

MISSIONARY DISTRICT OF PORTO RICO

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

P. O. BOX 1115.

11, November, 1925.

SAN JUAN P. R.

Rt. Rev. Manuel Ferrando,  
Mountain Lakes, New Jersey.

My dear Bishop:

As you know, Mr. and Mrs. Edmunds came down with us on the San Lorenzo last week and I went over with him to Ponce and Quebrada Limon, arriving at the mission on Friday morning. I stayed with them until Sunday afternoon. During that time we had a meeting with all the people of the house and another with all the men who are working and living on the property. In your absence, I tried the best way I could to inform the people that Mr. Edmunds was to be entirely in charge of the whole material situation. That anything affecting them should be taken to Mr. Edmunds. That he had been given your and my authority to conduct the work of the farm.

The first problem I had to face was that of the disposition of the house and I solved it in the following manner: After a considerable talk with Hermenegildo and his wife. I decided that the present room used as a parlor should be set aside as a vesting room for the clergy and to be used for that purpose only. The wardrobe near the bathroom is to be moved there with the communion vessels, etc. The large bedroom between the present parlor and the dining room to be used as the Edmund's parlor, the Edmunds to use the three bedrooms on both sides of the bath room and to have exclusive use of the dining room and kitchen. That gives the house on the one floor for the use of the Edmunds family.

I designated the two rooms in the tower for Hermenegildo and his wife. She at first complained that the stairs would be bad for her, and she did not like the disposition for that reason. I then suggested that they use the present study for the bedroom and move the study up stairs, which they readily agreed to do.

I made a decision regarding the amount of coffee to be provided by the Mission for the people of the house and for Ramon Cortez. Ramon told me that he has been drawing coffee at the rate of six pounds per month, which I think should be sufficient for Hermenegildo and his wife, and an equal amount for the three deaconesses and their servant. There was considerable objection to this apportionment, but I stood my ground and carried the point, that they might receive either the coffee or the equivalent in money each month, at the rate of twenty-five cents per pound.

As regards charcoal, I told them they should not expect to receive charcoal for their own needs any more than they would if they were living in their own house. That I did not know if the farm would make any charcoal at all, but that if it does, we would be glad to sell it to them at a slight reduction below the market value in Quebrada Limon. That otherwise they would have to buy charcoal wherever they could.

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Everything went very pleasantly and agreeably and a good spirit was manifested by all. I felt that I had to make these decisions in order to give Mr. Edmunds a basis to work upon. I hope that they are going to meet with your approval and that you will be able to back me in everything I have said and done.

Hermenegildo suggested that the best thing to be done as regards his own living quarters or those of whoever should be the native priest in charge of that mission, would be a small house built upon the property with one cuerda of land for his own garden. I thoroughly agreed with him and told him I would write to you at once, making the suggestion that if possible, we raise the sum of \$500 for the purpose,- that it might be possible for you to do something in that particular before you came down.

If you can do something toward the matter, I think that possibly later on I might be able also to help with it. I am sure that this would be the means of causing the greatest amount of satisfaction to all concerned.

The question was raised in regard to Innocencio de Leon. As I understand it, Innocencio is paid from the funds received from New York, at the rate of \$6.50 per month for the work he is able to do around the place, out of which he pays to Hermengildo, \$5.00 for his food. They told me that this is not sufficient for the purpose, but did not state how much more would be required to meet that expense. I answered that I could see no way out of this for the present and they would have to continue as formerly, but that I would acquaint you with the situation and see if you could find any solution for the difficulty.

I see from the accounts that Ramon Cortez has been paid from the farm funds at the rate of \$50 per month for the past three months, with which I am in thorough conformity. Of course the farm needs every dollar that it can possibly raise just now for certain equipment which is absolutely necessary and if there were any way to reimburse the farm for this \$150, it would be well. As to Ramon's salary for November and December, I have a suggestion to make to you which may or may not meet with your approval. That is, that the discretionary funds which are at your disposal be used for \$50 for November and \$40 for December for Ramon's salary. I estimate that up to December 1st, there is to your credit in this discretionary fund, \$116.00. That would be disposing of \$90.00 of this amount, leaving \$26.00 to your credit. In December I propose that Don Antonio's services be dispensed with and that \$20.00 of the amount now paid to him be paid Ramon Cortez for services which he may render in assisting Mr. Edmunds. I took the initiative in asking Ramon if he were willing to do this work and he readily assented without any reference on my part to remuneration for the same. His only condition was that I should so state to Hermenegildo and anyone else concerned, so that there might be no misunderstanding in regard to his taking part with Mr. Edmunds in the work of the property. From December 1st, therefore, this would allow Ramon \$60.00 per month for such time as Mr. Edmunds may find his assistance necessary. I assured Ramon that this should not be allowed

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to interfere with his spiritual work in any way, but inasmuch as he knows the language and customs of the people, I am sure he can be of tremendous assistance in the management of affairs. If you are willing that this amount of money should be used from your discretionary fund for this purpose, will you please write me at once, authorizing me to draw the said amount from the Treasurer for the purpose.

Inasmuch as I am to be away from Porto Rico for part of the two remaining months in this year and part of the time in the beginning of next year, I have asked Father Saylor to assist me with the spiritual oversight of Quebrada Limon and surrounding missions until I can have a chance to talk the matter over with you. I hope that he may find it possible to visit the missions say twice each month and give them the encouragement and moral support that they need. This is a temporary arrangement and is subject to any decision that you and I may make in regard to it.

Father Pfeiffer is leaving San Juan on November 27th for St. Thomas. I have rented his house for you, but it will be entirely unfurnished. I am to take the services at St. John's on November 29th but am to be in St. Thomas on the 1st Sunday in December, and in the Dominican Republic on the second Sunday. I hope very much, therefore, that you are going to be able to be here the first part of December in order to help out with the situation here.

The Edmunds are making use of your furniture in Quebrada Limon and it seems to me that some way should be found to eventually pay you the value of that furniture in order that you may provide other for yourself, wherever you may be.

Hoping that you can carry out your plan to be here and assist me in the San Juan work and with all best wishes to the family, also hoping that you can approve of all I have done during your absence from Porto Rico, believe me,

Very sincerely and affectionately yours,

CBC/LWT.

Chas. B. Colver.

P.S. Mrs Pfeiffer wants to recommend her servants to Mrs Ferrando. They are English speaking negroes. If you do not wish them perhaps you would send me a line. C.B.C.