Abbot Torres and the complex canonical status of New Norcia

Maria Teresa Avalos

University of Notre Dame Australia

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Chapter Two: Intricate Canonical Status of New Norcia’s Status and undefined Abbatial Authority

Given the state of things it could be an obvious imprudence from my part to call things for their real name. Not taking into consideration that some people may feel offended, such intention is so foreign from my way of thinking.

(Abbot Torres to Abbot Jose Deas, 8th October 1909)

Before entering upon a proper discussion of the intricate canonical status of New Norcia, it will be worthwhile to learn something about the man Bishop Salvado hand-picked to be his successor. On 10th April 1901, Dom Fulgentius Torres, accompanied by a party of ten monks and postulants\(^{57}\) arrived in New Norcia and as soon as possible he set out to commence his labour.

It is almost impossible to say what he was really like by looking at his personal diary; for even in it he concentrated on the business at hand. Few are the instances in which he alluded to his feelings and thoughts. The diary entries reflect their author as a man deeply focused and concerned with the events at hand and the importance they may have for the monastic Community and their missionary goals. The Diary of Bishop Torres is almost entirely dedicated to his voyages of exploration of the north coast of Western Australia.

His correspondence reveals his honest and simple attributes. These attributes can perhaps be corroborated by an article dedicated to Bishop Torres after his death in 1915 in the Revista Montserratina. The article makes manifest the lasting impression he made on his superiors in Europe. They knew him right from the beginning of his religious life and a look at what they had to say may reveal something about his personality:

It is only fair that we render a last tribute in these pages of the Revista Montserratina to one who may have left so many alive and beautiful memories in all who knew him, much more amongst us due to the number of years that he lived here and for the offices entrusted upon him\(^{58}\).

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\(^{57}\) They were Dom Gerardo Castanares, Dom Fausto Curiel, Dom Emiliano Planas and Dom Inigo Alcalde; the deacons Dom Hermenegildo Casas and brother Mauro Bonet from the Monastery of Montserrat and the postulants Alberto Porres, Luis Arrufat, Manuel Ferrer and Valentín Saez.

\(^{58}\) The Illustrious and Reverend Father Dom Fulgentius Torres y Mayans, O. S. B. Ordinary Abbot of the Monastery of Sacred Trinity of New Norcia (Western Australia) and Bishop Titular of Dorylaemum, Administrator Apostolic of the Kimberley Vicariate', Revista Montserratina. Number 97, January
His kindness and good character earned him everyone’s esteem, to this also contributed even more his spirit of charity and his readiness to help beyond measure which sealed all his acts.\textsuperscript{59}

There is not much that can be said that has not been said before about Torres’ early life in Europe. He was baptised Antonio Torres Mayans, his parents were Juan Torres y Torres and Manuela Mayans y Torres de Formentera. He was born on 24th June 1861 in Baleares on the Spanish Island of Ibiza, Spain.\textsuperscript{60} He made manifest his desire to become a priest from a young age. Apparently, his parents wanted to dissuade him from becoming a priest and encouraged him to concentrate on his studies. This he did with great success, for he was studious and disciplined. He was sixteen years old when he moved to Barcelona, to go to the University there to follow up studies in Pharmacy. He completed his three years Bachelor of Science degree in 1880, nonetheless he decided to enter the Seminary of Vich; there he initiated his religious studies whilst teaching in the missionary college of Montserrat.\textsuperscript{61}

In 1885, Torres felt certain of his calling and decided to go to the Monastery of Montserrat to ask for the Habit of St Benedict. After a period of trial, he was accepted and under the guidance of the recently elected Abbot Jose Deas he took St Benedict’s Habit. After one year of novitiate, he pronounced his simple vows, in 1887 he was ordained priest and in 1889 he made his solemn vows. He put to good use all his pharmaceutical knowledge; first by helping the monastery’s doctor install an efficient dispensary. He was also the assistant choir master of the boy choir. He was apparently an excellent teacher of mathematics, physical science and natural history. He was in the group of monks chosen to set up a foundation in the Philippines in 1895, after sometime he was appointed Superior of the Mindanao mission and Parish priest of Gigaquit. The political instability of the Philippines at the time forced the missionaries to return home to safety. In 1898, he was chosen to assist the Prior Justo Saez of the Monserrat Church in Naples, who died after a few months leaving Torres in charge of the office.\textsuperscript{62}

