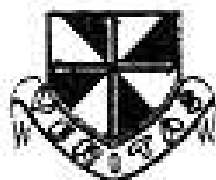


FR. ANGEL DE BLAS'

*Journal*

on the 1948 Lipa Phenomenon

Source:



**NATIONAL SHRINE OF OUR LADY OF THE HOLY ROSARY**

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Sto. Domingo Convent \* Quezon City      Tel. 712-62-71 to 7  
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 3992, Manila

*Note:*

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## TRANSLATION OF FR. ANGEL BLAS' SPANISH JOURNAL

With regards to the antecedent apparitions, we would like to make the following commentary:

1. The apparitions of the previous 15 days appear to have no other purpose but to manifest the love and interest of the Holy Virgin Mary with the title, Mary Mediatrix for the community of Lipa and the desire that worship flourishes there through genuine religious observance. It is only in the apparition of the 12th of November where there is reference to the Christian World, there praying of the rosary is inculcated with fulfillment of the wishes manifested by our Lady at Fatima.
2. The first time I read M. Cecilia's account I was of the impression that all these apparitions were solely to ward off an impending catastrophe over the community at the convent of Lipa. After which, reading M. Luisa's account, this impression further rooted itself in my thinking to the point where I considered her affirmations to be totally true. However, unanimity of the religious sisters of Lipa in admitting that the regular activities had remained the same in spite these occurrences, nor in the lack of truth that anyone was talking about the M. Prioress or doubts expressed about her morality, I had to exercise care, deciding to examine the matter slowly with the required prudence.
3. Certainly, the insistence by the Blessed Virgin to defend the M. Prioress evidently demonstrates that there must have been, at least, the occasion to need that defense. Our Lady, in her apparition of the 12th (of November) appeals to the nuns to kneel before the M. Prioress to ask her forgiveness for the bad thoughts the nuns must have had as a sequence of the care exercised by the M. Prioress towards her "little one".

This proves that regardless of whether the apparitions are true or fake, the community must have entertained un noble thoughts about the M. Prioress' demeanor towards Teresita. It is thus probable, that some words may have been said about the M. Prioress' conduct no matter what the nuns now say.

4. Somewhat strange are the Holy Virgin's gripes about the incredulity of some of the religious nuns as it appears that in the beginning one or another expressed doubt when no one is obligated to believe personal and private revelations without incontrovertible proof.
5. From all these, one deduces that from the original 2 nuns only one of them remained incredulous, to the latter of whom, Our Lady sends her hieroglyphic admonition, "to my daughter who does not believe, I do not force you to believe my child and perhaps we best leave it as is and not cause me further displeasure". Who could this sister be?

Whomever reads Sr. Luisa del Mundo's account and thereafter reads M. Cecilia's account will undoubtedly see that the reproach was against Sr. Luisa herself, Sr. Lucia, then the postulant, or finally, the nurse, Sr. Ana Maria. A little later, Our Lady adds, "if the place is of your disliking and you do not like to hear my messages but you are obliged by the pledge of obedience" then as neither the postulant or Sr. Lucia, who was then a novice had yet made their vows, can one conclude that allusion was against Sr. Maria. However, as Sr. Ana Maria vows never to have doubted nor do the other nuns at Lipa, there is no way to determine who this nun is.

6. The M. Prioress in her declaration, indicated that she never doubted the faith of Sr. Lucia in believing the apparitions and that Sr. Lucia had never approached her to tell that Sr. Teresita could perhaps be sick, as was asserted by the ex novice. However, the Most Holy Virgin, referring herself to the incredulous

nun says, "My little one, your sister, is well and she has no physical impairment". That said, the M. Prioress, in her declaration, indicated that Our Lady, when pronouncing those words referred to the nun that left the convent and as the only ones who left the convent were Sr. Lucia and the postulant, the latter for an affliction of the chest, as the M. Prioress herself admits, it follows that the M. Superior had to suspect of the incredulity of Sr. Lucia for however stupid it is.

The coincidence of the words used by Our Lady and Sr. Lucia makes one suspect that both are referring to the same event and it follows that not all that Sr. Lucia declares is fabricated unless those words were uttered on the 19<sup>th</sup> of September, before Sr. Lucia's departure from the convent and she, upon writing her statement chose those words to promote her own purpose even if they did not refer to her.

