

# GATHERED FRAGMENTS

A Publication of The Catholic Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania • Vol. XXV, Fall 2015



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## Submission Guidelines

The Catholic Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania solicits and welcomes items for *Gathered Fragments* addressing the culture and history of Catholicism in Western Pennsylvania.

*Gathered Fragments* publishes articles and primary sources relating to the parochial, religious, diocesan, and laical history of the Catholic Church in Western Pennsylvania. We also solicit book and exhibit reviews, news, and other items relating to Catholic history in Western Pennsylvania. Genealogical items are accepted, providing they relate to the broader scope of the Society's mission. Articles previously published elsewhere will be considered with appropriate permission from the original publication.

Research articles of 1000 words or more will be considered. Notation of sources must accompany each article. Submitters are urged to consult the *Chicago Manual of Style* or the most current edition of Kate Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, for guidelines on proper formatting.

Submissions should be sent to: [info@catholichistorywpa.org](mailto:info@catholichistorywpa.org). To submit by mail, please send to: Catholic Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania, Diocese of Pittsburgh, 2900 Noblestown Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15205-4227. News items or other relevant articles of note of any size pertaining to Catholicism in Western Pennsylvania will also be considered.

Submissions are requested to pertain in some way to the broader theme of Catholicism in Western Pennsylvania. These items may also be sent to the above address.

The opinions expressed in *Gathered Fragments* represent the views only of the individual contributors; they do not necessarily reflect the views of the officers, the members of the board of directors, or The Catholic Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania. Advertising in *Gathered Fragments* does not necessarily imply endorsement.

### Membership Information

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The Society also welcomes donations to complete research, as well as to support publishing and preservation projects in local Church history.

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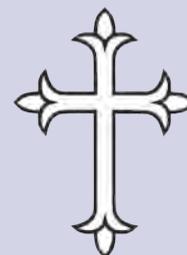
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# Homily

# 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Mass

## of The Catholic Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania

St. Paul Cathedral, Pittsburgh

May 17, 2015

Rev. James W. Garvey

Good Afternoon. My name is Father Jim Garvey, and along with the principal celebrant today, Bishop William Winter, D.D. (retired), and the concelebrating priests, I am taking part in this Eucharistic Liturgy to mark the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary (May 17, 2015) of the founding of **THE CATHOLIC HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA**. I am pleased to see so many of you here today to join us in marking this special occasion.

In today's Gospel (John 17: 11b - 19), the Evangelist John recalls for us that Jesus came to save us from our sins. Jesus invites us to become one with Him as he is one with the Father. We are reminded that Jesus chose to send us, his followers, into the world, so that we might bring His light and His love to people who are hungering for the truth. Jesus consecrates us in truth as he sends us forth to Christianize the world in His name.

For some 2,000 years, the Christian community has engaged in missionary outreach spreading the Good News of the Gospel — spreading the truth that God is our Father, Jesus is our Savior, and the Holy Spirit accompanies us on our pilgrimage through life until we cross over the threshold of death, and are united with Christ in the truth of his Kingdom which never ends.

The truths of our faith are found in the tradition of the Church, just as they are inscribed and enshrined in the Scriptures and have been proclaimed for millennia. The “truth” of Jesus's saving Word in Scripture is a record of many of the extraordinary things he said and did during His time on this earth. Also part of that record are the Epistles of Paul, James, John, and the Acts of the Apostles. The faith community grew reflecting on the Word of God in the Scriptures, and was nourished by Jesus's saving actions in the Sacraments.

We appreciate and derive much benefit from reading about and studying the events that befell that first Christian community in the Acts of the Apostles. We recognize how important it is to chronicle the “history” of what happened in the history of the Church for the last two thousand years.

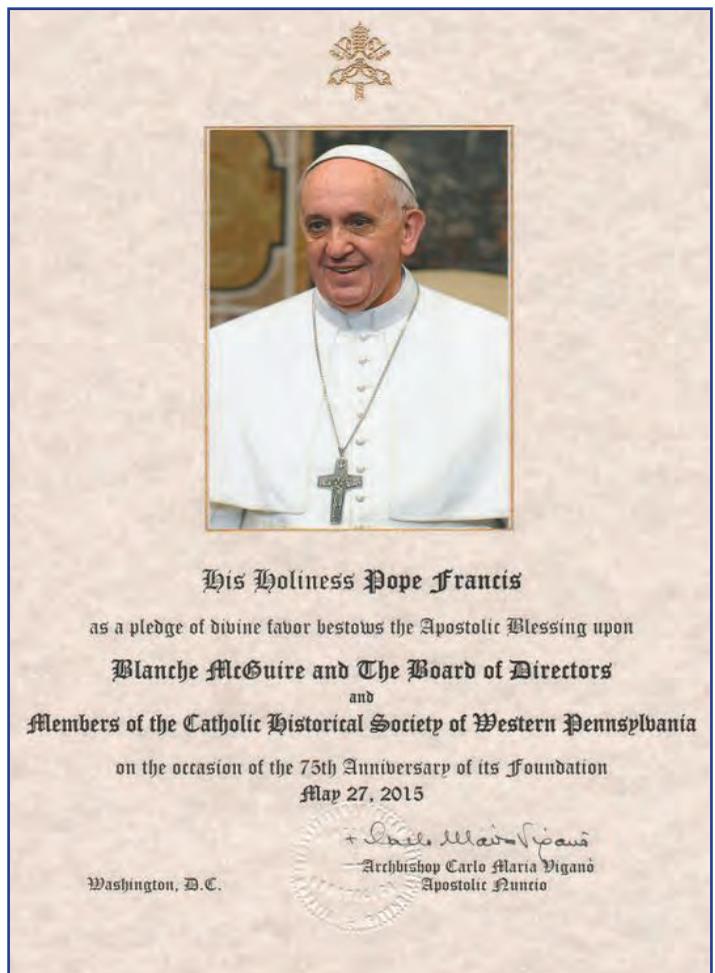
And, that is very much what the Catholic Historical Society has been about these past seventy-five years in Western Pennsylvania.

We salute those early founders of this Society who had the foresight to gather like-minded men and women — clergy, religious and lay — and make the effort to preserve the record of what was happening as the Church in Western Pennsylvania grew and developed through many waves of immigrants and converts who saw the light and found the truth in the teachings of the Church.

In the very earliest days of this nation, Western Pennsylvania was really rough and tumble. This was the frontier. There were many arguments about whether Pittsburgh was part of the Virginia Territory, or Penn's Woods, Pennsylvania.

No question about it, Pittsburgh was the jumping off point for those who were traveling west by way of the Ohio River, and the Mississippi — including the Lewis and Clark Expedition (1804-1806) which was not the first, or the last to cross the interior of the United States in search of the western boundaries of this continent at the Pacific Ocean.

After the Revolutionary War was concluded and the Church began to grow in this new nation, Pittsburgh was part of the Diocese of





**Blessing of Society's Memorial Plaque at Synod Hall during 75th Anniversary Celebration (May 17, 2015). L to R: Dennis Wodzinski, John Bates, Jim Hanna, Rev. James Garvey (rear), David McMunn, Bishop William Winter (rear), Kathleen Washy, Blanche McGuire, Paul Dvorchak, and attendee.**

Source: Blanche McGuire

Philadelphia, which included all of Pennsylvania, and big chunks of territory in Delaware and New Jersey.

Even then Pittsburgh was growing, and on August 8, 1843 our Holy Father Pope Gregory XVI split the state of Pennsylvania into two dioceses. The eastern half continued as the Diocese of Philadelphia, under the direction of Bishop Francis Patrick Kenrick. The other half, all of Western Pennsylvania, became the Pittsburgh diocese. Bishop Michael O'Connor was appointed the first bishop of this diocese. In the decades that followed, both dioceses, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, would be divided several times, to form new dioceses, so that the Church might continue to grow, evangelizing and better serve the ever growing Catholic population. Today Philadelphia is the metropolitan see and the suffragan sees are: Allentown, Altoona-Johnstown, Erie, Greensburg, Pittsburgh and Scranton.

Individuals and families came to this new land from Europe and other nations — they came in search of religious freedom, economic opportunity, and held high hopes that they might build a better life for their families free from tyranny, oppression, grinding poverty, and widespread bigotry. Further, they sought to escape persecution and follow the tenets of their religious beliefs.

In anticipation of the celebration that would accompany the Centenary of the Diocese of Pittsburgh in 1943, the Catholic Historical Society was formed, May 27, 1940 at St. Vincent College in Latrobe. Eight persons took on leadership roles: two were from

St. Vincent's Archabbey, Latrobe, Pennsylvania. They were Fr. Felix Fellner, OSB, and Fr. Hugh Wilt, OSB. They were joined by Fr. William J. Purcell. All three priests were professors of History. Two attorneys were also involved: Joseph A. Beck, and Paul G. Sullivan. The last two founders were: Alice Thurston McGirr, of Carnegie Library, Pittsburgh, and Elizabeth Daflinger, Associate Editor of *The Pittsburgh Catholic*.

There was a rather remarkable first public meeting held July 8, 1940 at what was then known as Mount Mercy College (now Carlow University) at which Bishop Hugh C. Boyle of Pittsburgh presided. More than 500 people attended that first meeting when the by-laws were adopted, and the name of the new Society was agreed upon: "The Catholic Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania."

The Purposes of the new Historical Society were:

1. To study American Catholic History, especially in Western Pennsylvania,
2. To gather and correlate papers, documents and relics of our Catholic heritage,
3. To research and investigate local Catholic history, and
4. From time to time, to publish the results of that research and those investigations.

Meetings were held quarterly, and at each meeting lectures were presented on Western Pennsylvania Catholic history. For the first 14 years, the Society relied completely on the rich local wealth of historians, archivists and professors to serve as speakers. Historical tours were inaugurated in 1941, along with an historical essay contest in parochial schools throughout the diocese. Talks about Catholic history were given on local radio stations WWSW-AM and WJAS-AM. Weekly history columns were researched, edited and printed in *The Pittsburgh Catholic*.

The Society was responsible for causing a history of the Diocese of Pittsburgh to be written to mark the centenary in 1943 titled: *Catholic Pittsburgh's One Hundred Years 1843-1943*. This work was the modern successor to two earlier histories of the diocese that had been written by Msgr. Andrew A. Lambing.

Over all these years, the Historical Society had been quite busy researching, investigating and publishing various articles, papers and books. In 1949 the Society reached an arrangement whereby Duquesne University would provide space in its library for the Archives of the Catholic Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania. Coadjutor Bishop John F. Dearden formally dedicated the Society's Archives Room at Duquesne's Library on October 8, 1950.

A major contribution of the Society was a tri-partite agreement among the Society, Duquesne University officials, and *The Pittsburgh Catholic* to microfilm all copies of *The Pittsburgh Catholic* from 1844 to the present. The result of that effort is now available on the Internet with a searchable data base for the use of the curious as well as scholars in the discipline of local Catholic history.

The first Mass celebrated in Pittsburgh's Golden Triangle was offered by Father Denys Baron in April 1754, while he was Chaplain to the French troops occupying The Point at that time. To commemorate that occasion, the Historical Society observed the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of that first Mass at Pittsburgh's Golden Triangle, by commissioning an original oil painting to mark the occasion, and



**Society's 75th Anniversary Mass at St. Paul Cathedral. L to R: Rev. Joseph Scheib, Bishop William Winter, and Rev. James Garvey.**

Source: Kathleen Washy

sponsoring a public lecture by Father John LaFarge, S.J., Associate Editor of *America* magazine.

In 1959, the Society published a booklet in observance of the bicentennial of the City of Pittsburgh, which emphasized the extraordinary growth of Catholicism in Western Pennsylvania.

In the 1960's there was a period of dormancy in the Society. In 1984, two Pittsburgh priests — Father Bernard L. Hrico, working with Monsignor Francis Glenn — restarted the Historical Society, and began an Oral History Project, provided speakers on the history of Catholicism in Western Pennsylvania for parish gatherings, expanded its lecture series, resumed tours, and co-sponsored historical lectures with other organizations.

In the following years, the Society began to publish *Gathered Fragments* — and by 2009, it assumed a color glossy journal format. In 1993, the Board of Directors converted the Society into a not-for-profit organization.

Today, the Catholic Historical Society marks its 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. In those decades much history has been made in Western Pennsylvania. Because of the industrious work of the Society, much of that history which touches on the Catholic Community has been recorded and catalogued.

We are proud that the Society achieved so much in the past. And we are equally pleased that everywhere people of good will

were able to generate cooperation between and among schools, institutions, clergy, religious, and lay persons. All worked together to share resources and record much of the Catholic history that was made here in Western Pennsylvania.

In the future, historians may ask: “Were Catholics active and involved Christianizing the society in Western Pennsylvania over the years?” The affirmative answer will be obvious for those who want to look. Thankfully there will be well-organized Archives containing articles and letters, journals and photographs, and recordings from oral history projects for them to research so that they can discover and wonder at the accomplishments of the Catholic Community in Western Pennsylvania.

Those who have gone before us — from colonial times to the present — worked tirelessly to build parishes, churches, schools, convents, rectories, monasteries, orphanages and hospitals. These institutions were built, staffed and maintained and in large measure continue to this day to serve the needs of the people in the wider community.

For 75 years the Catholic Historical Society has labored to preserve the record of those accomplishments — may it ever stand as a monument to our forefathers who built up this community of faith in love, and in service to God and neighbor.

# The Soul in Stained Glass: Nick Parrendo

Dennis Wodzinski

Upon entering Hunt Stained Glass Studio on Pittsburgh's West Carson Street, it soon becomes apparent that there's a Parrendo around every corner. From David Parrendo, Hunt's Business Manager, to Celeste Parrendo, the Master Painter of the studio, it is quite clear that the business owned by their father and artist Nick Parrendo maintains a true familial bond.

The same can be said of the Pittsburgh area as a whole – there always seems to be a Parrendo work around every corner. From Aliquippa (St. Titus Church) to Zelienople (Calvary United Presbyterian Church) and St. Agnes Parish (Richeyville, PA) to Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church (Irwin, PA), Nick Parrendo's touch has illuminated sacred spaces of all faiths, most prominently within the Catholic churches of the Diocese of Pittsburgh.

As you continue through the workrooms and offices of Hunt Studio (and as you do, Nick will gladly show you everything), the workplace of Parrendo since 1950, time often seems to slow down, if not stop completely. The one hundred and nine year-old business has seen many churches come and regrettably go. New pieces of stained glass are sometimes flanked by since-returned pieces, the only vestiges of a number of now-shuttered churches and worship spaces.

But if stained glass is to impart a sense of peace and solace upon the worshiper, Hunt Studio is as good a place for such creation and arrangement to begin. Parrendo's peaceful nature is the perfect complement to the workplace which is a stone's throw away from the West End Bridge on Pittsburgh's South Side.

But Nick Parrendo will be the first to tell you that "Hunt" has been here much longer than he. His humble demeanor will tell of other skilled designers and workers who preceded and inspired him. His admiration for former Hunt Studio designers Helen Carew Hickman and Charles Morris, whom he apprenticed under, is evident in the reverential tone of his voice when he recounts their influence on him.

But to his family, his coworkers, and to his clients, Nick Parrendo is Hunt Studio. His hand, his touch, and his artistic eye are the soul of "Hunt." Sitting in the Mary Immaculate Chapel of the Sisters of St. Francis of the Providence of God's Motherhouse recently, I couldn't help but see Parrendo's jovial face as I contemplated his depiction of the life of St. Francis of Assisi. Where the Seraphic Father's face showed compassion, it also showed vitality and a divine love. This illuminated life of St. Francis in twelve panels is among Parrendo's earlier works — a task he finished as a twenty-six year old in 1955, over sixty years ago. You can argue that the depictions of St. Francis's vitality, compassion, and divine love are also reflective of the artist.

At age 87 Nick Parrendo, now sole manager of Hunt Studio, has been at this trade for 65 years.

However, the master was not always the skilled and calculating craftsman that he is today. After recalling his early days and years with "Hunt" he laughingly will recount a myriad of stories detailing his maturation in the centuries-old-craft of stained glass design,

creation, and installation. An often told story is one about when he was an apprentice making seventy-five cents an hour and in charge of overseeing a piece by designer Charles Morris. The only problem was that Parrendo was also painting glass at the same time and forgot about the piece in the kiln.

"I was painting glass and I looked up from the painting and saw Mr. (James) Hunt, George's brother — he was the foreman — and he said 'Look at the kiln' and I said 'Oh my gosh'. All the forms melted out of shape, there were holes burned in them and I went to Mr. Morris and he said 'Well that's okay, I've done the same thing.' So they didn't fire me."

Offhandedly with a familiar laugh he added, 'It's good I'm the owner now.'

Parrendo's vocation has unfolded on Pittsburgh's South Side, but he clearly is a North Side man. Named for his maternal grandfather, 'Nicolò', Parrendo grew up in an Italian family in the Woods Run neighborhood of the city. His father, an immigrant who was unable to read or write English, never rose above the position of "helper" for the Pennsylvania Railroad. Parrendo's mother, who was



**Window in chapel of Motherhouse of Sisters of St. Francis of Providence of God (Whitehall, PA) by artist Nicholas Parrendo.**

Source: Archives of the Sisters of St. Francis

## The Soul in Stained Glass: Nick Parrendo (continued)

twenty-five years younger than his father, maintained the house and oversaw the faith development of the family at nearby Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church. The church was another formative locus for Parrendo as it was where he befriended his spiritual advisor, Fr. Eddie Farina, received the sacraments, met and married his wife, and was eventually the location of Parrendo's first commissioned work.

When asked about how his artistic journey began, Parrendo is fast to state that he was not always so sure of his abilities. It perhaps was the most unlikely of places where his vocation seemed to bloom. It was on a hospital bed in Children's Hospital.

His first audience was an anonymous nurse whom Parrendo met while in the hospital with a severe case of bleeding ulcers. She gave him a pad of paper and a pencil to draw while he was recovering in his bed. Upon seeing her patient's progress, Parrendo fondly recalled "She said, 'Wow, that's good'. You know, I didn't think I could do anything good. I didn't think I could do anything really to begin with. So I kept drawing. She thought that was good, so I figured I'd keep drawing." The art world is extremely glad that he did.

The next memory Parrendo has of his artistic development is at North Catholic High School, where he was urged to attend by his parish priest, Fr. Eddie Farina.

"I was in high school and my literature class was reading Gulliver's Travels and there was this picture of Gulliver going through the woods, with his hand around the big pine trees, and again I started drawing. The teacher said, 'Are you finished with that,' and I said 'Oh yeah,' and he said 'Can I have it?' And to this day I'm not sure if he liked it, if it was a reprimand or a compliment," Parrendo joked. Either way, a definite talent was found and encouraged in the young artist.

High school graduation for Parrendo presented a crossroads for the budding artist. Encouraged by his grandfather, he enlisted in the post-World War II army, served for a year and a half and returned to Pittsburgh with a taste of the outside world and the G.I. Bill to support his educational development.

The next problem Parrendo faced was discerning what his next step would be. When he left the service, he returned to his high school guidance counselor for advice. Noting that Parrendo did not take any college prep classes, the advisor recommended applying to art

school. Parrendo remembers "College was out of the question." So he began studies at the Ad-Art Studio School in Pittsburgh (later combined with the Art Institute of Pittsburgh) and supported himself with part-time janitorial work at Our Lady of Perpetual Help. When he finished his classes, as with many things in the young Parrendo's life, it was the suggestion of his parish priest, Fr. Eddie Farina, to "go and see Mr. Hunt. He wants to get young blood in the business."

But "stained glass...hmm," Parrendo still says with a smile.

"So I went to see Mr. Hunt. I wanted to get married, so... (laugh). Mr. Hunt said 'I'm going to hire you as an apprentice. You'll make seventy-five cents an hour.' So I began. They asked me if I would do some cartooning (sketching the planned window out to full size). I vowed to myself, that if they asked me to do anything, I would do it. So I jumped right in."

It was Parrendo's skill with "cartooning" that made him a valuable asset on the Hunt team. His ability to render the finished product without having to send the cartoon to an outside enlarger saved Hunt Studio both considerable amounts of time and money. During the 1950s, when the country was experiencing a boom in the construction of religious buildings, any saved time and effort was critical.

Recalling his early years as an apprentice, Parrendo often mentions the influence that designer Helen Carew Hickman had on him. Hickman (her married name after her time with Hunt) was a 1947 graduate of Carnegie Tech and worked for Hunt from her graduation until 1953. Compared with Hunt's other designer, Charles Morris, Hickman's work was a bit more contemporary in nature. "It turned out that Helen was geared into very contemporary things, but I also saw her do some very traditional pieces," Parrendo recalled. "She told me, 'You have to make yourself change so that your work will be fresher.' I tried to follow her lead. She was a great teacher for me and led me on to all of this."

Initially, Parrendo was paired with Hickman and would transfer her smaller designs into the larger, often ten-foot charcoal "cartoons." "They were coming out great and Helen would point out the details that I might have missed. She would do the research and I thought 'Boy, what a nice education I'm getting. At one point she came back to me to say 'It's a shame that you don't get to do your own work.' So they eventually gave me the chance to do my own designs too."

Fittingly, Parrendo's first independent work was for his parish, Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Woods Run. "Mr. Hunt gave me that job. I think there were fourteen windows and he wanted a ventilator in there. They were double-hung windows so we took out the wooden sash, put in new frames and a new ventilator and windows for \$100," Parrendo laughed.

"So I designed a very simple pattern. The background was rectangular tinted glass and there was a medallion in the middle. The medallions all had an image of Our Lady with a Latin text. And do you know when we got that job, people came into our church and said 'Where are the figures – there's only symbols.' I said 'You have new windows, a new ventilator, all for \$100!'"



Artist Nick Parrendo in his studio.

Source: Dennis Wodzinski

## The Soul in Stained Glass: Nick Parrendo (continued)

Parrendo laughed. Regrettably, Parrendo's first stained glass design has been lost to history. "That building is now I believe an apartment building. All the windows were taken out and sold. So I don't know who has the windows to this day." Gradually, work picked up and he soon was receiving ample design and installation work of his own.

To give one a sense of the size and scope of the workload at Hunt Stained Glass Studio in Parrendo's first decade of work at Hunt, there are 1,065 unique work orders listed for the 1950s alone. Of that number, the 1950s saw significant new stained glass arrangements for St. Henry Church (Pittsburgh - closed 2005), St. Ignatius Church (Carnegie, PA), St. Elizabeth of Hungary Church (Pleasant Hills, PA), Divine Providence Prep School (Allison Park, PA), and Speers United Methodist Church (Charleroi, PA) among several others. In total, from 1950 until 2014, Hunt Studio was responsible for 6616 unique jobs including design, fabrication, installation, and repair of stained glass arrangements. Averaged out, that is roughly 103 unique jobs per year. This is an extremely significant number when one realizes that Hunt Stained Glass Studio employed four designers in the 1950s (Hickman, Morris, Roy Calligan and eventually Parrendo himself); by the end of the 1960s, Parrendo was the sole designer.

The Sisters of St. Francis of the Providence of God, located in Whitehall, PA, gave Parrendo his first commissioned work regarding the life of St. Francis. In response, with some suggestion from Mother M. Loyola Sebelskas, OSF, he delved into Franciscan spirituality and symbolism. Likewise, when St. Bonaventure Parish needed a new stained glass arrangement, Parrendo began researching the life of the Seraphic Doctor, and tapped into a new realm of spirituality heretofore unknown to him. As you listen to Parrendo humbly discuss some of his past projects, you realize that each new commission, though often tiresome in regards to research, has always been a period of spiritual growth and development for the soft-spoken artist. After sitting with him for a while, one gets the sense that he considers his career to be his vocation — a true gift and a long journey of faith and spiritual and educational growth. With every prospective window or piece, Parrendo had to delve into the critical elements of scripture, Christology, lives of the saints, and even the images and traditions of other faith communities.

Categorically, Parrendo's work is hard to classify as a whole. Initial works showed a more traditional design. Recent decades have shown a more fluid composition style, reflective of a spirit that often feels borne out of the sacred space itself, and not simply anchored by colored glass and lead. Parrendo's artistic strength lies in his flowing style and ability to adapt the window to the space that it illuminates. He quipped while discussing the benefits of bendable lead framing on his works that "If you want longer-lasting windows use flexible lead. If you want a long life, be flexible." Overall, his work shows a flexibility that Helen Carew Hickman, his mentor of years past, would approve of.

Asked if he had a particularly favorite saint or religious scene to depict, Parrendo paused before he answered. "You have to like it all, that's what I say. You have to like all the scriptures, Old

Testament, New Testament, all the letters and everything else." Pausing another moment, he added "However, Revelation is so visually impactful that it gives you so many subjects to work with. That's what I've noticed when doing images regarding Revelation. The Apocolypse makes you think 'Wow'. It allows you to go on forever with such vivid imagery."

With the advent of the 1960s, a shift was becoming evident in the greater Roman Catholic Church; 1962 marked the opening of the Second Vatican Council.

When considering the changes of the "Vatican II" Church, Parrendo noted a shift in perception of the church, from within and without. For a while, he said, Protestant

"ministers would almost always come down on the Church and point out all of the bad things. Since Pope John XXIII, all that changed. He brought fresh air into the Church and now we are one, common in Christ, and now we're not picking at each other. I noticed the difference quite a bit actually. I remember one Presbyterian minister who came in. He wanted a lot of detail in his work. He brought a stack of papers, three quarters of an inch thick, and he said 'Here's the first window.' I said, 'All that for one window?' But I learned so much in regard to scripture from him. Another lesson I learned from a Lutheran minister, he said 'You Catholics make Christ so judgmental, so severe, put a smile on his face and make him happy.' Ever since then I've tried to make our Lord pleasant,"

Parrendo laughed. "It has been a true learning experience."

The late 1960s also harkened in a new era for Hunt Stained Glass Studio itself. In 1966, with the retirement of George Hunt from the family business, Hunt Stained Glass Studio was sold to John and Margaret Lally. Noted for their business and philanthropic acumen, the Lallys enlarged the scope of Hunt's business model by expanding into faceted glass design and dealing more with repair and conservation work. A prime example of faceted glass design that Hunt and Parrendo undertook were the massive wall-sized stained glass pieces designed for St. Thomas More Church in Bethel Park, PA. Other significant Hunt Studio works from this decade include St. Patrick Church (Canonsburg, PA), St. Norbert Church (Overbrook - Pittsburgh, PA), Beth Israel Synagogue (Washington, PA), and St. Valentine Church (Bethel Park, PA) among many others.

Asked if he ever had any regrets over certain designs, Parrendo laughed "Oh yeah. I wish I could do several over again. For the first couple of years, every time I did something I would later say 'Ah, I could have done this, I could have done that.' Once you commit to a design, it is hard to change, especially in stained glass. Once you put something down, you have something to go by. But then you say 'Wow, I don't have time to do it over. Boy, it would be nice to do it over the way I see it now.' But yeah, hindsight is amazing," he joked.

Such hindsight and vision is emblematic of Parrendo's unique ability to change perspective and keep his approach to work "fresh" and invigorating.

## The Soul in Stained Glass: Nick Parrendo (continued)

One example of his fresh approach to work has been his time as an instructor of stained glass design: “I was here about twenty-five years and they needed a teacher of stained glass in Pittsburgh.” At first hesitant, the humble Parrendo was worried “if they’d ask questions that I don’t know the answers to – what would I do? But I remembered St. Francis de Sales said, ‘If you want to learn, teach.’ Then I thought, that’s what I should do.” In response to his initial “yes” to becoming a teacher of stained glass, he still offers classes and workshops on the craft that he picked up as an apprentice. Currently Parrendo also leads a yearly stained glass class for St. Edmund’s Retreat on Enders Island, CT.

Another example of Parrendo’s versatility and ability to adapt is his foray into 3-D art — sculpture. The impetus for working on sculpture came when he was approached by St. Gabriel of the Sorrowful Virgin Mary Parish (Whitehall, PA) after he had completed their stained glass arrangement. “So I said, ‘Okay, I’ll try to do that.’ Since he was an employee of Hunt Stained Glass Studio, Parrendo had to look elsewhere for viable creative space for this new venture. “So I sketched it and did it in my basement at home. I had an old couch there so I made a clay model, created a mold, and put it on the couch and then put the resin in it.” Pausing, he added “I didn’t realize it, but it got so hot that I thought I might burn my house down. So I maintained a vigil all night, wondering when it would cool down because my wife and family were upstairs. I sweated that one out,” he laughed.

As his ability in sculpture also became known, he had to improve his work area to compensate for incoming commissions. “Soon one thing lead to another. We needed more space, so my brother in law, the kids, all pitched in and built this garage in my backyard. Now I could work on the weekends.” However, “Then I bought a new car. I put that car in the new garage and the next day it wouldn’t start. So I said I’m never going to put a car in that garage again. But then I got the studio, and now I do them here.”

Speaking of “getting the studio,” with the departure of the Lally family from Hunt Stained Glass ownership in 1987, a unique opportunity was presented to Parrendo.

“I’ll tell you, going from an employee to an owner. I was scared, I’d say to myself ‘What do I know about running a business?’ I just wanted to do the artwork. A guy advised me, ‘You have to buy this studio.’ I said ‘I know nothing about running a studio.’ He said ‘Anyone who buys this studio will bring their own artists – where do you think you’ll be?’ So I said ‘If I’m going to keep my job, I have to buy the studio.’ So I took a mortgage out on my house and started all over. It worked out terrifically. I couldn’t ask for anything better – I’ve always had a key to this place. I would always come in on Saturdays. I thought, just to be able to come here...it’s a second home. If you’re saying that you’d rather be at the studio than on the golf course, well that’s saying something about what you’ve been able to accomplish. I’m so grateful. It’s amazing how things worked out. Just the idea that God has a plan for you, and you say ‘Yes’ – it’s going to click.”

But such a long career has also had a few bumps along the way. One of his fellow artist-friends won’t let him drive the golf cart after an accident during a national stained glass convention. To mark his now humorous accident, they placed a marble plaque, “a memento to Nick cascading over the hill into the creek,” he laughingly recalled.

On a more serious note, Parrendo recalled a scary situation that developed at a conference in Kansas in 1994.

“I’m on the van to the hotel, and a fire breaks out in my chest. I had this pain that burned like crazy. I thought ‘I’m not going to tell anyone I have heart problems in my chest. They’ll take me to the hospital – I’m not going to the hospital.’ I thought it must be my gallbladder. I stood on my head. I tried everything to get rid of that pain. It wouldn’t go away. So I called the airport and asked when the next plane went back to Pittsburgh. So I took the flight the next morning, got into my car, and drove to Allegheny General Hospital. They said ‘You’re having a heart attack.’ I said ‘What?’ So I called my daughter, I said ‘I’m not in Kansas anymore,’” he laughed.

Despite these health scares, Parrendo still maintains a very active lifestyle, often playing a round of golf a week or taking a ride on his bicycle on Pittsburgh’s North Shore. In addition to his work at Hunt Studio (a name he never contemplated changing) and his physical activities, he is also very active in the greater stained-glass world. In 1999 Parrendo received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Stained Glass Association of America, the same organization that his mentor and friend Helen Carew Hickman was president of in the 1970s. When contemplating that thought, the humble Parrendo simply smiled and nodded his head.

Today, Hunt Stained Glass Studio, hemmed in by West Carson Street, the Ohio River, and within a stone’s throw of the West End Bridge, is a vibrant workplace and inspiring repository of thousands of completed stained glass works from decades past. It is an appropriate location for some introspection and peace for the 86-year-old Parrendo. Reflecting on his own approach for stained glass, he said

“I was always searching...It’s a relationship with God, and I think the more that you develop such a relationship, the more you’ll encounter the light. Centering Prayer has really helped. I thought, to be able to sit in silence, and music is very nice, but there is a better language with God, and that is through silence. To be able to start the day with twenty minutes of silence, just remembering that you are in God’s presence, is very important to me. I often think of the many things that have happened because of that special relationship, those encounters that impress themselves onto my artwork.”

But as often occurs with Nick Parrendo, the discussion shifted to matters other than art or stained glass. He added “We’re searching for that close bond - it’s a whole never-ending search. And we look forward and think, we’re eventually going to die. We wonder ‘Where are we going?’ Well, if we fall into the arms of God, you know, that’s what it’s all about.”

## The Soul in Stained Glass: Nick Parrendo (continued)

After sitting down with Nick Parrendo for an hour or two, it becomes quite clear that a sincere love permeates his entire being. It influences how he approaches work and even how he holds a conversation. As an artist, Parrendo could be justified saying that his work is his true love. But it isn't. Perhaps stained glass is his second love, but his first and enduring love will always be his wife Emmanuella – 'Luella', whom he met in the Our Lady of Perpetual Help bowling league, and his four children John, David, Eddie, and Celeste. Every discussion of stained glass with Parrendo will also be a discussion of family and the ties that bind. Nick and Luella were married thirty years before she succumbed to the effects of leukemia in July 1981.

We as outsiders, as admirers of his skill, are lucky enough to catch the essence of that familial love in his work that we encounter on a weekly and perhaps daily basis. As the sun illuminates each and every pane that Parrendo works on, his drive and love also shine through each and every piece that he has created. In many ways, it is the touch, the arrangement, and the mind of the artist that bring true illumination to our sacred spaces. However, Nick Parrendo would argue otherwise and simply offer that someone greater than he brings true illumination.

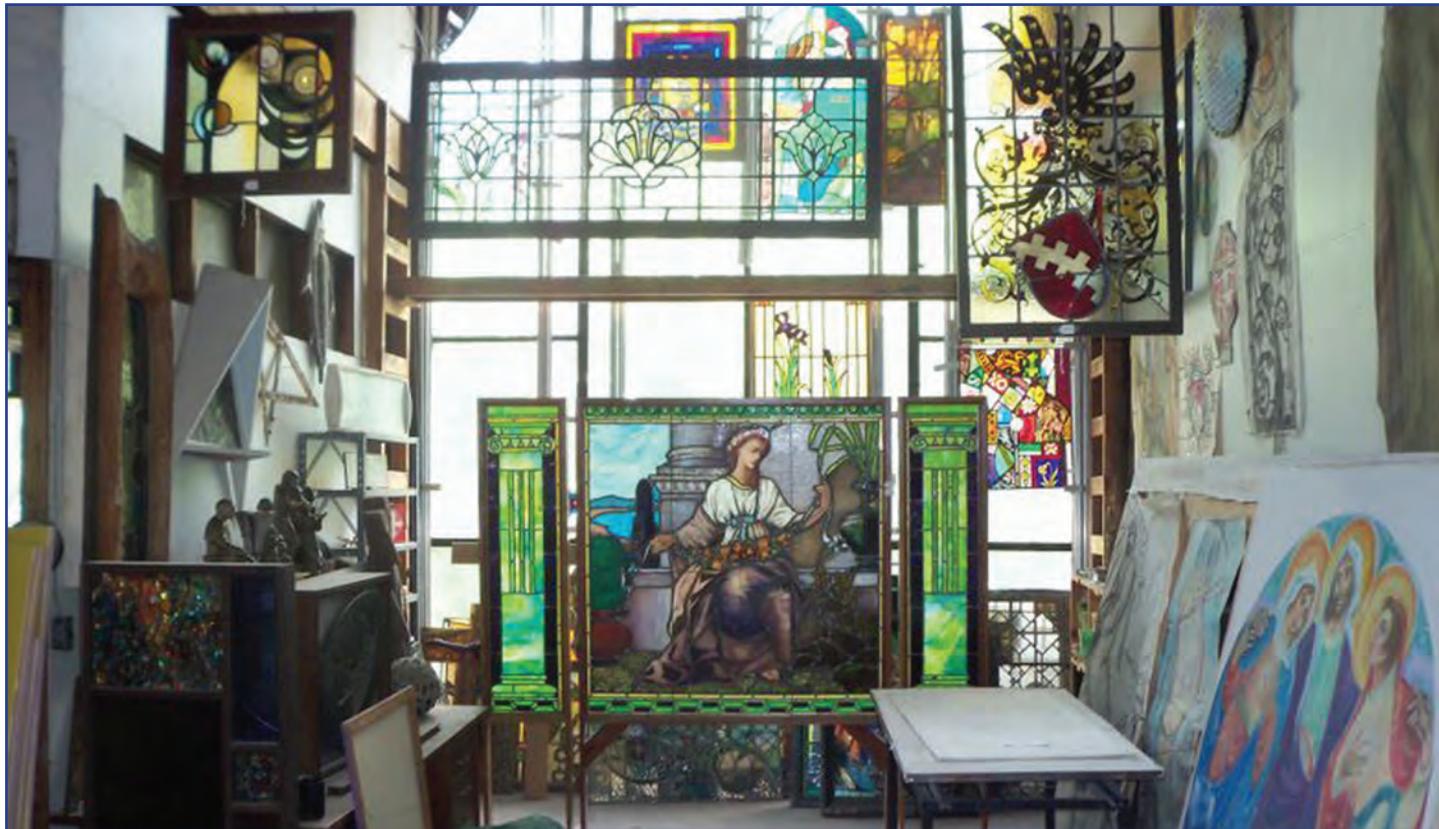
### Author's Note

*To be honest, this article was to have had a dual purpose: to provide a biography of the artist, and to produce an exhaustive listing and description of each of Nick Parrendo's public stained glass and sculptural arrangements. But, with thousands of works attributed to Hunt Studio in the past 65 years, such a listing is still a "work in progress" for another time.*

*Initially, I went to Hunt Stained Glass Studio to learn about Nick Parrendo, the artist, the prolific stained glass artisan, and sculptor. But something transpired in my two-hour long tour of Hunt Studios and my interview with the artist.*

*I came out of Hunt Studio having met Parrendo — the humble and joyful human, the long-time North Side resident, the weekly golfer, the proud family man, and the spiritual guide he undoubtedly is. It truly is hard to divorce Parrendo the family man from Parrendo the artist. Thus the incomplete nature of my intended dual undertaking! However, one does not exist without the other. There cannot be the artist without the North Side family man; they exist together as one. That is truly what makes Nick Parrendo's work so enduring and invigorating. The work reflects the man as a whole, and not simply a school of design or a fleeting artistic genre. It is as if in each and every pane of glass that Parrendo has arranged, he has illuminated the space with a little glimpse into the soul of a man who is wholly a part of the finished product. As Parrendo said to me at the conclusion of our talk, "I think what will happen, when we see God, divine and beautiful, we're going to forget everything else." Often it is that forgetfulness that one feels when stepping into the illuminated space of a Parrendo arrangement for the first time. If that is so, Nick Parrendo will surely feel he has accomplished his stated intent.*

Additional information on Nick Parrendo and Hunt Stained Glass Studios is available at the studio website: <http://www.huntstainedglass.com/>.



