 Canonization of St. Peregrine Laziosi.
- 1727 Approval of the Constitutions of the Germanic Observance.
- 1731 Death of Fra Carlo Antonio Tassinari, spiritual director of St. Veronica Giuliani.
- 1732 Fra Filippo M. Serrati leaves for China; he returns to Italy in 1744.
- 1733 Ordination to the priesthood of the first Latin American Servite, the Brazilian Antonio (fra Ugucione M.) Dias Quaresma.
- 1737 Canonization of St. Juliana Falconieri.
- 1742 Death of Sister Maria Electa ab jesu, foundress of the convent of enclosed nuns in Munic in 1716.
- 1769 Publication of the *Methodus* or program of studies by Prior General Francesco Raimondo Adami.
- 1770 Decree of the king of France suppresses the Servants of Mary in Provence.
- 1772 Suppression of priories in the Republic of Venice.
- 1778-1779 The pope suppresses the Congregation of Hermits of Monte Senario.
- 1780-1790 Reign of Emperor Joseph II; Josephinist suppression of religious orders and congregations.
- 1798-1799 First "Roman Republic." The suppressions of religious orders continue in the territories occupied by the French.
- 1801 Concordat between Napoleon and Pius VII. Fra Carlo Francesco Caselli, former prior general (1792-1798), later cardinal (1802) and bishop of Parma (1804-1828) takes part in the negotiations.
- 1803 Foundation of the convent of enclosed nuns in Rome.

- 1805 Foundation of the convent of enclosed nuns in Reggio Emilia, which was transferred to Montecchio Emilia in 1887.
- 1809 Exile of Prior General Luigi Bentivegni. Execution of Fra Amadio Bertoncelli.
- 1810 General suppression of religious orders by Napoleon I.