

Quebrada Limon,  
Box 776, Ponce, P.R.  
April 18, 1932.

My dear Bishop Ferrando,

The subject matter of our recent correspondence is a thing of the past so far as I am concerned- let us forget it so that we can present a united front to a new danger that threatens the work at Quebrada Limon; Bishop Colmore is at this moment on the sea en route to the National Council with the recommendation that all agricultural work at Quebrada Limon be discontinued.

A few weeks ago Bishop Colmore wrote me that on a certain date I would be visited by a committee of the executive council to survey and report the work here. I was all ready for them with horses saddled to show them all over the place- but they laughed at the idea. They said they would ask me one question, "Was the farm a money making proposition"? Of course I told them it was not, any more than St. Catherine's St. Andrew's or any other missionary activity. They would not even inspect my books and left me in a few minutes. In due time Bishop Colmore sent me a copy of their report (full of glaring inaccuracies) and their recommendation that the work be discontinued immediately. The Bishop very politely told me he had the highest opinion of my character and my work but he must nevertheless concur in the recommendation of his committee and put it before the National Council and advise its adoption. Curiously enough just about that time one of my local friends informed me that the minister here, Villafane, was going around bragging that he would soon be living in my house- I asked the Bishop point blank if he had promised my house to the little priest, there was no room for equivocation and he had to admit it-- Then I began to see a great light:

Villafane resents my lack of enthusiasm in regard to his monstrous innovations in the Church service- I have carefully avoided any criticism of it, but he feels that I have damned it with faint praise- We never have Morning Prayer, the 10 o'clock service he calls High mass and it consists mostly of his changing his brilliant robes in the chancel with the help of 2 and sometimes 3 red robed acolytes and it has to be done to the accompaniment of clouds of evil smelling incense; The church has been re-decorated and the walls are hung with gaudy colored prints which are called stations of the Cross- There is an additional altar (I think it is called a lady altar) near the entrance of the Church, and the congregation is expected to perform in front of it at certain times. The simple dignified worship which you instituted here and which the people understood is a thing of the past- Villafane knows I am not in sympathy with his innovations and has complained of me to the Bishop and the latter has evidently decided that this is no place for a protestant.

Bishop assumes that if the work is discontinued he can get my salary and farm appropriation to play with somewhere else, perhaps St. Catherine's. He tells me he is in favor of renting the whole estate as pasture to some big central that wants a place for its work cattle! Can you conceive a greater piece of vandalism? Think of my acres of bananas, my young coffee, and the hundreds of forest trees that I have set out. And think of all the families that are more or less dependent, either as share croppers or helpers, on the farm work.

It is monstrous to pretend that the discontinuance of the work becomes necessary at this particular time; The farm never was in better



shape. My files are full of letters from Bishop Colmore commending the work I am doing, and one as late as last December especially approves the work and tells me he is getting an item of \$1,000 for farm buildings in the Advance work budget. Ofcourse there is the depression, but why not let that hit all activities equally; I am taking a 10% salary cut and a 20% cut in farm appropriation- The whole thing is wrong on the face of it. Why should a little local committee presume to dictate to the Board of Missions. I can stand losing my position, but why shpuld I be kicked out suddenly to make room in my house for a favorite priest- The house that was built with your help and from a special appropriation for agricultural missionaty's house.

I realize that my knell has sounded and I am not trying to hold on where I am not wanted- But I do insist on decent treatment and sufficient notice so that I can have several months to make my arrangements.

Our plan is to move over to our little finca on Maruenâ and we hope that as humble LAY workers we can to some extent follow your good work-

There are many sick women and children who are getting no help whatever from villafane, they do not happen to be his pets- I think we can get a few donations from friends back in the States of oia clothing and linen, we will not ask for salable things and we will not be interested in silk stockings forthe girls or neckties for the boys.

One main reason of this letter is to ask your permission to call our poor little feeble work on Marueno the "Ferrando Mission" The name will mean much to the people, and as our work would be purely practical there would be no possibility of your everbeing embarrassed by questions of doctrine or ceremonial- The religious side of our work will be confined to our motto: "Hungry and ye fed Me; Naked and ye clothed Me; Sick and ye visited Me".

You will see Bishop Colmore, his account of the change recommended may vary from mine, but you know us both and can draw your own conclusions.

The Convocation has just finished its session at Quebrada Limon; This is the first time in a/great many years that I have not been a delegate to a diocesan convocation- We were not even invited to attend the sessions in spite of Bishop Colmore being a guest in our house.

Your/judgment is completely vindicated.

Greetings to all the family,

Ever yours faithfully,

*John M. Valentin*