

Copy of letter ¹ Gaia Portugal 11th November 1921
to each of the members of our Council of Bishops
~~The Rt Rev. J. Gregg D.D.~~
~~Lord Bishop of Gibraltar~~
~~My Lord Bishop~~

The Rt Rev. J. Gregg, Bishop of Gibraltar has just
paid a short visit to Oporto. The ven. J. Flower secretary of the
Synod arranged that all the priests of the Lusitanian Church,
Catholic, Apostolic, Evangelical in the north of Portugal should
meet the Bishop at the English Church on All Saints Day after
the early celebration, advising them to be there in time to
communicate, so as to show a friendly spirit between the two
Churches. I was unable to go with them as my time was
fully occupied, Holy Communion in one Church, a Children's
in another which was crowded to excess, & an open air service in the
Parochial Cemetery largely attended by Roman Catholics, all
very attentive. I had no intention of calling upon the Bishop
of Gib. but he sent a message that he was anxious to see me, &
invited me to come to the house where he was staying.

D^r Gregg, B. of Gib. said he had read of the
noble work of Lord Chanket, Archbishop of Dublin who was
one of the first Anglican Bishops to show sympathy with the
Old Catholics, taking an active & prominent part in their Con-
ferences, also showing sympathy & giving help to the Lusit-
anian Church by performing the episcopal functions of Ordi-
nation & Confirmation which only a Bishop could perform.
He knew that another eminent Irishman D^r J. R. Bernard afterwards
Archbishop of Dublin had been deputed by the Archbishop of

Sanctuary to visit the Eastern Churches with a view to promote Reunion & Intercommunion.
 Rec remembered that several of his predecessors on the subject of Reunion, especially the eminent historian & liturgist D. W. C. Collins had been deputed by Lambeth to endeavours to promote Reunion and Intercommunion with the Old Catholics, the Orthodox Churches in the East, also to visit the Lusitanian Church.

His Lordship said he much wondered at a loss to wonder stand why the Lusitanian Church was still without a Bishop, his episcopal organization being completed by the consecration of a native born bishop, pressed me to tell him what steps we had taken to promote this.

In answer to his Lordship's question I answered the following:

In 1879 the Lusitanian Church, including ^{the} Evangelical was organized.

In 1880 our Synod met (I attended as a layman). Our general laws & canons were drawn up & approved of, a Memorial was forwarded to the bench of Irish Bishops, & through praying them to consecrate a Bishop elected by our Synod, & this Memorial was well received.

In 1881 Lord Plantagenet, then Bishop of Norwich was commissioned by the Irish Bishops to visit Portugal & inform us as follows:

"As regards the special prayer contained in your memorial, I am authorized to inform you that in the event of sufficient guarantees as to doctrine & discipline being provided by your Church, and all necessary canonical conditions being complied with, we are prepared to accede to your request." Lord Plantagenet showed us great sympathy, & gave us valuable advice & congratulations. The Lusitanian Church upon having recognized the Catholic

In 1881, Our Liturgical Committee completed its labours, & our Prayer Book was printed, the Liturgy proper largely copied from the Roman Missal. We may mention that our Prayer Book Office & general laws & canons have been approved of by Lambeth Conference, & warmly praised by several Old Catholic Bishops.

When the Lusitanian Church was organized, the Rev. T. C. P. Pope O.D., an eminent theologian of a broad Catholic spirit was elected president of the Synod.

In the year 1891 Canon Pope, T.C.P. was unanimously elected Bishop, but he refused to accept the position because, to quote his own words in a letter to Archbishop Plunket, "the native Church should have a native born attorney, and I laid much stress upon the importance of avoiding anything that might make the movement look like an Anglican plantation." In 1897 Dr. Pope, being urgently pressed by the Lusitanian Synod to reconsider his original decision, consented to allow a petition for his consecration as Bishop to be sent to the Bishop of the Church of Ireland. To this the following answer was sent in 1898 through the Lord Primate of Ireland to Diego Cassels who acted as deputy and secretary to the Memorialists.