Interior of Hunt Studios, Pittsburgh.

Source: Dennis Wodzinski

# A Woman, A Mission, A Commitment: Sister M. Ferdinand Clark and Urban Renewal

Kathleen M. Washy

*“God has assigned to each and every individual a particular mission in life to perform in the sanctification of the big world. This conviction, once grasped, generates a burning desire. It inevitably arouses a strong sense of personal responsibility and individual initiative in bringing Christ’s love and truth into every segment of life.”*<sup>1</sup> – Sr. M. Ferdinand Clark, 1968

In 1953, the Sisters of Mercy appointed Sister M. Ferdinand Clark as administrator of the Mercy Hospital of Pittsburgh. A natural born leader, Sister Ferdinand turned out to be the right woman at the right time to lead the hospital through a 25 year period of pivotal changes. Since the hospital’s founding in 1847, Mercy Hospital developed alongside the growing industries in and around the city of Pittsburgh, with one of the hospital’s evolving roles being that of providing trauma care for patients of industrial accidents. And just as the city transformed, so did Mercy Hospital. Even as Mayor David L. Lawrence led the city into reurbanization for much needed renewal in the middle of the 1900s, so would Sister Ferdinand lead Mercy Hospital into its own reurbanization during her administration, while maintaining the Sisters of Mercy commitment to Catholic health care to the sick and poor.

When Mayor David Lawrence was elected in 1945, Pittsburgh was known as the “Smoky City.” It was out of the smoke that he led the city into a rebirth through a program of urban renewal. In the same year, the state of Pennsylvania passed the Urban Redevelopment Act, providing cities and counties “with legal and financial mechanisms for rebuilding and redeveloping older parts of our cities,” thus providing the means for Pittsburgh’s rebirth.<sup>2</sup> Under Lawrence’s guidance, Pittsburgh underwent “the largest urban renewal attempt in the nation at that date.”<sup>3</sup> Pittsburgh underwent an historic facelift and a cleaning of the air; Renaissance I “reversed the downward trajectory in the Golden Triangle, began the critical cleanup of the city’s environment, modernized several aspects of the infrastructure, and established a tradition of public-private partnerships.”<sup>4</sup>

With this exciting Renaissance I happening around it, Mercy Hospital, which is located close to the center of Pittsburgh, entered into its own rebirth, which was touted as “an exciting new ‘People Chapter’ in the ever-developing Renaissance of Pittsburgh.”<sup>5</sup> From 1953 until 1978, Sister Ferdinand Clark led the organization through this reurbanization process; she provided the vision and the leadership necessary to maintain this bulwark of Catholic health care in Pittsburgh during these years of tremendous changes. Urban renewal impacted Mercy Hospital in two areas: 1) facility planning/construction and 2) the relationship of Mercy Hospital with the neighboring community of the Hill District. The success of Mercy Hospital both in facility building and community relationships rested on the administration’s conviction in the Catholic mission, or, in the words of Sister Ferdinand, how Mercy Hospital remained “true to itself and the spiritual philosophy and tradition of the Sisters of Mercy.”<sup>6</sup>

## EARLY YEARS OF MERCY HOSPITAL

Established in 1847 by the Pittsburgh Sisters of Mercy, the sisters initially opened the first Mercy Hospital in the world in temporary quarters in the motherhouse on Penn Avenue. In 1848, Mercy Hospital relocated to a permanent location in what was then the Soho section of Pittsburgh.<sup>7</sup> As Pittsburgh grew, so did Mercy Hospital; ever-expanding services for increasing numbers of patients required added facilities, so that the hospital gradually developed from occupying a single building in 1848 to taking up an entire city block with a multi-building complex by 1940, with the main hospital buildings dating to before the turn of the century. Not only was the city undergoing changes with reurbanization in the middle of the 1900s, the area directly adjacent to Mercy Hospital was also changing. As requested and approved by the city, the Catholic college, Duquesne University, took over and expanded onto an area consisting of 63 acres extending to Bluff Street and was to be “redeveloped for residential, including higher education, commercial, and special industrial expansion with the Duquesne University as the redeveloper.”<sup>8</sup> In light of the city’s urban renewal efforts, the Sisters of Mercy understood that the renewal of Mercy Hospital would need to fit into the changes that were taking place around them. In order to accomplish this, the sisters turned to leaders of Pittsburgh, both members of the Catholic church and lay businessmen, and recruited them to an advisory board in 1952. As they had not had a lay board since the 1920s, the sisters were inexperienced with the function of the board. Additionally, being an advisory board, there was an inherent problem in that the board had no authority and essentially no direction, thus, the process met an impasse.

## SISTER FERDINAND BECOMES ADMINISTRATOR

In the midst of this stalled-out drive for the hospital’s urban renewal, in 1953, the sisters appointed Sister M. Ferdinand Clark as the new administrator for Mercy Hospital, marking the beginning of a new era for Mercy Hospital. Born on Pittsburgh’s North Side, Sister Ferdinand entered the Sisters of Mercy in 1924. While she was initially an elementary school teacher, by 1931 she was working as admissions officer and business manager at Mercy Hospital. From 1947 to 1953, Sister Ferdinand served as administrator of St. Paul’s Orphanage. When she returned to take charge of Mercy Hospital in 1953, she became the first administrator at the hospital in 50 years who was not a nurse. She was a woman who had magnetism and the charisma to inspire those around her. In 1956, an anonymous source wrote of her: “People are drawn to her by the warmth of her greeting and her facility for putting them at their ease ... Recognizing each individual as a fellow human being and a child of God, Sister has dedicated her life to the fulfillment of

## A Woman, A Mission, A Commitment: Sister M. Ferdinand Clark and Urban Renewal (continued)

her religious vocation to serve God by serving His people.”<sup>9</sup> Sister Ferdinand first and foremost was a Sister of Mercy, a woman who lived according to the charism and mission of her religious order.

When a woman professes her vows as a Sister of Mercy, she takes four vows: poverty, chastity, obedience, and service to the poor, the sick, and the uneducated. In her leadership role in health care, Sister Ferdinand was visible proof of living the mission of the sisters to treat the sick poor. As a sister, Sister Ferdinand never doubted that the Pittsburgh community had a need for a Catholic hospital – a hospital that was dedicated to treating all aspects of patients’ needs. With this philosophy as her basis, Sister Ferdinand was determined to ensure the improvement of Mercy Hospital’s outdated facility in order to continue to supply quality care to every human being who walked through the doors.

### MERCY HOSPITAL IN THE 1950s

At the time of her appointment as administrator in 1953, Sister Ferdinand took over a large hospital that had an antiquated physical plant and insufficient operating income. By the late 1950s, Mercy was a 750-bed hospital with 18,000 hospital admissions a year, more than 18,000 emergency room admissions a year (6,000 of whom were treated free), and nearly 23,000 patients who were treated in the outpatient clinic, free of charge. Mercy was donating \$325,000 a year to the health of the community. Although Mercy Hospital provided all of this free care to any individual, no matter what religion, the state of Pennsylvania perceived the hospital to be

sectarian and, starting in 1921, the state declined all appropriations to Mercy; Mercy Hospital persevered in spite of this loss in funding.<sup>10</sup>

While Mercy Hospital was an extremely busy hospital, it was lacking the proper facilities to accommodate the community’s needs. In addition to the original 60-bed 1848 building, the main buildings of the hospital complex had been built in the 1890s with the secondary buildings built in 1918, 1926, and 1939, eventually turning into the 750-bed hospital that Sister Ferdinand was overseeing in the late 1950s. Although the hospital had added many beds over the years, the facility was becoming outdated in terms of advances in health care.

At a time when the city was forging ahead with its Renaissance, the hospital was at a crucial crossroads which would determine its future. While urban renewal influenced Mercy Hospital, the Sisters of Mercy influenced Mercy Hospital’s response to urban renewal. In the same spirit that the city had entered into Renaissance I, Sister Ferdinand forged ahead with a plan to build the new facility that was needed. To make that happen, she had to work within the established framework of the city’s urban renewal effort, which, for health care in Allegheny County, was embodied in the Hospital Planning Association. The head of Mercy Hospital’s recently established Advisory Board, J. Rogers Flannery Jr., made it understood to Sister Ferdinand that “Mercy’s plan for expansion and modernization would need not only broad community support. It would also need the blessing of the Hospital Planning Association.”<sup>11</sup>



**Mercy Hospital, 1956**



**Mercy Hospital Outpatient Clinic, c. 1954** (Photos courtesy of the Pittsburgh Mercy Health System)

## A Woman, A Mission, A Commitment: Sister M. Ferdinand Clark and Urban Renewal (continued)

### THE HOSPITAL PLANNING ASSOCIATION

Riding “the tide of urban renewal and city planning by also recognizing a perceived need for hospital planning,” the Hospital Council of Western Pennsylvania completed a study in 1958 of the hospitals in Allegheny County and realized that many hospitals were looking to build within the upcoming years.<sup>12</sup> Between the results of this study and the overarching view that the hospitals were public property since the public funded the hospitals, the Hospital Council established the Hospital Planning Association of Allegheny County (HPA). “The public which constructs, uses, and supports hospitals deserves maximum and effective use of the capital investment and personnel. This requires conscious effort by responsible community leaders. Expansion of hospital facilities involves a permanent increase in current financial support.”<sup>13</sup>

The HPA represented a powerful, voluntary alliance of the area’s major corporate employers. This organization’s focus was to develop a comprehensive plan for hospital growth in the county while guaranteeing the most efficient use of the available funds. The HPA held tremendous power, for if its members disapproved of a hospital’s building project they could persuade corporations, foundations, and even government to withhold funding.<sup>14</sup> The HPA defined their terms as such:

The hospitals of Allegheny County should be established or expanded solely in terms of community need for service, education and research. Factors determining need are: present and prospective use of existing facilities; residence and staff privileges of physicians; availability of ambulatory diagnostic and treatment services; travel patterns of patients seeking care; trends in character and growth of population.<sup>15</sup>

At the same instant, the HPA understood that Allegheny County was an unusual metropolitan area since it was “without a short-term hospital owned and operated by a local governmental authority for the care of a certain portion of indigent and low-income persons.”

### QUEST FOR RENEWAL

Working within the parameters of the HPA dictated urban renewal, Sister Ferdinand steadily moved toward making the hospital’s operations compatible with the guidelines needed to enable her to present her plan to the HPA. Listening to the recommendations of J. Rogers Flannery Jr. and the Advisory Board, Sister Ferdinand implemented some changes to the hospital operations. One of those changes was the increased public visibility of the Sisters of Mercy within the institution. This focus was in line with the Board’s recommendation to focus on strengths, one of which was the public’s comprehension of the commitment of the sisters to quality care. “Why do patients go to Mercy Hospital?” asked Mr. Flannery. “It is because they feel Sisters are selfless in their service.”<sup>17</sup> During these years, the sister staff had been somewhat depleted by the 1959 transfer of several sisters to Holy Cross Hospital in Florida, but within a couple of years, their ranks at Mercy Hospital were filled.<sup>18</sup> Other practical changes were made as well, affecting patient care and hospital operations. The hospital began a program of renovation and modernization, including the creation of a radioactive isotope laboratory, the opening of an electro-

encephalographic (EEG) department, and the start of a medical research program. While these measures filled some immediate needs, Sister Ferdinand’s long-term goal was to demolish and replace the obsolete, non-fire-resistant buildings.<sup>19</sup>

By 1962, Sister Ferdinand was confident that she had brought Mercy Hospital to the point that the HPA would approve her plan for a new flagship hospital. At a time when health care was rapidly changing, she could not continue to prop up the antiquated hospital buildings. In August 1962, Sister Ferdinand and the hospital’s Advisory Board submitted the proposed Mercy Hospital’s architectural drawings and the proposal for the \$13 million modernization program to the HPA for approval. However, when the HPA weighed in on the proposal, Mercy Hospital encountered a roadblock: the HPA “suggested that implementation of any construction program should await a more thorough evaluation of the Hospital in relation to the needs of the community as reflected in the developing regionalization concept.” Turning down Mercy’s request, the HPA intimated that the sisters and the board should consider moving the hospital out of Pittsburgh to the expanding suburbs.<sup>21</sup>

### REASSESSMENT, REBOUNDED, AND RETOOLING

While Mercy Hospital was physically located in the midst of a focused effort on redevelopment, Sister Ferdinand was faced with the fact that her plans had received a serious blow and that Mercy’s renewal was delayed. However, this setback did not deter her and she refused to even consider moving Mercy Hospital. “What was Mercy to do?” wrote Sister Ferdinand, “Stay and serve the central city or leave for the suburbs? We chose to stay.”<sup>22</sup> The mission of providing health care to the sick and the indigent was paramount to the Sisters of Mercy and location meant everything to that mission.

Accepting the HPA recommendations, Sister Ferdinand worked hard to effect the changes necessary in order to accomplish her goal. With the review of the hospital, the HPA counseled that Mercy Hospital should hire a hospital planning consultant. Acting on this advice, Sister Ferdinand retained the services of E.D. Rosenfeld, M.D., head of the Hospital and Health Services Consultants of New York, to survey Mercy in 1963. The resulting report, Sister Ferdinand remarked, “caused more healthy discussions than it has been my privilege to observe over a period of 10 years.”<sup>23</sup>

According to Rosenfeld, city plans for urban redevelopment, exhibited in a 1963 map of future development, indicated a proposed shopping and housing plaza nearby, a cross-town expressway cutting directly overhead, and an adjacent Industrial Research Park.<sup>24</sup> If all the proposed changes had occurred, Mercy Hospital would have been almost exclusively surrounded by the direct products of urban renewal. As urban renewal plans for the Hill District were expected to result in a population between 40,000 and 60,000 and many of this increased population would look to Mercy for health care. One aspect of his report was the echoing of Sister Ferdinand’s conviction that Mercy Hospital remain in the city. Rosenfeld wrote: “The Hospital should remain where it is, exploit as fully as possible its deep and long-standing good will in the Allegheny region.”<sup>25</sup> While he

## A Woman, A Mission, A Commitment: Sister M. Ferdinand Clark and Urban Renewal (continued)

recommended staying put, Rosenfeld advised changes in all phases of the hospital's operations, urging expansion of and concentration on medical specialties and subspecialties, strengthening education and research programs, and increasing the focus on ambulatory care, while decreasing the number of beds.<sup>26</sup>

### CHANGE TO A BOARD OF TRUSTEES

One crucial and necessary change underscored in the report was the reorganization of the Advisory Board into a Board of Trustees. Not only did Rosenfeld feel that this change was necessary, but so did Bishop John Wright, as evident in a letter to Sister Ferdinand: "Quite frankly, I do not feel that an advisory board serves any substantial purpose in the case of a modern hospital as large and as complex as is Mercy Hospital." He went on to argue that people do not want to serve as mere advisors, but rather as active participants and that this was crucial to the development of the hospital. "I feel strongly ... that the hospital cannot possibly move forward as it hopes to do without a radical revision of the status of its lay representatives from the general community."<sup>27</sup> In 1964, the Sisters of Mercy welcomed a new Board of Trustees, of which J. Rogers Flannery Jr. served as president, providing a continuity between the old and the new boards. The initial task of the Board was to tackle Rosenfeld's report and to implement appropriate changes. With Rosenfeld's report highlighting the need for planning and evaluation, the Board and Administration formed planning committees to address these issues.

As things were getting off the ground, Flannery died suddenly of a heart attack. The sisters turned to Willis McCook Miller, a partner in a local law firm, who became Board president in July 1964. As president, Miller kept the momentum of progressive change on a roll as did the next Board president, G. Albert Shoemaker, who assumed the role in 1967. Recently retired president of

Consolidated Coal Company, Shoemaker was a non-Catholic and as such, he was hesitant to accept the role as Board president, but he was swayed by a call from Bishop Wright. "He [Bishop Wright] made a very pertinent and persuasive comment," Mr. Shoemaker recalled. "He said, 'Doesn't Mercy take care of Protestants as well as Catholics?' I decided then I should give it a try."<sup>28</sup> Thus, Shoemaker brought a different dimension to the Board; he worked with Sister Ferdinand to bring renewal to the hospital.

### MOVING FORWARD WITH THE BLESSING OF THE HPA

With this continuing progress, by 1968, Sister Ferdinand was able to report that "Mercy is one of those rare institutions that, in this mid-20th-century world, knows where it wants to go and has well-thought-out ideas on how to get there. To have arrived at such a stage, in the face of today's many health and medical perplexities, may well have been... the past decade's greatest accomplishment."<sup>29</sup> In 1970, Mercy inaugurated its facilities plan with the construction of an auxiliary building, the Mercy Health Center, which would serve as the outpatient clinic, and had its plans together for the new proposed Mercy Tower.

In 1973, with approval of the HPA, the Western Pennsylvania Comprehensive Health Planning Agency, and the City Planning Commission, Mercy Hospital announced the \$29 million construction program centering on a new, 13-story tower and extensive renovation of the South and Southeast Wings. For funding, Mercy Hospital had accumulated a building fund over the previous decade, received a loan guarantee from Hill-Burton, and turned to the public with a fundraising drive to complete the funding. Launching the "Quality of Mercy" campaign, Mercy Hospital tied this project directly to Pittsburgh's own urban renewal. Building on the city's Renaissance theme, Mercy Hospital issued the brochure, *A New "People Chapter" in Pittsburgh's Renaissance*, to explain the project: "Pittsburgh's continuing Renaissance presupposes the vigor, the industriousness – and the good health – of its people... Plans to modernize Mercy's aging physical plant represent the key to an exciting new 'People Chapter' in the ever-developing Renaissance of Pittsburgh."<sup>30</sup>

Groundbreaking took place on November 5, 1973 and by 1976, the new Mercy Tower was completed and opened, providing a new building to replace those buildings built in the previous century. While adhering to HPA's directed urban renewal, Sister Ferdinand had achieved her goal of building a new facility and keeping it right where it was needed most by the community in order to accomplish its Catholic mission.

While the new facility was one aspect of Mercy Hospital's reurbanization, another impact of urban renewal on Mercy Hospital was the relationship of the hospital with the neighboring community. As part of the Sisters of Mercy's mission, Mercy Hospital historically had provided substantial free health care to the city's sick and poor, a majority of those benefiting lived in the neighboring Hill District. With much of the downtown area rejuvenated by the 1960s, the city began working on large neighborhood renewal projects, one of which was the Hill District, the neighborhood so closely tied to Mercy Hospital.



**Board of Trustees (left to right): Feilx T. Hughes, John J. Maloney, J. Rogers Flannery, Jr., Sister Ferdinand Clark, Nicholas Unkovic, John L. Propst, B. R. Dorsey**

## A Woman, A Mission, A Commitment: Sister M. Ferdinand Clark and Urban Renewal (continued)

### URBAN RENEWAL AND THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Targeting the area for the development as a cultural center, the city created turmoil for this neighborhood with its plans to build the Civic Arena. The redevelopment of the Lower Hill District came to be considered “a classic example of an urban renewal failure”; aside from the Civic Arena and a few additional buildings, not much additional development took place within the original plans.<sup>31</sup> In order to accomplish the erection of the Civic Arena, many residents were scattered to new areas of the city while others relocated into other areas of the Hill District, which fostered a loss of community stability.<sup>32</sup> “Certainly the charge that it did not contribute to desegregation of the city but merely increased the density in the black Middle and Upper Hill is accurate,” relates Mike Weber in his biography on Mayor Lawrence. “Nearly 800 of the 1239 black families relocated into the already densely populated Third, Fourth, and Fifth wards. (Middle and Upper Hill)...”<sup>34</sup> In his 1963 report for Mercy Hospital, Rosenfeld wrote: “The importance of the large concentration of Negro families in the immediate service areas of Mercy Hospital cannot be overlooked. These people are by and large in the low-income group and cannot afford private care.”

Mercy’s relationship with this neighboring community had a profound effect on Sister Ferdinand. Looking back, she wrote at her retirement, “What I have done since my decision to retire is to reflect on what I consider the most meaningful of these experiences -- those that clearly challenged me both as a hospital administrator and as a Catholic religious. One especially meaningful experience will remain with me always. The lessons it taught were many and priceless.”<sup>35</sup> She was greatly impacted by those years of working with a community that had experienced negative urban renewal and with a community that was moving into a stage of social unrest, as was the rest of the nation.

From the very beginning of her administration, Sister Ferdinand believed that Mercy Hospital was providing the best care for those from the neighborhood and was always striving to improve. In accordance with this thinking, Mercy Hospital applied for a grant from a governmental agency in 1964 to provide a more systematic delivery of health care to the neighborhood. Ultimately, the agency rejected the grant with the justification the black community had a poor image of Mercy; Sister Ferdinand could not have been more surprised. One of the quotes that was cited to her was “You treated us. But you have never accepted us.”<sup>36</sup> In a speech, Sister Ferdinand defined the issue as one of service by the sisters to the community: Certainly, another problem facing this county is the great urban crisis. I can tell you this is a problem which faces us daily at Mercy Hospital. Consider our position geographically in the heart of downtown Pittsburgh. We have on one side the affluent residents of the downtown residential community. On the other, we have those who have been forced to live at the lower end of the economic scale. To the Sisters of Mercy serving with me at Mercy Hospital, our challenge is clear and simple to define -- that we must service the special needs of each. However, I can tell you we are deeply concerned about our neighbors in the uptown and hill district communities. We ask ourselves daily -- how best

can we serve these people? And let me make it clear - I mean just that - how best to serve their needs - because we are determined to provide the very best health care possible.<sup>37</sup>

### ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW SERVICES

It became clear to Sister Ferdinand that Mercy Hospital no longer should concentrate solely on the facilities and the programs but focus on the community, ensuring that the needed health care programs were well planned and not “hastily-put-together.”<sup>38</sup> Mercy Hospital could not rely on the sick poor to come consistently to the hospital, but rather, Mercy would need to reach out to the community with the mission of the Sisters of Mercy. In 1968, Mercy established the Neighborhood Advisory Committee on Health Care, drawing individuals from the neighborhood to work together with Mercy on policies. Some other changes were the establishment of both a community relations department and a human relations committee. With further evaluation of how to reach people who were sick and poor, Mercy established a program of health care expeditors, consisting of individuals hired from the Hill District to assist their neighbors in obtaining health care.

Mercy Hospital’s 1969 Report on the Progress of the Long-Range Plan clearly defined the issues at hand:

The first of these roles is Mercy’s assumption of responsibility for the provision of comprehensive health services to the population of a defined Primary Service Area. Although the need and existence of Mercy’s inpatient resources are recognized, the primary focus of this program is on outpatient care. In order to increase both the availability and acceptability of such care, Mercy proposed the creation of an ambulatory care center adjacent to the Hospital and related to primary care substations located in the neighborhoods of the Primary Service Area.<sup>39</sup>

By the time of this report, Mercy Hospital had received the required HPA approval for primary care centers and opened the first one in the center of the Hill District; two more were established within the next year. A mobile care unit, known as the Caremobile, was put out on the road, bringing the services directly to the community living in the streets.

### CREATION OF MERCY HEALTH CENTER

Next, Sister Ferdinand and the hospital’s Neighborhood Advisory Committee focused on replacing their outdated, overcrowded clinic area with its own building. Without any reservation, the HPA had quickly approved the center. In 1970, Mercy opened the Mercy Health Center, which is considered to be “the most enduring element in the hospital’s commitment to comprehensive community care.”<sup>40</sup> This new clinic was not even called a clinic but a Health Center, indicating the direction that Mercy Hospital was taking in the delivery of care to the community. Respecting the patient’s dignity, Sister Ferdinand ensured that elements of sensitivity and compassion were included in the structure of the Mercy Health Center, as well as the clinical care, with 33 departments providing comprehensive medical care; the focus was “to bring the clinic-

## A Woman, A Mission, A Commitment: Sister M. Ferdinand Clark and Urban Renewal (continued)

patient-doctor relationship to a one-to-one basis ... with special emphasis ... placed on protecting the privacy and dignity of the patient.”<sup>41</sup>

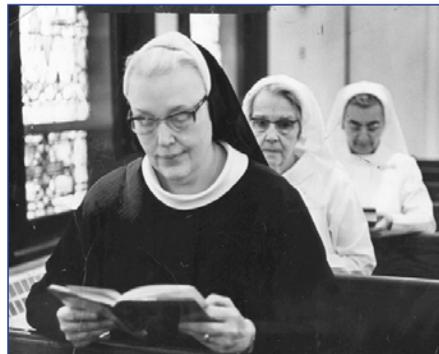
Once opened, Mercy Health Center received over 25,000 visits in the first year. By the time that the Mercy Tower opened six years later, the Mercy Health Center had received more than 51,000 visits for the 1975-1976 fiscal year; an additional 2,838 patients were treated at the primary care centers during that same timeframe.<sup>42</sup> Both programs were filling needs of the community. Reflecting back on this experience, Sister Ferdinand wrote:

One of the most meaningful and enduring lessons those of us serving at Mercy learned through our close experience with the hospital's door-step community was that inadequate health care only compounds the evils of poor housing and high unemployment. Combined, these factors deny all minorities their rightful place in society. We also realized that while the delivery of health care must always be Mercy's main concern, a demonstrated sensitivity to all of the problems, and particularly those of racism, that affect the lives of minorities was necessary to providing that care.<sup>43</sup>

### SISTER FERDINAND RETIRES

By the end of Sister Ferdinand's administration, Mercy Hospital had a new campus, a new community health care program, and a definitive grasp of how Mercy fit in with the new urban landscape. Over the years, Sister Ferdinand had received many awards in recognition for her work, including becoming the first woman to win the Jaycee Man of the Year in Medicine Award in 1972. In 1978, she stepped down from her position at Mercy Hospital. Her retirement coincided with the dawn of Pittsburgh's Renaissance

II. While piloting Mercy Hospital through its urban renewal, Sister Ferdinand was guided by her sense of mission and her role as a Sister of Mercy. Looking back on those intense years of her administration, she focused on her purpose of serving God: “What all this means to me, as I prepare for my retirement, is that despite Mercy's modern facilities and sophisticated new technology, regardless of changing conditions, we have learned that it is still possible to adhere to the hospital's original philosophy of service to God through service to people.”<sup>44</sup> With her convictions rooted in her Catholic faith, she successfully led Mercy Hospital through a period of urban renewal.



**Sister Ferdinand Clark, c. 1970**  
(Photo courtesy of the Pittsburgh Mercy Health System)



**Newly constructed Mercy Tower, 1976**

### Author's Note:

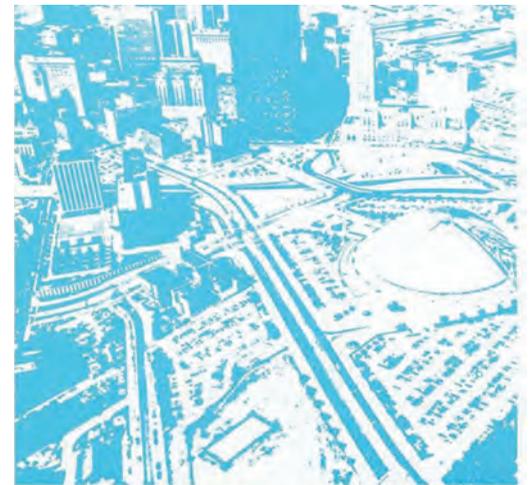
*As throughout the past 160+ years, the Sisters of Mercy continue to evaluate how best to serve people who are poor, sick, and uneducated within the changing urban landscape and the evolution of health care. In 1983, like most other hospitals in the area, Mercy Hospital expanded into a health care system and named it Pittsburgh Mercy Health System (PMHS). The 1990s and 2000s brought more major changes which, among other things, included adjustments in health insurance reimbursement, utilization guidelines, and health care technology. PMHS was a founding member of Eastern Mercy Health System which helped to create a regional system, Catholic Health East, which eventually became part of a national health system, Trinity Health.*

*All of this was at a time of changes in the city, including the decline of the steel industry, a retooling of the city's industries, and a shift in the city's population. In a progressive move, the Sisters of Mercy sold Mercy Hospital to the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC) on December 31, 2007, with an agreement that UPMC maintain Mercy Hospital as a Catholic institution sponsored by the Diocese of Pittsburgh. Selling only the hospital, the Sisters retained all of the other mission-driven, community-based services of Pittsburgh Mercy Health System: Mercy Behavioral Health, Mercy Intellectual Disabilities Services, Mercy Community Health, Mercy Parish Nurse and Health Ministry Program, and Operation Safety Net. The Sisters of Mercy applied the funds from the sale of the hospital to their mission of service and created McAuley Ministries Foundation which awards approximately \$3 million in grants annually.*

*Today, PMHS continues the work of the original seven sisters who arrived in Pittsburgh in 1843. Building on the wisdom and dedication of Sister Ferdinand Clark, PMHS colleagues serve in the spirit of the Sisters of Mercy, reaching out to people and addressing needs in the most efficient and effective ways for the current times.*

# A Woman, A Mission, A Commitment: Sister M. Ferdinand Clark and Urban Renewal (continued)

- <sup>1</sup> UPMC Mercy Archives, Sister M. Ferdinand Clark papers: Speech, April 1968.
- <sup>2</sup> City Planning Commission Pittsburgh Report for Years 1951-1952.
- <sup>3</sup> Michael P. Weber, *Don't Call Me Boss: David L. Lawrence, Pittsburgh's Renaissance Mayor* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1988): 274.
- <sup>4</sup> Edward K. Muller, "Downtown Pittsburgh : Renaissance and Renewal," in Kevin J. Patrick and Joseph L. Scarpaci, Jr., *A Geographic Perspective of Pittsburgh and the Alleghenies*, (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2006): 12.
- <sup>5</sup> UPMC Mercy Archives, *A New "People Chapter" in Pittsburgh's Renaissance*.
- <sup>6</sup> Community Relations Speech, Sister M. Ferdinand Clark papers, UPMC Mercy Hospital Archives, SMF c. 1970
- <sup>7</sup> In the early to mid 1800s, the Bluff/Uptown area was part of the Soho section. The area was first developed by James Tustin in the late 1700s/early 1800s. He named the estate that he built "Soho" after his previous residence in England and the name was applied to the whole area. In later years, the Soho neighborhood became a more narrowly defined area, with other neighborhoods being carved out of the area. [www.worldbooklibrary.org/article/WHEBN0002603647/Bluff%20\(Pittsburgh\)#](http://www.worldbooklibrary.org/article/WHEBN0002603647/Bluff%20(Pittsburgh)#) References accessed 9/9/2015. Also see [www.duq.edu/news/pittsburgh-2030-district-embraces-the-bluff](http://www.duq.edu/news/pittsburgh-2030-district-embraces-the-bluff) accessed 9/9/2015 as well as *History of Pittsburgh and Environs, Volume 1*, (New York: The American Historical Society, 1922): 138-139.
- <sup>8</sup> City Planning Commission Report for Years 1951-1952; Joseph Rishel & Paul Demilio, *"The Spirit That Gives Life": The History of Duquesne University, 1878-1996* (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1997): 115.
- <sup>9</sup> UPMC Mercy Archives, Sister M. Ferdinand Clark papers: biographical information.
- <sup>10</sup> UPMC Mercy Archives, Financial Services Records: State Appropriations; UPMC Mercy Archives, Planning Records, *Summary of the Survey and Report prepared for Mercy Hospital*, (E.D. Rosenfeld MD & Associates, 1963): 13.
- <sup>11</sup> C. Hax McCullough , *Pillar of Pittsburgh: the History of Mercy Hospital & the city it serves* (Pittsburgh: Mercy Hospital, 1989): 144.
- <sup>12</sup> UPMC Mercy Archives, Board of Directors Records, Minutes: Executive Director's Report, 23 May 1960.
- <sup>13</sup> UPMC Mercy Archives, Planning Records: Exhibit "C", Principles of Hospital Planning, Approved by Executive Committee, HPA, 17 March 1960.
- <sup>14</sup> *Pillar*, 145.
- <sup>15</sup> UPMC Mercy Archives. Hospital Planning Association of Allegheny County Records.
- <sup>16</sup> UPMC Mercy Archives. Hospital Planning Association of Allegheny County Records.
- <sup>17</sup> *Pillar*, 145.
- <sup>18</sup> Sister Cornelius Meerwald, *Mercy Hospital 1847-1959* (Pittsburgh: Mercy Hospital, 1961): 12.
- <sup>19</sup> Rosenfeld, *Summary*, 14.
- <sup>20</sup> UPMC Mercy Archives, Planning Records, *Summary of the Survey and Report prepared for Mercy Hospital*, (E.D. Rosenfeld MD & Associates, 1963): 14.
- <sup>21</sup> *Pillar*, 147.
- <sup>22</sup> Sister M. Ferdinand Clark, "A Hospital for a Black Ghetto", *Hospital Progress* (Feb 1969): 49.
- <sup>23</sup> UPMC Mercy Archives, Board of Trustees Records: Correspondence.
- <sup>24</sup> UPMC Mercy Archives, *Planning Records, Survey and Report Part 1, prepared for Mercy Hospital*, (E.D. Rosenfeld MD & Associates, 1963): 27-28.
- <sup>25</sup> Rosenfeld, *Summary*, 15.
- <sup>26</sup> *Pillar*, 149.
- <sup>27</sup> *Ibid*, 148
- <sup>28</sup> *Ibid*, 155
- <sup>29</sup> *Ibid*.
- <sup>30</sup> UPMC Mercy Archives, *A New "People Chapter" in Pittsburgh's Renaissance*.
- <sup>31</sup> Muller, "Downtown Pittsburgh," 11.
- <sup>32</sup> Paul Roberts (ed). *Points in Time: Building a Life in Western Pennsylvania* (Pittsburgh: Heinz History Center, 1966): 201.
- <sup>33</sup> Weber, *Don't Call Me Boss*, 271.
- <sup>34</sup> Rosenfeld, *Summary*, 19.
- <sup>35</sup> Sister M. Ferdinand Clark, "Adequate Health Care: One Step Toward Social Justice", *Hospital Progress* (Oct 1978): 6.
- <sup>36</sup> Sister M. Ferdinand Clark, "A Hospital for a Black Ghetto", *Hospital Progress* (Feb 1969): 49.
- <sup>37</sup> UPMC Mercy Archives, Sister M. Ferdinand Clark papers: Speech, April 1968: 5.
- <sup>38</sup> Sister M. Ferdinand Clark, "A Hospital for a Black Ghetto", *Hospital Progress* (Feb 1969): 49.
- <sup>39</sup> UPMC Mercy Archives, Planning Records, Long Range Plan for Mercy Hospital Summary and Progress Report, 26 Sept 1969
- <sup>40</sup> *Pillar*, 178.
- <sup>41</sup> Sister M. Ferdinand Clark, "A Hospital for a Black Ghetto", *Hospital Progress* (Feb 1969): 50.
- <sup>42</sup> Clark, *Adequate Health Care*, 9.
- <sup>43</sup> *Ibid*, 10.
- <sup>44</sup> *Ibid*.



**A NEW "PEOPLE CHAPTER"  
IN PITTSBURGH'S RENAISSANCE**

**Cover of brochure for Quality of Mercy Campaign (UPMC Mercy Archives).**

# Strolling Through Time: A Walking Tour of the Baden Campus of the Sisters of St. Joseph

Barbara Hecht

Sisters of St. Joseph celebrated the rich heritage of their home and land with nearly 70 guests who “strolled through time” on June 18 in Baden, PA.

The threat of thunderstorms did not deter local history *aficionados*, curious neighbors, newcomers to the Baden grounds, and those with fond memories of the Sisters from participating in the mile-long historic walk.