\textsuperscript{59} Ibid., pp.12-13.
\textsuperscript{60} Ibid., p.12.
\textsuperscript{61} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{62} Ibid., pp. 12-13.
It was in Naples in January of 1900 that Salvado first met Torres and he had the opportunity to admire Torres’ dedication and genius. Salvado thought highly of Torres and treasured their shortlived friendship and he asked Spanish Provinceals to allow him to go with him to his Australian Mission. Moreover, when Salvado learnt that his chosen successor as abbot of New Norcia, Dom Fulgentius Dominguez had died in April of the same year, he decided to ask Torres to take his place. This took place on 14th December 1900; Torres agreed to this, but had to wait for the decree of the SCPF to appoint him Apostolic Administrator of the Abbey Nullius of New Norcia and subsequently Torres had to undergo a proper abbatial election in New Norcia.64

Salvado’s last visit to Rome is indeed significant because in it he finalised a matter that had remained undefined for too long. Father Eugene Perez wrote that:

In the Archives of Propaganda, the Decree of 1864, by which New Norcia, without his knowledge, had been united to the incipient Subiaco Congregation, 60 km east of Rome, was still dormant. It had been suspended on his arrival in Rome on that occasion but now, at his request, was brought out and presented for approval. He wrote, “I propose, that it be put into execution, but with the modifications I myself have introduced”. All his amendments were accepted, and his monastery in Australia became part of the Congregation of Subiaco and united to the Spanish Province of that Congregation.65

**New Norcia in 1900 by Decree of CCPO and with approval of SCPF**

[Diagram showing the relationship between Holy See, CCPO, SCPF, SPCCPO, and Abbey Nullius of New Norcia]

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63 Salvado wrote of Torres in a diary entry: “I saw in Naples the place where he is building the new church and house, which could not be better nor more central. As far as I could judge from the plans I saw, the buildings should be good. I understand that everything will be finished shortly, thanks to the activity and zeal of Fr Torres. May God keep him strong and healthy for many years”. Cited in the introduction to *The Diary of Bishop Torres* by Dom Eugene Perez, p. 16
64 Ibid., p.17.
65 Ibid.
This was a great achievement for Bishop Salvado and a great step towards securing the legal canonical standing of his monastery within the SPCCPO and of ensuring that after his death New Norcia would not fall under the control of secular clergy. However, this union really served to place the New Norcia Monastery in a disadvantageous position. When Torres became Abbot of New Norcia, he inherited the responsibility of consolidating the monastic and missionary work of his predecessor. However, he also inherited the responsibility of adhering to the amendments established by the union. The consequences of this union were discussed by Abbot Torres in his ad limina report to the SCPF of 1910.

This document is not only illustrative of the particular situation of New Norcia and its abbot, but also representative of the similar circumstances that applied to other religious congregations in Australia or foreign missions. It exemplifies the nature of the conflicts of authority in foreign missions. It provides a clear and well-structured discussion of the unresolved and consequently problematic canonical status of the New Norcia Community.

The only copy of the report in the archives is in Latin; according to Mrs Alison Thompson, the translator, there are several mistakes in the Latin grammar that add some confusion as to what the document was meant to say. Although repetitive, the document is set out in a comprehensive and concise manner. His approach can best be described as highly pragmatic; he showed his ability to treat the issues with reference to their practical reality and, even when complicated in their nature, he treats them with great clarity. His discussion in the report is divided in four sections. Each section presents a new argument and, as he progresses, one can clearly see each argument’s relation and significance to the centrality of the discussion.

