

## THE BEGINNING OF THE SALESIAN WORK IN VIETNAM THE PATRIARCHAL STORY AND EXODUS

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*They go out, they go out, full of tears, carrying seeds for the sowing;  
They come back, they come back, full of song, carrying their sheaves.*  
Ps. 126, 5-6

### Introduction

Up to the present day, officially the Salesians of Vietnam has had a history of over 52 years. A history that is long, as well as epic and fruitful enough to draw admiration from many, as well as attention of those who are interested in Salesian history, as we are here in these days. Certainly, this history is worth to be recorded and written down for the edification of all. .... unluckily, because of the social and political turmoil of the country, most of the documents had been destroyed or lost, which certainly renders the writing down this history become a very challenging task. But we all hope that this work should be done, nay, must be done at all cost, in honoring the Lord of History who has reserved for it, as one of the most beautiful plan, and in honoring too the courage and sacrifices of so many Salesians who had offered the best of their life to build it up.

Anyhow today, it is my task – and also in my very limited historical competence – to present to you a short historical account of the first period of this glorious history: *The beginning of the Salesian Work in Vietnam*, of which, in using biblical expression, I would dare to give a subtitle: *The Patriarchal story and the Exodus*. The account that my presentation is dealing with covers a time-span of about 25 years, roughly from 1930 to 1955, and which comprises the following main contents:

- 1 – The Church of Vietnam readied herself to receive the sons of Don Bosco
- 2 – First heroic attempt: the work and the death of Fr. Francisque Dupont
- 3 – The precursor of Don Bosco: Msgr. Paul Seitz and his work
- 4 – Arrival of the Salesians in 1952
- 5 – The great Exodus, or the transplant necessary for growth.

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Due to limited time allotted to the presentation, I would try to touch just the main events that have some historical importance.

## **1. Vietnam had longed for Don Bosco**

About Don Bosco, the young and suffering Church of Vietnam had known and to him had nurtured a great devotion many years before the coming of his sons, either. In fact, on the occasions of the beatification and the canonization of Don Bosco in the years 1929 and 1934, Don Bosco was spoken of in the circle of the diocesan clergy and religious of various orders, and in particular way, among the young seminarians of various diocesan seminaries. In fact, in order to quench the desire to know more about the new saint, the first biography of Don Bosco written in Vietnamese had been published in 1937, by Rev. Luke Ly, the Vicar General of the Diocese of Phat Diem. One year after, simple and stylish as it was, the book was reprinted by order of Msgr. Michele Picquet, Vicar Apostolic of Nha Trang; who published another edition in 1957 for the pastoral needs of the southern Vietnam. A monument in honor of Don Bosco was erected at the seminary *Trung Linh* in the year 1939.

On the other hand, as early as 1926, Msgr. Costantino Aiuti, the Apostolic Delegate for Indochina, who had his residence in Hanoi, had written a letter to Fr. Ignazio Canazei, the Salesian Provincial of China, asking him, in the name of Msgr. Ruiz de Agua, the Vicar Apostolic of Hai Phong, to have the Salesians open a school of arts and trades in his vicariate. The second letter that followed was precise and in more details: the utility of the work, favorable conditions and offerings, but also the requirements, among which having a Salesian of French nationality as superior...; to which Fr. Canazei had to decline since the Province of China at that time had only 2 French confreres who were engaged in works in Shiu Chow and in Shanghai.

In 1936, Msgr. John Bpt. Nguyen Ba Tong, the first Vietnamese Bishop consecrated in 1933 and Vicar Apostolic of Phat Diem, wrote to the Provincial Carlo Braga, asking him to send French, or at least French speaking Salesians to take care of the formation of a minor seminary, to run a parish, and to establish a professional school. Naturally, Fr. Braga by no means could cope with such a demand; anyhow he did send Fr. Joseph Kerec to Vietnam, and later he himself too, to make a trip of

exploration... In the following years, many other Salesians on their way to Kunming, would take the route via Haiphong and Hanoi, and therefore frequently created a temporary Salesian presence in Vietnam.