7. The style and ideas displayed in these apparitions are of the same exaggerated simplicity as those that took place and were observed in Teresita's cell.
8. Regarding the message of the 23<sup>rd</sup> for the M. Prioress, "tell your mother that she decide the issue for she is the Prioress", I have been unable to determine what it is about. Teresita says she has no understanding of the message's aims and the M. Superior affirms she doesn't remember. Shouldn't it be the desire of the M. Superior to know what to do with the incredulous nun?

## TERESITA'S AUDITIONS

We think we have said enough about the visionary from Lipa's auditions, as we have told about the apparitions we have also, by necessity, compared these to each other. We have also said, that Teresita has heard the voices of Our Lord Jesus Christ, of His Most Holy Mother, of the Angels and of the devils.

At this moment, while we devote a separate paragraph exclusively to this matter, we do so because we seek to determine their nature and their relationship with the visions. Are the visions and auditions of Teresita of an objective character or could these also be classified as among those which may be considered imaginary?

I ask Teresita, if previous to her visions or her auditions she ever felt like fainting. Likewise, if she felt this way during the actual visions and auditions and her reply to both was, no. She said she would simply start to see Our Lady, a saint or a demon and to hear a voice without seeing from where it had come from, this being the case in the apparitions or visions. Similarly these would cease with the voice disappearing and without experiencing anything special or sensation of any kind.

All these apparently demonstrate that the objects she saw really existed in the space they occupied just as the sounds she would perceive indeed were heard. However, the following events seem to indicate that the forementioned were imaginary:

1. Teresita's conviction that on the night of the 22<sup>nd</sup> of August when the great temptation occurred she was naked while the M. Superior alleged she wore her nightgown.
2. Teresita's confession stating that during the visions everything around her would disappear however this could be explained by the intensity of her concentration and attention.

3. Some of the visions, according to M. Cecilia, were while Teresita was in a trance, therefore manifesting that she would be incapable of using the exterior senses.
4. In the vision that came upon M. Cecilia, as related by M. Prioress, when she was transferred to Jaro after the investigation had commenced, Teresita saw how Jesus on the cross offered His Grace to a priest who summarily rejected it, the M. Prioress assured that this vision happened while Teresita seemed to be asleep.

I asked Teresita in what direction did she perceive the voices to come from and she responded by saying that she always perceived them to be coming in front as if there was someone before her who was speaking.

## TERESITA'S BLINDNESS

As we've seen, Teresita suddenly felt herself blind on 2 occasions. Her blindness commenced the first time at dawn of the 22<sup>nd</sup> of August after the great temptation and continued up to the 7<sup>th</sup> of September, at which that time, the M. Prioress, following the instructions of the voice which guided her, kissed Teresita's eyes at the visiting room while greeting Monsignor Obviar and Teresita's blindness got healed.

According to M. Cecilia, Teresita suffered her first blindness for the sake of both of them, for the salvation of the visionary's parents and for the beautiful destiny that awaits her in the next life. Teresita became blind for the 2<sup>nd</sup> time on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of October during the blessing ceremony at the spot where the apparitions took place, when the Virgin traced a cross on both her eyes and she got healed on the 10<sup>th</sup> of the same month after the M. Prioress, again, instructed by the rather well known voice, kissed both her eyes while apparently, in her own cell. The blindness of this occasion was caused as a supernatural sign for Monsignor Obviar to ascertain that indeed it was the Blessed Virgin who appeared to Teresita.



According to M. Cecilia, the first blindness was to remain hidden from the community and that's why, the M. Superior, instructed by the voice, took personal charge of Teresita, keeping her in her own cell during the day and bringing her to the novice's room at night when the nuns would retire to their own cells with the exception of perhaps 2 occasions when Teresita remained the whole night at the M. Superior's room.

Teresita's isolation and the request of the M. Superior to personally take care of her was, according to Sr. Luisa's account, what prompted the community to murmur and suspect of the relationship that apparently existed between the M. Superior and Teresita.

