

LL
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BULGARIA

RELIGION

Persecution

Roman Catholic Church

Persecution Against Catholics

SOURCE TRIESTE: A Bulgarian in exile in contact with high Bulgarian political and commercial circles.

DATE OF OBSERVATION: July 1952.

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A person known by our source, a fervent Catholic, residing at SOFIA, asserts that on 9 July 1952, some 14 agents and two uniformed militiamen made a thorough search of the house presently used by the Capuchin Fathers both as their residence and as the Catholic Chancery of SOFIA. The "Obisk" (the search) was also extended to the former large salon, presently used as the church profer. It seems that among other things these agents were looking for gold and foreign currency; but it might be also possible that this was only a pretext. It is foreseen that within a short period of time, the Bulgarian Government may initiate action against the Catholic world of the Bulgarian capital.

The result of this search was that the following day, that is on 10 July 1952, Father FORTUNATO (fnu), who was replacing Father Roberto as pastor, disappeared; no one knows his fate!

Another consequence is that many young Bulgarian Catholics who were either members of the choir or of the Santa Cecilia Club refuse to attend not only the church but also the choir and the club itself; it is evident that the militia is rather inclined to put an end to the Roman Catholic Church, a church which, represents a religious stronghold, which will not bow down to Communist law.

EVAL. COMMENT: The cited event is UNCONFIRMED.