## **2. First heroic attempt: the work and the death of Père Francisque Dupont**

Père Francisque Dupont would be considered as the first Salesian who had really worked and served the Salesian mission in Vietnam (before him, Fr. Giovanni Casetta, SDB served as Secretary of the Apostolic Delegate for Indochina from 1926-1927). This young French priest, when he came to Vietnam in 1940, was 32 years old. He had been a young missionary in Japan for five years, but then, because of the world war, had been mobilized 'sur place' to the French army. He then was sent to Vietnam to serve as an interpreter of the French High Command, in dealing with the Japanese occupying force. Despite of the difficult task, his heart and person was always and everywhere a Salesian missionary, who never forgot his real mission: serving the young. In the first two years 1941-1942, he had engaged himself in various pastoral works: preaching, giving conferences, directing courses of retreat, chaplain and spiritual director of various Catholic Action Groups such as Young Christian Student Movement (YCS), Scouts Association, and Girl Guides of Indochina.

It was in 1942, that he got a chance to do real Salesian work. Upon the death of its founder and director, Mr. Rene Robin (after whom the institution was named), an orphanage destined for the Franco-Vietnamese Métis children in Hanoi was proposed to be entrusted to the Salesians. The Provincial of the Salesian Province of China – Fr. Carlo Braga readily accepted the proposal, and gave permission to Fr. Dupont to take over the direction of the work, promising him other confreres to come soon in order to open a real Salesian community. Later, because of the war, only Fr. Raymond Petit (1902-1975) could arrive from Thailand to be Fr. Dupont's companion, and no other. Working with these difficult children gave the two Salesians chance to prove themselves to be true sons of Don Bosco. With great sacrifices and hard works, with the help of some lay people, they applied the Salesian educational method to change gradually the morality and spirit of this group of about 100 adolescents. Owing to the social and political conditions of the time,

they had to face mounting difficulties; and in 1944, after heavy bombings of Hanoi by the American planes, they had to move the children to Ke So, an old complex of buildings which belonged to the seminary about 50 miles south of Hanoi. A short time later, the group was split into two: a group of bigger boys returned to Hanoi with Fr. Petit in order to continue their apprenticeship, while the majority of boys remained at Ke So with Fr. Dupont.

By the beginning of August 1945, with the withdrawal of the Japanese occupying force, the political situation of Vietnam became chaotic. The drive for independence mingled with the hatred towards foreigners and Catholics was in the air. The security of Fr. Dupont was at stake, since Ke So was in the country side too far away from center of population.

In fact, for many days, there spread a rumor that revolutionaries want to kill the missionaries at Ke So, and people tried to persuade them to find safety in Hanoi. Meanwhile, Fr. Dupont tried by all means to bring all the children to Hanoi with him. On August 10, news about the plot was imminent: they would come to assassinate the Fathers that very night. Fr. Dupont worked desperately all day to secure a passport to Hanoi for all of them, but did not succeed; the Japanese promised him the next day. That evening, on the way back from Phu Ly, the chef-lieu of the province met Fr. Cantaloube, the procurator of the seminary who was leaving for Hanoi. The latter earnestly advised him to stay over night at Phu Ly because the danger was great. And this was Fr. Dupont's answer: "You are not in charge of anyone, so you can go; but I have to stay, because of the children". That night he himself told the boys: "If the Viets come, and if they could not find me, they might revenge on you... That is the reason why I take the risk of staying. Furthermore, I was always doing good things... I always promoted good understanding between French and Vietnamese... Anyhow if something happens, I would do my best to save myself.... Everyone should die once, right? Even Fr. de Foucault had done only good things and they killed him too..."

At 9.20 p.m., a band of five, armed with light machine gun, pistol, saber, and knife broke in his room, tied him down, and forced him in pajama and without shoes out of the house towards the river. The next day, people found his body in the river; hands tied, stabbed at the loin and shot at the left temple. They buried him at the Ke So Catholic cemetery.

Later, in 1947, Fr. Petit brought a group of about 30 of these children to France and confided them to the Salesian schools of Nice and Marseille. It was they that gave the first hand witnesses of Fr. Dupont's death.

### **3. The precursor of Don Bosco: Msgr. Paul Seitz, MEP**

The history of the Salesian works in Vietnam cannot but speak about Msgr. Paul Seitz MEP, the precursor of Don Bosco in Vietnam. He first gave a helping hand to Fr. Dupont's work, then founded himself an institution in favor of the young victims of war, which later in 1952 was handed over to the Salesians when he himself was consecrated Bishop, Vicar Apostolic of Kontum. Because of him, the Salesians could restart their interrupted work in serving the young Vietnamese.

