



Brief of Correspondence Re Parish of Our Lady of Sorrows
Dominican Fathers, San Antonio, Texas

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October 30, 1924 Letter of Bishop Drossaerts to Rev. Juan Menendez, O.P. vice Provincial of Dominicans, Mexico, D.F. Bishop offers new Mexican Parish in Cuero to Dominicans together with Mexican missions of Yorktown, Yoakum, and other contiguous cities. If Father Menendez has an abundance of priests the Bishop would gladly offer them a parish in San Antonio. In all of these places only the Spanish language is necessary.

November 10, 1924 Letter from Father Menendez to Bishop Drossaerts. Within fifteen days more or less, Father Menendez will receive permission from their Father General in Rome to establish a house in the United States near the Mexican frontier for exiles. Father Menendez will then come to San Antonio to establish the house in Cuero.

January 6, 1925 Letter from Father Menendez to Bishop Drossaerts. He has not held a meeting of the Priests of his Province but as soon as it is held he will write concerning acceptance of one of the parishes which the Bishop has kindly offered to him. Meanwhile if the Bishop could give the Dominicans a parish in the city of San Antonio it would be accepted with pleasure.

March 15, 1925 Father Menendez to Bishop Drossaerts. The Dominicans are disposed to accept Cuero and its missions. They will send two priests and a brother. Would like to have the parish assigned to them in writing.

March 25, 1925 Bishop Drossaerts signs contract for the Diocese of San Antonio with the Spanish Mexican Province of the Dominicans. The counties of De Witt and Lavaca are given to the Dominicans. People who habitually speak English are not under their jurisdiction. The Bishop promises that if at some future time a parish is erected in San Antonio for Mexican people it will be given, his consultors having been heard, to the Dominicans. This contract will be valid after being signed when the Holy See has approved it and granted permission for the erection of this national parish.

March 31, 1925 Letter from Bishop Drossaerts forwarding contract to Father Menendez for his signature.

April 4, 1925 Letter from Father Menendez to Bishop Drossaerts returning the contract signed.

February 18, 1926 From Bishop Drossaerts to Father Menendez. He is ready to turn over the church and property of Our Lady of Sorrows to the Dominicans. Tentative boundaries are submitted. Jurisdiction to be limited to Spanish speaking people. Desires to refer matter to Diocesan Consultors and all interested pastors. Does not foresee any difficulties. If Beneplacitum apostolicum is required they will procure it. Also the approval of the Dominican Chapter.

December 30, 1926 Contract signed for Archdiocese of San Antonio by Archbishop Drossaerts--for Dominicans by Father Menendez. With



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the advice and approval of the Archdiocesan Consultors, Archbishop Drossaerts gives the Dominicans the Parish of Our Lady of Sorrows with the following boundaries:

East - San Antonio River
South Park Avenue
West Howard Avenue
North Five miles beyond city limits.

For the present only the faithful who habitually speak Spanish shall belong to this parish but after the Dominicans of the Mexican Province have priests who speak English the faithful also who speak English will belong to this parish. The pastor and his assistants shall be subject to the provisions of the diocesan synod and the immediate jurisdiction and correction of the ordinary as are diocesan priests.

February 23, 1927 Rescript of the Sacred Congregation of Religious. Faculty to accept a parish. Upon the petition of the Rev. Procurator General O.P. the Sacred Congregation grants to the Rev. Father General O.P. permission to allow the Mexican Dominicans to accept the parish of Our Lady of Sorrows in San Antonio, Texas.

June 29, 1928 Father Menendez to Archbishop Drossaerts. Reminds him of his promise to give the Dominicans the English speaking faithful in Our Lady of Sorrows Parish when the Vicar Provincial would present to the Archbishop one or two priests who spoke English. Two English speaking priests are now serving the Parish. Without the support of the English speaking people the Dominicans cannot support themselves because only a few of the faithful speak Spanish.

September 25, 1929 Father Menendez to Archbishop Drossaerts as a son speaking to his father, he asks the Archbishop to convey to the Dominicans the English speaking people of Our Lady of Sorrows Parish because in spite of their sacrifices the Fathers find it very difficult if not impossible to fulfill their financial obligations.