The above mentioned events lend themselves to the following considerations:

1. Both the M. Prioress and Monsignor Obviar were too credulous about Teresita's actual blindness. An examination was in order, to be carried out by competent persons, especially when dealing with phenomena that presented themselves with a certain supernatural character. The most basic prudence would have advised them to do so.
2. The M. Superior declares in her account that the first blindness began on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of August. She adds that on the same day, when Teresita became blind, she heard the voice that said "have patience with your daughter. She'll be blind for three days for the good of you both." At 9:50 AM that same day, she heard the voice that communicated the prolongation of the blindness for another two days. At one fifty-five the next day the voice indicated that Teresita would heal from blindness on October 2. This whole story gives the impression that the blindness of Teresita was prolonged according to the exigencies of the moment and the personal intervention of the M. Superior in this matter, notwithstanding the supernatural character she tries to give it, makes her even more suspicious. Attributed to the Blessed Virgin, she appears indecisive and capricious and the prolongation of blindness is narrated in such a way that may even be considered, of sadistic character.

3. It is incomprehensible for us to think that the Blessed Virgin would not know of the dangers or at least of the great inconvenience for a religious community to have its superior personally taking care of one particular member no matter how well informed the rest of the community is about the motives behind this care. M. Cecilia tries to settle this matter as she narrates it in her account. However, in addition to this, it must be taken into account that the community of Lipa or at least some of its nuns had previously murmured and showed they disapproval on the distinctions made by the M. Prioress. She herself admitted that even before Teresita entered the convent, she had been obliged to consult with a certain person because there was talk from some of the nuns as a result of her conduct with a certain young one at the convent. She was accused of being partial and of having maintained private friendships. According to her, the person with whom she consulted said that she shouldn't give the matter too much attention or importance as superiors are often misunderstood by the others, especially in similar cases.
4. Taking these events, it is easy to explain why the community of Lipa spoke and murmured about the M. Prioress, or even in the absence of such talk or murmurings how they may have acquired the proportions and the character with which they appear in M. Luisa's account.
5. The manner in which Teresita's 2 blind spells were healed is strange and even suspicious. It should be noted, that Teresita did not know that she had been healed as a result of the M. Prioress having kissed her eyes until we, Father Juan Ortega and I, told her. She simply believed that they had touched her eyes before healing. The same must be said of the auditions of M. Prioress, Teresita was completely unaware of them until we told her!

## TERESITA'S EXPIATORY SUFFERINGS

From August 22, 1948 to April 4, 1950, Teresita, on many occasions, had extraordinary pains that made her suffer intensely and according to the testimonies of the M. Prioress, these were of an expiatory character because her sufferings were undertaken for the salvation of the souls. During the apparitions in the garden one day, the Holy Virgin manifested to Sr. Teresita that the two hours of suffering that she had had the previous night were due to the incredulity of some of the nuns. During these trances, Teresita loses consciousness of everything, except pain, so that she is unable to even think about the passion of Jesus Christ. Her consciousness during these trances, is limited to the perception of the physical pain which alienates her from all else. Although she sometimes feels more intense pains in the shoulder, chest, feet, and hands, she does not interpret them as to be undergoing the crucifixion but does sense that these sufferings are supernatural.

The trance, according to Teresita begins by a kind of pressure in the chest and prevents breathing and causes hot flashes and the sensation of drowning. The phenomenon always precede these episodes, which gives her time to withdraw, before consciousness is lost. The trances, however, have always taken place or in general have taken place in front of M. Cecilia, or the current M. Superior. In a few of these trances, Teresita braces and kicks a few times while in others both hands and feet acquire extraordinary rigidity. The sisters, when they have been present to one of these trances have tried to separate both hands and feet but have been unable to achieve it. Sr. Luisa, who witnessed one of these trances, describes it in the most ridiculous manner possible in her account. Said description being unanimously rejected by all the other nuns who had witnessed it.

As to the description that M. Cecilia makes of one of these trances on page 12 of her statement written in Spanish, in which, she follows the movements of Teresita during the trance, interpreting them as an expression of the torments of the crucifixion of Our Savior, I give these no value and attribute it to her eagerness to take an active part in the supernatural events of Teresita. Neither the sisters, nor Teresita, confirmed the M. Superior's description.

Teresita's trances are quite similar to those experienced by certain hysterical people but they do not differ much from what some Saints have experienced. As can be seen in Dr. Pardo's report, Teresita does not show a hysterical personality of any known type and in all manifestations proves to possess a normal personality. I intervened together with Dr. Pardo in the examination that he carried out to determine the normality of Teresita and I am of the same opinion as that of the mentioned doctor.