Msgr. Paul Seitz, born in 1906 at Havre, France, ordained priest in 1937, member of the Foreign Mission of Paris, was sent to and arrived in Vietnam in July 1937. He took a Vietnamese name *Nguyen Thuong Kim* (people called him affectionately *Co Kim*) and was appointed as Vicar of the Cathedral of Hanoi. To him was entrusted also the care for the Franco-Vietnamese student association and the chaplaincy of the scouts.

From 1942, this young energetic priest began to be interested with the young at risk in Hanoi. He would use the facilities belonged to the scouts to take care of this small group, especially in teaching them trades to earn their living. In 1943, the reformatory of Hanoi decided to confide to his care 80 young delinquents. Thus started the *Orphanage of St. Teresa* and their home would temporarily be the camping ground of the scouts on the *Ba Vi* Mountain, 40 km from Hanoi. With the support of the Bishop of Hanoi and helped by some MEP Fathers, Co Kim made all the efforts and sacrifices to run the work as best as he can.

In 1947, the Franco-Vietnamese war broke out again, and Ba Vi became unsafe and difficult to run (the transportation became very dangerous). Fr. Paul Seitz decided to bring the boys down to Son Tay and then back to Hanoi, by then their number already reached almost 200. At first he had to settle them at the La Salle school *Puginier*, then in 1948 moved to *Lacordaire*, the minor seminary of Hanoi (these establishments had been temporarily closed because either being damaged by the war, or impossible to gather the inmates).

Meanwhile the number of the boys had increased to 300, then 350, then 400, ranging from age 5 to 20 and over. He divided them into groups which he called families, entrusted to the direct care of seminarians and lay collaborators, while the smallest ones were entrusted to the Sisters "Lover of the Cross".

Among his many problems, the greatest was to find a definite establishment for his growing family. Somehow he managed to purchase a piece of marshy-swampy land of about 17 hectares east of Hanoi, and there he figured the project of building a Boys Town which he named "*La Cité du Christ Roi*" (The City of Christ the King). While the work was going on, by the end of 1949, the Bishop of Hanoi wanted to take back the *Lacordaire* since the seminary had to be re-opened, therefore Fr. Paul had to move once again his children to the great estate of Hoang Cao Khai, a high ranking mandarin of the imperial court in Hue.

At last, by the end of 1950 the definite home of the *Family of Little Teresa*, as it was intimately called, was ready, and the boys happily moved in, since most of the works were done by them. It looked like a real village with 12 quasi-autonomous home-families for about 30 boys each, church, workshops, classes, dispensary, administration, and electricity and water facilities... There were many other items to be completed later on, but basically the Boys Town functioned well, and it seemed to face a very bright future...

#### 4. Arrival of the Salesians

Then, all of a sudden, on 16 June 1952, Fr. Paul Seitz, who was then Founder and Director of the Orphanage (Boys Town), Dean of the Cathedral of Hanoi, and local Superior of the Foreign Mission of Paris, was appointed Bishop of Kontum, a newly created diocese entrusted to the MEP, in the central highland of Vietnam, where majority of the population was composed of minor ethnic groups. Before such a decision, many practical arrangements should be dealt with, among which the direction of the Boys Town was the toughest.

On 13 July 1952, and the Ecclesiastical authority of Hanoi, Msgr. Joseph Trinh Nhu Khue, and the Apostolic Delegate Msgr. John Dooley, wrote to the Rector Major of the Salesians, Fr. Renato Ziggiotti, letters presenting the request that the Salesians take over the Bishop nominee's work.

Based on this request, and commissioned by the Rector Major, Fr. Carlo Braga, the Provincial Superior of China Province, sent Fr. Goffredo Roozen, provincial economer, to Hanoi for a general survey of the situation. His favorable report, together with a letter of recommendation of Msgr. Carretto from Thailand persuaded the superior in Turin to accept the offer, and to officially start Don Bosco's presence in Vietnam. The affirmative answer was delivered on 18 August.

On 14 September, Fr. Braga from Rome wrote to Fr. Antonio Giacomino and to Fr. Andrej Majcen asking them to prepare to come to Vietnam. The choice of these two pioneers was well thought of: Fr. Giacomino, of Argentinean nationality but came from Salesian Province of Brazil, Sao Paolo, had been rector of *Colegio Dom Bosco* in Macau, and Fr. Majcen of Slovenian nationality, had been missionary in China from 1935, rector of the Salesian school in Kunming, and had recently got out of the mainland. Both of them knew some French, experienced in administration, and Fr. Majcen had traveled to Kunming via Hai Phong – Ha Noi several times, therefore he knew well the way. Fr. Antonio should be rector of the new work, and Fr. Andrej his councilor and confessor.