The tour, coordinated and led by Archivist Kathleen Washy, was planned in concert with the Year of Consecrated Life during which Pope Francis has asked sisters, brothers, and priests throughout the world to remember their past with gratitude. In opening remarks, Kathleen set the tone for her talk, saying:

You are standing on the grounds of the home of the Sisters of St. Joseph. Many of you may think of the stereotype of a motherhouse as being a quiet place, a drab and dour place. This place is truly a wonderful place for meditation and spirituality - I know that my soul feels at peace every time that I set foot on these grounds - but it is also a place that has always been full of life, fun, and vitality since the days that the Sisters of St. Joseph moved here. This place is truly a treasure, for anyone who comes on the grounds.

Visitors learned about the beginnings and growth of the Sisters in Baden in the context of emerging industries and modes of transportation surrounding them. Highlights of the tour included background on the original structures, statues, and property, which initially served as a dairy farm. When the Sisters moved from Ebensburg to Baden in 1901, they continued to maintain the farm with chickens, pigs, cows, horses, and a variety of crops.



Photos Courtesy of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Baden



Among the guests was John Bates, a member of the Catholic Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania, who summarized his tour experience:

I've been on a lot of tours, including Catholic and historic ones, locally and elsewhere. The Baden tour was truly exceptional — the initial vibe in the crowd waiting to start the tour, the friendliness of the Sisters of St. Joseph during and after the walk, and the great anecdotes that archivist Kathleen Washy recounted from the archives. All of that brought the Sisters to “life.”

Though the tour covered the buildings and their history, there was no “institutional” feel to this trip through time. Rather we experienced the *joi de vivre* that must have attracted and sustained the many women who joined the Sisters of St. Joseph over their more than 100 years in Baden. That spirit was ably communicated and truly demonstrated during and after the tour.

Following the tour, guests gathered for conversation with the Sisters, light refreshments and historic photo exhibits in Medaille Hall in the Motherhouse. One woman wanted to see the setting where her father had attended the former Mount Gallitzin boarding school for boys. Parents whose children now attend the Baden Academy Charter School attended to learn more about the property and buildings. A first-time visitor, Paul Bronder, who maintains a grape arbor in the South Hills of Pittsburgh, expressed great interest in the orchard and grape arbor on site and offered to share his recipe for grape jelly with the Sisters.

As the tour group meandered up the pathway toward the cemetery, Kathleen said some Sisters recalled singing as they walked along the same route years ago. In a diary entry dated May 2, 1927, Mother Genevieve Ryan not only seemingly confirms that ritual, but also attests to the beauty of God's creation that the Sisters continue to preserve and sustain today. To missionary Sisters in China, Mother Genevieve wrote:

As we wended our way to and from the cemetery, one could not but raise our voice of joyous thanksgiving to the Giver of Gifts for, as far as eye could reach, the country was shrouded in green, our own surroundings beautiful. Each year, the place grows more attractive.

This article has been reprinted with permission from the Sisters of St. Joseph of Baden. It originally appeared in the summer 2015 edition of the sisters' *Dear Neighbor* magazine.

# Captain Michael McGuire Memorial Park Dedicated in Loretto, PA

## Blanche McGuire

On August 21, 2015, St. Francis University and the Borough of Loretto dedicated a newly created public park in honor of Captain Michael McGuire, first settler in the region and religious benefactor.

More than two centuries ago, Captain Michael McGuire, a Catholic Revolutionary War veteran from Maryland, led a small band of family and friends to McGuire's Settlement located in what is today Cambria County. Before his death in 1793, McGuire set aside land for the benefit of resident clergy. Bishop John Carroll later gave a young Prince Demetrius Augustine Gallitzin permission to "take possession of the land donated by Captain McGuire," a decision that set the stage for a strong and vibrant Catholic settlement in Loretto. Today Loretto is home to St. Francis University, the Franciscan Friars of the Third Order Regular, a Carmelite Monastery, and the Basilica of St. Michael the Archangel.

More than 260 guests attended the park dedication, many of them McGuire descendants (some shown below) who came from Pennsylvania, Ohio, Maryland and Virginia to honor Captain McGuire and his family. The crowd also included many people descended from other early pioneers in McGuire's Settlement.

One McGuire descendant, Michael McGuire of Cresson, composed an original rollicking ballad about Captain Michael McGuire, his great-great-great-grandfather. McGuire and his son, Aaron, sang the ballad during the dedication ceremony. In this song and in earlier remarks, McGuire paid tribute to Captain Mike, his "saintly wife, Rachel" and to the faith that sustained his ancestors. He emphasized how much this heritage is needed in today's climate of relativism and indifference to religion. Said McGuire "We need to think for the future as well as the past. The Park is a symbol of good values, morals and hard work."

McGuire's sister, Sister Margie McGuire of the Carmelite Community of the Word, echoed these sentiments. "I grew up knowing and cherishing the McGuire family history. The pioneers cherished their faith and family and wanted their children to grow up in an environment that fostered these values."

The dedication ceremonies began with remarks by Mayor David Eckenrode of Loretto. Rev. Joseph Lehman, T.O.R., Vice President for Mission Integration at St. Francis University, gave the opening

prayer in which he too paid tribute to the early pioneers who were "bold in their dreams and blessed us their descendants with a great legacy." Rev. Malachi Van Tassel, T.O.R., President of St. Francis University, delivered the welcoming address. Rev. Malachi paid tribute to the close ties between the University and Loretto that resulted in a "natural, sustainable and inviting outdoor space...that will provide residents, students and visitors recreational and learning opportunities."

McGuire Memorial Park is the result of a partnership that began in 2011 between St. Francis University and Loretto Borough. Funding for the park was provided by a grant from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Community Conservation Partnerships Program as well as donations from community partners and others including members of the McGuire family.

The first community park in Loretto, McGuire Memorial Park, was designed to promote health and fitness and to celebrate Loretto's history and cultural heritage. It is an environmentally friendly space that provides recreation and education for area residents, visitors, and students. It includes a walking path, many plants native to Pennsylvania such as red maples and tulip trees, a playground, an outdoor classroom, picnic facilities, grills, bike racks, a bird blind, and boardwalks that lead into the natural wetlands located on the grounds.

The park features several historical signs providing background on Captain McGuire, Demetrius Augustine Gallitzin (Servant of God), the Franciscan Friars who founded Saint Francis Academy, and Loretto resident and steel magnate, Charles Schwab. Other signs provide lyrics for the Ballad of Captain Michael McGuire and depictions of pioneer life from American artist, Nat Youngblood.

The park's logo, designed by Shane Adams, depicts the hunting cabin that Captain McGuire built in this region in the late 1760s.

Ceremony attendees enjoyed a splendid ox roast supper, courtesy of the Borough of Loretto. "We'll do this every year, folks!" promised Mayor Eckenrode. Clearly the Park's legacy is just beginning.

Blanche McGuire is also a descendant of Captain Michael McGuire. In 1975-1976 she researched and documented the life of Captain McGuire for the Loretto, PA Bicentennial Committee.



**McGuire descendants with St. Francis University President, Rev. Malachi Van Tassel**

Source: St. Francis University

# Gannon, Guilfoyle, and Walsh: Shared Education and Catholic Higher Learning Objectives in Western Pennsylvania and Beyond, 1873-1957

Alan B. Delozier

*Sanita, Scientia, Sanctitas* – “Health, Knowledge, Holiness” is the school motto for Gannon University located in Erie, Pennsylvania, but can also relate in large measure to the path taken by those who became priest-educators or administrators and adopted the responsibility for supporting Catholic higher education in their respective academically-centered neighborhoods.<sup>1</sup> The educational path of a priest, especially one who rises in rank to that of bishop, is often a methodical and involved process that centers upon pedagogy and prayer alike. The long and distinguished line of prelates that led the various Sees of Western Pennsylvania and the colleges and universities they helped to found, or continued to nurture if already established, provides a look into the educational life of the Church and how these schools survived within society at large. Each faced the same issues: maintaining a Catholic vision, administrative provisions, location, and sustaining an established educational enterprise through keen promotion and budgeting practices. Our three examples — Archbishops John Mark Gannon and Thomas Joseph Walsh, Jr., and Bishop Richard Thomas Guilfoyle — administered their own dioceses and promoted higher education initiatives that led to scores who chose Holy Orders and some who eventually earned high ecclesiastical rank. The three bishops also joined thousands of alumni who chose advanced learning at a college via the traditional path of attendance, study, and diligence that ultimately led to a diploma and finding their place in the wider world.

## Biographical Information In Brief and Early Schooling

A common characteristic shared by Bishops Gannon, Guilfoyle, and Walsh — aside from their mutual Irish-Catholic heritage, large family units, modest blue collar roots, nineteenth century birth, undergraduate alma mater, and the seeds that led to the seminary and ordination for example — can be traced through their hometowns found in different parts of Western Pennsylvania.<sup>2</sup> It was a case of influence from “Éire to Erie” so to speak in terms of how those who had Irish-born parents or had Hibernian ancestry tended to be in the majority and dominated the ranks of the hierarchy for years within the early American Church. From here their lifetime choice of vocation would also grow to embrace and learn about other ethnic groups over time. This became part of an everyday and growing education which also helped to shape their leadership efforts and wider world view and in part lent perspective as to how colleges and universities functioned and grew within their respective dioceses. After birth and adolescence passed, their ultimate ties to the region would vary in depth and degree through their respective lives of service. The strongest contributions and local attachments to Western Pennsylvania belonged to Archbishop Gannon and Bishop Guilfoyle who would head the Dioceses of Erie and Altoona respectively. However, Archbishop Walsh became the “prodigal son” in some respects as he spent most of his time on the borders of the Keystone State and eventually made a name for himself early on within the Diocese of Buffalo (which borders the Northern Tier of the Commonwealth) and over the Delaware River

to the east when he became Bishop of Trenton before ending up as the Archbishop of Newark in New Jersey.<sup>3</sup> Despite geographical separation, each gentleman would share comparable church rank, serve as co-celebrants at elevations, jubilees, and other milestone events, correspond with one another, and serve on various hierarchy-administered boards. This was part of a continuous bond that lasted throughout the course of their respective lives.

In order to have a clearer idea of the life journeys of these three individuals, the following capsule biographical sketches will provide perspective. **John Mark Gannon** (June 12, 1877 – September 5, 1968) was the seventh of nine children born to Thomas Patrick (1832-1894) and Julia (Dunleavy) Gannon (1841-1930) in Erie. He was ordained to the priesthood on December 21, 1901. Gannon served as curate or pastor at various parishes in Cambridge Springs, McKean, Meadville, and Oil City prior to his consecration as Auxiliary Bishop of the Diocese of Erie on February 6, 1918. He later served as the fifth Bishop of Erie from December 16, 1920 until his retirement in 1966.<sup>4</sup>

A protégé of Archbishop Gannon, **Richard Thomas Guilfoyle** (December 22, 1892 – June 10, 1957) was born in Adrian Mines just outside of Punxsutawney in Jefferson County, Pennsylvania (diocese of Erie). He was ordained to the priesthood in 1917 and his first assignment was as curate at St. Stephen in Oil City (1917-21), with a brief transfer to St. Titus in Titusville during part of 1918.



**Archbishop Thomas Walsh, Bestowing Degree on Proud Graduate, 1948** (Photo courtesy of the Archdiocese of Newark Collection, Archives & Special Collections Center - Seton Hall University)

## Gannon, Guilfoyle, and Walsh: Shared Education and Catholic Higher Learning Objectives in Western Pennsylvania and Beyond, 1873-1957 (continued)

From parish duty, Guilfoyle eventually became secretary to Bishop Gannon and concurrently served as Chancellor of the Diocese of Erie. This experience ultimately led to his appointment as the third Bishop of Altoona in 1936, where he served until his death over two decades later.<sup>5</sup>

Another native son of Western Pennsylvania who contributed to the spiritual life of the region was **Thomas Joseph Walsh, Jr.** (December 6, 1873 – June 6, 1952). Born in Parkers Landing in Armstrong County (then in the diocese of Pittsburgh) to parents Thomas and Helen (Curtin) Walsh, he was the first of four sons. Walsh was ordained to the priesthood on January 27, 1900. He served as curate at St. Joseph's Cathedral (later appointed rector, 1915-18) while also occupying the office of Chancellor of the Diocese of Buffalo along with being private secretary to Bishop James Edward Quigley. He was appointed Bishop of Trenton (NJ) on May 10, 1918 and was named Bishop of Newark (NJ) on March 2, 1928. Walsh eventually was appointed the first Archbishop of Newark on December 10, 1937 and held this position until his death in 1952.<sup>6</sup>

As noted above, these three shared a common background, but early educational choices are what brought them closer in their joint paths to the priesthood and rise in the ranks — shared academic and life curriculum so to speak. For example, Gannon attended parochial school at St. Patrick's, his home parish, and graduation from “Old Central” and Clark's Business College followed in 1893.<sup>7</sup> Guilfoyle also attended parochial school in his hometown. Walsh himself attended public schools mainly around Pikesville, Allentown, and Wellsville (New York) after the family moved across the Pennsylvania border.<sup>8</sup> These formative steps infused these gentlemen with the fundamentals of writing, reading, and arithmetic as the old adage goes and led to a relative rarity, but a fairly common dream for first generation Americans — that of a college education and increased professional opportunities upon graduation.

### St. Bonaventure College and the Cradle of Western Pennsylvania Bishops

Envisioning future growth from a relatively short geographical distance, Gannon, Guilfoyle, and Walsh decided upon a liberal arts school conducted by the Order of Friars Minor (Franciscans) known as St. Bonaventure College — where they learned first-hand about higher education and applied those lessons later by extension to the dioceses, colleges, and parochial schools administered under their care. St. Bonaventure was founded in 1859 through the efforts of Nicholas Devereaux and other trailblazers including John Timon (1797-1867), the first Bishop of Buffalo whose family came from County Cavan, Ireland and himself born in Conewago, Pennsylvania.<sup>9</sup>

In many ways from the time of Bishop Timon forward, St. Bonaventure — located outside of Olean, New York — is a place that is often connected to Western Pennsylvania being situated approximately 11 miles from the state border and about 19 miles from the city of Bradford (Pennsylvania). In terms of proximity and travel, the school catalog of 1899 noted: “It is situated near the Allegany river in one of the most healthy and picturesque parts of the State. The Erie railroad runs through the grounds and thus renders St. Bonaventure's very convenient of access.”<sup>10</sup> After the school's

founding, the first freshman class of 26 students featured four young men from Pennsylvania (and a pair from Italy) who joined their New York brethren. What these students and eventually Gannon, Guilfoyle, and Walsh faced upon admission was the following base requirement: “No student will be received unless recommended by his respective Bishop or pastor. If he be from any other Institution he must have satisfactory letters from the President of that Institution.”<sup>11</sup> By the time Gannon and Walsh were on campus the school was led as president by Reverend Joseph Butler, OFM, a long-time fixture on campus. Father Butler also led the academic charge on behalf of St. Bonaventure which oversaw the 1898 initiative whereby the New York State Board of Regents had separated the preparatory and college divisions of the school, thereby allowing students to graduate in the now customary four years instead of the former terminal seven or eight.<sup>12</sup>

Once on campus, a student could select his own course of studies, but within a structured Catholic infused framework be it Ecclesiastical, Collegiate, Academic or Commercial. The Ecclesiastical Course of four years embraced Dogmatic and Moral and Pastoral Theology, Canon Law, Scripture (Exegesis) Hermeneutics, Sacred Eloquence, Hebrew and Arabic Languages, Liturgy, Ecclesiastical History, and Gregorian Chant.<sup>13</sup> The following course of studies was not only typical for the St. Bonaventure student of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, but often mirrored the curriculum and required course sequence (with authors/book titles) at other Catholic colleges and universities of the day. The seminary department and first year expectations are outlined as follows:



**Archbishop Thomas Walsh, Portrait** (Photo credits for Walsh all the same)

## Gannon, Guilfoyle, and Walsh: Shared Education and Catholic Higher Learning Objectives in Western Pennsylvania and Beyond, 1873-1957 (continued)

<b>Course of Studies<sup>14</sup></b>	
<b>Seminary Department</b>	<b>Collegiate Department</b>
Dogmatic Theology – Perrone	<b>Academic Course</b>
Moral Theology – Gury and Sabetti	Fourth Class – First Year (Freshmen)
Pastoral Theology – Stang	English – Brown’s Grammar and Exercises. U.S. History
Hermeneutics – Janssen’s	Latin – Grammar (Bullion), Historia Sacra (Thomond)
Ecclesiastical History – Brueck	Arithmetic – Davies’ (Intermediate)
Canon Law – Smith	Book-keeping – Crittenden’s
Liturgy – Wapelhorst	Writing – Lessons in Penmanship
Sacred Eloquence – Potter	Christian Doctrine
Plain Chant	
All theologians are required to preach at least twice a year.	

All three students also followed a standard prescription for the start of the academic experience. This involved the following prescribed pattern and preparation for life on campus:

The Scholastic year commences on the second Monday of September, and ends about the last of June. Terms. Board, Tuition, Bedding and Washing per annum, \$200. Doctor’s Fees – 5.00. Optional (With Extra Charges) – Piano, and use of instrument - \$30.00, Organ – 20.00, Modern Languages free of charge.<sup>15</sup>

Additionally, it was required ahead of time that students upon entering should have a sufficient number of shirts, toilet articles, etc.<sup>16</sup>

In addition to time in the classroom, these students had the option of engaging in various specialized activities, but each had to join at least one religious society as part of rounding out their education.<sup>17</sup> In the case of Walsh, his affiliation was as a consultor for the Third Order of St. Francis, but he also showed his artistic side as a member of the Cadet Band where he played the cornet (second chair, b-flat) and first violin in St. Cecilia’s Orchestra. Athletics was also another extra-curricular option and became a unifying force as Walsh belonged to the Handball Association and with his classmate and teammate John Gannon, both were contemporaries of National Baseball Hall of Fame members John McGraw and Hughie Jennings. Monsignor Robert Barcio, former archivist and historian of the Diocese of Erie who specialized in Church history, noted how these connections also included a third bishop – Pascal Robinson, OFM (class of 1896), who became a Papal Nuncio to Ireland in subsequent years and part of a wider ecclesiastical network.<sup>18</sup>

Around the time of graduation for Gannon and Walsh, the Pennsylvania-centered presence at the school still remained true in various ways beyond the consistent presence of young men in attendance from across the border. For example, the Reverend Francis Coyle from St. Thomas, Braddock sponsored a gold medal for

excellence in Christian Doctrine. The Alumni Association, organized in 1888, was led by Reverend William Dwyer of St. Andrew in Erie as president and the Reverend John Enright of Bernice (Sullivan County) who was part of the Executive Committee.<sup>19</sup> Gannon and Walsh would soon join the ranks of this organization in the late 1890s. Post “pomp and circumstance” remained in their joint connections to St. Bonaventure: Walsh was bestowed an honorary degree from his alma mater in 1913 and five years later in June 1918, Gannon ordained a class of 105 to the priesthood in a ceremony conducted at the adjacent seminary.<sup>20</sup>

Although Gannon and Walsh were contemporaries, Guilfoyle also made a mark himself at St. Bonaventure during the early twentieth century. As Monsignor Barcio noted in regard to the future Bishop Guilfoyle, his time at the college was quite memorable:

From 1908 to 1917, the name of Richard T. Guilfoyle was a household word at St. Bonaventure College. It was no exaggeration to say that this happy, alert and always courteous lad from the mining town of Delancey, Pennsylvania never had an enemy, but that from the very beginning he befriended everyone on campus from the last high school freshman to the senior of the deacon’s class, as well as every member of the faculty.

Richard Guilfoyle was always among the leaders in his classes. He received many academic awards for his prowess in the classroom. On June 17, 1914, commencement day, it was announced that Richard T. Guilfoyle was awarded the degree of Bachelor of Arts “Summa Cum Laude.” No doubt, this was the reason he was familiarly known by his classmates as “Sappy” short for “Sapientia” meaning wisdom.<sup>21</sup>

Guilfoyle eventually became a member of the Alumni Association. On November 30, 1936 his episcopal consecration was presided over by Bishop Gannon, with Bishop Walsh as co-consecrator —

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with the attendance of other fellow alumni that included Reverend Thomas Plassmann, OFM, who had succeeded Father Butler as college president. When Guilfoyle died on June 10, 1957, Archbishop Gannon heard the news of his passing while on a retreat with a band of diocesan clergy on the St. Bonaventure University campus — showing consistent attention to news of alma mater and preparation in overseeing operations of schools from grade to graduate school level within their own dioceses when they assumed leadership status.

### The “Paper Chase” and Next Steps to the Priesthood

In the typical succession of Church leaders, members of the clergy who are eventually elevated to the bishopric usually study at an advanced level in Rome or at Louvain if not also at the Catholic University of America. This is not an automatic right, but rather an oft-repeated and traditional path to power within the Church. For example, Gannon earned a second Bachelor of Arts degree (1902) and licentiate (1904) in Sacred Theology before graduating with a pair of doctorates in Divinity and Canon Law from the Pontifical Athenaeum, Apollinare in 1904 after starting at the Catholic University of America.<sup>22</sup>

Upon later reflection on these days of intensive and advanced scholarship, Archbishop Gannon wrote to the Reverend Robert Gannon, S.J. (no relation), the former President of Fordham University and recalled the following conditions that he endured en route to his future office of authority:

My days were spent in the library absorbing the tremendous shelf of Migne’s Greek and Latin Fathers. On the side, I learned day after day of all the soiled linen of that period until the Waggaman cyclone hit the institution, and I among others was dropped from the payroll. My Bishop transferred me to Rome.<sup>23</sup>

Additional recognition also came after they earned their diplomas. Walsh earned a pair of doctorates when he studied at the Pontifical Roman Athenaeum S. Apollinare between 1907 and 1908.<sup>24</sup> These prelates would often go on to receive honorary degrees including Bishop Gannon who received one from the University of Notre Dame du Lac in 1927, among other institutions over the years.

All of the three began their careers as young curates and later had “mentor” bishops who steered them beyond involvement with a single parish. This often included aiding an affiliated parochial school and deeper support of their parishioners on partaking in spiritual education and guidance based on prescribed Church teachings. On a more personal level, the sharing of Catholic-based education typically became a passion and duty for the bishops.

Among each of these future diocesan leaders, Archbishop Gannon had the earliest start and one of the most prominent track records for starting and nurturing academic institutions, especially with colleges housed within his particular see. More details will be provided further in this article, but by way of a basic overview and timeline, he founded Cathedral Preparatory School (1921), and encouraged the establishment of all-female Villa Maria College (1925), administered by the Sisters of St. Joseph, and all-female Mercyhurst College (1926), affiliated with the Sisters of Mercy. After the crash on Wall Street and economic troubles that rippled across the nation, Gannon was somehow able to establish the male counterpart Cathedral College

(1933), a two-year institution that was later extended to four and renamed Gannon College in his honor once it achieved stability and advanced standing in the academic world. Additionally, Bishop Gannon created a new educational program under the auspices of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine that was organized within every part of the Diocese of Erie.<sup>25</sup> Along with the aforementioned colleges he founded five regional high schools that often served as feeder academies into the world of higher education as more students considered attending college — but this would really explode under the G.I. Bill of Rights which offered free educational options for veterans which was a typical means of building school ties for the faithful. This was a trend that also later benefitted the efforts of Bishop Guilfoyle and Archbishop Walsh in New Jersey, but mirrored what was happening in his home state as well.

The G.I. Bill and the network of parochial high schools also impacted favorably upon Walsh-endorsed Seton Hall College, which featured a 95% growth in enrollment right after World War II (the highest ratio of any school in the nation). But Walsh was active in New Jersey where he did create institutions of higher learning that attracted a handful of students from Pennsylvania. Many of these individuals came from the eastern part of the state, but some from as far west as Pittsburgh and environs over the years. While Bishop of Trenton, he oversaw the creation of the all-female and Sisters of Mercy-led Georgian Court College (1924) and helped create Caldwell College (1939) under the Dominican Sisters. He also supported the College of St. Elizabeth, Convent Station (established in 1899), until it fell outside of his geographical jurisdiction with the creation of the Diocese of Paterson in 1937. Walsh also supported the Jesuit-run St. Peter’s College (founded in 1872) in Jersey City and Seton Hall College (which became a university in 1950) in South Orange, where he resided just outside the campus grounds for most of his time in office as bishop.<sup>26</sup>

Although the work done by Walsh does not reflect directly on Western Pennsylvania *per se*, the patterns show a consistent building explosion in Catholic America when Archbishop Gannon and Bishop Guilfoyle were likewise striving to build for the future of higher education within their areas of influence. But some individuals did not stay at home to attend college. For example, the connection to Pennsylvania was evident with Seton Hall (not to be confused with the Sisters of Charity school, Seton Hill University, located in Greensburg and founded as a junior college in 1914), going back to W.S. McManus, the 88th student admitted to Seton Hall in 1858 who hailed from Reading.<sup>27</sup> On average, a scattering of Pennsylvanians would be on the student register books per semester. During the tenure of Walsh in Newark, students from Allentown to Bradford Woods — along with individuals from Kingston, Forty Fort, McKeesport, and Union City among other towns — dotted the *Setonia* roster over the years including one priest who would serve in Western Pennsylvania: Monsignor James F. Hopkins ’95 (also a St. Bonaventure graduate) who served at St. Titus in Titusville for a number of years.<sup>28</sup> Regardless of local attendance or destination, enrollment at Catholic colleges especially in Western Pennsylvania was often a case of manageable economics, motivation, and accessibility. For the hierarchy it became the goal of building a solid infra-structure to help sustain these

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institutions for future generations to avail themselves of a church-supported education.

Meanwhile, Bishop Guilfoyle focused his energies within the Diocese of Altoona (later Altoona-Johnstown): Mount Aloysius College, a school located in Cresson and operated by the Sisters of Mercy. The school began in 1853 as a prep academy, but under Guilfoyle it expanded into a junior college by April of 1939 with aid from the sponsoring order and the Board of Trustees prior to becoming an undergraduate school offering bachelor degrees in 1991.<sup>29</sup> His efforts helped with the upgrade and were part of concerted efforts of support that exemplified that an academy could grow from a high school into a junior college and then into a four-year degree-granting institution of advanced learning. This was a common path among different American Catholic-affiliated colleges and universities over the last two centuries.

### Catholic Higher Education in Context

From the aforementioned schools that Archbishops Gannon and Walsh and Bishop Guilfoyle supported to other nearby Catholic colleges and universities (with their religious order affiliation) including Duquesne (Holy Ghost Fathers) and Mt. Mercy (later Carlow) (Sisters of Mercy) in Pittsburgh, or St. Vincent (Benedictine) in Latrobe and many others within and beyond Western Pennsylvania, all offered students a choice of blended traditional religious and commercial educational instruction.<sup>30</sup>

In many cases it was the dream realized of having first, second, and succeeding generations of immigrants attend college and be educated to avoid a lifetime of toil in the mills, factories, and coal mines of Pennsylvania where they had to overcome various health and safety hazards on a regular basis in order to achieve a foothold and build the proverbial “better life” in this country.

Within the whole of Catholic higher education, during the earliest presence of school life when diocesan leadership was building a solid parochial school system, this helped increase educational exposure and attractiveness for devout Catholic families to consider. Graduating from a high/prep school tended to be a realistic goal with college being a more distant hope. During the mid-to-late nineteenth century, colleges often had a seven-to-eight year curriculum with three-to-four years high school and a prescribed eight-semester path to an AB or equivalent degree like that encountered by Gannon, Guilfoyle, and Walsh during their own undergraduate experiences.

When it comes to the deeper history of Catholic higher education in America, the Society of Jesus set the pace with the founding of Georgetown College (later university) in 1789. Others followed slowly, but steadily, in turn as the nineteenth century progressed — including the founding of St. Francis College in Loretto in 1847, which became the first school of its kind in Western Pennsylvania.<sup>31</sup> Further milestones occurred later in that century as the National Education Association (NEA) was formed in 1892 to set curricular standards across the board; eight years later, the Association of American Universities (AAU) and then the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities (ACCU) were founded as voluntary associations of delegates from affiliated institutions of higher learning. By 1904, the

Catholic Education Association (CEA) was formed and this in part was a prelude to the maturing of Catholicism in the United States in the early twentieth century. In 1908, Vatican officials ended the missionary status of the American Catholic Church by removing it from the jurisdiction of *Propaganda Fide*, which led to both greater credibility within the Universal Church and to a new era in American Catholic higher education.<sup>32</sup>

The proportion of Catholics and those with access to educational facilities varied over the years, but the number of students was low in relation to the full population of those who belonged to the Church. As Catholic historian Jay P. Dolan noted, with a limited choice between seminary and college schoolwork, the trailblazing colleges featured a mixed student body:

Students ranged anywhere from eight to twenty-two years of age.... Such a mixture of young and old students meant that the college had to offer “instruction ranging from elementary courses like spelling, penmanship, and basic English grammar to college-level work in Latin, Greek and Philosophy.” Another point worth noting is that Protestants regularly attended Catholic colleges at this time.... Though these institutions hardly resembled today’s college, they were considered colleges at that time.<sup>33</sup>

The designation of what made up a college would change over time as basic curricula would become subject to accreditation standards by the end of the nineteenth century and beyond.

Those Catholics who did attend college during the first century and a half after the founding of Georgetown tended to be in a position to attend through diligence and careful planning. Across the country and within Western Pennsylvania in particular the:

tidal wave of Catholic immigration began with the Irish (French and Germans as well) in the 1840s, but by 1900 the European emigration had shifted decisively south and east as Poles, Slovaks, and Italians crowded through the nation’s ports of entry.<sup>34</sup>

Immigration slowed in the 1920s and what had been a predominantly “foreign” religion was, for better and worse, increasingly assimilated into American culture. Second and third generation immigrants advanced up the economic ladder. The aforementioned G.I. Bill educational benefits after World War II expedited this climb and also helped build student enrollment beyond merely local residents attending a nearby college.

A common vernacular language, developed in parochial elementary and secondary schools attended by immigrants and their offspring, also helped with students’ assimilation. Thus, Catholic educational tradition and modern society converged at colleges and universities in particular. As educational historian Edward Power noted:

In place of the classics, or in addition to them, an English curriculum was organized in most colleges before 1890. This new English course was not an accessory to the classical or classical-scientific courses so common in most colleges; it was considered to have sufficient merit in its own right and it retained only those parts or elements of the classical course believed to be essential to a good education.... From 1890 to 1920 Catholic colleges went through a period of reorganization. The purpose of reorganizing was to obtain some uniformity in college studies

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and to conform more closely to what was being done in the non-Catholic colleges of the country.<sup>35</sup>

Otherwise, it was noted that an extension of the Catholic school system not only in Erie but in much of the nation was ongoing. The extent of this venture, strongly supported by many bishops to fulfill the mandates of the Council of Baltimore to establish a school in every parish, contributed mightily to creating a demand for secondary and higher education under the auspices of the Catholic Church. Numerous Catholic institutions of higher learning were established in the 1920-1950 era to meet this educational need; it might be added that this was also the age of the expansion of higher educational opportunities in the country as a whole. The curricular development of Catholic institutions of higher education began as “more elementary” than “secondary” in content if not following a path through the seminary.<sup>36</sup> Specific requirements would include intensive English studies, but also a liberal arts (or classics) curriculum if someone did not follow a scientific or commercial course of studies in the end. Another benefit of this approach especially among the hierarchy was to try and retain a Catholic identity among those who attended parochial schools instead of the danger of losing their faith by attending public, or institutions sponsored by other religious denominations.<sup>37</sup>

Overall, the role of the hierarchy in higher education was one which usually centered on the creation of a board of trustees or regents in concert with a provincial or mother superior who led their particular religious order and appointed a president. Bishops helped to support their needs within their respective dioceses, but another unique circumstance that faced both Archbishops Walsh and Gannon is that they headed diocesan-run institutions of higher education — Seton Hall and Cathedral (Gannon) respectively where they sat as the head of their respective governing boards. There were only a handful of colleges and universities that were not led by religious orders, but Power went on to note this phenomenon in his expert analysis on a broader scale:

The Catholic college, it is true, has had a long tradition of administrative control. The presidents of the early colleges were encouraged by bishops and religious superiors to rule their houses of study without interference from the faculty, and this precedent has been retained with few exceptions. The early college, because it was a house of moral formation and Catholic doctrine, may have been justified in refusing to permit the “hands and the feet to interfere with decisions made by the head,” but the Catholic college of today is more fully an intellectual agency than its predecessors and it is simply impossible to suppose that all of the decisions in a college can be made by an administrative head.... The office of Catholic college president was often an avenue to preferment in the Church — many presidents became bishops — but more often, it seems, the office was a gateway to educational obscurity. An able president might become a bishop, but it was more likely that his talents as a leader and as an administrator were allowed to wither away in a subsequent assignment as a high school teacher or a college instructor.<sup>38</sup>

Thus, the leadership challenge of a college or university is one that

went together with understanding the fundamental educational needs of the constituency. Beyond those who had an opportunity to attend school in the early age of Catholic academia, the goal was to have a functioning system in place to educate all who wanted to avail themselves of higher education through part-time jobs, scholarships, purses, or sponsorship opportunities that could help defray costs. This helped students in larger measure focus on the books instead of having to worry as much about the financial end and dealing with the logistical and psychological transitions that were part of this vision.<sup>39</sup>

After World War II, enrollment in the nation’s colleges and universities reached 2,028,000 as compared to 1,365,000 in 1939. The growth of Gannon College was, of course, intimately related both to the need for a Catholic higher education for a larger number of young people as well as to the burgeoning veteran population on the campuses in 1946 and subsequent years. The further national growth of the percentage of young men and women continuing higher education (21% of the 18-21 age group attended college in 1930 compared to 32% by the late 1950’s) contributed to the solidification of Gannon and many institutions of higher learning.<sup>40</sup>

This also helped to make the Catholic institution a viable force in the future of knowledge sharing, based on an evolving tradition of higher education for the masses.

### Foundation of Western Pennsylvania Catholic Colleges Under Bishop Gannon – Mercyhurst and Villa Maria

When it came to describing the values of Archbishop Gannon and his work with Catholic education, Monsignor Barcio said the following of him:

The Church has gone to the length of establishing a national system of moral education throughout the nation. The burden of permanently supporting that system grows increasingly heavy but she accepts it as a divine mission and a patriotic duty. Let it never be said that the Catholic Church has failed America or the principles which made this nation great....<sup>41</sup>

Gannon had thus proved himself to be a builder and visionary. Aside from traditional parochial schools, ethnic and specialty schools arose. For example, St. John Kanty College, a high school and later junior college for men of Polish descent opened in 1911 under the jurisdiction of the Missionary Fathers of Saint Vincent de Paul. In addition, there was the Sacred Heart Mission (high school and junior college) at Girard in Erie County. This school was restricted to preparing boys for missionary priesthood in the Society of the Divine Word. Also, there was St. Mary’s College — a preparatory seminary founded in 1881 at North East in Erie County that educated young men for the priesthood in the Redemptorist Order. These were specialized educational enterprises that Bishop Gannon worked with in the course of his time as a leader and builder of religious-sponsored institutions — especially seminaries to help add to the ranks of the clergy to minister more fully to the faithful.<sup>42</sup>

From the germ of an idea to finished blueprints, the role of a church

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leader and the administrative forces behind a new college campus typically involved planning the mission, facility, financial reserves, and other facets which are involved with a new educational enterprise. Within the diocese of Erie, it was a case of female higher education first and then looking at a male counterpart. Dolan also noted that it became somewhat easier for the earlier all-women colleges to start and grow due to the number of teaching sisters and the focus exerted by the various religious orders, even though most faced perpetual issues of financial support and enrollment numbers.<sup>43</sup> From these particular circumstances, the Sisters of Mercy opened Mercyhurst Seminary High School and College in 1926 — but the story of the start goes back six years earlier when in 1920, newly installed Bishop Gannon suggested to the Sisters of Mercy that they move their Motherhouse from Titusville to Erie.<sup>44</sup>

Available land for the physical plant provided ample expansion for college operations with the groundbreaking taking place on September 8, 1924 and placement of the cornerstone by Bishop Gannon on August 23rd of the following year. The sisters were engaged in a swirl of activity once all parts of the administrative chain were set in place.<sup>45</sup> By 1928, Mercyhurst obtained a charter from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania as a degree-granting institution where women could obtain a Bachelor of Science diploma in Home Economics. Three years later, the Middle States Association of Colleges and Universities granted the school full membership and accreditation rights. Monsignor Barcio also provided the celebratory post-script to these developments whereby Mercyhurst obtained not only stability, but proper status and respectability through a carefully detailed calendar of cultural and social events that helped attract students to their campus. For example, Bishop's Day was celebrated each year to commemorate the dedication and blessing of Mercyhurst on November 10, 1926. On that occasion, each student was formally presented to Bishop Gannon when he attended an entertainment prepared for him and dined with the senior class. The Sisters of Mercy made sure that he was a regular visitor on-site.<sup>46</sup>

Mercyhurst was not the only Catholic college success story in Erie. The first major effort at Catholic higher education in Erie came via the Sisters of St. Joseph in September of 1925 with the establishment of their college, Villa Maria. With the imprimatur of Bishop Gannon, Villa Maria obtained a state charter (1928) and bestowed its first degrees on June 12th of that year.<sup>47</sup> Villa Maria obtained Middle States Association accreditation in 1937. As Monsignor Barcio noted, that same year showed how the college operated and its course offerings typified liberal arts schools:

The first degree had been listed under the categories of Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science. Majors were in English, German, Greek, Latin, music, chemistry, and biology. Later, degrees were conferred in the fields of home economics, sociology, and business education.

