OVERSEAS DEPARTMENT
PUERTO RICO

Subject: Completion of the St. John's Cathedral project at San Juan.

RECOMMENDATION

RESOLVED, That an appropriation of $13,500.00 is made to the Bishop of Puerto Rico towards the completion of the St. John's Cathedral project at San Juan; and be it further

RESOLVED, That such appropriation be drawn from the Rental Construction Fund to be repaid in fifteen annual installments of $900.00 each to be drawn from an item in the Puerto Rico budget to be designated as Rental Construction Account, St. John's Cathedral, San Juan; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Bishop of Puerto Rico be requested to submit to the Council a complete financial statement showing all funds received and expended in connection with this project.

The above resolution was adopted by the National Council on September 24, 1949.

EXPLANATION

The Bishop of Puerto Rico, writing to the Director of the Overseas Department on August 19, 1949, calls attention to the work being done on St. John's Cathedral, San Juan, Puerto Rico, and makes certain recommendations and requests regarding the completion of this project. The Bishop says:

"The project has two aspects. (1) There is the matter of repairs and improvements connected with the existing Cathedral itself. This part of the project is divided into 5 categories as follows:

1. Repair in all roofs.
2. Glassing in all windows.
3. Installing a small air conditioning unit.
4. Painting of interior of Cathedral.
5. Repairing and replacing chandeliers.

"The second aspect is that of the construction of the long-awaited new wing, which will complete the original plan of the Cathedral Close. This part of the project also is divided into 5 categories - namely"
1. Bishop's, Diocesan and Parish Offices, and Conference Room.
2. Priest's Apartment, and Diocesan Guest Rooms.
3. Auditorium, Church School, Guild rooms, etc.
4. Basement dining hall and recreation room.
5. Basement two-car garage.

The sources of funds to cover the above projects are:

1. On hand locally ............................................................ $ 21,000.00
2. R.& A. (Voted 1947 for this very project)......................... 25,000.00
3. Item 5, P.R. 1949, already listed under Rental
   Con. for this ....................................................... 13,500.00
   Total for all purposes .............................................. $ 59,500.00

"Sources 1 and 2 need no action. And I suppose source 3
actually needs no original action, since that was taken when the item
was asked for. But a resolution should be passed stating that the sum
of $13,500.00 (15 times existing Item 5 for $900.00 per annum) be
granted from the Rental Reconstruction Fund for the construction of a
Priest's apartment and Diocesan Guest Rooms, for visiting clergy,
postulants, etc., in connection with the over-all repair and new con-
struction project for St. John's Cathedral.

"The preliminary plans for all of the above are well along,
and things are taking shape rapidly."

Item 5 of the Puerto Rico budget for 1949 is designated as
Rental Construction Account and is in the amount of $900.00.

The Bishop is asking that the Council appropriate $13,500.00
towards the completion of the St. John's Cathedral project in San Juan
and that this appropriation be repaid in fifteen (15) annual install-
ments of $900.00 each to be drawn from Item 5 in the Puerto Rico budget.
MISSIONARY DISTRICT OF PUERTO RICO
Post Office Box 1729
SAN JUAN, P. R.

The Rt. Rev. Charles B. Colmore, DD. Bishop

The Rev. E. Rem-Garcia
Executive Secretary

Friday, August 19th, 1949

My dear Bishop Bentley:

This is a preliminary report on the repairs and construction project in connection with St. John's Cathedral, San Juan, P. R. I should get this to you now, because it involves action by the National Council, at their September meeting in San Francisco — namely, the granting of permission to borrow for the full 15 year period, Item 5, P. R. 1949, under the National Recon-struction Plan, so that sufficient funds will be available for the whole project.

The project has two aspects. 1) There is the matter of repairs and improvements connected with the existing Cathedral itself. This part of the project is divided into 5 categories — as follows:

1. Repair to all roofs.
2. Gassing in all windows.
3. Installing a small air conditioning unit.
4. Painting of interior of Cathedral.
5. Repairing and replacing chandeliers.

The second aspect is that of the construction of the long-awaited new wing, which will complete the original plan of the Cathedral Close. This part of the project also is divided into 5 categories — namely:

1. Bishop's, Diocesan and Parish Offices, and Conference room.
2. Priest's Apartment, and Diocesan Guest Rooms.
3. Auditorium, Church School, Guild rooms, etc.
4. Basement dining hall and recreation room.
5. Basement two-car garage.

The sources of funds to cover the above projects are:

1. On hand locally............................ $21,000
2. H. & A. (Voted 1947 for this very project)............................ 25,000
3. Item 5, P. R. 1949, already listed under National Recon. for this... 13,500

Total for all purposes........... $59,500

Sources 1 and 2 need no action. And I suppose source 3 actually needs no original action, since that was taken when the item was asked for. But a resolution should be passed stating that the sum of $13,500 (15 times existing Item 5 for $900 per annum) be granted from the National Recon-struction Fund for the construction of a Priest's apartment and Diocesan Guest rooms, for visiting clergy, postulants, etc., in connection with the over-all repair and new construction project for St. John's Cathedral.

The preliminary plans for all of the above are well along, and things are taking shape rapidly. I ever most faithfully and obediently,

[Signature]
For over 5 years now we have all been agreed here that the only thing
to do at the cathedral is to glass it in and air-condition it. The traffic
noises have steadily increased on the main avenue upon which the cathedral
faces, so that now it is most difficult to hear the services and sermons.
Also, a 7 story business and apartment building has been built on the
lot right next to the Cathedral (only 10 feet away from the side walls
of the Cathedral building) cutting off light and especially ventilation.
Further more, the mosquitoes at night are a serious problem to devotion
and health. The glassing in of the windows and installing a small air-
condition unit will solve all three problems mentioned above. It is
proposed to use some of our local funds in hand ($21,000) to take care
of this, plus the other necessary repairs and improvements.

The New Wing to be constructed is of even more vital necessity now
than at any time in the past. The existing wing, since the closing of
St. Catherino's Training School for native Workers many years ago and
which occupied this wing, was used for parochial purposes and (2nd floor)
as a residence for Canon Aristodo Villafane. Although it was not
built or designed for a parish house, and proved inadequate for that
purpose, it was (and is to date) the only thing available. Two years
ago, the Puerto Rican Congregation of the Cathedral, founded a parochial
day school, with the permission of the Bishop. The building formerly
occupied by St. Catherino's Training School was used part-time by the
school. In two years time, this parochial school has grown rapidly, and
opens this fall with some 200 pupils. In anticipation of the New Wing,
the existing wing has been turned over entirely to the parochial
school, and the Puerto Rican Congregation has spent over $4,000 in
remodeling the building so that now it is one of the first-class school
buildings in San Juan. With the complete wing now taken over by the
school, the three congregations of the Cathedral (Continental American,
Puerto Rican and West Indian) have no parish house whatsoever for the
many activities connected with their congregational life outside of
formal worship. This New Wing is being designed to take care of all
this. Also, the Diocesan Offices, which are now in the basement of the
Bishop's House, are being provided for in the New Wing. Also, an
apartment to replace the one lost when the existing wing was converted
entirely into class rooms. Also, Guest Rooms for visiting clergy and
workers when they come to San Juan on vacation or business, plus room
for postulants as and when they reside at the Cathedral while attending
High School or the University, etc., etc.