In the first part he presented the objective of the report accompanied by a discussion of the problems that the union of New Norcia to the SPCCPO created for New Norcia. The second part is a discussion of the Provincial duties of the superior of monasteries; duties and functions that Abbot Torres considered could not be demanded from Abbots who found themselves in extraordinary circumstances. It looks at the destructive interference of Superiors of the Congregation in matters of foreign monasteries to which they were entirely foreign and the particular problems caused by Holy Visitation. The third part is a continuation of the problems caused by the impracticality of the Holy Visitation and the sacrifices it imposed on the BCNN.
In the final part, he presents several measures that he and the New Norcia Community deemed more adequate for the inclusion of New Norcia into the CCPO.

It was Abbot Torres' view that New Norcia's ecclesiastical problems began with the union of the abbey into the SPCCPO, which took place in September 1900. This report represented his official attempt to have Propaganda Fide intervene and seek to ameliorate a condition that had been the source of problems for the Abbot of New Norcia and his Community.  

He argued that this state of New Norcia's subjugation to the Spanish Province was largely influenced by previous conditions established by the mutual agreement of Bishop Salvado and the Prefect of Propaganda Fide in 1864. New Norcia and its abbot became subject, not only to the laws of the CC but to the Abbot General of the Congregation and to the jurisdiction of the Abbot Visitor of the Congregation. For further assistance in ecclesiastical matters, New Norcia's abbot could approach the SCPF.

From the Report it can be sensed that, in theory, adhering to these arrangements and obeying the laws established for the benefit of a provincial monastery did not represent a problem for Abbot Torres. The problem lay in the fact that they could not apply to New Norcia, in the same manner as they did for monasteries of the Province located within it, due to New Norcia's unique status and to the fact that these measures were never truly executed. Abbot Torres was aware of this; for he knew from experience that these arrangements availed to nothing. It was a convenient system in theory, but in practice achieved very little.

This ecclesiastical incorporation brought more problems than solutions. First of all, New Norcia's abbot was subordinate to all Provincial and General Superiors; this not only meant that he received orders from these men individually and directly, but also he relied on their assistance to solve the problems of his monastic house. Before leaving Australia for Rome at the end of 1909, he wrote to Abbot Deas and what he had to say about New Norcia's reliance on the Abbot Visitor is most illustrative of the problems the system created for New Norcia:

I must inform your Paternity that at the end of this year I will leave for Rome where I have some matters of importance to deal with the Sacred Congregation of

67 Ibid., p. 1, No. 1.
68 Ibid., pp. 1-2, No. 1 (ii)
69 Ibid., p. 2, No. 2.
Propaganda. Given that I am convinced of the little usefulness that offer the Provincial Chapters and on the other hand considering the 15 years the Visitor has performed his role, he has shown me the little one can expect from such office, even though a person of known virtue and energy is in charge of it. It will be easy to propose to the Holy See a relative argument regarding this matter; given the distance in which we are from the Abbot Visitor and given the slowness with which some matters are dealt, many times this results in prejudice against the interests of this house.\textsuperscript{70}

Apart from his inevitable dependence on Provincial Superiors and General Superiors,\textsuperscript{71} the Abbot of New Norcia was a professed missionary; his duties were dictated by the Constitution of Propaganda Fide. He was a superior amongst several other higher superiors and two Congregations whose authority restricted his own power as abbot. In which case he was placed in a complex position; he had to withstand the problems caused by distance and the conflicts of authority that originated in Spain and Italy respectively. Consequently, these interfered in the government of his monastic house.\textsuperscript{72}

Ultimately, he identified that the most incoherent arrangement was that which legalised the community’s dependence on the authority of the Spanish Abbot Visitor, when distance was the ultimate obstacle and prime cause of the system’s unreliability. A further complication to the matter was the fact that the abbot of New Norcia, as a missionary, had to refer all his missionary activity to Propaganda, he was the administrator of all of New Norcia’s possessions on behalf of the Congregation. New Norcia’s dual role separated it from the rest of the Provincial monasteries. Consequently, the dependence on the Abbot Visitor in the same way as other monasteries of the Province could not, he argued, in any way apply to New Norcia. Its conditions were unique compared to those of the usual Provincial monasteries found in Spain.\textsuperscript{73}