The two pioneers were to be readied and to be present at the provincial house in Hong Kong on 30 September. They planned to arrive in Hanoi on 3 October, feast of the Little Teresa and the chosen day for the Episcopal consecration of Msgr. Paul Seitz. On 2 October, they received the recommendation and benediction of Fr. Braga, the out-going Provincial, and of Fr. Mario Acquistapace, the newly elected Provincial, who came straight from Beijing for the event.

On 3 October, their departure flight from Hong Kong was late. After much trouble, they arrived in Hanoi and to the Bishop's house when the celebration was almost over. They were received in the refectory of the Bishop's house by Msgr. Paul Seitz himself and were introduced to all the ecclesiastical and civil dignitaries present, among whom were Msgr. John Dooley, the Apostolic Delegate for Indochina, 18 bishops from all over Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos.... At a certain moment, the newly consecrated came up with champagne and invited all to a toast for the new comers, saying that he felt really sad because of having to leave his boys, but had been greatly consoled by the arrival of the Salesians who would take care of them.

That same afternoon, the two Salesians were brought to the Boys town, where, together with the new Bishop and the Bishop of Hanoi, they

were solemnly received by 450 boys and the whole administrative staff. It was in the church of the Boys Town that the ceremony of celebrating, of welcoming and of presenting was officiated, but in a prayerful atmosphere.... Concluding the night prayer, Duc Cha Kim (that was how the boys called him from then on) gave the Good Night in tears saying that: "Since five years we all had prayed incessantly for the coming of the Salesians. Now that they have come, I myself may leave in peace for the new assignment..."

It is very true indeed! Today some might think that this happening was just an administrative arrangement. Nay, it was but the result of a long and prayerful preparation. In fact, from the very early time of the *Family of Little Teresa*, the name of Don Bosco had often been mentioned to the boys as the Saint who really cares for them. Everyday, at the end of night prayer, they usually chanted two-three times a short song praying to Don Bosco as the Father of abandoned children. Msgr. Paul Seitz himself used to express publicly his wish to have the Salesians taking over his work one day, for the very lasting good of the young.

The following days were tough for all. They had to face the reality of transferring an established institution from one hand to another. There should be clear guidelines to follow... and they came up with setting down some basic principles for the transfer. The two pioneers too needed time to study the Vietnamese language. Finally, they all agreed that the Salesians should have at least three to six months to learn the Vietnamese language and customs; that the present staff (mostly MEP personnel) should continue to work at least for one year and to be replaced but gradually, that in the meantime, the Salesians should send in more personnel; that the Salesians should respect the primitive spirit of the institution and should introduce the Salesian spirit and the Preventive System of education but gradually. The priority was to find ways and means to make the workshop function well, since the need of training trades to the elder boys was pressing.

After having received reports from the two pioneers, by the beginning of December 1952, Fr. Mario Acquistapace, the Provincial of China Province unto which the Salesian work in Vietnam was juridically belonged to, decided to come in person to Hanoi. He had important meetings with the Bishop of Hanoi and Msgr. Paul Seitz to settle many juridical issues. In this occasion, he also promised to send in more confreres, which was very pressing indeed. Thus came on 20 March 1953, Fr. Lorenz Bohnen, a Dutch and good professor of French lan-

guage who would be in charge of the studies of the boys, on 4 July, Fr. Generoso Bogo, a Brazilian to be 'catechist', and Fr. Pierre Cuisset, a French to be economer, and in August, Br. Andrea Bragion, an Italian lay brother veteran missionary in China, to be in charge of the workshop.

The transfer had been done quite peacefully, though at times, some tension and misunderstanding. By September 1953, on the opening of the new school year, the running of the *City of Christ the King* was securely in the hand of the Salesians. Most of the old personnel went to join Msgr. Seitz in Kontum, so did the lay collaborators. The Salesians, now six in number, with Fr. Andrej Majcen as rector, were assisted by some diocesan seminarians, who came for first hand experiences on the Salesian life and spirit. The *Teresians* were transforming gradually into *Bosconians*...; and it seemed to everyone that a bright future was opening up ...