## THE PETALS

The fall of the petals that have brought so much celebrity from around the world began on August 20 in the cell of Teresita. The shower of petals was frequently repeated inside the convent, either in the Cloisters, or in the cells of the religious nuns, or in the chapel, but these did not begin to fall outside the convent until November 13 of the same year. Few of the sisters saw them fall, most of them falling on the ground. Outside the convent many people did see them fall.

As can be seen in the report of the botanist, Dr. Quesumbing, it is very difficult to determine, only from the petals, to ascertain the species of the plant to which the petals belong, to do so it is necessary to examine some leaves and part of the stem. It is noteworthy, that, Dr. Quesumbing claims that some of the petals, do not seem to have ever been attached to a flower. It would be interesting to examine petals which were certified to have fallen at Lipa.

As for the sacred images imprinted on some of the petals, I believe that this should not be given any importance. The first petals that the public acquired did not seem to carry any image. When the idea began to spread, that some petals, when viewed obliquely, had images of Jesus Christ, the Virgin and some of these images were confusing and blurred. These do not go beyond the constructive power of the imagination as it is called in psychology, the power of imagination, so that it can build on the edges of a cloud of an ink stain or in the shadows of one, where pictures of human and animal figures

can be put. Later, though somewhat crude, they appeared definite; And at present the perfection and accuracy of the drawings is almost perfect. This demonstrates the process of learning by which those who decided to dedicate themselves to print and draw the images that appear in the religious scapulars (medals) commonly used by Christians and which are now seen in the petals.

I myself have managed to print some images on flower petals quite accurately.

The sisters of Lipa confess to having seen some images in the petals that fell in the convent, but they do not give these much importance. In my opinion, the images in the petals have nothing supernatural.

## THE INTERVENTION OF MOTHER CECILIA

If Sister Teresita's apparitions are truly supernatural then it has been ironically tragic that M. Maria Cecilia de Jesus had to intervene in them. It is true that the Blessed Virgin ordered Teresita to communicate to the M. Prioress everything that happened but from here to the active intervention, that according to her own account M. Cecilia took in the events is too much.

She certainly believed that with the celebrated voices so often repeated they would save the day but it is evident that such voices are fiction as they were not necessary nor does she herself seem to be very convinced of their existence. Personally I questioned her about these phrases, and she talked about them with such timidity and with such an expression that I was convinced that there had never been such a thing. In Jaro, I pointed out that as it was in her account, the most important person in all those events was her and not Teresita. She shrugged and with a very weak voice answered that she did not know.

Given the dominant nature of Mother Cecilia, what has happened in this case is the following.

The M. Superior was convinced that in Teresita, indeed, was

something extraordinary and when she heard from the lips of the young less that the Virgin wanted her to know everything that happened, M. Cecilia convinced herself to believe she had been chosen to direct and advise the fortunate young woman, and as with her demeanor being akin to those with a dominant character, which tend towards exclusivity, this may have led to her subjecting Teresita to isolation. It is true and as Teresita admits, the Virgin at first, recommended keeping things secret indicating that for some time nothing was said to the confessors. Undoubtedly however, Monsignor Obviar knew everything and the prioress would have done better to have allowed him to have been the guide instead of following her private auditions which, as we have said, have all the characteristics of being an invention.

As we have already indicated, Sr. Teresita had never heard of such auditions and was greatly surprised when we told her. Sr. Teresita always narrated, immediately after the apparitions, what the Virgin communicated and at least twice as how the visionary assures me, that she wrote what the Virgin said and gave it to the M. Superior.

Teresita also assures that the M. Superior sometimes copied what she had said and in other cases, she did not, M. Cecilia herself admits that this is true. From where, it follows that the M. Superior wrote her own account and that therefore, could add and certainly added, much from her own head. M. Cecilia confesses that she does not know what she did with the written messages of Teresita and that she was very negligent in taking notes and documenting herself. Hence the difficulty of distinguishing today, especially in the messages, what is authentic and genuine from the added and spurious.

In my opinion, the messages after November 12, 1948 must be considered apocryphal, not in the manner in which these were written but rather as to their fundamental idea. Everything in the messages of the apparitions at the garden referred to the nuns who doubted or did not believe. The message of the 22<sup>nd</sup> is also very suspicious. Sister Teresita admits that the Holy Virgin told her that the Mother Prioress would find in her room a note but Teresita has never known what it contained. According to the account of M. Cecilia, the note was a message to the sisters about the second blindness of Teresita.