\textsuperscript{70} Archive No. 01720, Letter No. 9, dated 8th October 1909, pp. 5-6.
\textsuperscript{71} In the document Abbot Torres makes constant reference to ‘The Very Reverend Fathers or Officials’, it is assumed that they discussed the matters in their General Chapters. To avoid confusion in this thesis these superiors will be referred to as either Provincial Superiors or General Superiors. Provincial Superiors refers specifically to Spanish Provincial Officials; General Superiors refers to those meeting in a General chapter in Rome (they may include Provincial Superiors).
\textsuperscript{72} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{73} Ibid., p. 2, No. 2. He wrote:
But another reason can be demonstrated for the impossibility of that condition being fulfilled which is that a distance of 8 thousand miles separates our Abbey from the Very Reverend Abbot Visitor; since this serious condition occurs in no other professed Provincial Monastery, it is truly absurd to want our Abbey to depend on the Reverend Abbot Visitor in the same way as other Monasteries which have their roots in Spanish territory itself.
This problem only continued to aggravate due to the manner in which the General Superiors and Spanish Provincials treated it. They knew the seriousness of the matter, and yet, according to Torres, they treated it lightly, and no real solutions were ever introduced to ameliorate the situation. This, he found, was even more alarming when it was taken into consideration that this situation originated in Salvado's time and, as Abbot Torres expressed it, he was quite uncertain that it could be solved now. His criticism of the system focused on the unreliability on Provincial Officials and on their failure to address the issues related to it with the seriousness they deserved. He claimed that they took advantage of its subjugation and that their attempts to solve anything were always ineffective. An example of how some provincials took advantage of the distance factor is revealed by a problem he had with the Prior of the Monastery and College of El Miracle, in Barcelona:

The reasons, or better yet, the main cause by which the Prior of Miracle decided to get rid of the postulate, is no other than he was not able to squeeze out to his liking the money of this mission, even though for the six incomplete years that the postulate lasted it has cost this mission the excessive amount of 53000 pesetas in even numbers.75

The Provincials' involvement and continued authority over the BCNN was ineffective and pointless because New Norcia had little to do with matters of the Province and as such it only served to cause more delays.76

He acknowledged that Superiors at all levels within the congregation were trying to find a solution, he said in the report: 'latterly they did try in the end to remove some bad provisions and rule. Nevertheless, those arrangements effectively died.'77 Finding a solution to the problems remained a dilemma because they failed to approach such problems in a concerted manner. He argued that 'clearly all the Fathers of the Provincial Capital knew that; the Reverend Fathers of our Congregation gathered in the General Capital knew that; and finally the Very Reverend Abbot General with his own advisers knew just as did the Spanish Abbot Visitor. And seeing that everyone had a very good idea of the trouble, all within the limits of their own authority were busy trying to apply remedies. But following always a purposeful end?' As far as our Abbot was concerned, I shall speak openly: not at all.78

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72 Ibid., p. 3, No. 3.
73 Archive No. 01720, Letter No. 9, dated 8th October 1909, p.3.
74 Ibid., pp. 3-4, No. 4-6.
75 Ibid., p. 3, No. 4.
76 Ibid., p. 6, No. 7.
For example, when Spanish Provincials proposed that a Superior of a foreign monastic house be given extraordinary powers of authority like those of the Abbot Visitor, the Abbot Visitor rejected it. However, the Abbot General did not disregard it entirely and gave his consent to allow the Spanish Abbot Visitor to delegate his authority to abbots in foreign missions. This measure never became effective because the Abbot Visitor never approved of it.  

Following this substantial discussion of the conflicts of authority within the congregation, Abbot Torres moved over to a discussion of the impact of this on his office. His reflection upon the importance of his office reflects his beliefs and virtues: 

The good order and progress of the Religious Family, just as with any other community, does not depend so much on having obtained power to settle extraordinary business quickly, as following from right order and ease in settling every day things.  