During this period, the College had involved a number of foreign students, several of them from Puerto Rico. Thirty-four of them were graduated from the College between 1937 and 1967.<sup>48</sup>

The school eventually merged with Gannon College, which would

become Gannon University in 1989. Ironically, Bishop Gannon and his college (originally Cathedral College, later known as Gannon College, and ultimately Gannon University) would rely on Villa Maria College in order to establish a male-only college in Erie — a story which is outlined below.

### Archbishop Gannon – Founding of Cathedral (Gannon) College from the Ground Up

During the academic year of 1933-1934, Cathedral College opened and operated under the Charter of Villa Maria College as a downtown extension school for men. At the time, Villa Maria College was in the process of building credentials for accreditation and the crowded conditions made for a challenge from the start. Therefore, Villa Maria was for a time an *ad hoc* co-educational institution of higher education for the see. This happened due to the fact that the first graduates of the Cathedral Preparatory School for Boys were financially incapable of enrolling at a college due to financial shortfalls and wanted to pursue advanced educational avenues, but this was conditional due to room and logistics. The young men could only spend two years at Villa Maria while other provisions were made.<sup>49</sup>

Over three dozen young men from Cathedral Prep were allowed to attend Villa Maria for two years in the late 1920s through the efforts of Father [Doctor] “Doc” Joseph Wehrle who served under Archbishop Gannon.

Nevertheless, the Sisters acceded to “Doc’s” arrangements out of a general sense of gratitude to him as well as to Bishop Gannon. The male students were permitted to attend the college for two years until the early days of June, 1927 when they were requested not to return in the fall. “Doc” personally interceded on their behalf so that their grades and credits were accepted at St. Bonaventure University, Olean, New York and St. Vincent’s College, Latrobe, Pennsylvania even though Villa Maria was not accredited at the time. A charter was not granted by the State of Pennsylvania until 1929, the beginning of the Great Depression.<sup>50</sup>

The challenges were there and the next chapter in the growth pattern of Cathedral and later Gannon College was soon at hand.

The acknowledged chronicler of Archbishop Gannon and Gannon University is Monsignor Barcio, who further noted in his research that there are interconnections as Archbishop Gannon created this school during his time as head of the diocese of Erie and it was known at first as the “newsboys’ college” or “education on the square.”<sup>51</sup> As Monsignor Barcio further noted, it was an interesting process from blueprint to action in order to fill a serious void. He recounted the following short story from the summer of 1933 that shows how a college can be created through necessity and slightly unorthodox means:

“Now, Dr. Wehrle, don’t start a college when I’m away!” Bishop Gannon insisted just before leaving for his *ad limina* visit to Rome.

“By no means, Your Excellency,” “Doc” Wehrle assured him.

The very next day “Doc” Wehrle consolidated final plans to

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open a men's college. The retired Ordinary of the Diocese of Erie, Bishop Alfred M. Watson, with a smile, so described the mandate under which Cathedral College opened its doors, a few yards west of the bishop's residence [the Downing Building, 225 West Ninth Street], September 18, 1933....

If Archbishop Gannon had any interest at all in the improvement of his diocese, it would have been in the area of education.<sup>52</sup>

Thus began Cathedral College, which allowed for future growth to take place as this two-year community academy under the auspices of the diocese of Erie was now open for business. This arrangement was convenient at first as it was designed not as a degree-granting institution, but a place where students could transfer to a four-year school to earn a full bachelor's degree. With these transitional issues at hand, improvised attempts to partner with St. Vincent College proved successful under their charter and this lasted from 1934 to 1941 when the name change from Cathedral to the Gannon School of Arts and Sciences officially took place and the school came under the accreditation umbrella of Villa Maria College from that point.<sup>53</sup>

Despite the impetuosity of "Doc" Wehrle noted earlier, Bishop Gannon did come around and became an advocate for his burgeoning school. The prelate would write in 1941 what became an assessment and endorsement of the college and what he wanted it to become:

The sons of a working man, no matter how virtuous or talented, are forced to give up hope of a college education. I do not think the right to a college education should be based on wealth or social standing. I think the right to a college education should be based on virtue and talent.... The college should be open to young men of any creed or color. They shall receive an education and at a minimal cost – a cost which they can well defray by a paper route.<sup>54</sup>

Within a decade of early operations once the Gannon School of Arts and Sciences was christened, a more formal and permanent application was made to the Pennsylvania Department of Instruction for a separate and distinctive charter which would authorize the school to confer the degrees of Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Sciences depending upon the track chosen. Success was achieved later in 1944 as the Gannon School of Arts and Sciences simply became known as Gannon College, with all due rights and prerogatives to grant the baccalaureate degree. With the success of the American war effort in Europe and Asia, and the signing of the two armistices in 1945, the hostilities of World War II ceased.<sup>55</sup>

A major milestone for Gannon College came with achievement of accreditation by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools in 1951. When the evaluation team visited on March 4-5, 1951, they were amazed at what had been accomplished since its first visit in 1948. They unanimously recommended that the College be accredited by Middle States. Much of the credit for this major achievement was due to Erie Auxiliary Bishop Edward P. McManaman (Secretary of the Board of Incorporators and the Board of Control), "Doc" Wehrle, Rev. William Sullivan, Ph.D. (a member of both boards), and Rev. Wilfred Nash (Dean of the College).<sup>56</sup> Another report in 1955 and a team visit in 1957 led to the modern era and continued operation of Gannon College into the present day as a university.

In retrospect, on November 5, 1951, the city of Erie was the scene of one of the most solemn and colorful religious ceremonies the city had ever witnessed. The occasion was the rededication of St. Peter Cathedral and the celebration of the Golden Jubilee of priesthood of Bishop Gannon. In attendance were the provincials of religious orders, presidents of colleges and universities, leaders from seminaries and monasteries, and many priests from neighboring and distant dioceses. Swelling this array of religious leaders were professors from Gannon College in academic robes, students of the three Catholic colleges in Erie (Gannon, Villa Maria, and Mercyhurst), and students of the four Catholic high-school academies in Erie (Cathedral Prep, Villa Maria, St. Benedict's, and Mercyhurst).<sup>57</sup> This was a show of unity and displayed the efforts of Bishop Gannon — both symbolic and actual — that stemmed from his educational experience and that of Bishop Guilfoyle and Archbishop Walsh at St. Bonaventure's and its Franciscan educational tradition.

### St. Francis and Felician - Franciscan Academics Come Full Circle For Guilfoyle and Walsh

Beyond the diocesan affiliations of Gannon and Seton Hall, ironies on the educational development front also occurred when it came to schools supported by Bishop Guilfoyle and Archbishop Walsh. The latter was an advocate for the Felician Sisters and the Franciscan College of New Jersey located in the Borough of Lodi. Originally known as the Immaculate Conception Normal School, this academy was founded on July 5, 1923 as a college that helped young women achieve state teaching certification.<sup>58</sup> On May 27, 1935, this "Normal" School was raised to the status of a teacher training institute approved by and affiliated with the Catholic University of America. The students who belonged to a religious order and completed a maximum of seventy-two semester hours of their undergraduate work at Felician could then transfer to the Catholic University of America, Seton Hall, or Fordham University. Eventually, the institution reorganized as a junior college in 1941, and on March 26, 1942, it was incorporated under the laws of the State of New Jersey as Immaculate Conception Junior College.<sup>59</sup>

Conversely, when it came to Bishop Guilfoyle, the tradition and connections that he absorbed at St. Bonaventure helped with the Irish Franciscan Brothers who had founded St. Francis College in Loretto in 1847. Historically, St. Francis is one of the first twenty Catholic universities in the United States, the first in Pennsylvania, and the first Franciscan college to be founded in the country. This school was also one of the first Catholic universities to become co-educational in the entire nation.<sup>60</sup> The school's high point with Bishop Guilfoyle came during his installation ceremony when the St. Francis choir sang in his honor. As the school press also noted, they wished him well on his new rank:

That Sainthood will be the reward ineffable of Bishop-Elect Richard T. Guilfoyle's labors here in the Diocese of Altoona, is the prayerful wish of the Franciscan community and the students of Saint Francis college and ecclesiastical seminary.<sup>61</sup>

After 1936, Bishop Guilfoyle did not spend much time on campus inasmuch as other members of the hierarchy came to the campus for seminary events, ordinations, occasional ground breaking ceremonies, commencements, or special convocations. But for the centennial

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celebration of the college, Bishop Guilfoyle celebrated the 10:30 a.m. Mass on the main day of the commemoration — October 4, 1947.<sup>62</sup>

Despite not having as large a profile as Archbishops Gannon or Walsh — who had Gannon College and Villa Walsh High School (Morristown, NJ) named in their honor, respectively — Bishop Guilfoyle would, after his death, be memorialized in the renaming of Altoona Catholic High School as Bishop Guilfoyle High School. Today, Bishop Guilfoyle High School provides “guaranteed scholarships” for those with exceptional academic achievement to attend St. Francis University, Mount Aloysius College, St. Vincent College, or St. Bonaventure University. These tuition aid opportunities reflect both the tradition of Catholic academic stability and development, and the experience of these three bishops who had attended schools in Western Pennsylvania and beyond the state’s borders and in turn built on that foundation for future generations.<sup>63</sup> This is a homage to schools that were founded early in the development of American Catholic higher education and ones that had a connection to Archbishop Gannon, Archbishop Walsh, and Bishop Guilfoyle.

## Conclusion and Final Overview

This article shows a specific connection between episcopal oversight and different levels of college and university development from a general historical perspective. Western Pennsylvania roots nourished the development and blossoming of the learning tree of various Catholic educational institutions. Time marched forward and opportunities for education — coupled with needs of both Church and society — moved these schools to explore new options after World War II, through the Vatican II era, and into the new millennium. These changes included co-education as a normal progression, movement of colleges to university status, development of graduate and specialty schools (nursing, medical, law), and expansion via national and international enrollment, exchange programs, and satellite campuses. These advances came in part as consequences of the concerted efforts of Archbishops Gannon and Walsh and Bishop Guilfoyle, who helped to pave the way. This article has examined how Catholic higher education has developed, survived, and expanded to the present day. For example, St. Francis University in Loretto currently has a student body of 1,800+ (615+ graduate students) with a campus in Ambialet, France. Gannon University in Erie features over 2,900+ undergraduates and 1,200+ graduate students with a branch campus in Florida as of 2015.<sup>64</sup> Similar growth at Mercyhurst, Mount Aloysius, and other institutions influenced by the lives, educational training, and episcopal connections of these three native-son bishops of Western Pennsylvania is also part of the present success story of Catholic colleges and universities in Western Pennsylvania.

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## Acknowledgments

Mr. Tony DeGol, Secretary for Communications at the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown; Mr. Dennis Frank, Archivist for St. Bonaventure University; Ms. Rachel Fillgrove, Student Assistant at St. Bonaventure University; Reverend Justin P. Pino, Archivist for the Diocese of Erie, Pennsylvania; Mr. Robert Stere, Mount Aloysius College Library; Professor Rebecca M. Kopanic, Technical Services Librarian and Archivist at Saint Francis University; and most especially Mr. John Bates, Esq., for his support in the preparation and editing of this article.

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- 1 "Gannon University" appearing at the website <http://www.gannon.edu/>. Last modified September 4, 2015; accessed September 7, 2015.
- 2 "Bishops" appearing at the website, <http://www.catholic-hierarchy.org/bishop/>. Last modified August 22, 2015; accessed September 7, 2015.
- 3 Rev. Joseph H. Brady, *The Most Reverend Thomas Joseph Walsh, S.T.D., J.C.D.* (South Orange, NJ: Seton Hall College, 1950), 1-6.
- 4 "Archbishop John Mark Gannon" appearing at the website <http://www.catholic-hierarchy.org/bishop/>. Last modified January 19, 2015; accessed September 7, 2015. Rev. Robert G. Barcio, "*That You Love One Another: The Life and Times of Archbishop John Mark Gannon - A History of the Diocese of Erie: Volume II* (Erie, PA: Diocese of Erie, 1996). (Gannon was appointed Titular Bishop of *Nilopolis* on November 13, 1917 in conjunction with being named auxiliary bishop of Erie. He became the first native son of Erie to lead his home diocese. Named an Archbishop *ad personam* on November 25, 1953, he served as Bishop of Erie until his resignation on December 9, 1966, at which time he was named Titular Archbishop of *Tacarata*. He died on September 5, 1968, at age 91. He passed the rare milestone of having served as a bishop for over a half century.)
- 5 "Bishop Richard Thomas Guilfoyle" appearing at the website <http://www.catholic-hierarchy.org/bishop/>. Last modified January 19, 2015; accessed September 7, 2015,
- 6 Brady, 1-15. (Newark became an archdiocese in 1937.)
- 7 Rev. Robert Barcio, "*That You Love One Another*," 11. (After working at the Erie City Iron Works for two years as a bookkeeper, John Gannon left for St. Bonaventure College in 1894.)
- 8 Brady, 1-7.
- 9 Robert, Ann, and Daniel McCarthy, *Good Journey: 150 Years at St. Bonaventure University* (St. Bonaventure, NY: Franciscan Institute, 2011), 1-5. *Catalogue of the Officers and Students of Saint Bonaventure's College and Seminary, for the Academic Year 1898-99* (Allegany, NY: Citizen Press, 1899), 1-10. (St. Bonaventure was chartered in 1875 and became a university in 1950.)
- 10 *Catalogue, 1898-99*, 11.
- 11 *Ibid.*, 13. McCarthy, 14-16. (On average about 20% or more of the student body during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries came from Pennsylvania with most traveling to campus from the counties in the western part of the Commonwealth. For example, those students who studied for the priesthood in 1899 included: **Seminary Department:** William Becker – Erie; Patrick Boland – Archibald, PA; Thomas Cantlin – Erie; James Conlin – Erie; Patrick Cranney – DuBois, PA; Miles Curley – diocese of Scranton, b. Great Bend, PA; John Dannecker – b. Lock Haven, PA, diocese of Harrisburg; Peter Donohoe – Greenville, PA, diocese of Erie; Edward Driscoll – Reynoldsville, PA, diocese of Erie; John Gannon – diocese of Erie, born in Erie; Adalbert Kovachy – Wilkesbarre, PA, diocese of Erie; Joseph Kuntz – Erie, diocese of Erie; John McCabe – born Pawtucket, PA, diocese of Erie; Peter Miller – Archibald, PA; Martin O'Hern – DuBois PA, diocese of Erie; John O'Brien – born Hartford, CT, diocese of Pittsburgh; Thomas O'Malley – born Dunmore PA, diocese of Scranton; Maximilian Pulaski – born Erie, diocese of Erie; Charles Schulze – born Erie; Thomas Walsh – Wellsville, NY, diocese of Buffalo; John B. White – born Carbondale, PA; and Anthony Wiersbinski – Oil City, PA, diocese of Erie; Others were from the Pennsylvania dioceses of Scranton, Harrisburg, and Philadelphia. **Collegiate Department:** Matthew Boland, John Burke, William Costello, John Cunningham, William Davies, John Devlin, John Doherty,

- William Donlin, William Gallup, Timothy Giblon, Louis Hamilton, Patrick Hunt, Theodore Hull, Dennis Kane, Thomas Kenny, Louis Lanigan, Joseph Miller, John McManus, John O'Malley, Paul O'Neil, Tobias Schlaudecker, Arthur Smyth, Joseph Snyder, Joseph White, and Francis Youska. St. Bonaventure was not co-educational at this time.)
- 12 McCarthy, 14-16.
  - 13 *Catalogue, 1898-99*, 10-12. ("The Collegiate and Academic Course of eight years embraces the Greek, Latin, English (French, German and Italian languages optional), Rhetoric, Poetry, Elocution, Philosophy (Mental and Natural), Natural History, Descriptive Geography, Mythology, Ancient and Modern History, English Literature, Drawing, Phonography, Trigonometry (plane and spherical), Surveying, Conic Sections, Calculus, Chemistry, Astronomy and Physics." "The Commercial Course, of four years, comprises the English and French languages, (German and Italian optional), Rhetoric, Elocution, History, Geography, the use of the Globes, Astronomy, Book-keeping, and Commercial Correspondence, Practical Arithmetic, Commercial Law, Geometry, Mensuration, Trigonometry, Algebra, English Composition, Drawing, Phonography, Natural Philosophy, Chemistry and Physics.")
  - 14 *Ibid.*, 14-16.
  - 15 *Ibid.*, 12.
  - 16 *Ibid.*, 12-13. (Further pronouncements included the following: "Payments must be made invariably half-yearly in advance; if not students are liable to be dismissed. Deductions within the sessions will be made only for dismissal or protracted illness. Students will not be received for a shorter period than one session, viz: for five months; and if they withdraw before its expiration, if special arrangements have not been made, the charges for the whole session will be exacted. The Institution will not furnish clothes, books and stationery, unless a sufficient sum be deposited with the Treasurer." "All letters to and from students are subject to the perusal of the President. The use of tobacco or intoxicating liquors is positively prohibited.")
  - 17 McCarthy, 16.
  - 18 Barcio, "*That You Love One Another*," 11-12. *Catalogue, 1898-99*, 23-35. ("This fraternity was erected in 1877, in order to foster a religious spirit among the students and to enable them to participate in the innumerable spiritual privileges enjoyed by Tertiaries of the Seraphic Order.")
  - 19 *Catalogue, 1898-99*, 21.
  - 20 Barcio, "*That You Love One Another*," 17, 398. *Alumni Directory of Saint Bonaventure's College and Seminary, 1859-1930. Bulletin of St. Bonaventure's College and Seminary. II:1-A* (St. Bonaventure, NY: Citizen Automatic Press, 1939)
  - 21 "*That You Love One Another*," 407.
  - 22 *Ibid.*, 12-14. ("His student days were filled with high hopes and great promise. So impressed was Bishop Fitzmaurice with his academic acumen that he sent this handsome young seminarian to Catholic University in Washington, D.C. Then, on December 21, 1901, he was ordained to the priesthood in the old Cathedral of the Assumption in Baltimore" by Cardinal Gibbons. "After a short stint as pastor of St. Francis Xavier's, McKean, in the summer of 1904, Bishop Fitzmaurice sent him to the Appollinare University in Rome to finish the studies he began at Catholic University. He was also advised to spend some time at the University of Munich." Gannon lost scholarship money due to a mishandling of funds by a Washington lawyer and real estate agent, Thomas Waggaman. "While at the University Father Gannon was assigned to assist Doctor Shahan a noted dogmatic theologian at the University. For his service, he was to receive a compensation of \$800.00 per year for a three year course toward the Doctorate. ... His studies in Rome culminated in receiving a doctorate in Canon Law and Sacred Theology. He was the first and only priest of the Erie Diocese to win such degrees." In the *Alumni Directory of Saint Bonaventure's College and Seminary, 1859-1930* (published 1939), the entry for Gannon lists him as having a BA, DD, DCL, STB, and STL. This shows how important the presence of academic credentials was among these Church leaders.)
  - 23 *Ibid.*, 13
  - 24 Brady, 4-7.
  - 25 Barcio, "*That You Love One Another*," 268-271.
  - 26 *The Bishops of Newark, 1853-1978: The First 125 Years of the Archdiocese of Newark As Seen Through The Lives and Administrations of the Seven Men Who Have Been Its Leaders* (South Orange, NJ: Seton Hall University Press, 1978). Sister Rita Chambers, OP, *Celebrating the Past, Shaping the Future: A Short History of Caldwell College, 1939-1989* (Caldwell, NJ: Caldwell College, 1994), 1-15. (Mother Joseph Dunn, Mother General of the Caldwell Dominicans, wanted to start a junior college and noted this as early as 1928. However, this reality did not materialize until 11 years later

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- on September 19, 1939 when Caldwell College for Women opened its doors. Archbishop Walsh served as their first president. Caldwell became a university in 2014.)
- 27 *Seton Hall College Student Register, 1856-1891* (South Orange, NJ: Seton Hall College, 1856-1891), 1-12.
- 28 *Seton Hall University Alumni Directory* (South Orange, NJ: Seton Hall University, 1952).
- 29 *Board of Trustees Minutes Book for Mount Aloysius College* (Cresson, PA: Mount Aloysius College, 1939). Sister M. Pierre Green letter to Sister M. De Sales of Mount Aloysius College and Dr. Clarence L. Ackley, Secretary of the Pennsylvania State Council of Education, 1 April 1939. (Minutes of Mount St. Aloysius Academy, Cresson – September 9, 1939. All local Superiors including Mother Mary Cecilia, Mother Provincial presiding. “As we all know that there must be a local Board of Trustees to take care of the more immediate – financial business in the Provinces.... Authorized by the Provincial Council, Sister Mary de Sales Farley tried to obtain State approval for opening the Junior College.... I am here to announce to-day that a Junior College will be opened here this month with, to date, an enrollment of 23 ... 15 boarders and 8 day pupils (*sic*).” The school received the “go ahead” to proceed in a handwritten message to advance its educational operations.)
- 30 “Colleges in Pennsylvania” appearing at the website <http://collegestats.org/colleges/pennsylvania/>. Last modified 2015; accessed September 7, 2015. (Overview of colleges in western Pennsylvania: Throughout the last few centuries many Catholics would gradually attend public community colleges, four year schools, graduate programs, and other types of schools depending upon individual circumstance. Many had Catholic chaplains and/or Newman Centers to minister to Catholic students on a particular campus. Included in this region are Allegheny College, Meadville; Robert Morris, Moon Township; the State University system including Clarion in Clarion County, Edinboro in Erie County, Indiana in Indiana County, and Slippery Rock in Butler County — and major institutions including Pennsylvania State University in State College and the University of Pittsburgh, both with campus locations across the state.)
- 31 Edward J. Power, *A History of Catholic Higher Education in the United States* (Milwaukee: Bruce Company, 1958), 86.
- 32 Ibid. “An Immigrant Church, 1800-1900” appearing at the website <http://www.catholichistory.net/Timelines/Timeline1800.htm>. Last modified September 4, 2015; accessed September 7, 2015. (The Association of American Universities was founded to promote higher standards and put U.S. universities on an equal footing with their European counterparts. “In addition to the tendency toward multiple curriculum organization, the Catholic colleges began to enrich their curricula during the years after the Civil War, especially after 1880, and permitted students to major and minor – or concentrate – in an area of knowledge. Modern languages were offered regularly and were part of the curriculum. French and German were most popular, but Spanish was common too; Irish was offered as an elective at Notre Dame.”)
- 33 Power, 1, 51. Jay P. Dolan, *American Catholic Experience: A History From Colonial Times to the Present* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, 1985), 249-50. (“College students ranged in age from boys who were mere children to young men in their late twenties; the same academic activities and the same rules of conduct applied to all without regard to age differences. The reasons why boys attended colleges were as diverse as their ages and abilities. To suggest that the sons of the upper classes attended college is not to imply necessarily that their parents were college-trained. Some of them were, of course, although there was much less of an academic background in the heritage of Catholic college students than there was for the students of some of the better denominational colleges of the East. People of means sent their boys to college; people with ideals did so whenever possible.” “Catholic colleges passed through different periods of curricular and methodological development. Throughout the nineteenth century, however, whatever the general curricular developments in the United States tended to be, Catholic colleges adhered to the basic theory that the purpose of higher education was mental discipline. When practical studies were included in the curriculum of the early colleges, they were placed on the same level as the rudimentary classes; they were never thought of as being part of higher education.)
- 34 “An Immigrant Church, 1800-1900.”
- 35 Power, 82-84. Barcio, *Gannon University*, 15. (“Beginning with the establishment of Georgetown... (the) number [of Catholic affiliated colleges and universities] had grown by 1932 to 162 institutions with 2,768 professors providing an education for 105,926 students. The pace of development increased in the 1930’s and after and by 1982 there were 237 colleges and universities serving 533,080 students.”)
- 36 Power, 53, 56. (The Plenary Councils of Baltimore were national meetings of bishops to discuss church policy in 1852, 1866, and 1884. The 1866 session in particular introduced Title IX, section iii on “Of the Education of Youth” that – “A desire is expressed to have a Catholic university in the United States.”)
- 37 Ibid., 57.
- 38 Ibid., 87, 108, 155. (“The institutions of higher education supported by the Catholic church are conducted by teaching orders of priests, brothers, sisters, and by the hierarchy or the Bishops of the United States who, with the exception of the hierarchy, work under the general supervision of the bishop of the diocese in which the institution is located.”)
- 39 Ibid., 110.
- 40 Barcio, *Gannon University*, 38-39.
- 41 Barcio, *That You Love One Another*, 372-373.
- 42 Barcio, *Gannon University*, 3.
- 43 Dolan, 249-254.
- 44 Barcio, *That You Love One Another*, 32, 135, 138. (On September 30, 1920, Mother M. Borgia Egan purchased 75 acres of land in southeastern Erie for \$51,000 for the new Motherhouse of the Sisters of Mercy and for Mercyhurst College.)
- 45 Ibid., 136.
- 46 Ibid., 140.
- 47 Ibid., 141.
- 48 Ibid., 121.
- 49 Ibid., 159. Barcio, *Gannon University*, 3. (“Most Catholic Colleges at that time were not co-educational especially those conducted by religious communities of women.” By 1933, the year Cathedral College opened, there were 15 parochial schools with 6,655 students — which exceeded the 1913 count of 4,100 students in 11 parochial schools. Before Villa Maria College opened in 1925 and Mercyhurst in 1926, St. Vincent Hospital School of Nursing began operations in 1901.)
- 50 Barcio, *That You Love One Another*, 159-162. (It was discovered that: “any college in Pennsylvania that held a charter granted before the adoption of Pennsylvania’s Constitution of 1873, known as a ‘grandfather clause’, had almost unlimited educational powers and was not subject to legislative restrictions that were adopted since 1873. The Erie Sisters of St. Joseph at one time had possessed such a charter but had failed to renew it. Duquesne University possessed one of these ‘grandfather charters’ but refused to sponsor Cathedral College. Undaunted Dr. Wehrle returned to St. Vincent’s College in Latrobe, Pennsylvania where he had attended the Seminary. There, the Most Reverend Archabbot Alfred Koch, O.S.B. graciously consented to allow Cathedral College to operate under the charter of St. Vincent College. This was the arrangement from September, 1934, the second year of operation, to September, 1941 when Cathedral College became the Gannon School of Arts and Sciences and returned once more to function under the charter of the fully accredited Villa Maria College.”)
- 51 Barcio, *That You Love One Another*, 166.
- 52 Ibid., 17.
- 53 Ibid., 26.

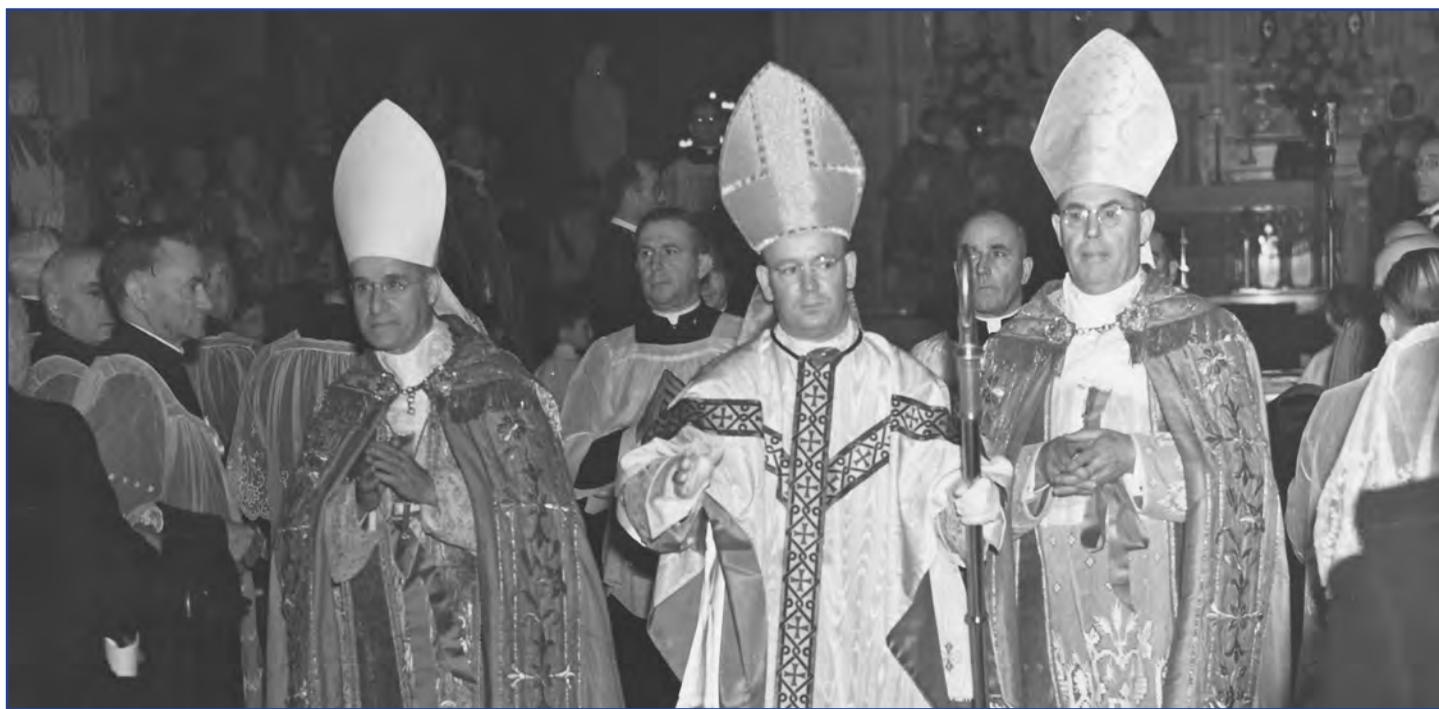


**Consecration of Bishop Richard Guilfoyle at St. Peter Cathedral in Erie (1936).** L to R: Bishop Francis Tief of Concordia, Bishop John Mark Gannon of Erie, Dennis Cardinal Daugherty of Philadelphia, Bishop Richard Guilfoyle of Altoona, Bishop Thomas Walsh of Newark. Source: Archives of Diocese of Erie.

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54 Barcio, *Gannon University*, 18. The budget for the third year of the fledgling college was:

CATHEDRAL COLLEGE			
BUDGET FOR SCHOOL YEAR 1935-1936			
EXPENSES			
Salaries			\$5,500.00
Books	Paid	\$457.31	
	Due	368.32	368.32
Miscellaneous (Estimated)			150.00
St. Vincent Contract			200.00
			\$6,725.63
INCOME			
Tuition, Books and Lab Fees:			
First Semester		\$2,994.11	
Second Semester		2,329.65	
			\$5,323.76
N.Y.A.			755.75
Chem. Dept. Special			92.93
Janitor Service on Tuition			50.00
			\$6,222.44
Delayed:			
Tuition, Books and Lab Fees			\$200.00
N.Y.A.			280.00
Janitor Service on Tuition			25.00
			505.00
			\$6,727.00



**Departing the consecration ceremony at St. Peter Cathedral in Erie (1936). L to R: Co-consecrator Bishop Thomas Walsh of Newark, Bishop Richard Guilfoyle, and co-consecrator Bishop Francis Tief of Concordia.**

Source: Archives of Diocese of Erie

# Out of State But Not Out of Mind

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## Grant Gerlich

Mercy Heritage Center is the national archives for the Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas. It contains records dating back to 1843, when the first community in the United States was founded in Pittsburgh, to approximately 2008 when the majority of the former communities were realigned. The Heritage Center is a state of the art facility with 5,700 linear feet of shelving in the main repository. It holds 30 collections consisting of manuscripts, books, artifacts, photographs and a variety of audio visual materials. In addition to an archives, Mercy Heritage Center is an education center with research space, education rooms and exhibition gallery.

From concept to creation, Mercy Heritage Center was a major undertaking on many levels. Moving the collections from across the United States to Belmont, North Carolina was a journey in and of itself. Now that the collections are here the journey continues as we provide accessibility and reference services to the Sisters of Mercy as well as to the general public. This is a story of consolidation and care, and of service to those whose records we now hold.

### The Seed is Planted

In 2004 the Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of Americas was on the verge of a reconfiguration. Twenty-five regional communities were to become five Communities with consolidated administrative centers and leadership teams. During this period the Mercy Regional Archives Network (MRAN) began to address the future of the archival collections in their care. Sister Sheila Carney, the Institute Leadership Team (ILT) Archival Liaison and a Pittsburgh Sister of Mercy, suggested the possibility of a centralized location. The seed was planted.

Over the next several years a flurry of activity ensued to flesh out the details of a centralized archival repository. There needed to be a consensus from the various communities to send their historical records off-site. Working with Institute leadership it was agreed to form a committee to explore possibilities of an Institute wide archival repository.

The Institute Archivists Committee (IAC) was formed in 2005. It consisted of a member archivist from each of the soon to be formed Communities: Northeast, Mid-Atlantic, NyPPaW (New York, Pennsylvania, Pacific West), South Central and West-Midwest. The records of the sixth Mercy community, CCASA (Caribbean, Central America, South America) were retained at the Community offices in Buenos Aires. The archivist for each of these new Communities would be responsible for maintaining records after the creation of the new Community structure.

The IAC held meetings with the MRAN archivists to discuss details and get feedback on the project. The archivists debated the merits of one central archives as opposed to maintaining and staffing 25 separate archival repositories. It was concluded that the benefits of one location with a state of the art facility and professional staff outweighed 25 separate repositories.

Now that the general consensus for one location had been reached, the search was on for the site. The IAC had certain criteria for the

new archives center. It had to be easily accessible and have ample parking. The repository should be a stand-alone building, not shared by other entities and, most importantly, the building should be Mercy owned.

### Seeking the Site

Three cities were selected as a potential home for the central archives due to their historical significance to the Sisters of Mercy and the accessibility of the location. Pittsburgh was the first community of the Sisters of Mercy in the United States. It was founded by the “original seven” Sisters from Carlow Ireland in 1843, led by Mother Frances Warde. The Chicago community was founded in 1846 by Sister Agatha O’Brien, one of the original seven from Pittsburgh. The St. Louis Community, founded in 1856, was the third choice. Several additional Mercy communities put their hats in the ring as well. Belmont, North Carolina, a relatively small community compared to others, became a serious contender when it was designated as the administrative headquarters for the new South Central Community.

Eventually the search came down to two options. The former site of St. Xavier Academy in Latrobe and the McCarthy Spirituality Center in Belmont. At the October 2008 IAC meeting the options for Mercy Heritage Center were discussed. The Latrobe site was recommended for new construction. The Belmont site was recommended as a renovation project.

The property in Latrobe is a lovely site in the rolling hills of the Laurel Highlands. St. Xavier Academy and Convent was established in 1845. It burned down in 1972 and was not rebuilt. The Pittsburgh community’s cemetery is also located on the property and five of the original seven founding sisters are buried there. The site’s strong historical significance was a factor in the selection process, however the cost of new construction was unknown and accessibility to Latrobe by US 30 was an issue. The McCarthy Spirituality Center was built in 1966, originally serving as the library for Sacred Heart College. After the school closed in 1987, the building had served several temporary functions but was currently underutilized. Because of its history as a library, the building was easily adaptable into an archival repository, with plenty of space for exhibits, programs and research. In addition, Belmont’s proximity to Charlotte, accessibility to Interstate 85 and the Charlotte-Douglas airport made it an ideal location. The nod went to Belmont.

### Renovation, the archivist and the first collections

In 2009 the renovation project began in earnest. The director of engineering on the South Central campus attended a Society of American Archivists workshop on best practices in the construction of an archival repository. Using that as a guideline, architects and contractors were selected. The building was completely gutted and new electrical, HVAC and fire suppression systems were installed. A generator was added later so that Mercy Heritage Center (MHC) would always have HVAC and fire suppression. New furnishings, work spaces and high density shelving were added on the ground floor. The upper level was converted into rooms for research, education and exhibits.

## Out of State But Not Out of Mind (continued)

By the fall of 2010 the rehabilitation of Mercy Heritage Center was nearing completion and the IAC began the search for an archivist. I applied and was interviewed in Belmont. Part of the interview included touring the building. I was amazed to see an archival repository that was not an afterthought but, rather a top notch facility. Usually archival spaces are inadequate for collection storage, such as basements with no climate control. Mercy Heritage Center, in contrast, was palatial. After seeing MHC I immediately knew I would accept the job if I had the good fortune to be selected--and I was.

I started in late January 2011 and the first four collections were shipped from the Institute office located in Silver Spring Maryland in early February and the consolidation officially began.

### Pittsburgh

The next collection due to arrive was Pittsburgh. Since Pittsburgh was the first Mercy community in the United States and the first community specific collection scheduled to move to Mercy Heritage Center, I flew to Pittsburgh to introduce myself to the sisters there to discuss the moving process. As a former resident of the Southside and Lawrenceville, I have many fond memories of Pittsburgh and was delighted to come home to my adopted city.