Later on, when speaking of the mass which was said on October 2 at the place of the apparitions, Mother Cecilia said that his Excellency, Monsignor Obviar asked Teresita to beg the Blessed Virgin for a sign so that he would be certain that Our Lady was indeed there and that the blindness, which began that day, was the Sign given by the Blessed Virgin.

In the message of the Blessed Virgin to the nuns it was said that the blindness was necessary for the salvation of souls and no it was not given as a sign for the Bishop to be certain of the presence of the Blessed Virgin. What is it then? How can a fact be considered a signal when its existence on that day had been predetermined?

It will be said that this event could serve both, for one does not go against the other. It would be true had the Prelate was unaware that the blindness would commence that day, but it is improbable as the Mother Prioress was keeping him abreast of the goings on. But, all things granted, was the Bishop certain that said blindness was real and not simulated? The fact that Sr. Teresita needed a guide after the mass does not in any way prove anything.

The date of the 2<sup>nd</sup>, I believe was added to the message after verifying the blindness of the 22<sup>nd</sup>.

It is lamentable that Teresita does not have a better memory of the details of the messages nor of the events that appear to be supernatural as the account of M. Cecilia speak about her. It isn't very clear how the young lass has accomplished the precept given her by the Blessed Virgin that prohibited her from forgetting everything that concerned those 15 days

I would suggest that Teresita be isolated and ordered to write only from her memory an account of all that happened between the 31<sup>st</sup> of July 1948 to the 4<sup>th</sup> of April 1950.

Mother Cecilia's account offers little confidence.

## WHAT IS THERE TO SAY ABOUT THE EVENTS AT LIPA?

The events at the convent of Lipa can be explained in 3 ways:

- through a diabolical intervention and this seems to be the opinion of Father Jaime Moran, S. J. and of others;
- as an invention to cover the disorders of M. Cecilia, Sr. Teresita and even of Monsignor Obviar and this is how Sr. Luisa del Mundo explains it in her account
- as truly supernatural events that have been disfigured by the intervention of incompetent, rather unscrupulous people who perhaps wanted 3 Spot in the limelight.

I consider the first possibility as improbable due to the following:

1. While the devil seeks to entangle everything and will seek his gain all the time, I do not believe him to be capable of devising a scheme that will counter his own goals. Nonetheless, consider the many souls, through the many marvels said about Lipa and who by themselves have come to visit the monastery to see the image of the Blessed Virgin and have come back to the faith or have reformed their lives and continue in the present giving testimony of a true conversion to deep Christian life.
2. The devotion to the Holy Rosary has extended itself throughout the archipelago most specially in Luzon.
3. The petals and water from Lipa have produced truly extraordinary wonders. I have seen the folders that M. Cecilia has kept of the letters from persons who believe have received favors from Heaven by way of the petals and from the water in which some of these were immersed. There are many in number which narrate the favors received that with diligent study and authentication would very probably be considered true miracles.



4. Monsignor Librea, the parish priest at Lipa and member of the commission assures that the faith and devotion of the people of Lipa has augmented in extraordinary fashion.
5. In my conversations with Teresita, I have tried without her becoming aware, to lead the questioning to find out the possibility of a diabolic intervention. Her replies in this respect, examined according to the rules set by the authors on spiritual life for these cases demonstrate that the devil has not taken part in these events.

With respect to the second possibility, I have already indicated that at the beginning it appeared to me that it was very probable. However when I heard that Sr. Lucia confessed that from her account it was not possible to be taken for a sexual interpretation and after having read the accounts of the other nuns of Lipa who were horrified at such an idea, I changed my mind. It is true that the Mother Superior's acts did support this interpretation but whoever it is who knows Teresita would consider it impossible.

There is no rational explanation for a young lass from a well to do family who would be capable of experiencing all the pleasures from the refined society in which we, the fortunate, are gifted with, be inspired during her whole life to consecrate herself to Christ at Carmel, who had to fight valiantly against the opposition of her parents, brothers and finally had to pursue her vocation by selling her belongings to offer a dowry and escape her home to join the convent. With but 15 days from her entry be willing to subjected to such disorder and accept to become an instrument of an infamous plot to safeguard dishonest desires. I do not believe, that if anyone were to treat her without prejudice, would consider her capable of such an aberration.