October 18, 1929 Archbishop Drossaerts to Father Felipe. The Archbishop encloses a letter for the Provincial. He cannot grant the Dominicans limits for their Parish. He referred the matter to the Consultors three times and it was rejected three times. Archbishop thinks that limits for Our Lady of Sorrows Parish would harm the Dominicans. If the Archbishop grants limits and forces some people to sever their connections with St. Mary's Parish they will resent it. Archbishop suggests tentative boundaries as follows:

East - San Antonio River
North East Summitt Avenue
West McCullough Avenue
South East Ashby Place

The trouble is that the Oblates have an open chapel on Laurel Heights and a parish must be erected soon west of McCullough.



What does Father Felipe think of the plan outlined above?

January 16, 1930 Archbishop Drossaerts to Father Felipe. Archbishop is worried about parish limits. They would hurt the parish more than benefit it. Americans would stop coming to Our Lady of Sorrows Church if they were assigned to that parish. Archbishop faces a situation over which he has no control. Perhaps this decision will force the Father Provincial to recall his Fathers from our midst. I would regret it immensely but cannot recede from this decision.

August 18, 1931 Father Menendez to Archbishop Drossaerts. The Fathers of the Congregation of the Holy Ghost are willing to give up the seminary building in Castroville. Father Menendez requests permission for the Dominicans to use it, hoping to buy it later for less than its cost.

August 22, 1931 Archbishop Leopold Ruiz, Apostolic Delegate to Archbishop Drossaerts approves of plan to allow Dominicans to start a noviciate at Castroville.

July 30, 1932 Fumasoni Biondi, Apostolic Delegate to Archbishop Drossaerts. How much can Dominican Fathers offer in cash for Castroville Seminary. Would sale of property for amount offered be reasonable.

August 17, 1932 Archbishop Drossaerts to Apostolic Delegate. \$8000.00 would be fair price.

April 1, 1933 Since the Dominicans need money to pay the debt on the house at Our Lady of Sorrow he must place his priests where they can be of help to their brothers in San Antonio now that the foundation in Cuero is not sufficient for the support of the priests as seven years have revealed. He has been sending money to San Antonio from Mexico for the debt and the upkeep of our Lady of Sorrows. But now the political situation in Mexico is such that he cannot employ foreign born priests there and on the other hand the Archbishop is not successful in achieving his purpose of giving the Dominicans the English speaking people of Our Lady of Sorrows as he had promised in the contract. Father Menendez will not be able under such circumstances to pay the debt on Our Lady of Sorrows Parish with regret he sees the necessity of removing the Fathers from Cuero. They will remain there until April 29 or for an additional month if required.

April 23, 1933 Archbishop Drossaerts to Rev. Juan Blasquez, O.P. The vice-provincial may remove the Fathers from Cuero on the 29th. He is always trying to rush things. In his letter he is trying to rush me to give territorial limits to Our Lady of Sorrows. I carried out my promise and offered parish limits which you yourself refused as too small and insignificant.

January 28, 1934 Father Manuel Montoto, O.P., assistant to Father General in Rome, to Father Laboure, O.M.I., Superior General in Rome. With the consent of his consultors Archbishop Drossaerts



promised the English speaking parish of Our Lady of Sorrows in San Antonio to the Dominicans. The approval of the Holy See was granted. The Dominicans have incurred expenses and a considerable debt. Now the Archbishop refuses to give the parish to the Dominicans. Will Father Laboure ask him to do this. It will require that part of the Oblate parish be cut off. It seems useless to appeal to the Sacred Congregation.

February 1934 Father Laboure, O.M.I. to Father Manuel. The question of territory for Our Lady of Sorrows parish is a difficulty almost insoluble. The Oblate parish also has a considerable debt and the territory promised to the Dominicans is precisely that part of the city which the Oblates need to pay their debt. It is evident that the difficulty is insoluble.

April 6, 1934 Father Menendez to Archbishop Drossaerts. On the 14th I went to see you with two priests. Since you refused to return my greeting and the doors of your residence were closed against me I come to ask Your Excellency in all humility whether or not I will be received when I have business to transact with your Excellency.

April 10, 1934 Archbishop Drossaerts to Father Menendez. Since you notified me by letter of the recall of the Dominicans from Cuero other business may be transacted in the same way

April 23, 1934 Father Menendez to Archbishop Drossaerts. I removed the priests from Cuero by letter to you because I do not always have the necessary funds to make a trip to Texas. It was necessary to remove the priests because our Father General insisted that we comply with Canon 496. If I have made a mistake I ask forgiveness. You will always be to me a father.