I reported to the Mercy Motherhouse on Fifth Avenue and was greeted by Sister Patricia McCann the Pittsburgh community archivist. Sister Patricia showed me the collection and gave me a tour of the Motherhouse. The next day we traveled to Latrobe to see the St. Xavier's site and cemetery; lovely.

On April 27, 2011 a Dorr's moving van arrived at MHC. I thought it very appropriate that a moving company based in Wilmerding brought the collection. Sister Patricia, along with Sister Clare Smith arrived to supervise and assist in the unpacking process.

With every move the archivists came along to make sure their collections arrived safely and to visit their beautiful new facility. We documented each event with photographs to share with the other archivists so they could see how the Heritage Center was progressing. We also presented the archivists with a certificate with our pledge to care for their materials. We wanted them to know that we understand how important their collections are and that we take our charge seriously.



**The Artifact Storage Room Hanging System.**

Source: All pictures courtesy of Sisters of Mercy Heritage Center

### More Collections, More staff

Over the next few months I familiarized myself with the collections here and worked on scheduling the transfer of collections to MHC with the archivists. As we gained knowledge of the size of each collection we began to designate shelf space for them. We wanted to make sure each collection remained intact to maintain the identity of the community from which it came.

In the summer we interviewed candidates for the newly created Assistant Archivist position. Betsy Johnson came on board in late September just in time for the next wave of collections to arrive. Betsy is a graduate of Middle Tennessee State's graduate program in public history with a concentration in archival management. She is a great addition to the team.

The collections began arriving in earnest in October. Within the span of a week Cincinnati, Nashville, Knoxville and Louisville were delivered followed by Rochester two weeks later. On November 9<sup>th</sup> all the former regional communities that form the Northeast Community arrived. This was a whole tractor trailer with collections from Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Connecticut, Providence and Albany. In addition to archival materials these collections contained artifacts.

We started 2012 with another tractor trailer arriving with the St. Louis collection. This collection contained many artifacts and framed items. Then in June the Buffalo and Erie collections arrived. The Baltimore collection was transferred in August. We closed out 2012 with all the former regional communities that now form the Mid-Atlantic Community. Brooklyn, Hartsdale NY, Scranton, Watchung NJ and Merion PA arrived all at once.

The following year we transferred part of the Institute collection in the spring and the North Carolina Collection in the summer. The only collections left were the former regional community collections of West Midwest Community. They arrived in November from the Omaha, Cedar Rapids, Detroit and Chicago communities. The final collections, Auburn and Burlingame, California, were delivered in the spring of 2014.

We successfully transferred 30 collections consisting of 5,000 linear feet of records plus a room full of artifacts. The former regional community archivists, the Community archivists and their respective communities pulled together to make this happen. This was truly an impressive effort and something we were proud to be part of, but there's more to be done.

### Getting to know you

With 30 separate collections we needed to get a handle on what we had. We began a Collection Assessment, Review and Evaluation project (CARE). Betsy and I went through each collection, box by box, to determine the condition of the documents making notes on arrangement, condition and contents (mixed media items, photographs, oversize materials, etc.). We then reviewed these CARE sheets to determine what actions need to take place to update and streamline preservation, arrangement and description

A by-product and helpful component of the CARE process was gaining knowledge of the collections; we began to familiarize

## Out of State But Not Out of Mind (continued)

ourselves with the topical strengths of collections and quirks to their organization. This is helpful when conducting research and answering reference questions. Although the staff has gained significant knowledge of the material at hand, we are still learning more about these collections every day.

### Reaching out; Accessibility

One of the challenges of having all the records of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas in one location is that of accessibility for the membership. We can hardly expect members (sisters), leadership and administrators from across the country to travel to North Carolina to do research. When we do get requests from members we go out of our way to respond as quickly as possible. We want to show them that although the collections are far away, the information is accessible and that it can be delivered efficiently. Another challenge is that we are a completely new facility and therefore do not have an established presence outside the Sisters of Mercy. We have worked diligently on outreach, hosting workshops, participating in professional organizations and promoting our presence through the Sisters of Mercy website. Although utilization of our exhibition space is still in the planning stages, we are using temporary exhibits as a way to reach out to the public and our membership. Our current exhibit, "Civil War Sisters; Sisters of Mercy Healing the Wounds of the Nation" addresses the role of the Sisters of Mercy as nurses in the American Civil War. The history of women religious is history waiting to be discovered. By revealing the little known but crucial role Sisters played in tending to the sick and wounded, the exhibit provides a way for people to discover the Sisters of Mercy.

The exhibit is open to the public on Thursday afternoons and to groups by appointment. We have also hosted field trips from local Catholic schools. To expand our reach to those who cannot visit we created an online exhibit. People can tour the exhibit by going to [www.civilwarsisters.com](http://www.civilwarsisters.com).

### On the radar

As early as fall 2011 we began receiving reference inquiries through the main website. Reference questions are funneled through two question categories, "Search for a Sister" and "Archival/Historical." "Search for a Sister" inquiries are often former students seeking to make contact with a favorite teacher. Sometimes they want to thank the Sister for having an impact on their lives or to apologize for being a rotten kid. "Archival/Historical" questions run the gamut, from genealogy questions to graduate students writing dissertations and include topics as varied as "great aunt Mary who became a sister" to the fire at St. Xavier's in Latrobe.

We also began to keep track of all of our reference inquiries. We developed a database to follow the types of questions we received, including who, where, length of time required and the degree of difficulty. We adapted this from the Reference Effort Assessment Data (READ) scale <http://readscale.org/>. This was developed by Bella K. Gerlich and G. Lynn Berard at Carnegie Mellon University. It is a useful tool to analyze reference usage. In 2012 we had 374 reference inquiries. In 2013 we had 473.

In the fall of 2013 a new Institute wide website was launched that gave MHC more exposure <http://www.sistersofmercy.org/heritage>. Early on in 2014 we realized we were on pace to exceed 800 inquiries. With the READ scale we were able to calculate how much time we were spending on reference inquiries. We were now using a quarter of our time doing reference. With this data it became apparent that we needed an additional staff member. Our initial estimate for 2014 was incorrect. We actually responded to 1,019 reference inquiries! We are now on pace for 1,100 for 2015!

As for our third staff member, Emily Reed joined our team in the fall as our Digital Records Archivist. You all will be glad to know that she's a graduate of Pitt's School of Library and Information Science and is doing a fine job. Emily is developing a digital preservation program for Mercy Heritage Center and addressing the preservation needs of our audio-visual collections. She also created the online Civil War exhibit.

In the first four years of its existence, Mercy Heritage Center has grown from an empty building to a research center housing rich resources which more researchers access each year. In some instances, due to the amount of material and limited resources, it is not possible for us to provide research services ourselves. More and more scholars are finding it worthwhile to make the trip to Belmont. Rest assured the Pittsburgh collection lives on in Belmont; think of us as Pittsburgh south. Visit us on line or make the trip; you'll be glad you did, and so will we if you bring pierogis or Primanti's.



**Pittsburgh Archivist Sister Patricia McCann with Certificate.**

# The Pennsylvania Passionist Who Became Chinese: Fr. Basil Bauer, C.P.

Katherine Koch

In 1967, after finishing their annual retreat, the Passionist community of St. Joseph's Monastery in Baltimore, Maryland gathered around two wizened priests who were reflecting upon triumphs and tumult in the mission fields of China. To the younger Passionists, the frail elders in their midst — Frs. Basil Bauer and Jeremiah McNamara — towered like giants. They were veterans of a holy struggle to bring Christ to the mountainous wilderness of Hunan, and they had narrowly escaped Red China with their lives. When the most cheerful listeners tugged both Fathers to a blackboard and prevailed upon them to supplement their recollections with chalk drawings, Fr. Jeremiah scrawled a figure in Chinese garb, complete with a long, scraggly beard. At first his rudimentary artwork prompted gales of laughter, but then he spoke, and the explanation made their chuckling subside into reverent silence. The figure, he said, was Fr. Basil. "During the missions," Fr. Jeremiah remarked, "Bas' became Chinese."<sup>1</sup>

Bas became Chinese. Aside from being a touching tribute, it characterized the faith of a missionary devoted to his cause, and the hardy spirit that was required for a China missionary at the time. Flung far from family, homeland, and all reminders of Western culture, he divested himself of his American heritage in the hope that he might forge an understanding with people who hailed from one of the most ancient civilizations in the world. Those who knew Fr. Basil described him as a gentle and empathetic soul with earnest brown eyes, black-brown hair (salted by white in his later years), and a voice like a bass trumpet. He listened more than he spoke, but when he did voice his thoughts, the room fell silent because everyone in his midst knew that he would reveal something of importance.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, he was direct — sometimes blunt — when speaking his mind, yet he rarely spoke ill of anyone, even if he had justifiable cause to do so.<sup>3</sup> Fellow Passionists compared him with the biblical personage of Nathaniel, of whom Christ said, "Here is someone genuine; there is no guile in him."<sup>4</sup> Trained according to the strict regimen of the pre-Vatican II era, Fr. Basil was conservative in his views, and although he held firm to his own beliefs, he was not intractable. Like the Chinese, he did not believe that opinions were entirely right or wrong. Each perspective was a composite of good points and faulty ones, and therefore all deserved to be heard.<sup>5</sup>

One occurrence recalled by Fr. Basil's second cousin, Gary Koch, tells volumes about his personality. In the 1960s, the priest made yearly trips from Baltimore to Sharon, and would spend several weeks in his hometown, visiting family. Gary was about ten years



**Rev. Basil Bauer, C.P. about the time of his ordination (Oct. 28, 1923).** Source: Passionist Archives

old, and considered it an honor when Fr. Basil asked him to assist as an altar boy during his Masses at St. Joseph's Church. One day after services ended, Gary and a fellow acolyte were puttering around the churchyard. Weary and bored, they picked up bits of decorative gravel and flung them against the black stone façade of the church. Fr. Basil was talking to parishioners inside, but he suddenly emerged from a side door, beckoning to the boys. He prevailed upon them to stand in the church and wait. Meanwhile, the priest stepped outside and began pelting the facade with stones, just as the boys had done minutes before. To his chagrin, Gary realized that, when rocks hit the church wall, a nerve-rattling clatter thundered through the sanctuary. Fr. Basil knew that the boys meant no harm, and instead of chastising them, he gently demonstrated why their actions caused such offense. This serenity defined his character, even during the worst of times.<sup>6</sup>

## Part I: Western Pennsylvania Fr. Basil Bauer's Early Life

His origins were as American as apple pie. He was born on October 11, 1898, in Sharon (Mercer County), Pennsylvania, the sixth of thirteen children in the Bauer family.<sup>7</sup> The second son born to John and Anna Koch Bauer, he was given the name Joseph. At the turn of the century, the steel industry thrived in the Shenango Valley area. In 1902, Sharon Steel Castings Company merged with Carnegie Steel Company, a subsidiary of United States Steel Corporation.<sup>8</sup> The resulting economic boom greatly expanded Sharon, brought an influx of new inhabitants, and led to the city's south side becoming the independent borough of Farrell.<sup>9</sup> Joseph's father supported his rapidly growing family with a lucrative career at the American Steel and Tin Plate Company.<sup>10</sup> As more children were born, he built three additional rooms onto the family's two-story home on Elm Avenue. When they congregated around the dinner table every night, the gathering resembled an organizational banquet.<sup>11</sup> The table itself spanned the length of the room. Born into a large family unit, young Joseph Bauer became well-acquainted with the concepts of familial interdependence, mutual cooperation, and reverence for elders — values that he would eventually discover and admire in Chinese society.

The Bauers were not only prolific, they were also deeply spiritual people. As members of St. Joseph's Church in Sharon, all thirteen filed into the sanctuary every Sunday like a parade troop. Anna Koch Bauer hailed from a family that helped found the parish's first church, St. Rose of Lima on Dutch Lane in Hermitage.<sup>12</sup> The Bauer children described their mother as a "living saint" — a woman of grace, patience, and unwavering religious conviction.<sup>13</sup> Anna's brother — and the family patriarch — was Fr. Victor Koch, C.P., a member of the Congregation of the Passion since 1889.<sup>14</sup> This order, commonly known as the Passionists, has a unique creed: its members vigorously promote the memory of Christ's suffering on the Cross.<sup>15</sup> Priests and parishioners alike are encouraged to contemplate their personal trials, and use them to bond with Jesus as He suffered through the agonies of His Passion. Anna Koch Bauer and Fr. Victor Koch closely identified with this concept, for they had endured painful bereavements and hardship throughout their childhood years.<sup>16</sup> Passionist teaching set the tone for the spirituality of the Koch and Bauer families.



**Hunan Province, China, showing Catholic missions.**

Source: Katherine Koch

Fr. Victor's zeal for his vocation was infectious. He inspired two of his cousins — Fr. Gilbert Mehler and Fr. Benedict Huck — to join the Passionists, and his influence on the Bauer children was equally powerful.<sup>17</sup> He was eager to motivate the next generation and usher his nieces and nephews into a life of religious service.<sup>18</sup> Victoria, the eldest daughter in the Bauer family, was the first to answer that call and become a Benedictine nun, but the vocation was short-lived. To outsiders, the Bauers maintained that poor health caused her to return home to Sharon, which may have had a grain of truth. However, behind closed doors, it was whispered that the spirituality of the Benedictines was not stringent enough for her taste.<sup>19</sup> Victoria's faith bordered on fanatical. She was infamous for slipping into the confessional to criticize the priest over faults she'd perceived in his sermons.<sup>20</sup>

A farm existed on the east side of St. Joseph's church, one owned either by a friend of the Bauer family, or possibly by the Bauers themselves. They pastured a cow there during Joseph's early teen years. One day, as he was leading the cow to the field, the boy heard bells tolling from the nearby church and eased into a philosophical state. With a start, he realized that he had just heard his calling: he would devote his life to leading the lost, the suffering, and the forlorn back to the Good Shepherd, Jesus Christ.<sup>21</sup>

Like the Chinese who he was destined to serve, young Joseph held his elders in reverence, and felt that family defined his very identity. He did not question what religious order he would apply for. Like Fr. Mehler and Fr. Huck, he would follow Fr. Victor into the Congregation of the Passion. By joining the order and consecrating his life to religious service, he would honor his mother and uncle, inspire his siblings, and firmly advance a family tradition into another generation. On

December 15, 1912, Joseph, now age 14, filled out paperwork to enter the Passionist congregation's Preparatory college in Dunkirk, New York.<sup>22</sup> St. Joseph's parish priest Rev. Simon Assenmacher had known the boy since the day of his baptism. He vouched for his character, writing a letter affirming that he was a credit to his church and to St. Joseph's grammar school, and confirming that his conduct suited the vocation that he had chosen.<sup>23</sup> A physician's note declared the future priest to be in perfect health.<sup>24</sup>

Young Joseph entered the Passionist preparatory school in February of 1913, during a time of expansion for the order. Eight years earlier, the U.S. province had split into a western and eastern branch, using the Ohio River to mark the boundary.<sup>25</sup> Reforms were being implemented to educational programs.<sup>26</sup> Thus, instead of attending classes in Dunkirk, he began his education at St. Joseph's monastery in Baltimore, Maryland. It is interesting to note that Fr. Victor Koch was serving as Rector of St. Paul of the Cross monastery in Pittsburgh at this time, but once his term ended a year later in 1914, he moved to Baltimore and served as pastor of St. Joseph's monastery church.<sup>27</sup> The Baltimore parish was thriving. The city's social and devotional life was centered around Catholic organizations. St. Joseph's parish alone boasted four different societies for men: the Holy Name Society, the League of the Sacred Heart, the St. Vincent de Paul Society, and the Parish Debt Society. Three more were available for women: the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin, the Married Women's Sodality, and the Immaculate Conception Sodality. Children could join the Holy Angels Sodality or the Holy Name Cadets, which accepted boys between ages twelve and sixteen. Men and women could participate in the annual Passion Play, which was managed by the Monastery Dramatic Club.<sup>28</sup> An experienced pastor was needed to support this mélange of parish life, and Fr. Victor Koch was surely a man who gravitated toward big enterprises, but he was also the type to pounce upon an opportunity, and he had a keen interest in ensuring that his nephew's introduction into a new vocation went smoothly. As a fourteen-year-old boy that had left the home he knew and loved, young Joseph welcomed a familial presence. If any doubts, fears, or longing for family plagued the future priest, Fr. Victor was only a heartbeat away to help him acclimate. On a brisk autumn afternoon of Sunday, September 16, he traveled to Pittsburgh with Joseph. He was there to watch his nephew profess as a Passionist, don the habit, and take the name that would define him for the rest of his life — Basil of the Cross, C.P.<sup>29</sup>

### A Calling to China: World Events Sweep Basil Bauer From Seminarian to Missionary

Between 1917 and 1923, as Confrater Basil Bauer continued his novitiate studies in Pittsburgh and Scranton, Pennsylvania, and finally in Union City, New Jersey, great changes were taking place in the world, and the aftershocks were destined to change the course of his life.<sup>30</sup> Prior to World War I, Roman Catholic world missions were primarily launched from Europe. Once conflict broke out, the countries that had sent the most missionaries abroad — Germany, France, and Belgium — recalled their priests to become chaplains for their national armies. It was estimated that at least one third of French seminarians and missionaries were killed in the war.<sup>31</sup>

The war swiftly became a cause of great concern for American

## The Pennsylvania Passionist Who Became Chinese: Fr. Basil Bauer, C.P. (continued)

Passionists. The conflict had started in July 1914, and initially, U.S. President Woodrow Wilson had taken a firm stance of neutrality, supporting Britain and France with large-scale loans.<sup>32</sup> However, after the sinking of the passenger liner RMS *Lusitania* in 1915, Americans increasingly came to see the German Empire as an aggressive nation, and the exacerbation mounted as German U-boats began sinking American ships in the North Atlantic. On April 1, 1917, President Wilson called for war, emphasizing that America had to fight to maintain its honor and to have a decisive voice in shaping the new postwar world. The administration decided to rely on conscription to raise military manpower for the war effort.<sup>33</sup> The Selective Service Act of 1917 authorized a draft of all American men between twenty-one and thirty-one years of age (which was later extended to ages eighteen to forty-five).<sup>34</sup> Recognizing that a large percentage of Catholics would be drafted, the Passionists made a call for volunteer chaplains so that the spiritual needs of Catholic soldiers could be met on the front.<sup>35</sup> Section Four of the Selective Service Act exempted ministers and divinity students from service, and the Passionists were intent upon retaining students in the novitiate. Provincial Clement Lee acted swiftly, informing all rectors to communicate at once with the bishops of their diocese and ask them to class their monasteries as divinity schools. Instructions accompanied the announcement, providing a standardized response for each seminarian as he registered for the draft.<sup>36</sup> Confrater Basil Bauer registered on September 9, 1918, identifying himself as “Basil Joseph Bauer,” recording St. Paul of the Cross Monastery in Pittsburgh as his home address, and stating an occupation of “divinity student.”<sup>37</sup>

In the aftermath of the war, the Catholic Church turned attention to the disruption in missionary work, and sought a way to revitalize the effort. In November 1919, Pope Benedict XV issued the Apostolic Letter *Maximum Illud*, calling for a revival of missionary work around the world and encouraging all Catholics to participate by offering donations and prayers.<sup>38</sup> With the United States emerging from World War I as a world power, this was largely seen as America’s hour, prompting a surge of mission vocations — especially to China.<sup>39</sup> The Passionists were determined to answer this call. When the Twentieth Chapter of St. Paul of the Cross Province occurred between August 20-28, 1920, capitulars unanimously voted to send a band of missionaries to China, laying the foundation for a new province in that distant land, and laboring to bring the message of Christ’s Passion to its people.<sup>40</sup> The order would share responsibility for a mission district in western Hunan that had been established by Spanish Augustinians.<sup>41</sup>

In September of 1918, Confrater Basil completed classes in theology and philosophy at St. Ann’s Monastery in Scranton, and transferred to St. Michael’s Monastery in Union City, New Jersey, to take advanced theological courses. In the Fall of 1921, Maryknoll priests and Columban missionaries visited the adjacent monastery parish and discussed their labors in China.<sup>42</sup> These mission appeals may have been his first exposure to the idea of missionary work. However, given Confrater Basil’s predilection to follow in the footsteps of family members, two other incidents may have decisively set him on the path to his destiny. The first wave of Passionist missionaries departed for China on December 25, 1921.<sup>43</sup> The youngest of the

band was twenty-three year old Fr. Timothy McDermott, his third cousin.<sup>44</sup> His contemplation of missionary work likely solidified in 1922, when Fr. Silvio Di Vezza, C.P., the Passionist Father General in Rome, tapped Fr. Victor Koch to co-found a new Passionist province in Germany. For Confrater Basil Bauer, missionary life suddenly ran in the blood. He followed their lead and volunteered for the Passionist China Foundation.<sup>45</sup>

In September of 1923, the young Confrater’s hopes were fulfilled when eight students were selected from the St. Paul of the Cross Province to join the next wave of China missionaries, and his name was on the list: Frs. Basil Bauer, Theophane Maguire, Terrence Connolly, Jeremiah McNamara, Rupert Langenbacher, Clement Seybold, Godfrey Holbein, and Ernest Cunningham had been selected from a pool of volunteers. The Holy Cross Province in the west contributed four more missionaries: Frs. Anthony Maloney, Cyprian Frank, William Westhoven, and Gregory McEttrick. At twelve members, it was destined to be the largest wave of American missionaries to commit themselves to China.<sup>46</sup> Their departure was scheduled for June of 1924, which left only nine months for the future priests to receive the requisite training. Their ordination had to be expedited to meet the timetable.

Thus, the two happiest occasions of Confrater Basil’s life followed swiftly after he became a selectee for the China mission. First, on Sunday, October 28, 1923, at 8:00 a.m., he and his fellow classmates were ordained by Rt. Reverend Hugh Boyle, the Bishop of Pittsburgh, at St. Vincent’s Archabbey in Latrobe, Pennsylvania. The ceremony was solemn and lavish, drawing a throng of attendees from Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and beyond. To the delight of the newly ordained Fr. Basil, his parents had come to the ceremony, along with a throng of brothers, sisters, and their families. His sister Clara Bauer did not attend, but Fr. Basil likely found the reason highly gratifying: in 1918, she had joined the Sisters of the Good Shepherd and became a nun.<sup>47</sup> His immediate family members were joined by two uncles from the Koch branch of the family — Albert and Peter Koch — and cousin Fr. Benedict Huck, C.P. Sixty-six priests were ordained at St. Vincent’s that day, but the crowd’s interest keenly focused upon the eight Passionist missionaries bound for China.<sup>48</sup>

The second happy occasion occurred just a week later in Sharon, at Fr. Basil’s hometown parish. On Sunday, November 4, 1923, friends and family filled the pews of St. Joseph’s Church and watched the new priest celebrate his first Solemn High Mass. The event even drew reporters from the local newspaper, *The Sharon Herald*, and made front page news later that week.<sup>49</sup> Very Rev. Fr. Simon Assenmacher, Fr. Basil’s pastor since childhood, assisted. At the close of Mass, Fr. Assenmacher gave a brief talk, reviewing the life of the young man he had baptized twenty-six years ago, and saying how very proud he was to see his former parishioner become a full-fledged priest and missionary.<sup>50</sup> A Confucianlike mix of family harmony and a calling to service had shaped Fr. Basil’s identity. As friends and relatives rejoiced in his accomplishments and lauded him for pursuing missionary work in China, he felt contentment to the core of his being. He was ready to begin the next phase of his life.

## Part II: China<sup>51</sup>

### China in the Early 20th Century

Inner tranquility was an asset to a China missionary in the early twentieth century, for his adopted country was a cauldron of political turmoil and revolution. The emperors that had ruled China for thousands of years had been deposed, ending with the Qing dynasty (1644-1911).<sup>52</sup> Its government had signed treaties ceding Chinese territory to foreign powers, fomenting anti-imperialist sentiments by nationalistic Chinese, and inciting several violent uprisings against foreigners — most notably the Boxer Rebellion.<sup>53</sup> The Qing government's apparent inability to defend China against foreign interests compelled young officials, military leaders, and students to rise in protest and advocate creation of a Chinese republic. The leader of this movement was Dr. Sun Yat-sen, a medical doctor who had quit his practice and devoted his life to the cause of transforming China.<sup>54</sup> In his view, the best way to unify China was to conquer the country's fragmented territories via a military campaign, then unite its population with a period of political tutelage that would eventually result in democratic rule.<sup>55</sup>

The need to unite China with a military campaign was evident. When a republic was formally established in January of 1912, central authority in China was precarious at best. Regional armies and militias seized power over swaths of the country. Two hundred warlords claimed territory, ranging from barons who conquered entire provinces to lesser rulers who had imposed control over isolated valleys and towns, enforcing authority with their own armies. Coalitions of warlords constantly fought one another. A bribe of arms or funds was enough to make militias shift allegiance from one leader to another. To a missionary, China was akin to the American wild west: traveling from one town to another frequently required a military escort to fend off bandits and protect them from the armies of rival warlords.<sup>56</sup>

While Dr. Sun Yat-sen struggled to unify China under a new Nationalist Party, the Guomindang, another revolution was brewing in Hunan.<sup>57</sup> In 1921, a twenty-eight year old Hunanese man named Mao Zedong traveled to Shanghai to attend the first meeting of the Chinese Communist Party, and returned home to establish a branch in Changsha, acting as the local Party secretary.<sup>58</sup> Under the instruction of the Party, he promoted Marxist propaganda and strove to organize a movement of urban laborers, urging railway workers to strike against Hunan's governor, warlord Zhao Hengti.<sup>59</sup> Changsha was a vital link on the Hankou-Canton railroad, a vital stop in which locomotives were switched and train crews were changed. This bold rupture of crucial infrastructure between north and south China snared the attention of northern warlord Wu Peifu, who sent troops to Hunan and massacred workers in the train station yard.<sup>60</sup> Mao fled, narrowly escaping death or arrest. Disillusioned by the defeat, he trudged through the countryside. Passing through rural villages, he paused to speak with local citizens and perceived a hot current of restlessness crackling through all of them. In his view, the political upheaval of the past two decades had planted within them the seeds of revolutionary potential. Moreover, they represented eighty percent of the nation. They were a power base waiting to be galvanized. The future Chairman of China's Communist Party felt inspired.<sup>61</sup>

Perhaps unknown to Mao Zedong, Josef Stalin, Director of the International Communists (Comintern) in Moscow, had learned of the failed strike.<sup>62</sup> He perceived that the Communist Party in China was weak, claiming only 432 members in 1923, but it was well-organized. On the other hand, Sun Yat-sen's Guomindang Party boasted support from the masses, but it suffered from a crippling lack of organization. The solution to China's ills was to unite both the Guomindang and Chinese Communist Parties, urging them to join forces against the rapacious warlords. Stalin brokered the uneasy peace through Soviet Comintern agent Michael M. Borodin and Adolf Joffe, a diplomat internationally recognized for negotiating the Brest-Litovsk Nonaggression Treaty with Germany at the end of World War I.<sup>63</sup>

### Preparation and Departure for China

Even if Fr. Basil and his fellow missionaries had heard about the political turmoil brewing in China, the news likely registered only on the periphery of their minds. By December of 1923, they were immersed in first aid courses in Pittsburgh. The missionaries would be stationed in an area of China where the population had no access to medical care, and therefore part of their work would involve operating dispensaries and administering medicine for common ailments. Aside from learning how to dispense the proper medication for colds and dysentery, they were also instructed on how to deliver babies. This came as a surprise to Fr. Basil's fellow missionary Fr. William Westhoven, who recalled that none of the Passionists had ever done this, because normally priests needed special permission from Rome to do any kind of surgical work.<sup>64</sup> The other crucial part of their training — Chinese language lessons — would be conducted after the new missionaries arrived at the central Passionist Monastery in Chenzhou, China.<sup>65</sup>

While the twelve members of the next missionary band completed their medical training, another priest, Fr. Cuthbert O'Gara, was assigned to the band.<sup>66</sup> In March of 1924, Chinese Passionist Superior Fr. Dominic Langenbacher wrote to U.S. Provincial Fr. Stanislaus Grennan, requesting him to send a candidate in the next wave of missionaries who might serve as an apostolic prefect. A history of misunderstandings between the Passionist missionaries and Bishop Ángel Diego y Carbajal, the Vicar Apostolic Emeritus of Changde, China, convinced Fr. Dominic that the order needed to establish its own apostolic prefecture, and thus manage its own affairs without intrusion.<sup>67</sup> Fr. Stanislaus acted swiftly, tapping Fr. Cuthbert for the position.<sup>68</sup>

Thus, by May of 1924, thirteen Passionists were bound for China. Aware of the ill omen overshadowing their number, the band dubbed themselves the "Lucky Thirteen."<sup>69</sup> They comprised the largest band of American missionaries that had been sent to China. Both the eastern St. Paul of the Cross province and western Holy Cross province arranged a series of religious ceremonies that galvanized the public, gained support for the American mission effort, and heightened apostolic zeal for the newly ordained missionaries. Between May 18 and July 22, events honoring the Lucky Thirteen were held in at least ten cities, starting with Union City, New Jersey.<sup>70</sup> The first three China-bound mission bands had started their departure

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from St. Michael's Monastery in Union City, a fact that connected the Lucky Thirteen with their predecessors. The ceremonies received publicity in local newspapers, and crowds thronged to each event, necessitating the construction of outdoor altars to accommodate their numbers. To show the national scope of the venture, it was common for representatives of Maryknoll, or an ecclesiastical dignitary to be present to induct the departing Passionists into the new foreign mission fraternity. Video footage from the Bauer family's archives indicate that members of his immediate family followed their departing son and brother to San Francisco, watching him board the *S.S. President Wilson* on July 22, 1924.<sup>71</sup> Given the depth of his connection with family, this parting must have struck him like a crucifixion, and yet as the sight of the California shore gradually slipped away, he turned and faced west toward China, putting himself into God's hands. He willingly left everything that he knew and held dear, and vowed to join in the sufferings of China, all in the hope of bringing knowledge of Christ Crucified to the people of that distant land.

### China: The Mission District, The People, The Culture

The mission territory that the Passionists shared with the Spanish Augustinians was vast — 15,400 square miles, an area equaling the combined American states of Delaware, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island. Their district lay in the western half of Hunan, which was tucked in the remote interior of southwestern China. Glorious mountains swept the terrain, making each trip filled with breathtaking scenery — and life-threatening perils. The manner of traveling from place to place remained as it had for centuries: by sedan chair, by mule, on foot, or on the river routes by *sampan*, a flat-bottomed skiff made from three planks of wood.<sup>72</sup> The seasons were marked by extremes. During summer, the countryside baked like a furnace; according to the Chinese, the heat was so intense that, when a dog chased a rabbit, they both walked.<sup>73</sup> Summer gave way to a temperate fall, then surrendered to the biting cold of winter. The torrential rains of spring lasted between six weeks to two months, during which shoes, vestments, clothing, and books were assaulted by black mildew. Hunan was the last Chinese province to admit foreigners within her borders, and thus the Passionist missionaries were venturing into areas where people gawked, having never seen a Caucasian. A blending of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism infused the local culture, and the traditions of each demanded numerous observances. For a missionary in Hunan, life was a cavalcade of material problems discovered and solved, apostolic triumphs and disappointments borne, language barriers encountered and overcome, and privations and bouts of sicknesses resolutely accepted.<sup>74</sup>

Fr. Basil and his fellow Passionists soon learned that the culture itself presented many obstacles to the inculcation of Christianity. The Chinese were meticulous about saving “face” — avoiding public humiliation even in the slightest degree. Fr. Basil Bauer's fellow missionary, Fr. Flavian Mullins, describes the Chinese custom as follows:

“FACE” means a lot of things. If you do anything that is the work of a servant, and are seen, you lose face. If one is corrected... in public... it means losing face. You may never refuse a Chinese anything by saying, ‘no.’ You must go round and round and say, ‘Well perhaps later on.’ This postponement means a refusal, but

saves face.... This is one of the deepest habits of Chinese life, and is probably the most difficult to eradicate, for little children and adults as well, are consistently influenced by it. Many of the better classes will not become Christians because some of the lower and poorer classes belong to the Church.<sup>75</sup>

Thus, a Catholic missionary in China found that part of his work involved instilling a sense of Christian humility, and eradicating the negative perceptions that the Chinese culture cast upon the faith. This was difficult, especially during occasions when anti-foreign sentiment burned hotly in Hunan. Chinese Christians were often referred to as “slaves of foreigners.”<sup>76</sup>

### The Lucky Thirteen Arrive in China

On August 12, 1924, after a twenty-one day journey across the Pacific, Fr. Basil and his fellow missionaries arrived in Shanghai, disembarked from the *S.S. President Wilson*, and took their first steps upon Chinese soil. They were greeted by one of their fellow Passionist missionaries from a previous band, Fr. Edmund Campbell.<sup>77</sup> The new missionaries paused in Shanghai briefly to enjoy the hospitality of a famous Chinese Catholic layman and businessman named Lo Pa Hong. Shanghai was an ideal stop before venturing into the interior because it was a Chinese city with a thriving Catholic population and a Western cosmopolitan atmosphere, and thus it blunted the initial sense of culture shock. Their gracious host was a deeply faithful man who served one or more Masses every day, and assisted at Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament every afternoon after leaving his office. He had also instructed and baptized numerous criminals before their execution. A philanthropist who lived his faith, he was able to enlist substantial monetary assistance from both Christian and pagan associates, which he then used to help schools, hospitals, orphanages, and asylums. Lo Pa Hong's piety in word and deed earned him the nickname “the St. Vincent de Paul of China.”<sup>78</sup>

Upon arrival, one of Fr. Basil's fellow missionaries received shocking news. Fr. Cuthbert O'Gara had joined the mission band to serve as an apostolic prefect. He soon learned that the mission Superior, Fr. Dominic Langenbacher, had made the request for a prefect with a burst of enthusiasm, but in a moment of indecision, had hesitated to follow through with the plan to establish a Passionist prefecture. Irritated by the change of plans, but still resolute to carry out God's will in China, Fr. Cuthbert decided to remain in the country as a missionary.<sup>79</sup>

As planned, the Lucky Thirteen remained at the central mission in Chenzhou for a year to learn Chinese. On two occasions, Fr. Basil was introduced to the savagery that the people of China endured at the hands of bandits. First, in September of 1924, Chenzhou was invaded by ten thousand Sichuan troops led by warlord Xiong Kewu, a Chinese name that translated into “Bear Fit to Fight.” The bandits invaded private homes, forcing the locals to sleep outside while they occupied their beds. They also scavenged all the food in town and did what they pleased to the citizens without respect for age or sex.<sup>80</sup>

Just days later, Fr. Dominic Langenbacher received word from Fr. Stanislaus Grennan that five Sisters of Charity from Convent Station, New Jersey, were on their way to China, and the group was due to arrive in Hankou province by October 28, 1924. They were traveling with Fr. Matthias Mayou, C.P., a Passionist visitor sent in compliance

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with requests that a Provincial Consultor accompany them to China. Fr. Dominic took Fr. Basil on the trip as a companion.<sup>81</sup>

Hankou was only 200 miles from Chenzhou, but the trip was so fraught with difficulties that it lasted an agonizing nine months. Travel was mainly accomplished via sampan on the Yuan River, which was characterized by dangerous rapids. When the travelers encountered them, a band of coolies swam to the shore and donned harnesses with ropes. In a long, slow, laborious process, they pulled the boats along the turbulent waters to prevent them from capsizing. At times, the rudders of the boats would break, demanding repairs that would halt the journey, or the cables used to haul the boats would snap, and the current carried the ships away, utterly destroying an entire day's progress.<sup>82</sup> To make matters worse, the party was traveling through bandit-infested territory, and on one occasion they fell into a trap that nearly ended with fatal results for Fr. Matthias:

The bandits immediately hopped into the Catholics' larger boat and demanded three thousand dollars. When the priests explained that they had only one hundred dollars in cash with them, the chief looked them over and quickly concluded that Fr. Matthias (tall, dignified, and in American clothes) was in charge. He grabbed Father's arm, thrust a revolver into his face, and announced, "We'll take this one into the mountains!" [Upon discovering that Fr. Matthias was a stranger who spoke no Chinese, and therefore had no value as a hostage]... the bandits began looting their belongings. This they did three times, taking whatever they fancied....

The looting went on for two mortal hours. Trunks and suitcases and bags of every description lay scattered on the deck; and what the bandits didn't want was strewn everywhere, even in the water. Then, the lookouts on the mountain gave the signal that a boatload of soldiers was approaching from down river, and the bandits hastily gathered their booty, scurried on to their raft, and left in a hurry.<sup>83</sup>

Fr. Dominic Langenbacher recalled later that, every time the party ventured forth, it seemed that something ominous lay in store. The journey made an impression upon Fr. Basil as well. He commented that the Devil did all in his power to prevent the Sisters of Charity from entering China.<sup>84</sup> The experience of this trip likely contributed to his preference for traveling through the countryside by mule.<sup>85</sup> The Sisters of Charity finally arrived in Chenzhou on July 12, 1925, and they received a warm welcome from the Passionists.<sup>86</sup>

The Lucky Thirteen received their first mission assignments in August of 1925. Fr. Basil was first assigned to the mission of Yongshun, which he shared with fellow missionary Fr. Terrence Connolly.<sup>87</sup> Fr. Basil and the Passionists found more reasons to rejoice after learning that Pope Pius XI had established Chenzhou as a Prefecture Apostolic the previous March.<sup>88</sup> Thus, their mission territory would be detached from the Vicariate Apostolic of Northern Hunan, the mission of the Augustinian Fathers, and given the autonomy they had craved. This was the first step in eventually establishing their own diocese in Hunan.

