



## A New Year Letter From Banaue

Banaue, Ifugao, Mt. Province  
December 30, 1940.

Dear Father José,

A few days ago I received your letter announcing me the good tidings that you would send me again the monthly allowance of ₱25.00 as a help for the support of my catechists. We missionaries in the Mountain Province are fortunate in having The Little Apostle to plead our cause with the generous Catholics in this country, specially in these days of a regretful handicap in our missionary work caused by adverse circumstances.

You ask me how things are going in Banaue. Well, the best I can say is that I have taken the necessary precautions in due time. First, I have totally suppressed my dormitory for boys. You certainly understand why I say "totally," because the means had to be radical in order to make it effective. I had quite a headache that day, for the decision leaned heavily on me. The expenses for this dormitory ran up last year to five hundred pesos. Now I must

admit that the boys took care of our horses, providing them daily with a good bundle of tasty grass, and in such a way they spared me a hundred pesos which I would have spent paying a "sacatero." Anyhow, four hundred pesos less on our budget is certainly some relief.

But, you may be sure, dear Father, that it does't mean a spiritual relief to our mission. Far from it! In Banaue we need to keep the children with us if we want to give them a serious education. I trust in the Lord, because God has commanded time to console the unhappy: time will come when I can again welcome our noisy bambinos.

The question was that I had to choose between two evils: suppress our dormitory or give up some of our catechists. The latter will be done only when we are utterly on the street, or when we see the rats deserting our sinking ship. We are blessed with five zealous Catechists, who love their work and never shrink at a sacrifice: they are generous in the service of the Lord, because they are thoroughly

convinced that our Lord will never be outdone in generosity. They knew our precarious condition and the sad circumstances that made it uncertain, and freely offered their salary to be cut off 10%. Thanks to their generosity and apostolic spirit of sacrifice, we can get along for the time being — hoping that this world's turmoil won't last too long.

We do not want to be less generous than our catechists. We know that other missions in the Mountain Province have greater difficulties than we have: poor Salegseg had to give up nine catechists out of eleven, the two left are kept on the mission field through the generosity of your Readers of The Little Apostle and El Misionero; in Baguio I met Barlig's best catechist, our famous Bustamante, who had to leave the Barlig Mission for lack of means. Our Mountain Province Missions can hardly afford to miss a man of the Bustamante type and jovial character, who is now doing catechetical work in the mines. I know the urgent needs, the loss of catechists in our missions of Kapangan, Itogon, Kayan, Bontoc, Kabugao, Ripang, and so many others, that I have no heart calling for help when it is not absolutely needed. Missionaries in the Mountain Province have the spirit of solidarity, and we want help to be given first of all to those who are in the greatest distress.

Therefore, dear Father, do not trouble yourself about Banaué, but trouble yourself the more about

those of our confreres whose miseries are greater than ours.

Two days from now we have another New Year. New Year! The great wish in the heart of every man of good will is: Peace! But by this word only that is meant which is true in its full substance: Peace with Justice!

It made a deep impression on me when I read in an American Catholic Paper what the English announcer from Vatican Radio, addressing a North American audience, had to say of His Holiness Pope Pius XII. "The Pope knows too well," he said, "that there are forms of tranquility which differ only in degree from despotism and slavery: and history both ancient and modern, has burnt into his paternal heart the evidence that neither men nor nations can live as brothers where they must live as slaves."

This is but the beginning of the announcement from Vatican Radio, but it gives us a clear illustration of what we, Catholics of the Philippines, should think and do in regard with the present universal conflict in the world.

I am one of your readers, and allow me to express in the name of all of us our wishes and resolutions for the year 1941.

We wish true peace to all men on earth, we pray for peace of charity and justice—strong in our Catholic Faith which teaches us that all men are created at the image and likeness of God, that all men are called to be the adopted children of the same Father in

Heaven.

We pray for peace of charity, embracing all men, all nations, in one act of fraternal love, pitying those who went astray, hoping for their return, forgiving those who made themselves our enemies, who persecute us, and who, driven by a foolish pride, use brutal force in order to make us their slaves for ever.

We pray for peace of justice, hating error, sin and pride—the great evils of the day. We abhor the “Apostasy of Nations, the State idolatry” (words of the Holy Father Pius XII), which have caused all the present calamities as a well deserved punishment from Heaven.

We pray for peace of justice, thanking the Lord for having spared us until now from the horrors of war, but with a strong resolution in our heart to defend the sacred rights of justice, to answer the first call to duty and to arms, if needed, to repulse any unjust invader who wants to deprive us of our inherited treasure of country and religion, who wants to make us their slaves.

We are free children of God and His Church—and that is what we are decided, firmly decided to remain.

We pray and work for peace of charity and justice—and therefore we pray that all men of good will should stand firm, united in one front against hatred and oppression. With holy enthusiasm in our heart we acclaim the Pope’s sublime words of comfort for the

brave: “Those who fall defending charity and justice against their enemies we rightly call heroes or martyrs, not suicides.”

We pray and work for peace of charity and justice—and we will not allow that, while we still remain preserved from the horrors of war, our works of charity and justice in our country have to suffer on account of the war they are waging around us. No, it will not be written into history that we failed to save our Home Missions, which were put in imminent danger by the disrupted relations between Catholic countries and Catholic peoples.... We stand firm to protect and defend our own, and will safeguard what Holy Providence has intrusted to us. If during 1941 we are not hurt by an invader’s sword, we will hurt ourselves by generous cooperation, by generous giving—yes, we will give till it hurts and send back to the poor Igorrotes their much needed catechists.... We will!

And to you, dear Father, we wish perseverance in your endeavors to make the Mountain Province Missions and their urgent needs known to all Catholics of this country—and we pray that God’s choicest blessing be your reward.

Yours fraternally in J. & M.,  
Padre Francisco

*EDITOR’S NOTE: Are these also your wishes and your New Year resolutions? I know they are.*

*Join our “Generosity Contest,” and you will have a fine opportunity to com-*

ply with such lofty resolutions.

Make your friends interested in our Catechists' Fund—telling them what a wonderful work these lay-apostles are doing in the Mountain Province.

See that The Little Apostle (El Misionero) finds its way to all Catholic families of your acquaintance.

By doing this you will have done a great work—one that attracts God's choicest blessing upon you and your beloved ones.

These days Church and country need generous souls. —In them lies the hope for a Peace of Charity and Justice.



Banaue Mission Church, rectory, Convent of the Sisters, school and dormitories.

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To all our beloved Readers

We wish a Very Prosperous New Year