"The Bishops of the Church of Ireland desire to express their sincere sympathy with the members of the Lusitanian Church in their brave struggle in behalf of the Catholic, Apostolic, and Evangelical Faith, and trust that, with the blessing of Almighty God, they may increase in numbers and influence, and become a great power in their own land. The Bishops are most anxious to assist them in any way in their power, but regret that at present they cannot proceed to the consecration of a Bishop."

Since then we have increased in numbers & influence.

In November 1906 Dr. W. C. Collins Bishop of Exeter paid his first visit to Portugal, showed sympathy with the Lusitanian Church, & at a meeting convened to welcome him said:

"If you maintain the Catholic organization national character, ancient liberties and independence of your church, then with God's blessing you will be respected by your brethren in other lands and other branches of the Holy Catholic Church."

He also advised us to send a Memorial to the Archbishop of Canterbury.

praying for the consecration of a bishop for the Lusitanian Church, & further said:— If any technical objection should be made to the Anglican Bishops consecrating for a foreign country, then they would probably refer & recommend us to the Old Catholics, who he knew would consecrate a bishop if asked by the Lusitanian ^{Church} in its corporate capacity. Instructions were sent from London that no Memorial must be sent & these instructions were obeyed.

On February 10th 1911 the Permanent Committee of the Lusitanian Church unanimously passed a resolution that a third memorial should be sent through the members of our Council of Bishops to the Bishops of the Church of Ireland, humbly praying them to take steps for the Consecration of a Bishop for the Lusitanian Church, to be elected by the Lusitanian Synod, since without a native-born Bishop it is impossible to enter the doors now being opened to our Church on every side.

This Memorial was never received by the Irish Bishops at Armagh! I sent a copy of the Memorial to the members of our Council of Bishops, but we fear that the original official form never reached them!

The Archbishop of Canterbury, primate of the vast Anglican Communion, in October 1912 authorized us to inform our colleagues that if the Lus. Church should send him a Memorial, praying for the consecration of a national Bishop, the Memorial would be received with great interest and sympathy, and that if the bishops convinced themselves that the reform movement in Portugal was spontaneous and free, not of foreign origin, then we might be *certain* that they would be encouraged, not only to show us their sympathy, but also to help us in any way consistent with our honour as a national independent Church, and that the Memorial could be sent to him, the Archbishop, *as soon as we wished*, but it was necessary that the initiative should come from the Lus. Church.

In 1913 Dr H. J. C. Broughton, then bishop of Syd. visited Porto, & when all the priests of the Lusitanian Church in the north of Portugal called upon him, he told us that he was commissioned by the Archbishop of Canterbury to inform us that a Memorial might be sent to Lambeth ^{as we liked}, and he added:— "If you can guarantee the stipend of a bishop, then I know no objection why a bishop should not be consecrated."

On the 26th October 1916 at a meeting of the Permanent Committee held in Lisbon a fourth Memorial praying for the consecration of a bishop for the Lusitanian Church was unanimously voted to be sent as on former occasions to the Bench of Irish Bishops at Stramagh. This memorial was put in type writing by the secretary, sent round & signed by all the members of our Synod. On the 17th December 1916 I was informed that the memorial had been returned from London with instructions that it must be altered & that it must ^{not} be addressed to the Bench of Irish Bishops. Neither I nor the ^{lay} representative of the two Churches in any charge were asked to sign the altered memorial, & we don't know what alterations were made in it. !! Altho' we had signed the first original!

Early in the year 1920 the three oldest ministers of the Lus. Church sent a petition to the rev. Figueiredo president of the Synod, asking him to call a meeting of our Permanent Committee (which had not been called since 1916) to consider the advisability of forwarding a Memorial to the Lambeth Conference of Bishops praying for the consecration of a Bishop for the Lusitanian Church. We received no answer for several weeks, & then it was negative!