In July, Fr. Francis Marchetti Selvaggianti, the Secretary to the Passionist Superior General in Rome, wrote Fr. Stanislaus Grennan and informed him that Fr. Dominic Langenbacher had been

nominated for the office of Prefect Apostolic. Fr. Dominic discussed the matter with Fr. Cuthbert O'Gara, whom Fr. Stanislaus had sent to China for the express purpose of performing that function. Graciously, Fr. Cuthbert encouraged him to accept, and he agreed, although hesitantly.<sup>89</sup> He was now recognized as "Monsignor" Dominic Langenbacher.<sup>90</sup>

The senior China Passionist missionaries convened in December, drafted resolutions for the new prefecture, and laid out an ambitious program that would govern Fr. Basil's work within various mission towns. The plans for the prefecture were comprised of the following:

A *Seminary* for local clergy under the patronage of St. Joseph;

A *Catholic School System*, with a primary school for each mission, and three high schools, one in each major city, plus a training school for catechists, men and women, who would direct the religious instruction of catechumens at each mission;

A *Deanery System*, dividing the sixteen counties into three subdivisions, or foranes, with a Superior of vigilance and one residential Mission and a dispensary in each;

A *Budget System*, all major construction or expense to be approved by the Prefect and his council. All donations, from whatever source, to be deposited at the Passionist Procurator in Hankou.<sup>91</sup>

### Chiang Kai-shek and the Northern Expedition

Just as the Passionists made progress in Hunan, a fresh wave of political and social upheaval threatened to impede further developments. On March 12, 1925, Dr. Sun Yat-sen, the founder of China's nationalist Guomindang government, passed away. The uneasy coalition between the Guomindang and Mao Zedong's Communist Party was left without a leader, resulting in a power struggle. Thirty-eight year old Chiang Kai-shek, the military commander of the Guomindang, emerged as the country's new leader.<sup>92</sup> As with his predecessor Dr. Sun, the Western media dubbed him *Generalissimo*. Like Dr. Sun, he was committed to the cause of unifying China via military conquest, followed by a period of political tutelage and a democratic government. The greatest obstacles to this vision of China's future were the rapacious warlords and the Chinese Communists.<sup>93</sup> Suspicious of foreign intervention, he had misgivings about the alliance that Dr. Sun had forged with the Soviet Union, but China depended upon the financial and military aid that it received from the Communist country. Therefore, he reluctantly maintained relations.<sup>94</sup>

As the Chinese people grieved the loss of Dr. Sun, the Guomindang tapped into the nation's grief and sought to utilize it as a unifying force. The party launched a propaganda campaign in major cities, which was designed to foster Chinese nationalism and vilify foreign "imperial" powers that held territory or exerted influence upon China. The Chinese Communist Party took the opportunity to sow unrest throughout Shanghai. On May 30, 1925, Chinese protestors marched on Shanghai's International Settlement. When the demonstrators

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turned violent, Shanghai municipal police opened fire upon the crowd. The incident sparked a nationwide wave of anti-foreign demonstrations and riots known as the May 30<sup>th</sup> Movement.<sup>95</sup> As Chiang Kai-shek marshaled the forces of the United Front and began the expedition to conquer China's bandit-infested territories, his soldiers cried, "Down with the Warlords! Down with Imperialism!" This statement summarized the spirit of the Northern Expedition and the United Front.<sup>96</sup>

### Chaos Strikes Hunan

As civil unrest and anti-foreign sentiment reached a boiling point in Hunan, Fr. Basil and his fellow missionaries struggled to maintain the status quo in their prefecture. Msgr. Dominic Langenbacher traveled to the United States in March of 1926.<sup>97</sup> He returned to China in September with four Sisters of St. Joseph from Baden, Pennsylvania, and a fresh band of Passionist missionaries who dubbed themselves, "The Four Horsemen."<sup>98</sup>

As the new missionaries made their way to the central mission in Chenzhou, and the Sisters of St. Joseph journeyed to their intended station of Yuanzhou, the United Front was thrusting into eastern Hunan. Their goal was to defeat warlord Wu Peifu, who boasted an army of 350,000 men and controlled territory in Hunan, Hebei, and Henan provinces.<sup>99</sup> The routed bandits became a significant threat to Passionists traveling through the countryside. The Guomindang intended to imprison or kill any bandits they apprehended. Therefore, the brigands had taken to the practice of seizing foreign hostages and negotiating their release to avoid their own capture — or for an agreement to peaceably rejoin the Guomindang.<sup>100</sup> Chiang Kai-shek's success in the campaign rested upon the cooperation of graduates of the Peasant Training Institute in Canton, which was directed by Mao Zedong. Trained graduates organized farmers on behalf of the United Front, eliciting their assistance as guides, porters, and spies. The intelligence they gathered enabled Chiang Kai-shek to disarm 10,000 of Wu Peifu's soldiers and seize strategic areas vital to the warlord's operations.<sup>101</sup> The joint venture served to thrust Mao Zedong into the spotlight of Chinese politics.

The union between the Guomindang and the Communists had always been unstable at best, but tensions ran especially high by 1927. After a schism of loyalty formed in the ranks of the Guomindang, Chiang Kai-shek became convinced that the Communists were scheming for a way to undermine his authority and seize power. On April 11, he issued a secret order to all provinces under the control of his forces to purge Communists from the Guomindang.<sup>102</sup> The directive was carried out a day later in Shanghai. The so-called "Shanghai Massacre" drove a rift between both the Guomindang and the Communists.

Early in 1927, hostilities of every conceivable shade — pro-warlord, pro-Nationalist, pro-Communist — were erupting in west Hunan. Communist troops struck first in Xupu, the mission run by Fr. Godfrey Holbein and Br. Lambert Budde. The two fled their mission complex and escaped from a wave of Communist troops with only the clothes on their backs.<sup>103</sup> Msgr. Dominic experienced a similar event at the mission in Chenxi:

Agitators come to a town... go about the streets preaching everywhere, enlist the students in their crusade, brow beat every trade and every class of individuals of the town into a revolutionary society and then through these crush everything...

the machinery is especially... directed against the Missions.... "Down with!" got to be the slogan for everything that stood for law and order. Down with the Catholics, Down with the Protestants, Down with the Foreigners.<sup>104</sup>

Msgr. Dominic was convinced that war was at hand. Upon learning that U.S. citizens were escaping upon the American gunboat *Isabel* to the city of Hankou, he issued a controversial order to Passionist missionaries and the Sisters of Charity and the Sisters of St. Joseph throughout the prefecture: flee their missions at once for Hankou.<sup>105</sup> The order immediately set to flight thirty-one Passionist priests and sisters, including Fr. Basil Bauer. Four missionaries who had not experienced violence in their areas elected to remain behind. Passionist activity in western Hunan came to a devastating halt.<sup>106</sup> The sharp rise in violence in southeast China and the sudden lapse in communication from the missionaries focused world attention on the region. Fr. Basil's hometown newspaper, *The Sharon Herald*, reported that he and his fellow Passionists had gone missing in Hunan.<sup>107</sup> *The Pittsburgh Catholic* published news from the U.S. State Department that missions had been pillaged and burned throughout the Passionist prefecture, except for the central mission in Chenzhou. In Shanghai, Lo Pa Hong, the famous Catholic layman who had received the Lucky Thirteen after arriving in China, was reportedly in hiding from persecutors who wished to kill him for his involvement with foreigners.<sup>108</sup> A whole tedious month would pass before the U.S. State Department confirmed that all missionaries were accounted for in various parts of China.<sup>109</sup>

For Fr. Basil and the other missionaries who fled to Hankou, the exodus was a tale of misery, replete with days of travel in the blistering sun and bouts of dysentery that were aggravated by the consumption of unwholesome food. One Sister of St. Joseph, Sr. Clarissa Stadtmuller, contracted malignant malaria and died in Chongqing. Another Passionist missionary from the Lucky Thirteen, Fr. Terrence Connolly, was sent to the International Hospital in Hankou, where he was diagnosed with nervous exhaustion. He would never recover. Upon returning to the United States, he was institutionalized for the rest of his life.<sup>110</sup> The weary and solemn band reached Guiyang by May 21, and boarded a steamship, the *Yiling*, on June 20, which carried them to safety in Hankou. During the trip, the boat was packed with Chinese officers and their concubines. Because the Passionists were foreigners, the soldiers were less than civil. They reportedly broke into the cabins unannounced and demanded use of the one bathroom that had been reserved for the missionaries.<sup>111</sup>

When the Passionist finally returned to their missions, they found congregations of lapsed Catholics who had abandoned the practice of religion under the fury of Communist propaganda. Those who had resisted Msgr. Dominic Langenbacher's orders were still making excellent progress. The realization fomented a sense of dissent and resentment among the missionaries, which resulted in Msgr. Dominic's resignation as Superior. He continued to function as the Prefect Apostolic. Fr. William Westhoven, C.P., a member of the Lucky Thirteen mission band, assumed the title of Superior.<sup>112</sup>

By August of 1928, Fr. Basil was assigned to the town that would become his home mission throughout the remainder of his time in China — Wangcun, "King's Village".<sup>113</sup> He took over for Fr. Anthony

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Maloney, C.P., who originally established a mission there in 1925.<sup>114</sup>

The mission town of Wangcun was not the usual stone-walled citadel on a plain. The houses crowded closely to a solitary street that twisted and struggled up a steep hill. To Fr. Basil's eye, it looked as though all the houses had played leapfrog down hundreds of "steps" formed by rice terracing, a few houses clinging to each step, until they were halted by the beautiful and treacherous North River.<sup>115</sup> It was an isolated place. The people knew very little of what occurred in other parts of Hunan, and far less of what was happening in China overall.<sup>116</sup> When Fr. Basil arrived, he had been granted a new tract of property. It was his mission to build a church, a school, catechumenates for men and women, and a permanent residence for himself.<sup>117</sup>

### Fr. Basil Becomes Chinese

Fr. Basil was a product of Western culture. In the Western world view, the individual is the most fundamental element of society. Citizens interact with a democratic state, and harmony is found when widely varied groups of people are capable of pursuing their own interests, providing the whole with freedom and stability. Emphasis is placed upon the rights of the individual. Families are seen as private entities that are wholly separate from the State, acting without interference from the other. Morality is established by religion, with Christianity predominating. According to traditional Christian ethics, peace, harmony, and happiness are found in obedience to God. Within the family model, the husband obeyed God as Christ willingly submitted Himself to the Father. The wife submitted to the husband, and thus, indirectly through him, submitted to God's will. Children respected and obeyed their mother and father and, in turn, the parents brought them up to obey the Lord. These concepts would have informed the missionary's basic understanding of society.<sup>118</sup>

As Fr. Basil worked in China, he discovered that, *jia*, the family, was considered the core unit of Chinese society. The family was the most important part of a person's life, the foundation of one's identity, one's morality, and the source of the meaning of life. Filial piety formed the root of all virtues, and familial solidarity was essential to a well-functioning society. All institutions of community, from religion to education to politics, were constructed around and functioned on the model of the family. The father was responsible for setting the moral standard for his wife and children via Confucian virtues, and served as a model for them to emulate. As in the West, families were patrilineal, with the prime authority being vested in the most senior male. According to Confucian thinking, individuals were at the center of a web of relationships: ruler and subject, parent and child, husband and wife, older and younger sibling, friend and friend. Three of these ideal "Five Relations" in Confucian doctrine are found within the family. Of all ancient virtues in China, *xiao*, or filial piety — the almost religious respect that children owe to parents, grandparents, and the aged — was the most important. Religious beliefs contributed to the ethics of the Chinese mainly in their belief in karmic rewards or retribution for their actions.<sup>119</sup>

Even though Fr. Basil had emerged from Western culture, he also came from a tightly-knit family. The fact is underscored by the realization that, when several of his siblings left home — particularly the ones that did not marry or follow him into religious service —

they simply moved a few doors down from their childhood home on Elm Avenue in Sharon.<sup>120</sup> Hailing from a family with thirteen children, he intimately understood the need for familial solidarity, piety, and cooperation, and thus, a society based upon this model did not strike him as alien. The concept of the eldest male ruling the family and setting an example for emulation made complete sense to him. Fr. Viktor Koch was the eldest male in his own family, and true to Chinese form, Fr. Basil had indeed followed his example. Thus, Fr. Basil found it easy to "become Chinese."

Fr. Basil approached the process of becoming Chinese in Chinese fashion. In other words, he accepted only the parts that appealed most to his nature and cast the rest aside. His innate common sense prevailed in many cases that left him in jaw-dropping dismay. He witnessed one occasion in which a shabby servant girl named Yang Mei got into a shouting match with a child from a wealthy family. The two were abusing each other in language far beyond their years, and drawing the interest of neighbors — an incident that the Chinese call "cursing the street." Yang Mei emerged from the affair with her ego so bruised that she tied her feet to a piece of old wooden matting and cast herself into the river, committing suicide to save face. A young adherent to Buddhism, the child thought that after death, she would be reborn into a new life. Fr. Basil assured his assistant at the Wangcun mission that the *Shen Fu* — Spiritual Father — would have much to say to his Christian parishioners next Sunday.<sup>121</sup>

In another instance, Fr. Basil witnessed a case in which a wealthy landowner had built a new house and neglected to invite his bodyguard crew to the celebratory banquet. The men perceived this oversight as a smear on their honor, resulting in a loss of face. Their leader plotted revenge and killed the landowner and his wife, shooting and bayoneting them in a fit of rage. He fled the scene, and authorities failed to find him. As a result, they punished the murderer's family, killing nine of twenty relatives. Fr. Basil was stunned. He did not agree with the wholesale slaying, or the extreme measures that were taken to correct the situation, but acknowledged that the principle, considered from the Chinese perspective, was considered acceptable.<sup>122</sup>

Perhaps even more baffling to him was the instance in which a *Bonze* — a Buddhist monk — was burned to death.

Religion causes men to do things that, to the uninitiated, seem the height of folly. Witness the belief and act of a Bonze, who last week here in Wangtsun [Wangcun], desired to be burned alive. His wish was granted.... It is a custom that when a priest is very old and is about to die, he expresses a wish to be burned alive. In this case he was a little over eighty years old, and did not have many days of life left.... When the priest can cry out no more [during the burning process] his soul is supposed to leave his body and he does not suffer the pain of death, and some claim that his body also goes to bliss without being destroyed, though how they can believe this when they see with their own eyes the consuming of the body, is more than I can figure out.... Is it religion or fanaticism?<sup>123</sup>

In April 1929, three Passionist missionaries, Frs. Godfrey Holbein, Clement Seybold, and Walter Coveyou were murdered by bandits. The incident sent shockwaves around the world, for this was the first instance of American missionaries being murdered in China. Readers of *The Sign* became intimately familiar with the dangers that the Passionists faced in the mission fields. Fr. Basil pointed out to

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them one fact that was easily overlooked — the Chinese themselves had suffered more from the armed criminals than the missionaries:

The country was literally overrun by bandits, and unlucky was the man who fell into their hands, especially if he had any money or fields. He was sure to be held for ransom. It was fatal for the man who could not persuade his folks to buy him back....

Fire was feared more than any enemy who lay outside the walls. Knowing this, the bandits, on one occasion, waited until a season when a long drought had withered the very crops in the fields. Then one night they let burning arrows fly on the straw roofs. They did not need to shoot many, for in a short time the entire town was like a blazing furnace. In the confusion, they slipped unnoticed past the guards. What they did that night is too gruesome to relate.<sup>124</sup>

Thus, in his view, the Passionists and the Chinese were united by a mutual struggle to survive against marauding forces. Parishioners from outlying areas were risking their lives to come to Mass and receive the sacraments. Like them, he chose to bear the hardship with patient endurance. It was another way in which he “became Chinese.” His characteristic serenity shines through in a passage he wrote for his article in *The Sign* in 1935. Considering what he and his fellow Passionists had experienced in China thus far, his resilience is extraordinary:

Strange to say, I feel safer among the Hunanese than I imagine I would in any part of China.... Living the last nine years in Hunan, I feel safe with everybody, provide they are not out and out bandits or Reds. Whether in the towns or cities, or along the roads or in country villages, I have no worry. After so long a time in a place, one gets to know what to expect, and experience tells me that, except in disturbed times, I have enjoyed a fair degree of safety, especially in the country where foreign influence has not yet reached.<sup>125</sup>

### Fr. Basil and Spiritual Forces in China

During his time in Wangcun and beyond, Fr. Basil also witnessed uncanny incidents that he attributed to spiritual forces in the living world. Belief in demonic forces reverberated strongly through Catholicism back in Fr. Basil’s day, but to family members hearing his stories back in the States, he was so emphatic about his convictions that it shocked them. Chinese culture was steeped in superstition and mysticism. Thus, he found ways to satiate their hunger for paranormal explanations by framing them within a Catholic context. His emphatic convictions in the supernatural are yet another facet in his identification with the Chinese.

In February 1931, Fr. Basil decided to construct a wall around his new mission complex.<sup>126</sup> Apparently the task was easier said than done. When the wall was finished, for reasons that he could not explain, it would invariably crash down the next day. He assiduously studied the ground and searched for instabilities, and several attempts were made

to rebuild the wall — all with the same result. Finally, he sprinkled each brick with holy water and said a blessing as it was being laid. At last, the wall remained standing.<sup>127</sup>

Another two incidents involve funerals. In the first, a deceased woman who was about to be buried shot up straight in her coffin and demanded a bath. The mourners were horrified, but they complied, and once the deed was done, she eased back into death. Fr. Basil was convinced that the Devil had made her body sit up and speak.<sup>128</sup>

The second occurred in Wa Chang, a small village outside the mission town of Yongsui. A woman gave birth to a child, and shortly after, both mother and infant died of illness.<sup>129</sup> The woman was a pagan, but Fr. Basil had learned that she was contemplating the idea of converting to Christianity, so he advised her relatives to avoid the superstitious rites normally associated with Chinese tradition. They agreed — except for one condition. According to Chinese belief, a body had to be buried on a date of good omen, and a failure to do so would compel the vengeful spirit to haunt the living. The entire village of Wa Chang demanded that the family let a Buddhist monk select the funeral date, and they capitulated. To Fr. Basil’s dismay, the day chosen occurred fifteen days after the death, and the countryside was baking in the torrid heat of July. The Chinese do not embalm their dead, and he feared that pestilence would soon plague the whole village. He refrained from further intervention, however, since the funeral was being officiated by pagans, in a pagan town. A fervent Chinese Catholic asked him for holy water, a request that he granted. The parishioner prayed over the dead and emptied the vial upon their bodies. When the funeral day finally arrived, to the amazement of the villagers, the coffins were opened and the corpses, though long dead, had not turned odiferous. To Fr. Basil’s delight, twenty families in the village signed up for doctrinal instruction. He, like the villagers, attributed the miraculous event to God’s work.<sup>130</sup>

The impact of Fr. Basil framing odd occurrences within Catholic context is evident in a story told by a Chinese boy in his mission village of Wangcun. The child had been stricken by polio as a youth, and thus remained a cripple for the rest of his life. One day, the boy had accompanied friends who decided to go swimming in a quarry pool, both of whom drowned. The dangers of swimming in quarry pools are well-documented: the water is often surprisingly cold, and swimmers who dive too deep can suffer from shock, and even hypothermia.<sup>131</sup> However, the child’s explanation reveals successful assimilation of Catholic doctrine. He told the grief-stricken parents of the drowned children that he had witnessed the Devil appearing in the water and taking the two boys. The Devil considered taking him as well, but ultimately rejected him on account of his physical deformity.<sup>132</sup>

Fr. Basil’s most terrifying encounter with spiritual forces likely occurred when he was called upon to perform an exorcism. The afflicted person was a boy, and the most nerve-shredding sign of possession was the fact that multiple streams of voices were emanating from his open mouth, all warning the priest that the child now belonged to the Devil, and any attempt to exorcise him would result in failure. Whether the boy suffered from psychological problems was unknown, but according to Fr. Basil, the exorcism was a success.<sup>133</sup>

## The Pennsylvania Passionist Who Became Chinese: Fr. Basil Bauer, C.P. (continued)

### A Respite in the States

The rigors of political upheaval, and long-distance travel, and dispensary work took their toll on the Passionist missionaries. In the summer of 1934, Fr. Basil returned home to Pittsburgh to undergo an operation that could not be performed in China, and recuperate from his labors.<sup>134</sup> On Monday, June 18, he went to Mt. Gallitzin, motherhouse of the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph, Baden, and watched from the church sanctuary as eleven young women received the habits of the order. One was Teresa Long, the first Chinese postulant from the community's mission in Zhijiang, Hunan, China.<sup>135</sup>

Fr. Basil returned home to Sharon to find that many changes had taken place within his family. First, his mother Anna Koch Bauer had died three years earlier, on April 30, 1931. She was attending Mass at St. Joseph's Church, and had just received Holy Communion when she was stricken by apoplexy. She died at home the next day.<sup>136</sup> To the Bauer family, no ending could have been more fitting for the woman they considered "a living saint." On a happier note, three more sisters had taken up the family tradition of religious service. His sister Clara had already joined the Sisters of the Good Shepherd in 1918. His sister Marguerite had joined a convent of Passionist nuns in Pittsburgh, and his sister Anna had become a Sister of Mercy in Erie.<sup>137</sup> A fourth sister Helen Bauer was in the novitiate of the Sisters of Notre Dame in Baltimore.<sup>138</sup> Thus, five Bauer children had elected to enter religious life, and nothing could have pleased Fr. Basil Bauer more. No doubt, he especially found it gratifying that Fr. Viktor Koch, the inspiration for the family, was overjoyed by the number of Bauers following his example.<sup>139</sup> His uncle had returned home from Germany for Christmas. The 1934 holiday season was a joyous one for both priests — and a state occasion for the Koch and Bauer families, demanding reunions. Feeling both grief-stricken over the loss of his mother, and elated by news of his sisters entering religious life, Fr. Basil returned to China in 1935, making it back to his home mission before Good Friday on April 19.<sup>140</sup>

### War Erupts in China: the Chinese Civil War and the Second Sino-Japanese War

While Fr. Basil lived in relative peace in Wangcun, two separate wars were brewing in China. First, the rift that had developed between the Guomindang and the Chinese Communists with the Shanghai Massacre of 1927 compelled Mao Zedong to retreat to the Hunan countryside and begin amassing peasants for a rebellion.<sup>141</sup> He named his recruits 'The First Peasants' and Workers' Army. Later, this force would become known to the world as the People's Liberation Army, or the Red Army. Its birth was marked on August 1, 1927, when the Red Army occupied the city of Nanchang and first engaged the Guomindang.<sup>142</sup>

The insurrection in Nanchang ushered in ten years of civil war in China. Chiang Kai-shek led the Guomindang on a series of campaigns designed to isolate, envelop, and eventually destroy the Red Army and their Soviet cells developing within China.<sup>143</sup> By October 1934, the Communists had been nearly decimated. Struggling to rebuild his army's numbers and evade the Guomindang, Mao Zedong led his forces on a year-long retreat through China known as the "Long March."<sup>144</sup> Communist movements disrupted the Passionists

once again in 1935, forcing twelve missionaries and eight sisters to temporarily abandon three mission towns.<sup>145</sup>

The Chinese Civil War afforded Japan an ideal opportunity to expand its empire without intervention. The Japanese were especially interested in acquiring Manchuria, a region in northeast China, which was rich in natural resources. They invaded Manchuria on September 19, 1931, establishing the puppet state of Manchukuo and installing Aisin Gioro Puyi, the last emperor of China, as its ruler.<sup>146</sup> Japan would remain entrenched there until 1945, when the country surrendered to Allied forces.

Tensions between Japan and China escalated on the night of July 7, 1937, when troops from both countries exchanged fire on the Marco Polo bridge in Beijing. The opposing armies summoned military reinforcements, and sporadic skirmishes swiftly erupted into a full-scale battle, ushering in the second Sino-Japanese war. By August, Japan occupied both Beijing and the port city of Tianjin.<sup>147</sup> Until that point, *Generalissimo* Chiang Kai-shek had preferred to fight his battles one at a time. He wanted to quell China's internal conflicts with the warlords and the Communists first, and avoid all-out war with Japan until those battles were won — a strategy that was unpopular with the Chinese people.<sup>148</sup> The Marco Polo Bridge Incident jolted him into action. Three days later, on July 10, 1937, he announced the Guomindang policy of resistance against Japan and marshaled Chinese forces for battle in Shanghai.

Unlike Japan, China was unprepared for total war. The country's military strength had been sapped by domestic battles, and it lacked the industrial strength to match Japan's mechanized weaponry. Yet, *Generalissimo* Chiang hoped to eventually win support from the United States and other foreign nations by demonstrating that his country was capable of mounting a defense. Once again, Communist forces called a truce and joined with the Guomindang to fight a common enemy. The Second United Front between both parties was far from unified, however. Both sides were bracing for a showdown once the Japanese were driven out of China.<sup>149</sup>

### Fr. Basil and the Passionists in the War Years

Despite the darkness of the times, the Passionists had reason to celebrate: On May 28, 1934, the Prefecture Apostolic of Chenzhou had been promoted to a Vicariate Apostolic. On that same day, Fr. Cuthbert O'Gara was appointed as Vicar Apostolic, and on October 28, he was ordained a bishop. In December of that year, the Vicariate's name was changed from Chenzhou to Yuanling.<sup>150</sup>

As Fr. Basil had reported in his articles for *The Sign*, Wangcun was tucked away in the remote reaches of Hunan, and news of the political chaos ravaging the country hardly penetrated its borders. In July 1937, as war raged throughout the rest of China, the primary concern for the villagers of Wangcun remained bandits:

Rumors about bandits are persistent, and will not give us peace. Ever since the Chinese Reds came through this place and robbed it right and left, killing indiscriminately, the local people have dug up their old rifles, or taken their spears and gone on a rampage themselves. Gangs from five to fifteen, sometimes more, roam the countryside.... Now in this district we have a gang of about three thousand ex-soldiers who are bandits. These men, traveling

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from place to place, bring havoc and terror among the people.... Such is the humdrum of life here in the North River section of our Vicariate where as yet no roads have pushed through.<sup>151</sup>

By 1938, Chinese resistance had stiffened, and the Japanese invasion slowed. At the height of its aggression, the Japanese army reached only the extreme northeastern tip of Hunan, and thus the Passionist Vicariate in the western part of the province was spared the trauma of Japanese occupation.<sup>152</sup> After Japanese forces captured the city of Wuhan in Hubei province, the Chinese government fled to the interior city of Chongqing, establishing a provisional capital there.<sup>153</sup> In an effort to break Chinese resistance, Japanese Imperial General Headquarters ordered the air branches of its army and navy to launch massive air raids on Chongqing, as well as civilian targets in major Chinese cities. As a result, the central mission of the Passionists in Yuanling endured bombing raids. Around this same time, the Passionists received startling news: Lo Pa Hong, the Catholic layman and philanthropist from Shanghai, had returned from a banquet and died of poisoning.<sup>154</sup> His assassination had been attributed to a suspected collaboration with the Japanese, an accusation that was hotly refuted by missionaries who knew him.<sup>155</sup>

Chinese refugees fled the coast, seeking shelter in the remote and mountainous area of Hunan. The first refugees began flooding into the Passionist vicariate by boat, bus, and on foot. The first waves mainly consisted of the educators of China, along with their students, all of whom had been urged by the government to take flight. They were accompanied by the wealthy classes who were trying to protect their businesses and possessions. Deciding that they only had their lives to lose, the poor remained where they were and struggled to endure amid Japanese aggression. By February, Yuanling had been bombed on numerous occasions.<sup>156</sup> In August 1939, incendiary bombs were dropped on the city for the first time.<sup>157</sup> Rolling up his sleeves to assist with relief work, Bishop Cuthbert O'Gara earned the nickname, "The Stretcher-Bearing Bishop."

In 1939, Fr. Basil was transferred to Yongsui, the old mission of Fr. Theophane Maguire, who had returned to the United States.<sup>158</sup> The mission town was predominantly occupied by an aboriginal Chinese population known as the Miao. They had their own specific dialect, which was a departure from the mandarin Chinese that Fr. Basil and his fellow missionaries had learned upon their arrival in the country, and speaking was the only method of communication, since the Miao had no written language.

While war erupted along the Chinese coast and the mission in Yuanling endured Japanese bombings, the village of Yongsui, "Lasting Peace," lived up to its name. The closest experience that its citizens had to the war was the frequent wail of air alarms. As the children in town liked to say, "They have dropped no eggs here."<sup>159</sup> The mission town boasted a Catholic following so large that Masses in the mission chapel were said for capacity crowds. Bishop Cuthbert O'Gara ordered a new church built in Yongsui and Fr. Basil served as an overseer during its construction. An avid videographer, Fr. Basil tape-recorded footage of the construction process.<sup>160</sup> In addition, he established a men's and women's catechumenate, and both brick buildings were frequently crowded with citizens learning the teachings of the Church. Bishop O'Gara also granted permission for Fr. Basil

to build another rectory in Yongsui and devote the existing mission house entirely for dispensary work.

By 1941, Fr. Basil commented that Passionists throughout the district were doing double-duty, juggling both their ordinary mission activities with the added strain of relief work. He also noted the influx of Chinese refugees coming into Yongsui:

Since the beginning of the war we have had a refugee camp to care for the many homeless ones who flocked here from the war-torn districts. The refugee children have been attending a school in the camp, organized and conducted by the mission. As soon as opportunity and funds permit, a school will be added to the buildings of the mission as a crowning feature.<sup>161</sup>

Fr. Basil remained at the mission of Yongsui until 1945, when he was transferred again to assist the mission at Wuxi.<sup>162</sup> After bombings had started in Yuanling in 1940, the mission's orphanages had been moved there.<sup>163</sup> A mission station of the Sisters of Charity, Wuxi was remote, far from highways, and sequestered by rolling hills. While the sisters saw to the care of the children, the Passionists conducted religious teaching. Fr. Basil also visited orphanages that were a part of Madame Chiang Kai-shek's ambitious social welfare program to care for the orphans of Nationalist soldiers.<sup>164</sup> Wherever Madame Chiang placed the children, and in whatever number, she never relinquished control. She would often visit unannounced to check on their care.<sup>165</sup> Fr. Basil visited one such orphanage in Zhijiang to teach religion classes.<sup>166</sup> Passionist involvement in the care of Chinese orphans and refugees is a point of interest because it demonstrates that Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist government could not provide for its own people and relied upon the Catholic missionaries of west Hunan to provide basic services and needs. This involvement would later serve as a justification of persecution by the Communists.

In February of 1946, Fr. Basil again returned to the United States, apparently to receive another operation that could not be performed in China.<sup>167</sup> During a sojourn in Pittsburgh, he met with Thomas Cardinal Tien of Beijing and Sr. Catherine Davenport, S.S.J., who also worked in the mission fields of China. Fr. Basil was present at the Motherhouse in Baden when several Sisters of St. Joseph received their habits in March.<sup>168</sup> He visited Sharon, and learned that his sister Gertrude had entered the Sisters of the Good Shepherd and had taken her vows in 1938. Thus, a total of six Bauer children had been inspired to pursue religious vocations.<sup>169</sup>

Fr. Basil's visit to Sharon also coincided with the second return of his uncle Fr. Viktor Koch. Germany was reeling from the aftermath of WWII, and Fr. Viktor had traveled home to America, vowing to return with a new band of Passionists willing to serve in Germany. A Mass was celebrated at St. Joseph's Church honoring Fr. Viktor's golden jubilee — fifty years as a Passionist priest. Fr. Basil co-celebrated the Mass along with other priests in the family: cousins Fr. Benedict Huck, C.P., Monsignor Joseph G. Mehler, and Fr. Rowland Flaherty, C.P., who had been ordained a month earlier.<sup>170</sup>

In 1948, Fr. Basil returned to Hunan and his home mission of Wangcun. He returned to learn that, shortly after his departure in 1946, the Vicariate of Yuanling had officially become a diocese.<sup>171</sup> The happiness over that development would be short-lived, for the new diocese would find itself besieged by Communist influences.

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Within another year, Fr. Basil would experience the most devastating events of his life as a missionary.

### Part III: Fr. Basil in Communist China The Communists Take China

When Fr. Basil left China, World War II had ended. Japan had unconditionally surrendered to the Allies, and Japanese forces remaining in China were surrendering to the troops of Chiang Kai-shek's Guomindang. However, the civil war between the Guomindang and the Chinese Communist Party was still ongoing. In order to diffuse hostilities between the warring parties, Patrick J. Hurley, the U.S. Ambassador to China, negotiated a treaty known as the Double Tenth Agreement (the name referred to the fact that the conference concluded on October 10, 1945).<sup>172</sup> According to the terms, the Chinese Communist Party would acknowledge the Guomindang as the legitimate government of China, and in turn, the Guomindang would recognize the Communists as a legitimate opposition party. Large-scale military confrontations did cease, but only for a brief time. On November 15, 1945, Chiang Kai-shek launched a new offensive intended to prevent the Communists from strengthening their power base. By the summer of 1946, China plunged back into civil war.<sup>173</sup>

By the time that Fr. Basil returned to China in 1947, the balance of power in the country had shifted in favor of the Communists. After Japan surrendered to the Allies, Russian forces occupied Manchuria, which had formerly been under Japanese control. Joseph Stalin, the leader of Russia and head of the Comintern, intended Mao Zedong to have firm control of the northern half of Manchuria after Russian forces had departed. The Soviets therefore delayed their withdrawal, allowing Mao Zedong's forces enough time to secretly slip behind their army. The Chinese Communists benefited greatly from the discovery of Japanese weaponry that had been abandoned, though they had difficulty mastering the hardware until well-trained troops from the Guomindang began surrendering and switching sides.

The United States offered aid to embattled Guomindang forces. Over 50,000 U.S. marines were sent to guard strategic sites, and 100,000 U.S. troops were sent to quell Communist forces in China's Shangdong province.<sup>174</sup> The U.S. equipped and trained over 500,000 Guomindang troops and transported their soldiers to Communist-controlled areas, where they could proceed to drive out the enemy. Despite the advantage of more manpower and weaponry, the Guomindang still could not defeat the Communists. Mao Zedong employed a "passive-defensive" strategy, withdrawing Communist soldiers from contested areas to preserve their numbers. He also favored tactics that wore out the Guomindang forces as much as possible. Communist history records this phase of the Chinese Civil War as the "war of liberation."<sup>175</sup>

### The Communists Enter Wangcun

As the Communists swept through China, their *modus operandi* became evident to inhabitants of liberated regions. The process was formulaic. The first arrivals were fighting men in the Communist army, stopping within towns only briefly for a respite before moving onward. In their wake they left behind a propaganda corps comprised of idealistic youth recruited from colleges and high schools in Communist-controlled regions.<sup>176</sup> The Nationalist army had planted spies within

these areas, and officers who had befriended American missionaries in Hunan made numerous attempts to warn them of the hardships to come. One Guomindang officer described the Communist process as follows:

For four months it is the *kao t'leo* (the traditional Chinese bow, or politeness); for another four months it is *ta t'leo* (bang heads, or punishment); and after that it is *ke'an t'leo* (cut heads off, or execution).<sup>177</sup>

The Red Army first entered Fr. Basil's mission of Wangcun in November. Just as Nationalist spies had predicted, their arrival was peaceful. The Nationalist Army and the town militia offered no resistance. Fr. Basil was impressed by the discipline of the soldiers. Unlike the bandits and soldiers he'd grown weary of encountering throughout his time in China, these troops refrained from storming into the homes of civilians, demanding food and quarter. Instead, they slept outdoors, beneath the eaves of houses, lulling the population into complacency with a sense of security. When they approached local farmers for food, they offered payment. The Communist occupiers who remained behind encouraged the locals to continue with their ordinary business, keeping shops and schools open. They promised to change nothing in the normal course of the Chinese life.<sup>178</sup> From Fr. Basil's perspective, they came in "like wolves in sheep's clothing." During the *kao t'leo* (politeness) phase, Fr. Basil noted that Communists focused special attention on the youngest citizens of Wangcun. They beguiled them with weekly parades in which all children participated in the famous 'stilt-walker dance.' It was an exciting spectacle, complete with the beating of drums, the clash of cymbals, and, to Fr. Basil's distaste, the shouting of slogans derogatory to the U.S. The children were often joined by members of the Farmers' Union and the Young Women's Guild. The latter were decked up in exaggerated makeup and flashy red costumes. Throughout these events, Fr. Basil noted that everyone seemed engaged in a competition to see who could shout the loudest, or appear the happiest.