He felt he was given no real authority to settle the more frequent ordinary matters, this restriction only served to make small problems big. Up to the time of the writing of the report, Torres pointed out that very rarely did consultation with the Abbot Visitor take place and that even when it did nothing was improved. New Norcia had not yet had a Holy Visitation. The Abbot Visitor was really unable to do much for the BCNN because he was obviously foreign and ignorant of the matters that concerned the abbey and because of the distance factor he was unable to visit the abbey and judge for himself the matters that needed improvement. An example of this is found in the handling of the problem concerning ‘the incompatibility in which Father Altimira would find himself in attending the office of administrator and the duties of Prefect of the Juniorates’. This was a problem exposed to the Abbot Visitor on  

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79 Ibid., pp. 4-5, No. 6.  
80 Ibid., p. 6, No. 8.  
81 Ibid., pp. 6-7, No. 9.  
82 Ibid., pp. 7-8, No. 11.  
83 Abbot Torres had to reorganize the administration of New Norcia when the Drysdale Mission was founded. Father Altimira was the manager or administrator of New Norcia and because Abbot Torres was short of staff he asked the Abbot Visitor to send another Benedictine to help him run affairs of the mission and the monastery. This was delayed for many years and Torres found himself having to appoint Father Altimira the Leader of Priests or Prefect of the Juniorates, by order of the Abbot Visitor (as well as being the administrator of New Norcia) His role would be to prepare those postulants within New Norcia to become novices. In 1910 Father Altimira replaced Father Planas as superior of the Drysdale River Mission.  
84 Letter No. 5, pp. 2-3. Juniorates are postulants undergoing the proper religious preparation to become novices within a monastic house or religious order. In New Norcia’s case, they would have been monks from within the same house who were being prepared by a Priest appointed by the abbot visitor.
1907, months went by and they still received no resolution from the Abbot Visitor. When finally some news was received from the Visitor, it was only to inform the New Norcia community that some of the letters explaining this matter to him had been lost. This meant that after a year of correspondence the matter was still at the same stage. No progress had been made whatsoever, due to the manner in which the Abbot Visitor handled the matter and to the unreliable nature of correspondence. The final point Torres made in this section is illustrative of all he said previously. It involves the dependence on the authority of the Abbot Visitor, the unnecessary delays caused by distance, slowness and the inconsistent manner in which the Provincial Superiors handled the matter:

...something happened very recently, to necessitate approaching the Reverend Abbot Visitor with regard to some affairs involving the Community, which granted were not urgent, nevertheless were of great significance; for they were concerned with the recent election to the office of Leader of the Priests, for which was also required previous acceptance of a declaration from the person then voluntarily exercising the duty of Abbot Visitor, all of which had been connected with the necessity of choosing Monks for New Norcia,... and nevertheless it was necessary to wait for eight months and more, and we merited to receive no answer other than that received after another ten letters making mention of that matter.....

The Abbot Visitor’s response was, in Torres’ words, that:

...he had not answered before, for the reason that he had delegated to us the powers of acting in necessary and urgent cases. To which worthy person it could be objected: if the Abbot of New Norcia is held to solve by himself the ordinary affairs of the Community in which the agreement of the Abbot Visitor is required, too much slowness in attending to these affairs renders them urgent [.] Finally what good can be hoped for, if our Abbot is prevented from fulfilling his duty by so often having to run back to the professed authority?

Abbot Torres opened the second part of the document with a repetition of the statement that

[The Fathers of Our Congregation knew the troubles of our monastery were not unimportant, coming from its dependence on the rule of the Abbot Visitor; and although they mediated in some matters that had to be extirpated, they succeeded very little in carrying out their proposals, to the extent that the troubles persist today just as before.]

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85 Ibid., p.7, No. ten.
86 Ibid.
87 Ibid., p. 8, Opening paragraph of section II.
The laws concerning the Provincial duties of an Abbot Ordinary of a foreign monastery were not modified to accommodate for New Norcia’s special circumstances. The Benedictine Constitution established that the Abbot Visitor should make a visit every year, or at least every second year. Torres’ argument was that, even if this clause should apply to all monasteries of the Province, it did not apply in New Norcia’s specific case. He argued that “the abbot of New Norcia [was] not a part of the Provincial Chapter, and his community [did] not send any of his monks there”.  