## **5. The great exodus or the transplant of the Salesian work**

While the Salesians were engaging in their work, the war (the so called French Indochina War) was escalating throughout the country. By the first months of 1954, the military and political conditions became more and more precarious. There were more recruitments of fighting men on both sides; there were talks and speculations about the communists taking over Hanoi, and so forth... The social climate was boiling, so too was the spirit of the children of the Boys Town, especially among the older boys. So much so that when Br. Bragion, who had spent most his energy and sacrifice to put up the metal and mechanical workshop, wanted to start the training courses, he could not: the older boys just boycotted it. The real motive was that most of them preferred to join the army or to go down south... And despite all his efforts, he did not have enough boys to open his courses in training.

During the Holy Week of April 1954, the Provincial from Hong Kong came for an urgent meeting; and here were the decisions taken: (1) Making first steps to find a suitable place in South Vietnam in case... (2) Select and send the best boys, especially those of good hope for vocation, to the care of Msgr. Seitz in Kontum. (3) The Salesians who had communist experience in China should be the first ones to be pulled out if the situation should get worse.

In fact, some weeks later, on 7 May 1954, the French army was defeated at Dien Bien Phu, the communists taking over Hanoi and the whole North Vietnam seemed so imminent... Three months that followed, everyone was thrown in disarray... An international conference was being convened in Geneva to find a solution for Vietnam, meanwhile rumors of every kind sprung up like mushrooms. Fr. Cuisset and Fr. Majcen made a trip to Saigon in order to look for places and possibilities, and came back disillusioned with the poor result: in fact the Bishop of Saigon, Msgr. Cassaigne denied the Salesian permission to settle eventually their children in Saigon... The division of Vietnam was just an open secret, and the refugees began teaming in Saigon in quantity... Meanwhile, the Sisters *Lover of the Cross* withdrew their members from the work, and prepared themselves to go south, taking with them a small group of the youngest boys. So were also the seminarians of Bui Chu diocese. Br. Bragion too asked to go back to Hong Kong because he had no boys to work with....

On 19 September 1954 in Geneva, an agreement was signed by all the interested parties to divide Vietnam into two: the north to the communists, and the south to the nationalists. At that moment, there came a telegram from Hong Kong with the order to hand the children back to the Bishop and return to Hong Kong. It was like a thunderbolt from a blue sky, as Fr. Majcen recalled later. Upon learning about the matter, the Bishop of Hanoi, in agreement with the Apostolic Delegate, in the name of the Holy Father obliged the Salesians to secure a place for the children in the south, before any of their withdrawal. When Hong Kong was informed about this reaction, the Provincial decided on the evacuation of the children. Nevertheless, it insisted on the immediate withdrawal of Fr. Andrej Majcen.

In the meantime, on an invitation of Msgr. Seitz, Fr. Majcen arranged a quick trip to Ban Me Thuat in order to secure a place for the children, which turned out to be a cattle ranch annexed to a coffee plantation. All the complex was located right in the midst of a tropical forest, distant 20 miles from the chef-lieu of Ban Me Thuat and belonged to Bao Dai, the last emperor of Vietnam. It was just a temporary shelter, but good enough to handle about 200 children for the time being ... Going back to Hanoi, Fr. Giacomino and Fr. Majcen handed over the work to Fr. Cuisset, Fr. Bohnen and Fr. Generoso and flew back to Hong Kong.

Now, the Boys Town "Christ the King" had to prepare with all ur-

gency to its south-bound trip. With much regret and with the help of bigger boys, the Salesians decided to dismantle and to pack up all the properties as much as they could: all the movables of course, but also the immovables such as roofs, windows, doors... even the iron skeleton of the workshop.... They had to rebuild their home somewhere in the south, and certainly these goods would serve. Then in extremely difficult conditions, they had to look for means of transport to carry these items by land and sea, via Hai Phong, Nha Trang to Ban Me Thuot, and eventually to Saigon. On 23 August 1954, the main body of the Orphanage: 350 boys with the Salesians, were air-lifted by ten military planes from Gia Lam airport directly to Ban Me Thuat, where Msgr. Seitz was waiting to take them to the temporary settlement.

They immediately installed themselves in the new abode which was actually a huge cow stable (actually sharing with circa 100 cows)... with no bed, no table... nothing, but a makeshift wooden floor to sleep on. They arranged themselves as best as they could and tried to organize their own living. It was a real challenge to feed this large group in the midst of the jungle, and it was still more challenging to boot up the spirit of these children in organizing their daily life... taking the study for example: how to make them study when there were no classrooms, no desks, no blackboard, no books...? The Salesians were conscious that this kind of Robinson's life must be ended as soon as possible, and some drastic decision and solution should be urgently made.