The missionary's first indication of the *ta t'leo* phase — punishment — occurred when the Communists called regular meetings of the townspeople. In all the schools, one class period was devoted to intensive propaganda.<sup>179</sup> By design, they coincided exactly with doctrinal classes, and thus eliminated religious instruction. Children were organized into "youth battalions," small groups of eight to twelve members, each with its own elected chairman and managed by an official propagandist. Chinese tradition demanded that young people show deference to their elders, but within six months of the Communist arrival, children and teenagers took to calling elders over age forty the *muh-yu-ming-tang-tih ren*, the "no-brains-generation." Parents were baffled by the complete absence of *xiao*, the traditional reverence that the Chinese held for their mother and father. Moreover, they discovered that they had to be extremely mindful of what they said at home. Their children were being urged to report people who had "wrong thoughts" about the regime, resulting in accusations of misconduct, and eventually incarceration.<sup>180</sup> Fr. Basil empathized with the anguish of the parents, and like them, he grieved at the breakdown of traditional Chinese culture.

Fr. Basil witnessed one case in which a 14-year-old boy reported anti-Communist sentiments uttered by his father, who was sentenced to

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ten years in jail. The following day, the local paper gave the boy front page publicity, heaping praise upon him, and urging other children to follow the example of their compatriot. Another case sent chills of horror through the citizens of Wangcun. In a neighboring town, two young miscreants who reported their parents were murdered the next night by incensed villagers. The incident roused the attention of the Communist military, and the perpetrators of the killings were swiftly executed.<sup>181</sup>

The students in Fr. Basil's mission school had always adored him. Within six months they turned openly hostile, deriding him as a "foreign devil."<sup>182</sup> Communist propagandists compelled the children to tease, torment, antagonize, and insult him, making life as miserable as possible. It was not uncommon for the youth battalions to stop at Fr. Basil's residence on a nightly basis, sometimes after midnight, awakening him and demanding to see books, papers, or other records. By day, they invaded his house to see what kind of food he was eating. The invasions were authorized by local police, and Fr. Basil's protests were consistently ignored.<sup>183</sup>

Town meetings increased in duration and frequency until every evening involved a long indoctrination period from which no townsman dared to be absent for fear of being ridiculed, reported, or incarcerated. With his classroom empty and church attendance whittled down to a hardy few, it became clear to Fr. Basil that the Communists were methodically stripping the Catholic Church's influence from the lives and minds of the people of Wangcun — and China as a whole. The town's Communist leader issued a stern warning, ordering the missionary to suspend all religious activities. Fr. Basil had been teaching religion in Wangcun for fifteen years, and therefore the demand shocked him to the core. He reminded the town leader that the Chinese government had promised religious freedom in China. The latter affirmed that religious freedom was indeed assured — but only within his mission compound.<sup>184</sup>

Within weeks, however, this last haven was wrenched from Fr. Basil as well. The school was seized for Communist use, and the chapel confiscated. The crosses were stripped from all buildings, and signs betraying names of Christian origin were obliterated.<sup>185</sup> The Communist leader also demanded control over the dispensary where Fr. Basil had been distributing food and medicine to 100 people every day. Defiant and indignant, the missionary pointed out with characteristic bluntness that the supplies were for all the people in need, and if he couldn't spread them accordingly, it would displease God to see him offering it only to one person. The Communist leader consented to let the dispensary remain open, and distribution of medicine continue unhindered.<sup>186</sup> Fr. Basil himself was relegated to a minuscule Chinese house within his mission compound. He conducted Mass there, but none of his parishioners dared to attend.<sup>187</sup> Had they done so, they would be reported to the Communists. All of his religious activities in Wangcun were finally curtailed.

For the people of Wangcun, the feelings of security inspired by the Communist arrival gave way to fear and a harrowing realization that they were being enslaved. Their conquerors redistributed the land, and each farmer received a share. Under the Nationalist regime, farmers found the taxes oppressive. After the Communist regime dawned over China, they soon discovered that half their harvest was

being hauled away for taxation. All supplies and property — rice, salt, oil, livestock, wood, vegetables — were being levied.<sup>188</sup> The remaining food supply was hardly enough to sustain them for five or six months. They were not permitted to sell any of their produce, for that would give them a certain reserve of funds. Moreover, the goods sold in the government stores were always priced cheaply, making it unfeasible for farmers to even make the attempt.<sup>189</sup>

Fear finally shifted to abject terror as the Communists began the final stage of assimilation, *k'an t'oo* — execution. A meeting was held for members of the former National government, and to the horror of Wangcun's inhabitants, nearly all of them were shot. The same happened to former Chinese army officials. Those who were not shot immediately were jailed for long periods of time, then sentenced to death. The Communists eliminated every individual who could pose the slightest threat to their authority. Those who were declared "dangerous elements" were sent to jails that were already jammed to capacity.<sup>190</sup> Throughout Hunan, skilled workers were incarcerated simply as a method to induce them to perform work for the regime. In one instance, when Party officers were in need of uniforms, Communist members made a tour of tailor shops throughout the province. About ten tailors were arrested on trumped-up charges, and told to bring their sewing machines with them. They were jailed for two or three weeks, sewing new uniforms in their cells, and released only when the work was complete. Carpenters, masons, and stone-cutters received similar treatment. During the occasions when Fr. Basil traveled through Hunan, he observed long lines of prisoners being led to public construction sites, or performing road maintenance.<sup>191</sup>

The older generations who knew Fr. Basil well commiserated with him in their shared plight. Chinese friends and parishioners could no longer attend religious services and ceremonies, but they readily made their way to his dispensary. Every day, he heard the same woeful refrain from merchants, farmers, housewives, and coolies. "Father, how long is this going to last? Is there any hope that, if we suffer for two or three years, the situation might make a turn for the better? It would not be so bad if only there were more food. If this keeps up for two more years, we shall have nothing to eat." Fr. Basil was a forthright soul, gentle, yet unsparingly honest. He assured them



**Rev. Basil Bauer, C.P. with puppy and children in Hunan, China (ca. 1930s).**

Source: China Historical Collection, Passionist Archives

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that he saw no hope in sight, and felt pangs of sorrow as he watched them plod away in despair. One remark from a merchant named Mr. Wang reveals the depth of emotional turmoil experienced by the citizens of Wangcun. A friend of Fr. Basil, he came in the guise of needing medicine, but in reality, he simply needed a willing ear to hear his troubles. He confided that he was in a state of suicidal ideation. The only thing that prevented him from carrying out the act was the thought of his children.<sup>192</sup>

### Fr. Basil's Final Years in China

The Communists were adept at engineering situations that would goad a missionary — or one of their parishioners — to react to persecution, and thus furnish evidence that might justify eventual arrest. One common tactic involved hanging posters on the walls of a mission compound, each denouncing foreign missionaries as spies and imperialists. When Communist officers found that the posters were missing, the missionaries were immediately held suspect of committing the act themselves, or forcing their Chinese followers to tear them down. A public trial swiftly ensued, an event that the Communists dubbed “Confession Day.”<sup>193</sup>

Given anecdotes passed down through the Bauer family, this scenario played out at Wangcun. Posters were hung on the mission walls, most likely denouncing Fr. Basil. In a fit of sheer indignation, a young boy from the town tore them down, and when the Communists arrived on the scene to arrest the guilty party, Fr. Basil covered for the child by claiming responsibility.<sup>194</sup>

A public trial ensued in the spring of 1950. The Communist propagandists cowed several hundred villagers into gathering at the town square for Confession Day, and demanded that they tax their memories for the slightest detail that might be construed as a “sin” against Communism and the Party. They fully intended to contort the information leaked from the townspeople into evidence of espionage. Their plot was foiled by an 11-year-old Chinese girl, Lung Teh Lui. Slim and roughly clad, she stepped forward and proclaimed that Fr. Basil was a good man, and she would not lie, regardless of what the Communists would do to her.<sup>195</sup>

Though the effort was courageous, Lung Teh Lui's response did not exonerate Fr. Basil. The Communists had failed to extract incriminating evidence from the submissive crowd, but they were determined to expel him from Chinese society. The town's communist leader placed him under arrest and banished him to the rectory of his former mission compound. Fr. Basil wrote to his sister, Sr. Anne Marie Bauer, R.S.M. of Erie, Pennsylvania, telling her of his turns of fortune.<sup>196</sup> That letter was the last communication that he would send outside Red China for twenty-two months.

By late October in 1952, Fr. Basil had lost nearly 50 pounds. Normally, the five-foot-nine missionary weighed around 180 lbs. He was now a gaunt 130. The dramatic weight loss had not resulted from abuse or neglect. The enlarged heart and overactive thyroid conditions that had developed from hardships in the mission fields were returning in full force, and the stress of confinement had left him withered. As his strength ebbed, Fr. Basil warned the Communist leader of Wangcun that, if an American died on Chinese soil, the Party would be held responsible. Shaken by the warning, the normally obstreperous man issued a permit for Fr. Basil to travel to the Passionists' central

mission in Yuanling, and ordered coolies to carry him over 35 miles of mountainous terrain.<sup>197</sup> Thus, in a state of physical anguish, and with a heavy heart, he left the mission town where he had spent the majority of his 28 years in China.

After visiting Yuanling and telling his brethren of his intention to leave China, he began the journey, arriving in Changsha.<sup>198</sup> There, Fr. Basil made a concerted effort to apply for an exit visa and return to the United States. He first confronted the town police and argued for the right to return home based on his failing health. The police escorted him to the hospital for medical examination, where he was placed under guard. Doctors confirmed that he was suffering from heart ailments, along with kidney stones. They prescribed digitalis, a medication derived from foxglove.<sup>199</sup> Unfortunately, it only exacerbated his condition, causing his enlarged heart to race, and his hospital stay lengthened to an agonizing eleven days. Twice during his convalescence, he “raised the roof,” again demanding an exit permit, resulting in calls to the police. The second appeal was successful. They issued his permit and told him to leave for Hong Kong the next day. With his health still precarious, he pleaded to have one of his fellow Passionists accompany him on the long road through bandit-infested territory. His request was denied.<sup>200</sup>

Teetering between life and death, he staggered into a train that took him from Changsha to Canton, where he boarded a boat and crossed into Hong Kong — and freedom — on November 7, 1952.<sup>201</sup> Fr. Basil looked back to the shrinking Chinese coastline, at distant green hills rising beneath veils of fog. He prayed for Passionist brethren who remained in Red China, as well as friends and parishioners he'd left behind in Wangcun. No resentment tarnished his thoughts of them. He could not conceive of Chinese Communism as a “revolution,” because that implied an acceptance of circumstances by the majority of the people. In his mind, Communism was a massive flood that had surged down from northern China, ravaging Hunan, and the people of that enchanting land had no other alternative but to let themselves drift along with the tide of fear. They would find themselves inundated for years to come.<sup>202</sup> That prospect anguished him to the marrow of his weary bones.

### Part IV: After China

A series of hospitalizations peppered the next two months of Fr. Basil's life. First, he spent twelve days in St. Francis Hospital in Hong Kong. After boarding the *S.S. President Madison* and disembarking in Los Angeles on November 23, he made his way home to Sharon, spent Christmas with family, then checked into the Sharon Hospital, where he convalesced for another nine days.<sup>203</sup> Next, he ventured to Union City, and after meeting with Fr. Provincial Ernest Welch, he traveled to the Leahy Clinic in Boston and received treatment for his heart and thyroid condition.<sup>204</sup> The state of his health remained a concern for the rest of his life. Fr. Basil's family members vividly recall that he drank wine to ease his heart condition, and if he drank coffee, by necessity, it was always Sanka.<sup>205</sup> The caffeine would aggravate his enlarged heart.

Between 1953 and 1955, Fr. Basil accepted a transitional assignment in Florida. While recuperating from the rigors of his experience in China, he performed pastoral duties at the Lantana Chapel in the Boynton Beach Area. In August of 1957, he received a new passport

## The Pennsylvania Passionist Who Became Chinese: Fr. Basil Bauer, C.P. (continued)



**Rev. Basil Bauer, C.P., tells reporters: “I came out of Red China empty-handed.”**

Source: China Historical Collection, Passionist Archives

and joined the Passionist missions in Mandeville, Jamaica.<sup>206</sup> Despite the change in venue, China remained with him. Occasionally, he made headlines in newspapers from Florida to Mandeville, Jamaica, and the reason was inevitably a keynote speech or interview about his experiences in Red China. When pressed for an opinion about the political upheaval that had afflicted the country, Fr. Basil was quick to praise Chiang Kai-shek:

Chiang was surrounded by gullible, greedy, grasping men, but Chiang is a sincere, honest man with China’s future at heart. He is one of the staunchest friends America has in the Orient. We should not let past failures guide us in supporting him in the future.<sup>207</sup>

The impact of China on Fr. Basil’s life is evident in stories relayed by relatives. As a child, Laurie Miller, his great niece, would beg him to teach her how to count in Chinese — a matter that required a special arrangement, since Laurie’s mother did not like the sound of the foreign words. Fr. Basil would prevail upon the girl’s mother to make a Manhattan for him, and while she was occupied with the preparations, he indulged Laurie with lessons.<sup>208</sup>

His second cousin Gary Koch remembered Fr. Basil teaching him how to write his name in Chinese. He also recalled a time when the Koch family drove Fr. Basil to the spillway at Pymatuning State Park in Linesville, Pennsylvania — famous as the “Place Where the Ducks Walk on the Fishes’ Backs.”<sup>209</sup> A railing overlooks the deep well full of writhing carp, and visitors are apt to toss bread in pieces and slices, watching with glee as ducks and fish squirm about, vying for food. A child at the time, Gary and his sister bought a loaf of stale bread and skipped over to the railing, turning giddy at the spectacle that awaited. To their shock, Fr. Basil gaped at the sight of visitors flinging bread over the railing. During his time in China, he had witnessed hundreds of people die from famine, and hundreds more swallow mouthfuls of dirt to alleviate gnawing hunger. The former missionary was not about to stand by and let his kin waste food on

fish. He permitted both children one slice each to feed the carp, but they were taking the rest of that loaf home, stale or not!<sup>210</sup>

Fr. Basil returned home from Jamaica to the USA in September of 1959 to attend the funeral of Mother Genevieve Ryan, former Mother Superior of the Sisters of St. Joseph in China.<sup>211</sup> He was assigned to St. Paul’s Monastery in Pittsburgh and remained there until 1962, when he was transferred to Baltimore. During that time, he served as a chaplain at the Jenkins Memorial Hospital, and also for the Patapsco Council of the Knights of Columbus. He never let a meeting conclude without reminding the men of their eternal destiny — of what life was about.<sup>212</sup> Every year he made it a point to visit family back home in Sharon, and in 1968, he even celebrated his golden jubilee of profession as a Passionist in St. Joseph’s Church, the same parish where he had been baptized, received First Communion, and said his First Mass as an ordained priest in 1923.<sup>213</sup> During one such visit on July 10, 1970, he suffered a heart attack that was destined to end his earthly life.<sup>214</sup> The Passionists who knew him best consider it a great coincidence that on that very day, Bishop James Walsh, a fellow China missionary, was freed from twelve years of captivity in communist China.<sup>215</sup> Fr. Basil was admitted as a patient in Sharon General Hospital the day of his heart attack, and on July 18, after a weeklong struggle to recuperate, he passed away.

To friends and family who knew Fr. Basil, he left a deep impression on the mind and heart. A true Passionist, human suffering resonated within the core of his being. Sharing the pain of the human condition was the way in which he connected with God. He had made himself a human bridge between Christ and China, which was extraordinary. In 1924, he set sail with no training in the Chinese language or culture, yet he intuitively understood what was required to succeed as a missionary.

Eighty Passionists and five religious communities of Sisters had struggled to sow the word of God in western Hunan, and when Communism swept away all that they had struggled to build in that mountainous province, they concluded that they had failed in their mission. However, all things are possible in China — provided that they are accomplished in Chinese fashion. Sr. Mary Carita Pendergast, S.C., a Sister of Charity who had worked in Hunan, returned there in April-May of 1989. Joined by Passionist Fathers Marcellus White and Robert Carbonneau, she discovered that the seeds had taken root amid the storm of political and social turmoil. In Chinese fashion, the Catholics of Hunan patiently endured the onslaught of Communist propaganda and waited for a time when persecution of Christians eased enough to permit open practice of the Catholic faith. Over time, the Church of China is slowly but surely strengthening its foundations.<sup>216</sup> May God reward Fr. Basil Bauer for the amazing part that he played in that valiant effort.

### Endnotes

- 1 *Homily for Mass for Father Basil Bauer*, Passionist Historical Archives, Union City, NJ [hereinafter PHA], (July 21, 1970), 1.
- 2 Author interview with Gary Koch (May 31, 2015).
- 3 In 1927, when violent clashes between the Communist Army and the Nationalist Army forced several Passionists to temporarily flee their missions, several missionaries bitterly criticized Prefect Apostolic Msgr. Dominic Langenbacher for indecision at issuing evacuation orders. When pressed for his opinion of the Prefect, Fr. Basil concurred that his fellow missionary had faults, but would condemn anyone who openly opposed him. Caspar Caulfield, C.P., *Only a Beginning: The Passionists in China, 1921-1931* (Passionist Press: Union City, 1990), 195.

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- 4 The Passionist comparison of Fr. Basil to Nathaniel was stated by the (unknown) Passionist Father who delivered his funeral homily. PHA, *Homily for Mass for Father Basil Bauer*, loc.cit.
- 5 Chinese ways of dealing with seeming contradictions result in a dialectical or compromise approach—retaining basic elements of opposing perspectives by seeking a “middle way.” Kaiping Peng and Richard E. Nisbett, “Culture, dialectics, and reasoning about contradiction,” *American Psychologist*, Vol. 54 (September 1999), 741-754.
- 6 Author interview with Gary Koch (May 31, 2015).
- 7 Joseph Bauer birth certificate, St. Joseph Church Records, Sharon, PA [hereinafter SJCR].
- 8 The Carnegie Steel Company was sold to the U.S. Steel Corporation in 1901, and became a subsidiary. Find details in the article “Sale,” appearing at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carnegie\\_Steel\\_Company](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carnegie_Steel_Company).
- 9 An overview of the Sharon Steel corporation and its role in the expansion of the city of Sharon, PA, appears at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sharon\\_Steel\\_Corporation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sharon_Steel_Corporation).
- 10 John F. Bauer Obituary, *The Record Argus* (September 2, 1941), 5.
- 11 Mairy Jayn Woge, “5 Bauers in Religious Orders Reunited Here,” *The Sharon Herald* (June 8, 1968).
- 12 The assertion that the Kochs helped found St. Rose of Lima is part of the oral tradition passed on through three generations of the Koch family. This has been confirmed by *The History of Mercer County, Pennsylvania, 1888* (Chicago: Brown, Runk & Co), 539-540. St. Rose of Lima was established in 1860, but changed its name to St. Joseph after a new church was constructed in the city of Sharon in 1893. All references to St. Joseph’s prior to 1965 refer to the old site of the church on State Street. In 1965, new property was purchased on Case Avenue in Sharon, and the present St. Joseph’s Church was built on that site.
- 13 Woge, “5 Bauers in Religious Orders Reunited Here,” loc. cit.
- 14 Details are found in the biography of Fr. Victor Koch, C.P., appearing at the Passionist Historical Archives website: <http://cprovince.org/archives/bios/12/12-15a.php>.
- 15 K. O’Malley and C.J. Yuhaus, “Passionists,” *New Catholic Encyclopedia, Volume 10*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Detroit: Thomson/Gale, 2003), 931-933.
- 16 Anna Koch Bauer and Fr. Victor Koch’s infant brother Fadius died on October 31, 1880, the day he was born. See SJCR, death record for Fadius Koch (1880). Their father Nikolaus Koch died on April 7, 1881. See SJCR, death record for Nikolaus Koch (1881). Their maternal grandmother, Anna Barth Koch, died on June 14, 1882. The cause of death on her death certificate is illegible, as the ink is worn. See SJCR, death record for Anna Barth Koch (1882).
- 17 See the biography of Fr. Benedict Huck, C.P., appearing at the Passionist Historical Archives website: <http://cprovince.org/archives/bios/9/9-30a.php>. Joseph G. Mehler professed as a Passionist on February 20, 1891, was ordained Gilbert of St. Joseph on June 4, 1898, and dispensed of his Passionist vows on July 10, 1906 due to illness. He was later accepted into the Columbus, Ohio, diocese. The Diocese of Steubenville was erected on October 21, 1944 out of territory taken from the Diocese of Columbus. Father Mehler, who had been serving within the territory that became part of the Steubenville diocese, was automatically incardinated into the new diocese. He became Right Reverend Monsignor Joseph G. Mehler on December 20, 1945. Koch Family Archives, Estelle Mehler Kidson, *Mehler – Cook Family Legacy: 1700’s to 2003* (2003), 7.
- 18 Fr. Victor’s eagerness to see the next generation enter religious service is revealed in a letter he wrote to his niece Teresa Bauer. He mentions a newspaper clipping stating that the John Bauer family has matched the record for the number of children joining religious orders, and is overjoyed by the prospect that it might be broken. Bauer Family Archives [hereinafter BFA], Letter from Fr. Victor Koch, C.P., to Teresa Bauer, Schwarzenfeld, Germany (November 25, 1935).
- 19 Email from Laurene Miller to author (March 31, 2015).
- 20 Victoria Bauer’s potent religiosity is recounted by both Gary Koch and Laurene Miller. Gary recalled stories about Victoria confronting parish priests about their sermons in the confessional. Laurene Miller recalled Aunt Victoria chiding her father for letting his wife and daughter wear shorts and exposing their legs, and claimed that they would all go to hell for the indecent display. Author interview with Gary Koch (May 31, 2015), and second email from Laurene Miller to author (March 31, 2015).
- 21 Woge, “5 Bauers in Religious Orders Reunited Here,” loc. cit.
- 22 PHA, Application of Joseph Bauer into the Passionist Preparatory College (December 15, 1912).
- 23 PHA, Letter from Rev. Simon Assenmacher to the Passionist Congregation, St. Joseph’s Rectory, Sharon, Pennsylvania (1912).
- 24 PHA, Physician’s Certificate for Joseph Bauer (March 17, 1912).
- 25 O’Malley and Yuhaus, “Passionists,” loc. cit.
- 26 PHA, Acts of the Seventeenth Provincial Chapter of the Province of Saint Paul of the Cross, October 4 to October 13, 1911 (October 13, 1911), 180-186.
- 27 For reference to Fr. Victor being Rector of St. Paul of the Cross Monastery in Pittsburgh, see “Victor Koch,” *Superiors and the Highlights of their Administrations, 1905-1953, Volume II Historical Record, St. Paul of the Cross Monastery, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania* (Pittsburgh: Passionist Community of St. Paul of the Cross Monastery, 1996), 10. For references on his transfer to Baltimore, see Fr. Victor Koch’s biography appearing at the Passionist Archives website: <http://cprovince.org/archives/bios/12/12-15a.php>.
- 28 Rev. Robert E. Carbonneau, C.P., *Life, Death and Memory: Three Passionists in Hunan, China and the Shaping of an American Mission Perspective in the 1920s* (Ph.D. Diss., Georgetown University, 1992), 24.
- 29 PHA, [Profile record of Fr. Basil Bauer]. See also “Fourteen Received the Passionist Habit,” *The Pittsburgh Catholic* (September 20, 1917), 8.
- 30 “Confrater” is a title used for a member of the Passionist order who is a novice. After finishing the novitiate, a Confrater assumes the title “Brother,” or becomes ordained as a priest and receives the title “Father.”
- 31 Angelyn Dries, O.S.F., *The Missionary Movement in American Catholic History* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1998), 86.
- 32 Information on World War I appears at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World\\_War\\_I](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_War_I). The entry of the United States into the war appears at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American\\_entry\\_into\\_World\\_War\\_I](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_entry_into_World_War_I).
- 33 For information on the Wilson Administration’s decision to use conscription in World War I, see “Military draft,” appearing at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United\\_States\\_home\\_front\\_during\\_World\\_War\\_I](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_home_front_during_World_War_I).
- 34 Confrater Basil Bauer was affected by the third draft held on September 12, 1918, for men ages 18-45. He was 20 years old at the time. Previous drafts affected men aged 21-31. See “National registration days and termination,” appearing at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Selective\\_Service\\_Act\\_of\\_1917](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Selective_Service_Act_of_1917).
- 35 Carbonneau, *Life, Death, and Memory*, op. cit., 34-35.
- 36 *Ibid.*, 33-34.
- 37 Fr. Basil (Joseph) Bauer draft card, U.S. World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918, appearing at the website: <http://www.ancestry.com>.
- 38 A summary of the Apostolic Letter *Maximum Illud* appears at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maximum\\_Illud](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maximum_Illud).
- 39 Dries, *The Missionary Movement in American Catholic History*, op. cit., 108.
- 40 Acts of the Twentieth Provincial Chapter of the Province of St. Paul of the Cross Held in the Retreat of St. Paul of the Cross, Pittsburgh, PA, from August 20th to August 28th, 1920, appears at the Passionist Archives website: <http://cprovince.org/archives/chapters/chapter-1920.php>.
- 41 A summary of the Passionist Order’s mission history in China appears at the Passionist Archives website: <http://cprovince.org/archives/histsummary/china-sum.php>.
- 42 Carbonneau, *Life, Death, and Memory*, op. cit., 54.
- 43 Caulfield, *Only a Beginning*, op. cit., 3.
- 44 Fr. Timothy McDermott was related to the Koch/Bauer family line through Anastasia Elser Ziegler, the sister of Viktoria Elser Koch. Viktoria was the mother of Fr. Victor Koch and Anna Koch Bauer. Unlike Fr. Victor and Confrater Basil Bauer, Fr. Timothy did not start out in the Passionist priesthood. He originally entered St. Vincent’s Archabbey in Latrobe, PA, with the intention of becoming a diocesan priest. In 1918, he transferred to the Passionist order. This decision hints at the strong bonds and influences that existed within the family tree. See Fr. Timothy McDermott’s biography appearing at <http://cprovince.org/archives/bios/4/4-8a.php>.
- 45 Passionist documentation does not make it clear whether selectees for the China missions were volunteers or nominees. However, Basil Bauer’s decision to volunteer is supported by the article, “Sharon Youth is Ordained to Priesthood; Rev. Basil Bauer Volunteers for Mission Service in China,” *The Sharon Herald* (October 30, 1923), 5.
- 46 Caulfield, *Only a Beginning*, op. cit., 88. The assertion of this band being the largest in American history is reported in the article, “Thirteen Mission Workers for China,” *The Scranton Republican* (June 6, 1924), 12.
- 47 Woge, “5 Bauers in Religious Orders Reunited Here,” loc. cit.

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- 48 “Sharon Youth is Ordained to Priesthood: Rev. Fr. Basil Bauer Volunteers for Mission Service in China,” loc. cit.
- 49 “First Mass is Celebrated by Sharon Priest: St. Joseph’s Church Thronged For Service by Rev. Fr. Basil Bauer,” *The Sharon Herald* (November 6, 1923), 1.
- 50 SJCR, Baptismal certificate for Joseph Bauer.
- 51 A note on Chinese names. There are two systems for transliterating Mandarin Chinese characters to the Roman alphabet: (1) Wade-Giles (1859, modified 1892), which would have been used during the time of the Passionist China missions, and (2) pinyin, which was developed by the Chinese government and approved as the standard in 1958. In still other cases, the missionaries used their own versions of Chinese names. This paper will use the pinyin system. If primary sources use Wade-Giles or missionary terms, the standardized pinyin version will follow in brackets.
- 52 An overview of the Qing dynasty appears at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History\\_of\\_China#Qing\\_dynasty](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_China#Qing_dynasty).
- 53 The territories ceded to foreign powers by Imperial China were called concessions. For further information, see [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Concessions\\_in\\_China](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Concessions_in_China). For the history of the Boxer Rebellion, see [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boxer\\_Rebellion](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boxer_Rebellion).
- 54 A profile of Dr. Sun Yat-sen appears at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sun\\_Yat-sen](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sun_Yat-sen).
- 55 Dr. Sun Yat-sen’s plans for Chinese union and democracy are found under the article, “Carrying out Sun Yat-sen’s will,” appearing at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chiang\\_Kai-shek](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chiang_Kai-shek).
- 56 For an overview of the Warlord Era, see “Origins,” appearing at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Warlord\\_Era](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Warlord_Era). A description of conditions during the Warlord Era is also found in Caulfield, *Only a Beginning*, op. cit., 54-56, 75.
- 57 “Guomindang” is the pinyin spelling for the Chinese Nationalist Army. In Wade-Giles, it is transliterated as “Kuomintang” and is often abbreviated to KMT. Wikipedia tends to employ the Wade-Giles spelling. The pinyin spelling is used in this paper.
- 58 Mao Zedong’s early involvement in the Chinese Communist Party is found in “Founding the Communist Party of China,” appearing at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mao\\_Zedong](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mao_Zedong).
- 59 A profile of warlord Zhao Hengti appears at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zhao\\_Hengti](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zhao_Hengti).
- 60 A profile of warlord Wu Peifu appears at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wu\\_Peifu](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wu_Peifu).
- 61 Caulfield, *Only a Beginning*, op. cit., 56.
- 62 “Comintern” is an abbreviation for “Communist International,” an organization that advocated worldwide communism. Information appears at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Communist\\_International](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Communist_International).
- 63 A profile of Comintern agent Michael Borodin appears at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mikhail\\_Borodin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mikhail_Borodin). For information on diplomat Adolfe Joffe, see [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adolph\\_Joffe](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adolph_Joffe). The involvement of Borodin and Joffe is also mentioned in Caulfield, *Only a Beginning*, op. cit., 75-76.
- 64 Passionist medical training in Pittsburgh is stated by two sources: Fr. Robert Carbonneau, C.P.’s interview with missionary William Westhoven, C.P., who was in the same mission band as Fr. Basil, and also Caspar Caulfield’s statement that the missionaries readying for departure were attending classes in first aid at a Catholic hospital in Pittsburgh. There is no mention of which hospital offered the courses. See Carbonneau, *Life, Death, and Memory*, op. cit., 63, and Caulfield, *Only a Beginning*, op. cit., 88.
- 65 Fr. Basil and his fellow missionaries studied Chinese for a year in the monastery at Chenzhou. Caulfield, *Only a Beginning*, op. cit., 99. A note on spellings: Chenzhou, the pinyin spelling, is used in this article. In Wade-Giles, it is spelled “Ch’en-chou.” The missionaries often used their own spelling of “Shenchow.”
- 66 Fr. Cuthbert O’Gara initially traveled to China as a missionary. Later on, once the Passionists established their own diocese of Yuanling, China, he was ordained Bishop Cuthbert Martin O’Gara. Information appears at <http://www.catholic-hierarchy.org/bishop/bogara.html>.
- 67 Early on, the Passionists in China had considerable difficulties managing their own affairs. The instance that prompted the communication to Fr. Stanislaus involved missionary Fr. Raphael Vance. Fr. Dominic Langenbacher, the Passionist Superior in China, ordered Fr. Raphael to leave his mission at Baojing for Hankou, where he would greet the fourth wave of China missionaries coming from America. Just days later, Fr. Raphael received a letter from Bishop Ángel Diego y Carbajal, O.S.A., the Vicar Apostolic of Changde, China (1917-1938), informing him that he had left Baojing without permission, and therefore his appointment in that mission was revoked. See Bishop Ángel Diego y Carbajal profile appearing at <http://www.catholic-hierarchy.org/bishop/bdica.html>. Also note that “Changde” is the pinyin spelling used for the Chinese city. In cases where the Wade-Giles Romanization is used, it appears as “Change.” At times, missionaries used the spelling “Changteh.”
- 68 Caulfield, *Only a Beginning*, op. cit., 88-89.
- 69 *Ibid.*, 99.
- 70 The 1924 departure ceremonies were held in Union City, NJ, on May 18; Boston, MA, on May 25; Baltimore, MD, in early June; Scranton, PA, on June 8; Dunkirk, NY, in mid-June; Pittsburgh, PA, on June 15; Cincinnati, OH, on June 19, Louisville, KY, on June 29; St. Louis, MO, on July 3, and finally in San Francisco, CA, on July 22, when the missionaries departed for China. See Carbonneau, *Life, Death, and Memory*, op. cit., 63-72.
- 71 Caulfield, *Only a Beginning*, op. cit., 89.
- 72 Fr. Basil Bauer, C.P., “In Journeying Often,” *The Sign* (July 1933), 735. Information on the *sampan* boat appears at <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sampan>.
- 73 Caulfield, *Only a Beginning*, op. cit., 57.
- 74 Sr. Mary Carita Pendergast, S.C., *Havoc in Hunan: the Sisters of Charity in Western Hunan 1924-1951*, (Morristown, NJ: College of Saint Elizabeth Press, 1991), 7.
- 75 Caulfield, *Only a Beginning*, op. cit., 202.
- 76 *Ibid.*, 136.
- 77 *Ibid.*, 89.
- 78 Fr. Theophane Maguire, C.P., *Hunan Harvest* (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Co., 1946), 11. Fr. Theophane refers to “Loh Pa Hong,” but judging from articles in *The Pittsburgh Catholic* and other sources, the most common Romanized spelling appears to be “Lo Pa Hong.”
- 79 Caulfield, *Only a Beginning*, op. cit., 89-90.
- 80 *Ibid.*, 100-101.
- 81 *Ibid.*
- 82 *Ibid.*, 119.
- 83 Pendergast, *Havoc in Hunan*, op. cit., 11-12.
- 84 Caulfield, *Only a Beginning*, op. cit., 117-120.
- 85 Bauer, “In Journeying Often,” op. cit., 736.
- 86 Caulfield, *Only a Beginning*, op. cit., 120.
- 87 For references to Fr. Basil’s assignments in Yongshun and Wangtsun, see Caulfield, *Only a Beginning*, op. cit., 121 and 195, respectively.
- 88 Establishing a prefecture apostolic was the first step toward establishing a diocese. The Prefecture Apostolic of Chenzhou (est. March 13, 1925) became a Vicariate Apostolic (May 28, 1934), which — following the name change to Vicariate Apostolic of Yuanling (December 10, 1934) — became the Diocese of Yuanling (April 11, 1946). The history of the Yuanling diocese appears at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman\\_Catholic\\_Diocese\\_of\\_Yuanling](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Catholic_Diocese_of_Yuanling).
- 89 Caulfield, *Only a Beginning*, op. cit., 123-125.
- 90 A profile of Monsignor Dominic Langenbacher, C.P., Prefect of Chenzhou (1925-1930), appears at <http://www.catholic-hierarchy.org/bishop/blange.html>.
- 91 Caulfield, *Only a Beginning*, op. cit., 129.
- 92 The emergence of Chiang Kai-shek as the leader of China is described in the article, “Chiang Kai-shek assumes leadership,” appearing at <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kuomintang>.
- 93 Chiang Kai-shek’s acceptance of Dr. Sun Yat-sen’s philosophies and his title of “generalissimo” is mentioned in the article, “Carrying out Sun Yat-sen’s will,” appearing at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chiang\\_Kai-shek](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chiang_Kai-shek).
- 94 Chiang Kai-shek’s mistrust of the Soviet Union is mentioned in the article “Preparation,” appearing at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Northern\\_Expedition](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Northern_Expedition).
- 95 An overview and general description of events concerning the May 30<sup>th</sup> Movement appears at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/May\\_Thirtieth\\_Movement](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/May_Thirtieth_Movement).
- 96 Caulfield, *Only a Beginning*, op. cit., 128-129.
- 97 *Ibid.*, 131.
- 98 *Ibid.*, 139.
- 99 *Ibid.*, 139-141. Also see the profile on warlord Wu Peifu, appearing at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wu\\_Peifu](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wu_Peifu).