He claimed that it was inconvenient and harmful for the New Norcia community. It was also unnecessary because in the Provincial Chapter only the interests of the Provincial Monasteries would prevail and the interests of New Norcia, due to their independence, could be ignored. New Norcia could not be part of the SPCCPO in the same way as the rest of the monasteries situated within it. To target these issues, Benedictine Officials made two concessions. Firstly, the Superior of a foreign Monastery did not personally have to be present at the Provincial Chapter and he was allowed to appoint a deputy. The second concession was that monasteries outside the province, belonging to the province, were allowed to choose a monk as deputy to the Provincial Chapter, as long as two of the voters from outside elect him.

Thus the abbot was freed from the burden of being present at the Provincial Chapters and freed from the obligation of choosing a monk as deputy from his own Province. These provisions were unreliable because it was doubtful that these deputies could mediate fairly. The fundamental reason for this was that a deputy under such circumstances was foreign to the community he represented; the interests of the New Norcia community could not be thoroughly communicated through someone who was not equipped to know the entirety of the problems. This system of dispensation had already created several serious problems, most of which he enumerated in the report. These were that Provincial Officials were in most cases unable to do anything to help solve the problems; exposing problems to them led to nothing being done. Thus, the foreign Communities were disadvantaged and sometimes censure took place. The deputy could not possibly persuade the superiors the Provincial Chapters of the seriousness of the problems he was presenting because he himself was totally unaware.

88 Ibid., p. 8, No. 12.
89 Ibid., p. 9, No. 12
90 Ibid., p. 9, No.13.
of their dimension in Australia. The Provincial and General Superiors when presented with particular cases, could not make any sound judgements because they had no evidence or the opportunity to learn the truth of the matter. This gave room for inaccurate interpretations and false accusations. This in turn had the potential to damage the honour and good name of innocent people. For example, the problem with the Prior of the Abbey of Miracle illustrates this point quite well. How were the Provincial Superiors to believe one or both sides of the conflict when one side of the problem could only be verified in New Norcia in Western Australia. Abbot Torres wrote to Abbot Deas:

in reference to the problem with Miracle, I will try to inform you about it in a few words; even though when you receive these lines you will be already informed, it is possible that that information is not exact.

The prevention measures that you mention I know nothing of; they must have been intended to have the damaging effect of losing those vocations to harm this mission. If that was the intention; God will not take it into account.

Notwithstanding these, Abbot Torres had to do with what was available to him and conform to this system of dispensation. In a letter to Abbot Deas he informs him of his choice of representative:

today I write to you to let you know that I received a letter from the Abbot Visitor in which he announced that the Provincial Chapter will be held in September or October in your Monastery, and that it followed that I should with all promptness possible elect the delegates representing my community and myself.

Abbot Torres then proceeded to make his final exposition of the problems in the third section. He acknowledged ‘another fountain’ from which no ‘beneficial drink was forthcoming for the Abbot of New Norcia’. He wrote:

The Reverend Fathers of Our Congregation knew that the troubles of our monastery happened because of their dependence on the Reverend Spanish Abbot Visitor in the order relating to Holy Visitations, and although in the most recent orders they were able to do good, they were by no means able to carry through their own plan.

93 Ibid., pp. 10-11, No. 14
94 Archive No. 01720, Letter No. 9, p. 2.
95 Ibid., p. 4.
96 Letter, No. 8, dated 29th June 1909, pp. 1-3.
97 Ibid., p. 11, Beginning of Section III.
98 Ibid., pp. 11-12,
He supported his discussion by referring to the particular clauses of the Benedictine Constitution that defined the frequency and importance of the holy Visitation. From it he acknowledges the dependence of New Norcia on the Spanish Abbot Visitor for Holy Visits in the same manner as other Provincial Monasteries and the necessity of having a companion to make the official visit with him. He concludes it to be an inconvenient journey and an unfair financial burden on the New Norcia Community.  