October 14, 1935 Archbishop Drossaerts to Rev. Stanislaus Waywood, O.F.M. I have received a kind of blackmail letter from the vice-provincial of the Mexican Dominicans saying that if I don't give them the parish in San Antonio at once he will be obliged to withdraw his three men from Cuero. There is an unwritten law here that all religious communities having a parish in San Antonio must also work in poor Mexican missions outside the city. I told him that since he was giving up Cuero, I could not give the Dominicans a city parish of English speaking people. I enclose copy of the contract which I unhappily signed. Was I right or wrong? Have I a right to limit the number of their public Sunday masses? They have six or eight of them.

October 19, 1935 Rev. Stanislaus Waywood to Archbishop Drossaerts. Contract is vague. No time specified for taking over English speaking people in territory specified. Archbishop and his consultants must decide when they are able to take care of English speaking people. Not a question merely of speaking English, but of understanding the people in a broad sense. Unwritten law binding religious communities to take poor parishes in the country is not in the contract. If controversy is started in Rome don't mention



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that the boundaries offered them in 1930 were different from those described in the contract. You cannot forbid public Masses on Sunday unless they binate without necessity. If they have only a handful of Mexicans they do not need six or eight Masses. Under law governing churches of religious they may have their church open during all masses.

July 11, 1936 Father Menendez to Archbishop Drossaerts Making a visitation of the Fathers in San Antonio would like to have faculties to hear confessions. If the Archbishop wishes that the Father Menendez extend greetings personally will be pleased name the day and hour of the audience.

January 8, 1938 Father Menendez to Archbishop Drossaerts would the Archbishop prefer to have Father Celedonio Alvarez or Father Eloy Juarez as pastor of Our Lady of Sorrows. He wishes to appoint a priest who will take care of the Mexicans, speak English, and will help him to pay the interest on the principal required for the rectory, convent and school.

March 20, 1938 List of masses and sermons in Our Lady of Sorrows Church. Six masses, 7:00 a.m. to 12:00 a.m. Five sermons in English by Father Lawrence, one in Spanish. Four priests in parish, 1200 people attend on Sundays. 85% Americans.

June 17, 1938 Rev. J. L. Callahan, O.P. Provincial, San Francisco to Archbishop Drossaerts. Request has come indirectly for removal of Father Lawrence Jagoe, who belongs to this province, from Our Lady of Sorrows Parish in San Antonio. What reasons make change advisable?

June 22, 1938 Father Menendez to Archbishop Drossaerts. He has read in the Southern Messenger of June 16, 1938 that the Oblates are going to build a church near Our Lady of Sorrows. Do the Oblates not know that this church would be within our jurisdiction? Do they not know that the people there have six Masses every Sunday in our Church? Would that these good Padres would consider Canon 1162-3-and 1676 since with a church so close we can neither pay our debts or subsist.

June 24, 1938 Archbishop Drossaerts to Father Callahan, O.P. Father Lawrence seems to be a sort of free-lance and general hand-shaker. Does not speak Spanish and is necessarily a misfit in that Mexican Parish. He is somewhat of a nuisance here. I intended to make the national parish of Our Lady of Sorrows into a territorial parish until the Vice Provincial sent me a black mail letter demanding the territorial parish or else he would withdraw his priests from the missions. Such a threat settled matters forever.

June 27, 1938 Rev. James Lockwood, Chancellor to Father Menendez. Our Lady of Sorrows is a national parish not territorial. The Oblates are forced to build a chapel by the aggressive attitude of the Dominican Fathers.

July 1, 1938 Father Menendez to Father Lockwood. The Archbishop signed a contract providing that the English speaking people of



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Our Lady of Sorrows Parish would belong to that church when we had English speaking priests. On this document a Beneplacitum apostolicum was granted. Shall we leave the Americans without the word of God? Most of the Mexicans understand English. The Archbishop gave us the following parish limits, etc. I believe that the Oblates are building in our jurisdiction.

So far as the English speaking people are concerned in this parish I am not insisting until I hear from the Father General. I leave the initiative to him; he will know what to do. I ask that you leave things in status quo until he writes to me.

July 6, 1938 Father Callahan, O.P. to Archbishop Drossaerts.
Father Lawrence will not return to San Antonio