Then all the priests & lay representatives of the Synod in the north of Portugal, (being a large majority of the congregations, members, scholars & contributors in the Lusitanian Church) sent a formal petition to the rev. Figueiredo asking him to call a meeting of the Permanent Committee to take into consideration the sending of a Memorial to Lambeth through our Council of Bishops. He gave no answer for several weeks & then he again refused to call a meeting because of the Permanent Committee, because he had received

instructions from London that this would show a want of confidence in our Council of Bishops (we never thought of showing a want of confidence & never thought of removing our allegiance from them) but if we liked we might send a Memorial to our Council of Bishops! The refusal to call a meeting of the Permanent Committee was most arbitrary & illegal!!

A Memorial was sent to our Council of Bishops, & kindly read by them in a Committee meeting of the Lambeth Conference & received with sympathy, but it arrived too late to form any part of the agenda of the Lambeth Conference, & the great majority of the Bishops attending never knew that this memorial had been read.

Dr. Gregory said as bishop to very large diocese, extending through a great many nationalities & different Communion, it was his earnest desire to abandon exclusive & insular ideas, & in the spirit of the Lambeth Conference, taken after much humiliation & prayer to do all in his power to consummate & promote intercommunion & reunion with the Old Catholic the Lusitanian & Eastern Churches & any other Communion calling themselves Catholic, & also to show sympathy & cultivate fraternal intercourse with all Liberations who separated after solemnity & liberty in spirit taught by our Saviour. He said he was much interested in the Lusitanian Church, & was always ready to help her by performing the episcopal functions of a bishop, if asked to do so by authority.

We know that Dr. W. C. Lefferts late B. of Gibraltar had given a favourable report of the Lusitanian Church. The memorial asking for the consecration of a bishop should reach London long.

He would do all in his power to support it, and he believed that the Archbishop would assent to our petition, as he knew that Fearce & many Anglican Bishops desired that our Catholic organization should be completed by the consecration of a bishop.

I felt extremely grateful to the Bishop of Gibraltar for his sympathy & offer of practical help, but to avoid any complication I merely answered Thank you - Thank you.

Personally speaking I am sorry that the world is not more active. I much regret that he was dependent upon foreign support, & that he has not a broader out look (he has never been out of little Portugal), but even so I could rejoice to see him consecrated the Bishop of the Lusitanian Church, because it is urgent that our Catholic organization should be completed, and we know that when a priest receives the grace of consecration he generally becomes more Christ like.

I know that in our quarter it has been said that I was an impediment, as it is feared that I might be elected bishop! This cause immediately falls to the ground, I was never a candidate, I have no wish whatever to be a bishop, and I am the first to know that I have not the necessary qualifications, but I am very anxious to see a bishop consecrated, and I am anxious during my life time to propose the way for a bishop to be consecrated for the north of Portugal after I am called to retire.

I understand that the property of the House now vacant in Lisbon, & the episcopal fund are sufficient to guarantee a modest stipend for a bishop in the north of Portugal.

Many years ago before my wife was taken to her rest,

we passed all our property in Portugal to the Lusitanian² Church, the rents to be devoted to the support of the Churches & Schools of S. João Evangelista & S. Salvador. In my will I have stated that I wish the stipend of a Bishop, so much needed for the north of Portugal, to be the first charge, because an active bishop can continue to influence contributions for the Schools, the Poor and Foreign Missions as hitherto, but an active schoolmaster can't influence contributions towards the stipend of a bishop.

I am very thankful to your Lordship for your kind interest in the Lusitanian Church, and I trust & pray that after waiting over 40 years, & having increased in numbers & influence in the north of Portugal, a bishop will very soon now be consecrated.

We leave all in the hands of our loving Father in heaven, who knows best & what is for our good.

I beg pardon for taking up so much of your Lordship's valuable time, but I know it is my duty to inform your Lordship what the Bishop of Gibraltar said to me. I remain

Your Lordship's humble & obedient servant in Christ
 Diego Casals

Overst in charge of the Church of S. João Evangelista,
 also of the Church of Salvador do mundo