To target this problem the Superiors created this decree:

In the overseas monasteries there should be a Holy Visitation only about every four years. If however it does not happen, even without a companion it could be undertaken, that is, for reference.

In such cases the decrees that the Spanish Abbot Visitor may have introduced were not effective until the Abbot General confirmed them. This decree achieved nothing because it never took effect. The dilemma however lasted for much longer because the financial burden still remained even when the Abbot Visitor did not accomplish his duties on behalf of New Norcia. Torres openly stated that “from the beginning of our union there has in fact been no Holy Visitation”.

Before his closing paragraph, he made two further points. First, that it was impossible to see this system of Holy Visitation ever working effectively; especially in those cases in which the Abbot Visitor concentrated solely on a study of the revenues and expenses of the Abbey. According to the Constitution of the CCPO the Abbot Visitor should be thorough in his examination of the administrative aspect of the Abbey. The second point, he thought needed consideration, was that which became a necessary condition due to the arrangements established by the SCPF. Namely, the limitations of powers of the Visitor; his scope of power was limited to an inquiry of the observance of the Rules of Monastic Life. Abbot Torres then questioned the necessity of having a visitation when the Rules of Monastic Life were being faithfully observed and when such Visit only placed more sacrifices upon the said Community.

It is worthwhile to include here Abbot Torres’ closing paragraph:

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99 Ibid., p. 12, No. 15.
100 Ibid., No. 16.
102 Ibid., p. 13, No. 17.
103 Ibid., p. 13, No. 18.
Therefore note well that the amalgamation and incorporation of the Abbey of New Norcia with the Spanish Province of the Cassinese Congregation of the Primitive Observance was set up in that way by the Very Reverend Fathers D. Rudisendo Salvado and D. Domenico Serafini, but never in fact existed with them; for they were unable to exist in practice or action; that was prevented through permanent causes and intrinsic things relating to the condition and position of the Abbey; and also hasty considerations over which the supreme authority of the Congregation was powerless, although they tried with every effort, to make that union more effective, and avoid the troubles and prejudices that arose thence for the Abbey on account of the necessities of dependence relating to the order, whether relating to the Reverend Abbot Visitor, or the Provincial Capital, or finally to a holy Visitation.105

The very last section of the report was dedicated to the presentation of six proposals, or better yet six new foundations for a stable union to be possible and by which all troubles and inconveniences could be removed.106 The new conditions he laid out, if approved, meant that the Abbot and future Abbots of New Norcia would be subject to the jurisdiction of the Abbot General and the Council of the Diet of the CCPO and not to the Spanish Division of the same Congregation. The role of the Abbot Visitor remained the same,107 however in the administration and running of matters of the monastery, no one whatsoever could interfere.108 The Abbot and the Community of the Abbey of New Norcia were to constitute a religious family of true name; as such they had to obey the Rules of the CCPO. The Abbot had to rule the Abbey according to the Holy Benedictine Rule and all other supplementary Constitutions and Declarations.109 Regarding visitations to the Abbot General pertaining to ordinary and extraordinary matters, the Abbot of New Norcia could deal with such matters by letters of investigation or by delegation. In Extraordinary matters he would have to travel to Rome to settle the matter. To ensure the stability and order of the Community the monks of New Norcia could not be transferred without the approval of their Abbot. If a transfer was approved but not demanded by the Abbot of New Norcia, the New Norcia Community was not liable to pay for the expenses of the transfer. Furthermore, New Norcia was not obligated to pay the costs of an ordinary

106 Ibid., p. 15.
107 Ibid., p. 15, No. I.
108 Ibid., p. 16, No. V.
109 Ibid., p.15, No. II & III.
visitation, expenses were only to be covered by New Norcia in case of an extraordinary Visit.\textsuperscript{110}

\textit{Abbot Torres' proposal given the nature of the problems created by Union of BCNN to the SPCCPO}

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzcd}
& \text{Holy See} \\
\text{CCPO} \arrow{se} & \text{SCPF} \arrow{sw} \\
& \text{Abbey Nullius of New Norcia}
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\textsuperscript{110} Ibid., p. 16, No. VI.