On the other hand, Teresita does not manifest in her structural anatomy, nor in her voice, nor in her deportment any of the characteristics attributable to the inverted feminine sex. I couldn't say the same about M. Cecilia nor Sr. Luisa del Mundo. Also it is important to note that Teresita during the period of the apparitions lived a life that

was completely preoccupied with her chores and devotions and as luck would have it, up to this day, she ignores everything that occurs at the convent. She suspected that perhaps they murmured about her but she wasn't certain about it. Her isolation, in my opinion was excessive and the M. Prioress was solely responsible for it.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> possibility appears to me to be the most hired reasonable, in other words, I truly believe that Teresita has received supernatural favors from heaven. At its core, it is similar to how S. Cecilia narrates it in her account however, I also likewise believe, in so far as how these are described and in many cases their substance, are quite personal and belong exclusively to the M. Prioress.

To distinguish the fields today is difficult. The M. Prioress herself, I believe, would not be capable of separating what is Teresita's and what corresponds to her.

I naively confess that this interpretation is susceptible to serious objections but it is also true that these objections come principally from the role played in this whole affair by the M. Superior, that is, if it were possible to discard from Teresita's conduct and from the content of the revelations what could have been added by the M. Prioress. The simplicity and crudeness of the messages which on occasions were manifested should not be attributed to the Blessed Virgin, as these do not possess the exact words in which Our Lady expressed them, rather a version garnished by the mentality of the M. Superior.

Undeniably, the M. Superior's account manifests itself like heavenly praise of the rationality of her own conduct, without accepting the affirmations made by Sr. Luisa it is true that she acted imprudently and in her approach gave occasion to feed the murmurings (gossip). Aware of all these, she made the use of the magnificent opportunity that presented itself by embracing herself in Our Lady's cause. Teresita, in all these has no fault. The poor lass does not suspect that the M. Superior could have used the supernatural gifts she had received for the M. Superior's personal ends (goals).

The washing of the feet produces a pretty bad impression as to what this in itself implies and because of its possible sexual interpreta-

tion in which acts of these nature, are oftentimes given today. However, as it is customary to bathe here at least once each day, it isn't very strange nor humiliating for someone to wash another's feet as it isn't considered taxing work. While the drinking of the water is certainly repugnant, we've read of more repugnant acts that were ordered in the lives of the saints that were not commanded by the Holy Virgin but rather by humans devoid of knowledge of what these acts could have had.

Finally, Father Moran's observation that Teresita should not have been guided in these affairs by the M. Prioress, rather should have been by a competent director is very noteworthy. This whole affair suffers from this defect. Do not cite the cases of Bernadette or the children at Fatima to defend that such guidance was not necessary. Any nun in whatever monastery would find herself in completely different circumstances to those presented to Bernadette or the visionaries at Fatima and therefore would not make a comparison possible.

To finish we will say two words about the extraordinary events at Lipa and how these could be classified (considered). If we were to take the events in general, it is evident that Teresita must be classified under the group called visionaries or seers.

As it would be lengthy to describe the different classes of visionaries that the authors distinguish, let us say that Teresita is among those visionaries who receive messages for the world, in which God proposes to change the bad habits, especially of those of Christians and clergy by threatening punishment if these are not heard. These characteristics are not very clear in Teresita's messages but these exist at least in the apparition of the 12<sup>th</sup> of November.

These celestial messages are usually accompanied by a secret which the visionary is prohibited from revealing. Teresita was given such as a secret message that she withheld from everyone including the M. Prioress that she decided to disclose to his Illustrious Monsignor Rufino Santos during the investigation because she believed that the Holy Virgin had allowed it. The message is as follows, "You will suffer greatly all your life. The M. Prioress will be reprimanded because of the apparitions. Suffer for your own salvation". While I have used quotation marks for the preceding words, these merely convey the substance of

the message. Monsignor Rufino Santos is capable of giving the exact copy (of said words).

Unless better seen, the forementioned expresses my opinion of the matter with which I have been commanded to investigate dispensing myself of prejudice and personal opinion and limiting myself exclusively to what is seen from the events that have transpired.

Fr. Angel de Blas, O. P.  
*Rector Magnificus 1948-1952*  
University of Santo Tomas

*Translated by*  
Manolo Gonzalez, 27 April 2017

*Edited and checked by*  
Mr. Erwin Bautista  
Department of European Languages  
University of the Philippines