By the end of October, Father Provincial, Mario Acquistapace from Hong Kong, via Saigon, came to visit the camp. The trip was so perilous that he actually broke his leg by falling down from his scooter on a slippery road. He met Msgr. Seitz and the Salesians, listened to them and promptly made the decisions:

- The boys over 17 should go to Duc Cha Kim to find jobs and earn their own living.
- By personal reason, Fr. Bohnen should leave Vietnam for Haiti, and more confreres should urgently be sent to Vietnam.
- Fr. Cuisset should step up the task of looking for lands in Saigon to settle the group definitively.

Finally, the 'promised land' was found: it was a terrain of circa 5 hectares at Thu Duc, 10 miles north of Saigon. On the eve of TET - lunar new year (February 1955) - the new family of 260 boys and three Salesians (Br. Giuseppe Borri, an old, humble Italian lay brother was added), after a whole day of traveling along 250 miles through the forest, arrived at

their new home: six large military tents were erected on a desert land of white sand. Meanwhile, the materials from Hanoi had also arrived, they would build definitely their lodging with their own hand. Anyhow, Don Bosco's presence had been successfully transplanted and a new phase of life serving the young has begun.

### **Some reflections as conclusion**

On preparing the paper for this Seminar, by reading the various memoirs, that I have in hand, of the witnesses of this so tumultuous a period: Fr. Andrej Majcen in the first place, Mr. Nguyen Duc Tran, and the old boys of Fr. Dupont, I myself personally, as one of the witnesses to this history, since I have lived inside it most of my life time, feel very much enriched by it, both in memory and in spirit. Looking back at this period of more or less 30 years, I am able to discern, in a certain way, the Divine Providence's plan for the Salesian Mission in Vietnam (and for my personal vocation too). The evangelical principle: "unless the seed of wheat would die away, it can bear no good and abundant fruits" is valid, and in this case is most applicable than ever.

The Church of Vietnam in general, and the Salesians of Vietnam in particular, are building up day after day their glorious long history of service to the poor and young people in a land that had imbued so much sweat and even blood of their predecessors. The dream of Don Bosco about the two chalices of sweat and blood came into reality in this land (as in the case of the mother Province of China). We look upon them, not only to find good examples and lesson of experiences, but rather to increase in faith and thankful heart. We would thank God for his wonderful divine plan, we would thank the Congregation at world and provincial level, through the person of the Superiors in their own time, instruments of this plan; we would thank most of all the protagonists (living or dead) of this very history for their labor in laying good and valid foundation for the service. I myself would pay to all of them my personal gratitude.... May God bless them all and give them the eternal repose.

*"Historia docet"*, and we all are indebted to it. I hope soon there would be someone who will be generous enough to dare consecrate time and effort to write down a complete history of the province of

Vietnam, together with that of China and other Salesian provinces of the so-called *Far East*. Such a precious work would certainly make great contribution to foster the Salesian mission in these countries and help to form younger generation of Salesians in good apostolic spirit. And all of this means for the greater glory of God and the salvation of many, many more souls: “*Da Mihi Animas, Coetera Tolle*”.\*

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\* Documents consulted: *L'Opera Salesiana nel Vietnam*. Breve storia scritta da Don Andrea Majcen SDB e compilata da Don Mario Rassiga SDB. Hong Kong: A.T.S. 1984; *Révérend Père Francique Dupont Missionnaire Salesien, Martyrisé et assassiné au Ke So (Viet Nam) le 10 aout 1945 au l'âge de 37 ans*. Dossiers documented by Mrs. Marie France and Mr. André Bordg. January 2002; *Coâ Nhi Vieän Teäreäxa, Tieän thaän cuûa Gia Nñnh Teäreäxa Hieän nay*. Recollected memory of Mr. Nguyen Duc Tran. Ho Chi Minh City, May 2004; *50 Naêm Don Bosco Vieät Nam 1952-2002*. A Short History of 50 year Presence of Don Bosco in Viet Nam. Dossiers documented. Ho Chi Minh City, 2002; Archivio Centrale – Pisana, Roma. Documents concerning affairs of accepting the Orphanage of St. Teresa in 1952 and the canonical erection of the first Salesian house in Hanoi.