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- 100 Caulfield, *Only a Beginning*, op. cit., 137.
- 101 Ibid., 141.
- 102 The Communist purge from the Guomindang is described in the article, “The Purge,” appearing at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shanghai\\_massacre\\_of\\_1927](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shanghai_massacre_of_1927).
- 103 Caulfield, *Only a Beginning*, op. cit., 144.
- 104 Ibid., 145.
- 105 The transliteration “Hankou” is pinyin. The missionaries referred to this large city as “Hankow.”
- 106 Ibid., 149.
- 107 “No News of Sharon Priest in China,” *The Sharon Herald* (May 13, 1927), 1.
- 108 “Grave Fears Felt For Safety of Pittsburgh Priests and Sisters Assigned to Interior of China; Western Hunan Missions Have Been Pillaged and Burned by Chinese — Nineteen Religious Flee,” *The Pittsburgh Catholic* (May 19, 1927), 1. Lo Pa Hong’s predicament is mentioned on the same page: “Native Chinese Philanthropist is in Great Danger,” *The Pittsburgh Catholic* (May 19, 1927), 1.
- 109 “Pittsburgh Priests And Nuns in China Reported Unharmful,” *The Pittsburgh Catholic* (June 5, 1927), 1.
- 110 Caulfield, *Only a Beginning*, op. cit., 170.
- 111 Ibid., 169.
- 112 Ibid., 179, 209.
- 113 The spelling “Wangcun” is pinyin. The Wade-Giles Romanization is spelled “Wangts’un,” but in all his letters and articles for *The Sign*, Fr. Basil used the missionary spelling of “Wangtsun.”
- 114 Caulfield, *Only a Beginning*, op. cit., 131.
- 115 Fr. Basil Bauer, C.P., “New Plans for Wangtsun [Wangcun],” *The Sign* (February 1931), 442.
- 116 Fr. Basil Bauer, C.P., “Calendar of Toil,” *The Sign* (January 1935), 353.
- 117 Bauer, “New Plans for Wangtsun [Wangcun],” op. cit., 443.
- 118 Tai P. Ng, *Chinese Culture, Western Culture, Why Must We Learn From Each Other?* (Lincoln, NE: iUniverse, 2007), 125-126.
- 119 Ibid., 127-129.
- 120 Fr. Basil’s childhood home was 35 Elm Avenue. His oldest sister Victoria moved to 154 Elm Avenue, and shared the house with her sister Mary and brother Vince. His sister Theresa married and lived in Masury, Ohio, just across the Pennsylvania-Ohio border. Woge, “5 Bauers in Religious Orders Reunited Here,” loc. cit.
- 121 Fr. Basil Bauer, C.P., “Yang Mei Saves Her Face,” *The Sign* (August 1931), 57.
- 122 Fr. Basil Bauer, C.P., “Wangtsun [Wangcun],” *The Sign* (April 1929), 570-571.
- 123 Ibid. The citation respects the missionary spelling of the town’s name, “Wangtsun.” The pinyin spelling is used in brackets for consistency.
- 124 Fr. Basil Bauer, C.P., “They Also Suffer,” *The Sign* (June 1934), 669-671.
- 125 Bauer, “Calendar of Toil,” op. cit., 353.
- 126 Bauer, “New Plans for Wangtsun [Wangcun],” op. cit., 443.
- 127 Email from Laurene Miller to author (March 31, 2015).
- 128 Ibid.
- 129 The pinyin transliteration of the name “Yongsui” is used in this article. Fr. Basil used the Wade-Giles Romanization “Yungtsui.”
- 130 Fr. Basil Bauer, C.P., “The Mission of Lasting Peace,” *The Sign* (September 1941), 92-94.
- 131 The dangers of swimming in pools and lakes that originated from abandoned quarries are noted in an article appearing at <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quarry>.
- 132 Email from Laurene Miller to author (March 31, 2015).
- 133 Author interview with Gary Koch (May 1, 2015).
- 134 According to a news article from 1952, Fr. Basil had returned home twice for surgery. The nature of the operations or his ailments is unknown, but likely related to the heart and thyroid issues he suffered later in life. “Rev. Basil Bauer Resting Before Return,” *The Pittsburgh Press* (Nov. 12, 1952), 8. See also “Missionary From China In Hospital: Father Basil Here To Regain Health After Years Spent In Remote Mission,” *The Pittsburgh Catholic*, (May 17, 1934), 14.
- 135 See “Sisters Receive Habits at Baden: Chinese Postulant Among 11 Invested at Motherhouse of St. Joseph Order,” *The Pittsburgh Catholic*, (June 21, 1934), 12. Note that the postulant’s name has been changed from the Wade-Giles spelling to “Teresa Long,” the pinyin Romanization. Also, the article in *The Pittsburgh Catholic* cites the Chinese mission town of the Sisters of St. Joseph as Yuanchow. Originally the town was called Yuanchow [Yuanzhou]. The missionaries — and the reporter who wrote the article — called it Yuanchow. The town’s name was later changed to Chihkiang [Zhijiang].
- 136 See “Mother of Priest, Three Nuns, Dies: Mrs. John Bauer is Stricken in Church After Receiving Holy Communion,” *The Pittsburgh Catholic* (April 30, 1931), 1.
- 137 Clara Bauer joined the Sisters of the Good Shepherd in Pittsburgh, taking the name Sr. Veronica, S.G.S. Marguerite Bauer joined the Passionist Sisters in Pittsburgh, and became Mother Sylvia Bauer, C.P. Anna Bauer joined the Sisters of Mercy in Erie, PA, and became known as Sister Anne Marie, R.S.M. Woge, “5 Bauers in Religious Orders Reunited Here,” loc. cit.
- 138 Helen Bauer (Sister Mary Basil, S.G.S.), had entered into religious life by this point, but she had not yet taken her final vows. Woge, “5 Bauers in Religious Orders Reunited Here,” loc. cit.
- 139 Fr. Victor reveals his joy in a letter to his niece Theresa Bauer, whom he was hoping might follow her brother and sisters into religious life. BFA, Letter of Fr. Victor Koch to Theresa Bauer, Schwarzenfeld, Germany, (November 25, 1935).
- 140 Sisters of St. Joseph of Baden Archives, Baden, PA [hereinafter SSJBA], Letter from Sr. Rosario Goss to Sr. Rose Angela Goss, Hankow [Hankou], China, (April 25, 1935).
- 141 Information on the Communist insurgency that disrupted the Passionist missions can be found in the article, “Communist insurgency (1927-1937),” appearing at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinese\\_Civil\\_War](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinese_Civil_War).
- 142 The founding of the Red Army is described in the article, “Formation and Second Sino-Japanese War”, appearing at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/People%27s\\_Liberation\\_Army](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/People%27s_Liberation_Army).
- 143 A listing of Chiang Kai-shek’s encirclement campaigns against soviet cells in China appears at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Encirclement\\_Campaigns](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Encirclement_Campaigns).
- 144 Information on the Long March appears at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Long\\_March](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Long_March).
- 145 “Priests From Here in Danger in China; Consul Says Hunan Officials Protecting Missions From Communists’ Attacks,” *The Pittsburgh Catholic* (December 5, 1935), 1.
- 146 Information on the Japanese invasion of Manchuria appears at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second\\_Sino-Japanese\\_War](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_Sino-Japanese_War) and [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Japanese\\_invasion\\_of\\_Manchuria](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Japanese_invasion_of_Manchuria).
- 147 A summary of the Marco Polo Bridge Incident appears at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marco\\_Polo\\_Bridge\\_Incident](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marco_Polo_Bridge_Incident).
- 148 Chiang Kai-shek’s desire to quell internal conflicts first, then handle external conflicts with Japan appears at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chiang\\_Kai-shek#Second\\_Sino-Japanese\\_War](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chiang_Kai-shek#Second_Sino-Japanese_War). The Chinese population’s distaste for this policy is mentioned in “Background,” appearing at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second\\_United\\_Front](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_United_Front).
- 149 A description of the Chinese methodology for resisting the Japanese invasion is found in the article “Chinese Resistance Strategy,” appearing at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second\\_Sino-Japanese\\_War](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_Sino-Japanese_War).
- 150 The Prefecture Apostolic’s promotion to Vicariate Apostolic and the name change to Yuanling appears at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman\\_Catholic\\_Diocese\\_of\\_Yuanling](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Catholic_Diocese_of_Yuanling). Information on Fr. Cuthbert O’Gara’s ecclesiastical career appears at <http://www.catholic-hierarchy.org/bishop/bogara.html>.
- 151 Fr. Basil Bauer, C.P., “Beatings and Bandits,” *The Sign* (July 1937), 738-740.
- 152 The extent of the Japanese invasion into China is described in the article, “1939-1940: Chinese Counterattack and Stalemate,” appearing at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second\\_Sino-Japanese\\_War](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_Sino-Japanese_War).
- 153 A description of the Chinese Nationalist government’s transfer from Wuhan to Chongqing appears at Wikipedia page: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second\\_Sino-Japanese\\_War#1938](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_Sino-Japanese_War#1938). The city’s name also occasionally appears as “Chungking,” which the missionaries used.
- 154 Fr. Theophane Maguire, C.P., describes Lo Pa Hong’s death in *Hunan Harvest*, op. cit., 12. Lo’s death was also reported in *The Pittsburgh Catholic*. “Lo Pa Hong, Noted Chinese Catholic, Deeply Mourned,” *The Pittsburgh Catholic*, (January 6, 1938), 1.
- 155 “Denies Lo Pa Hong Was ‘Pro-Japanese’; Former Protestant, Who Knew Of His Charities, Pays High Tribute to Character,” *The Pittsburgh Catholic* (January 20, 1938), 3.
- 156 Pendergast, *Havoc in Hunan*, op. cit., 85-87.
- 157 Ibid., 97.

## The Pennsylvania Passionist Who Became Chinese: Fr. Basil Bauer, C.P. (continued)

- 158 Yongsui has been changed to the pinyin Romanization. The missionaries used its Wade-Giles version, “Yungtsui.”
- 159 Bauer, “The Mission of Lasting Peace,” op. cit., 92-94.
- 160 BFA, 1939.
- 161 Bauer, “The Mission of Lasting Peace,” loc. cit.
- 162 The transfer is noted in the 1945 Membership Statistics, Vicariate Apostolic of Yuanling, Hunan, China from *The Official Catholic Directory* appearing at <http://cprovince.org/archives/sesqui/statistics/chinastats-1945.php>. Also note that the spelling of the mission name, “Wuxi,” is the pinyin version. The missionaries called it “Wuki.”
- 163 Pendergast, *Havoc in Hunan*, op. cit., 98.
- 164 Madame Chiang Kai-shek’s orphanage program is described in the article “Warphans,” appearing at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soong\\_May-ling](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soong_May-ling).
- 165 Pendergast, *Havoc in Hunan*, op. cit., 87.
- 166 Photographic evidence of Fr. Basil’s visit to one of Madame Chiang’s orphanages appears in the Passionist China Collection. See PHA, China Collection Photo Archive, photo 800.05\_003.002e, the caption of which reads: “Fr. Basil Bauer teaching religion to Madame Chiang [Kai-shek]’s orphans in Chihkiang [Zhijiang]. These youngsters are favorites of everybody, and are called ‘Angels’ by all. All are refugees from all parts of war-torn China.”
- 167 “Rev. Basil Bauer Resting Before Return,” *The Pittsburgh Press* (November 12, 1952), 8. The newspaper incorrectly states that he left China in 1945. According to the passenger manifest of the *S.S. James Bowdoin*, he departed from Shanghai on February 1, 1946, and arrived in Seattle, Washington on March 8. See Washington, Passenger and Crew Lists, 1882-1961, appearing at the website: <http://www.ancestry.com>.
- 168 The meeting with Thomas Cardinal Tien and Sr. Catherine Davenport, S.S.J., is documented in “China Reds Free Sharon Priest,” *The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* (November 12, 1952), 8. Fr. Basil’s attendance at the ceremony in which Sisters of St. Joseph received their habits is documented in *The Pittsburgh Catholic* (March 21, 1946), 8. A profile of Thomas Cardinal Tien appears at <http://www.catholic-hierarchy.org/bishop/btienk.html>.
- 169 Gertrude Bauer’s entry into the Sisters of the Good Shepherd, and her religious name, Sr. Gabriel, is documented in Woge, “5 Bauers in Religious Orders Reunited Here,” loc. cit. The year that she professed her vows (1938) is documented in the Bauer Family Archives.
- 170 “Father Victor, C.P., Observes Jubilee,” *The Pittsburgh Catholic* (Thursday, July 3, 1947), 12.
- 171 The Vicariate Apostolic of Yuanling was promoted to a Diocese on April 11, 1946. Information appears at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman\\_Catholic\\_Diocese\\_of\\_Yuanling](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Catholic_Diocese_of_Yuanling).
- 172 The “Double Tenth Agreement” was officially known as the “Summary of Conversations Between the Representatives of the Kuomintang and the Communist Party of China.” An overview of the agreement and its terms appears at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Double\\_Tenth\\_Agreement](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Double_Tenth_Agreement).
- 173 An overview of the Chinese Civil war appears at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinese\\_Civil\\_War](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinese_Civil_War).
- 174 Shandong’s history during the Chinese Civil War appears at <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shandong#History>.
- 175 The “War of Liberation” reference and Mao Zedong’s tactic to preserve the Red Army is explained in the article “Outbreak of War,” appearing at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinese\\_Civil\\_War](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinese_Civil_War).
- 176 Pendergast, *Havoc in Hunan*, op. cit., 178.
- 177 Ibid.
- 178 “Rev. Bauer Tells of Life in China Under Red Regime,” *The Sharon Herald* (December 24, 1952), 10.
- 179 Ibid.
- 180 Pendergast, *Havoc in Hunan*, op. cit., 183-184.
- 181 PHA, [Fr. Basil statement on conditions in Hunan, typewritten personal notes], 1.
- 182 “Passionist Veteran of China Missions Describes Red Terror,” *The New World* (December 26, 1952).
- 183 “Rev. Basil Bauer Says Chinese Will Remain Under Red Yoke Many Years,” *The Sharon Herald* (December 23, 1952), 1, 5.
- 184 “Rev. Bauer Tells of Life in China Under Red Regime,” *The Sharon Herald* (December 24, 1952), 1.
- 185 Ibid.
- 186 “Years of Work in China And Battling Reds Have Left Their Mark on Passionist Priest,” *The Palm Beach Post* (May 22, 1955), 22.
- 187 “Passionist Veteran of China Describes Red Terror,” loc. cit.
- 188 Pendergast, *Havoc in Hunan*, op. cit., 179.
- 189 PHA, [Fr. Basil statement on conditions in Hunan, typewritten personal notes], op. cit., 4.
- 190 “Rev. Bauer Tells of Life in China Under Red Regime,” loc. cit.
- 191 PHA, [Fr. Basil statement on conditions in Hunan, typewritten personal notes], op. cit., 1.
- 192 “Rev. Bauer Tells of Life in China Under Red Regime,” *The Sharon Herald*, loc. cit.
- 193 An incident similar to Fr. Basil’s occurred in Yuanling, where fellow Passionist Fr. Caspar Caulfield, C.P., was subjected to a public trial and house arrest. An irate Chinese parishioner tore down posters denouncing the priest, several Sisters of St. Joseph, and Chinese Catholics as spies. See Pendergast, *Havoc in Hunan*, op. cit., 199-201.
- 194 Email from Laurene Miller to author (March 31, 2015).
- 195 The public trial allegedly occurred in either April or May 1950. “Years of Work in China And Battling Reds Have Left Their Mark on Passionist Priest,” loc. cit.
- 196 “Sharon Priest Held in Custody by Reds,” *The Record Argus* (July 21, 1951), 2.
- 197 “Years of Work in China And Battling Reds Have Left Their Mark on Passionist Priest,” *The Palm Beach Post*, loc. cit.
- 198 PHA, [Handwritten notes on Fr. Basil’s ordeal in Hunan, author unknown] (June 1952), 2.
- 199 Information on digitalis appears at <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Digitalis>.
- 200 PHA, Letter from Fr. Basil Bauer to Fr. Provincial Ernest Welch, St. Francis Hospital, Hong Kong, China (November 15, 1952), 1.
- 201 PHA, Press release by Rev. Ronald Norris, C.P. Passionist Publicity Director, Union City, NJ (November 10, 1952).
- 202 “Priest Returns to Union City, Sees Communist China ‘Glued’ by Fear,” *Hudson Dispatch* (January 28, 1953), 8.
- 203 Fr. Basil’s departure is documented by the passenger manifest of the *S.S. Madison*. California, Passenger and Crew Lists, 1882-1959, appearing at the website: <http://www.ancestry.com>. See also PHA, [Handwritten notes on Fr. Basil’s ordeal in Hunan, author unknown], loc. cit.
- 204 “Priest Returns to Union City, Sees Communist China ‘Glued’ by Fear,” loc. cit.
- 205 Author interview with Gary Koch (May 1, 2015), and email from Laurene Miller to author (March 31, 2015). An explanation of Sanka appears at <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sanka>.
- 206 PHA, Letter from Ernest Welch, C.P. to British Consulate Service, Union City, New Jersey (August 13, 1957), 1. See also PHA, Letter from Fr. Ernest Welch, C.P. to US Passport Division, Union City, New Jersey (August 13, 1957), 1.
- 207 “Years of Work in China And Battling Reds Have Left Their Mark on Passionist Priest,” loc. cit.
- 208 Email from Laurene Miller to author (March 31, 2015).
- 209 An explanation of the Linesville spillway is found in the article, “Pymatuning Lake,” appearing at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pymatuning\\_State\\_Park\\_\(Pennsylvania\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pymatuning_State_Park_(Pennsylvania)).
- 210 Author interview with Gary Koch (May 1, 2015).
- 211 SSJBA, [Community Newsletter], (October 31, 1959), 1.
- 212 PHA, *Homily for Mass for Father Basil Bauer*, loc. cit.
- 213 This reference to St. Joseph’s Church refers to the building presently on Case Avenue in Sharon, PA. The old church on State Street had been abandoned and demolished by the time of Fr. Basil’s golden jubilee in 1968.
- 214 “Fr. Bauer, 71, dies; ex-prisoner of China,” *The Sharon Herald* (July 18, 1970).
- 215 PHA, *Homily for Mass for Father Basil Bauer*, loc. cit.
- 216 Pendergast, *Havoc in Hunan*, op. cit., 219-228.

The Pennsylvania Passionist Who Became Chinese: Fr. Basil Bauer, C.P. (continued)

Timeline of Rev. Basil Bauer, C.P.		
1898	October 11	Joseph F. Bauer is born to John F. and Anna Koch Bauer in Sharon, PA
1912	December 15	Joseph Bauer, age 14, applies to enter Passionist Preparatory School
1913	February	Joseph begins studies at St. Joseph Monastery, Baltimore, MD
1917	September 16	Joseph receives Passionist habit at St. Paul Monastery, Pittsburgh, PA
1918	September 17	Confrater Basil Bauer professes as a Passionist
1923	October 28	Pittsburgh Bishop Hugh C. Boyle ordains Basil of the Cross a priest at St. Vincent Archabbey in Latrobe, PA
1924	July	Fr. Basil and twelve other Passionists, after selection for missionary work in China, leave USA
1925	August	After a full year of training at Passionists' central mission in Chenzhou Fr. Basil receives his first assignment (with Fr. Terrence Connolly): mission at Yongshun
1927	Summer	Anti-foreign sentiment and Nationalist-Communist hostilities force Fr. Basil and fellow missionaries to flee western Hunan for Hankou
1928		Fr. Basil is stationed in Wangcun, which becomes his primary mission in Hunan Province
1929	April 29	Passionist missionaries Godfrey Holbein, Clement Seybold, and Walter Coveyou are murdered by Chinese bandits in vicinity of Huajiao
1930		Fr. Basil is temporarily stationed in Gaocun
1931		Fr. Basil returns to his primary mission of Wangcun
1934	May	Fr. Basil departs for USA to receive medical care
1935		Fr. Basil returns to China and, after Easter, to Wangcun
1939		Fr. Basil is transferred to mission at Yongsui
1943		Fr. Basil is transferred from mission of Youngsui to Wuki. He occasionally travels to mission at Zhijiang to teach religion classes to Chinese children in orphanage of Madame Chiang Kai-shek.
1946	February 1	Fr. Basil departs Shanghai and returns to USA to receive medical care
1947	July 3	Fr. Basil assists at Mass of his uncle, Rev. Victor Koch, C.P., who is celebrating Golden Jubilee as Passionist priest
	Fall	Fr. Basil sails for China and returns to his mission of Wangcun
1949	November	Communists enter Wangcun
1950	Spring	Communists seize Fr. Basil's mission compound. He is subjected to a public trial, which fails. Communists place him under house arrest and curtail all religious activity in Wangcun.
1952	late October	Fr. Basil leaves Wangcun for Changsha, where he is hospitalized for 11 days
1952	November 7	Fr. Basil is released from Communist China and crosses border to Hong Kong. After another hospitalization, he leaves Hong Kong for USA.
1953-1956		Fr. Basil convalesces at Boynton Beach, FL. Performs pastoral duties at Lantana Chapel.
1957-1959		Fr. Basil joins Passionist mission in Mandeville, Jamaica. Serves at St. Elizabeth Parish.
1959	September	Fr. Basil returns to USA and serves at St. Paul Monastery, Pittsburgh, PA
1962		Fr. Basil is transferred to St. Joseph Monastery, Baltimore, MD
1968	September 17	Fr. Basil celebrates his golden jubilee (50 years) of profession as a Passionist
1970	July 10	Fr. Basil suffers heart attack while visiting family in Sharon, PA
	July 18	Fr. Basil dies in Sharon, PA

# The Five Farina Brothers: Priests of the Diocese of Pittsburgh, 1928-1994

Paul Dvorchak

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Pittsburgh has been graced to have five brothers from the same family become Roman Catholic priests. The five Farina brothers — Albert, Louis, Joseph, Edward and Wilbert — served the Church in Pittsburgh from the time of the eldest Albert's ordination in 1928 through Edward's retirement in 1994, a span of 66 years. The total number of years served by the brothers is 192, just eight years shy of two centuries. The years they served took place during the greater part of the twentieth century. They lived through many of the major events in America, the Great Depression, World War II and America's political, economic, and cultural ascendancy. They witnessed the societal changes of the sixties and seventies. The Farina brothers also served the Catholic Church through the many changes of the last century. They were raised and nurtured in the Church of the immigrant. They witnessed the Catholic Church becoming a major national influence, morally, politically and culturally. They also witnessed and participated in the great changes brought about by the Second Vatican Council.

To write about the Farina brothers in depth would require much more space than this article will attempt as it would require a whole history of the Diocese of Pittsburgh for the years in which they served. The everyday events of a parish priest's daily life, the celebration of the Eucharist, baptisms, confessions, weddings and funerals, their participation in parishioners' major life events, the management of the business of a parish and oftentimes a school all are beyond the scope of this article. In fact, this article is the first of two articles, the first covering roughly the first half of the years the Farinas served. Next year's *Gathered Fragments* will cover the second half. To view the locations where and the dates when, the Farina brothers served, please see the chart that accompanies this article.

The Farina brothers were born and raised in an Italian-American family. They were the children of Italian immigrants. Their parents were part of the great migration of southern and eastern Europeans that came to America, beginning in the later years of the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth. In 1890, there were 24,662 Italian-born Americans living in Pennsylvania; this number increased to 196,122 by 1910.<sup>1</sup> So many immigrants were coming to Pittsburgh at the beginning of the twentieth century that one writer reported that a new church was founded every thirty days!<sup>2</sup>

In the United States, there was a "native" dislike of the increase of immigrants in the late 1800's. Some immigrant groups were considered better than others. Legislation was passed in Congress in 1882 that barred Chinese immigration. In many areas of the United States, Italian immigrants were not particularly favored. For example, eleven Italian immigrants were lynched in New Orleans in 1891.<sup>3</sup> The early years of the century also saw a resurgence of the Ku Klux Klan. All Catholics were perceived as the greatest enemy to the Klan in the 1920's and 1930's.<sup>4</sup>

The Vatican was aware of the difficulties facing Italian immigrants. Pope Leo XIII issued the Encyclical *Quam Aerumnosa* to the bishops of the United States, which acknowledged the difficulties facing

Italian immigrants. The encyclical advocated the appointment of Italian-speaking priests to serve those immigrants.<sup>5</sup>

Then, tensions existed between ethnic groups. A recent publication describes the political and religious struggles between the Irish and Italians in New York City.<sup>6</sup> In western Pennsylvania, prejudice and distrust existed from without and within ethnic groups. In the Lawrenceville neighborhood of Pittsburgh, German residents were angered when neighbors sold their property to Polish immigrants.<sup>7</sup> In the Diocese of Pittsburgh, there are memories of a dislike of "mixed marriages," or that members of one ethnic group had to have a pastor's permission to marry outside their own ethnic group. Arriving immigrants understandably wished to live, socialize and worship with their own kind. Before an Italian church was built, Italian immigrants in the Bloomfield neighborhood of Pittsburgh attended Mass in a blacksmith shop rather than at the local German parish.<sup>8</sup>

Pittsburgh has an early history of ethnic parishes. St. Philomena's was established as a German parish in Pittsburgh's Strip District as early as 1839. St. Peter the Apostle began in the lower Hill as an early Italian parish in 1892. With so many immigrants from different countries arriving in the city at the turn of the century, Pittsburgh's bishops recognized the value of ethnic parishes. Bishop Hugh C. Boyle (1873-1950) knew the importance of honoring the newly arrived immigrants. His first public appearance after his ordination as bishop was to dedicate St. Anthony Orphanage in Oakmont. The orphanage's initial mission was to serve orphaned Italian girls. The Italian envoy to the United States was in attendance at the dedication along with members of many Italian-American organizations who helped finance the orphanage.<sup>9</sup>

It is not possible to answer definitively the question as to why one family produced five vocations. But by looking at the cultural and familial background of the Farina brothers, we may receive clues to help answer that question.

The Farina brothers were born and raised in Rural Valley, a small coal mining town in Armstrong County. Their parents, Joseph (1871-1922) and Angela Andreis Farina (1885-1951) immigrated to the United States in 1896. The 1910 U.S. census states that their country of origin was Austria. Joseph and Angela Farina were from the northern Italian municipality of Fiave in the region of Tyrol. At the time of their departure, Tyrol was under control of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. But the Farinas spoke Italian and were culturally Italian. Besides the five sons in the Farina family, there were two daughters, the eldest child Julia (1903-1982) and Catherine Farina Borgo (1912-1999). Julia never married, as she was not very outgoing. Catherine became a registered nurse after attending St. Joseph's Nursing School on Pittsburgh's Southside. Catherine married John Borgo and they had six children.<sup>10</sup>

According to the census of 1910, Joseph Farina's occupation was that of a merchant.<sup>11</sup> A later newspaper article listed his occupation as a coal miner.<sup>12</sup> It is possible that the father was both, a coal miner and a merchant in a store. Raymond Brochetti, a cousin who grew up in the same town as the Farinas, said the Farinas operated

## The Five Farina Brothers: Priests of the Diocese of Pittsburgh, 1928-1994 (continued)

a shoe store, but that the store was not very profitable.<sup>13</sup> So, it is possible that like many immigrant families, the parents did whatever was necessary to provide for their families.

Rural Valley is located next to the town of Yatesboro. Joseph Farina and Angela Andreis were married at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Yatesboro in 1901.<sup>14</sup> St. Mary's in Yatesboro became the home parish of the Farina brothers.<sup>15</sup>

For newly arrived immigrant groups, the Catholic Church became the center of their religious and social lives. Most of the immigrants who came to western Pennsylvania at the beginning of the last century came to work in the area's coal mines and steel mills. Many came by way of "Chain Migration," where members of the same village or area came to the same area in America as the result of word of mouth in the old country. The Church was an integral part of the life of the new immigrants. The Church helped preserve the language and customs of the old country oftentimes amidst hostility from the predominant Anglo-Saxon Protestant society of America. The parish priest played an important role in these ethnic communities, as important as the role of physicians, teachers, policeman or political leaders. Prior to World War II, college education was unknown for most immigrant families, and priesthood was a means to the upper middle class. Higher education was valued but not easily accessed. So a vocation to the priesthood may have been viewed as a means of moving up the social ladder.

A priestly vocation, at its essence, is a movement and a calling of the Holy Spirit. Vocations can and often do have a human influence such as that of an admired priest, or a vocation can be inspired from within a family. In most families, the spiritual tone or religious practice is most often set by the mother. Then there is the dynamic of a large family of boys. The eldest is often looked upon as a role model by younger brothers. More is handed down from the older brother than outgrown clothes. Work habits, study habits, attitude towards girls, or a prayer life can often be emulated by younger brothers.

Raymond Brochetti stated that the Farinas were strict and very devout. He also said that the Farinas' mother, Angela, did not want her sons to work at manual labor but wanted them to be refined gentlemen. When the father, Joseph, died at age 55, Angela was 37 years old, her oldest daughter, Julia, was 19 years old and Albert was 18. Mr. Brochetti said that at the father's death, Angela took Albert to the parish priest, Fr. Rocco Matura and had Albert do odd jobs for the priest. He was already an altar boy.<sup>16</sup> But when all this is taken into account, a vocation to the priesthood is a mystery that dwells in the depths of a person's heart.

Albert Farina, after attending St. Bonaventure College and St. Vincent's Seminary was ordained a Catholic priest on June 17, 1928 and his four younger brothers followed him into the priesthood. In interviews with people who knew Father (later Monsignor) Albert Farina, they all agreed that Albert had a strong personality. One interviewee simply said that Albert called the shots.<sup>17</sup> There exists the Italian tradition of the "padrone." Sometimes viewed negatively, the padrone was a boss or manager or one who acted as middleman between workers and management for newly arrived immigrants. The young Albert may have been familiar with the

concept or practice of the padrone since many of the immigrants to Rural Valley emigrated from the same area, the Tyrol in Italy.

Fr. Albert served as an assistant pastor for ten years before becoming pastor of the Italian parish of Regina Coeli on Pittsburgh's North Side. Fr. Albert Farina must have been known and trusted by Bishop Boyle because at one time Albert and three of his younger brothers lived and served at Regina Coeli at the same time. Fr. Louis Farina served at Regina Coeli before Albert was assigned there but Louis was appointed the supervisor at St. Anthony's Orphanage in Oakmont during the time the other brothers lived at Regina Coeli. When Regina Coeli opened Our Lady of Perpetual Help as a mission of Regina Coeli, Fr. Edward Farina was assigned by Fr. Albert to take over the mission parish. Although still officially an assistant at Regina Coeli, Fr. Edward was practically the unofficial pastor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help.<sup>18</sup> Regina Coeli opened another mission church, Immaculate Mary on the North Side in 1941.

Early in their priestly careers, the Farina brothers were not passive in carrying out their vocations, but seemed eager to zealously live out their vocations. For instance, as early as 1933 Fr. Louis Farina was involved in an ecumenical plan to provide relief for the poor of the Manchester section of Pittsburgh.<sup>19</sup> This occurred two years after his ordination. Fr. Louis would later become the administrator/chaplain for St. Anthony's Orphanage in Oakmont.

St. Anthony's Orphanage is where Dorothy Day attended the silent retreats conducted by Fr. John Hugo and Fr. Louis Farina. The retreats were not listed as "silent retreats," and were not extensively publicized in *The Pittsburgh Catholic*. The retreat was listed as a "One week retreat" for men, with no mention of Fr. Hugo in *The Pittsburgh Catholic*.<sup>20</sup> But these retreats were most important in the spiritual life of Dorothy Day, the co-founder of the Catholic Worker movement. At this writing, Dorothy Day is honored as a "Servant of God," a step in the process of her being declared a saint of the Roman Catholic Church.

The retreats offered at St. Anthony's in Oakmont were inspired by the Lacouture movement, started by a Canadian Jesuit, Fr. Onesimus Lacouture. Concerning the retreats, Dorothy Day wrote:

I could write a great deal about that retreat, and all it brought to us, the new vistas which opened out before us. But I will simply say that it gave us spiritual direction. We were learning how to die to ourselves, to live in Christ, and all the turmoil of the movement, all the pruning of natural love, all the disappointments were explained by the doctrine of the Cross.... The seed has fallen into the ground and has died. But we know that it will bear great fruit.<sup>21</sup>

A scholar, Benjamin Peters, described the retreats in a dissertation: According to Day's notebooks the retreat opened with a conference on Sunday evening and ended with conferences the following Saturday. Each day began with Mass at 8:30 a.m. followed by breakfast and then a conference at 9:45 a.m. and another at 11:45 a.m. After lunch and time for private reflection, Father Louis Farina, a priest from the Pittsburgh diocese who also attended the 1939 Lacouture-retreat in Baltimore, gave a series of conferences on prayer each day at 3 p.m. Hugo then led a conference at 5 p.m. followed by Benediction and supper. The

## The Five Farina Brothers: Priests of the Diocese of Pittsburgh, 1928-1994 (continued)

day ended with a final conference by Hugo at 8:30 p.m. It was a full day, and one in which silence was maintained throughout – Hugo and Farina did all the talking.<sup>22</sup>

The retreats were controversial. The spirituality of the retreats were considered rigorous, too extreme and sometimes labeled “Jansenist.” The spirituality according to critics overstressed the supernatural. Responding to complaints from other clergy, Bishop Boyle transferred Fr. John Hugo to St. Mary’s in Kittanning in October 1942, thus ending his ability to regularly preach the retreats. Fr. Hugo and Fr. Louis Farina traveled to Rome to appeal the ending of the retreats, to no avail.<sup>23</sup>

After the “retreat controversy,” Dorothy Day continued to come to Oakmont for days of recollection. She went to confession to Fr. Farina and felt much consoled.<sup>24</sup> Even though Fr. John Hugo coordinated and led most of the retreats, Day thought highly of Fr. Farina. “Father Farina says that the only true influence we have on people is through supernatural love. This sanctity (not an obnoxious piety) so affects others that they can be saved by it.”<sup>25</sup> When Day questioned her motives as to why she served the poor, thinking it possibly wrong to increase her holiness while pandering to the weakness of others, Fr. Louis Farina told her that if the charity was of supernatural love, all impure motives would be cleansed.<sup>26</sup>

Little documented evidence exists that shows the other Farina brothers either made the retreat or were involved in the retreats, except for a brochure from 2001 that promoted the retreat. It quotes Fr. Edward Farina:

One of the highlights of my priesthood, one of the supporting influences, has been the retreat – not ‘a’ retreat but ‘the’ retreat – given by Fr. John Hugo. I owe it to him to say this – I wouldn’t be the priest I am today if it wasn’t for him. And my brothers felt that too.<sup>27</sup>

Another indication of the Farina brothers’ zeal and dedication to the Church is their involvement in street preaching. The Farina brothers were involved in street preaching in Pittsburgh in the spring and summer of 1942. The Catholic Evidence Guild conducted “Pitches” at the corner of Centre Avenue and Dinwiddie Street in the Hill District. Some of the priests involved were: Revs. Stephen Burdis, Charles Owen Rice, Joseph Meenan, Henry Podowski, John J. Hugo, Thomas Lappan, William Connare, and Albert and Louis Farina. Fr. Hugo was the moderator of the Guild. They gave talks such as: “Need of Salvation,” “Supernatural Life,” and the “Church.”<sup>28</sup> Lay people were also involved such as Alan Kistler, Elizabeth Dafflinger, John O’Donnell, and Edward Niederberger. The program each evening started with a half hour of music, three 15-minute talks and a period of questions, prayers for peace and the singing of hymns. They then passed out pamphlets and holy cards.<sup>29</sup> Then, at a later “Pitch,” Edward Farina, while still a seminarian, spoke on “Religious Orders.”<sup>30</sup> Wilbert Farina, who also was a seminarian along with another seminarian, Tom Rodgers spoke at later Evidence Guild “Pitches.”<sup>31</sup> Attendance at the pitches ran from 175 to 300.<sup>32</sup> What is especially interesting is that two of the younger Farinas were involved in street preaching while still seminarians at St. Vincent’s in Latrobe. Prior to 1942, there is evidence that the Farinas were involved with the

Catholic Evidence Guild, an early Catholic evangelical initiative. The Evidence Guild held monthly days of recollection. Fr. Louis Farina conducted the conferences held at Mother of Good Counsel House on Fernando Street in the lower Hill District.<sup>33</sup>

Fr. Louis Farina was the superintendent of St. Anthony’s Orphanage from 1935 to 1946. He relied on the patronage of Italians and Italian parishes. Throughout the summer and fall of 1937, he visited all the Italian parishes to explain his work and ask for their support.<sup>34</sup> In December of 1937, St. Anthony’s Orphanage published its first St. Anthony’s Bulletin as part of the establishment of St. Anthony’s Guild. The Bulletin was distributed to the member parishes of the Guild, which consisted of 24 of the 30 Italian parishes in the diocese of Pittsburgh.<sup>35</sup>

Fr. Louis Farina was twenty-eight years old when he was appointed superintendent of St. Anthony’s. As a young priest, he was absorbed with youthful ideals. He changed the name of the orphanage to St. Anthony’s Village. He hoped to have St. Anthony’s operated and organized on the same principles as Fr. Flanagan’s Boys Town. He did not want the children’s lives to be run by rule books. He wished to stress the Ten Commandments.<sup>36</sup> This was years before Fr. Louis Farina was involved in preaching and organizing the “Silent Retreat.”

The combination of strict evangelical morality and progressive ideas may be a theme for all the Farinas. The progressive or modernistic elements in their lives are reflected in the modern church buildings that four of the brothers built between 1960 and 1967. As the Second Vatican Council ran from 1962 through 1965, the Farina brothers as builders of churches were on the forefront of new ways of thinking about the Catholic Church for which the Council is known.

The next edition of *Gathered Fragments* will include an article that will concentrate on the later years of the ecclesiastical careers of the Farina brothers with an emphasis on them as builders of new churches.



**Farina priest-brothers: Albert and Louis (front, L to R), Edward, Joseph and Wilbert (rear, L to R).**

Source: Archives of Diocese of Pittsburgh

The Five Farina Brothers: Priests of the Diocese of Pittsburgh, 1928-1994 (continued)

Dates and Locations of the Farina Brothers' Ministry					
Year	Albert L. (1904-1969)	Louis A. (1907-1981)	Joseph E. (1911-1979)	Edward R. (1917-1997)	Wilbert A. (1919-1982)
1928	Ordained June 17. Assistant Holy Family Latrobe				
1931		Ordained June 7. Assistant Regina Coeli North Side			
1933	Assistant, St. Vitus, New Castle				
1935	Assistant SS. Simon & Jude Blairsville	Superintendent and chaplain, St. Anthony Orphanage, Oakmont	Ordained June 16. Assistant St. Peter New Kensington		
1939	Pastor Regina Coeli North Side				
1940	Our Lady of Perpetual Help established as mission of Regina Coeli				
1941	Mary Immaculate established as mission of Regina Coeli				
1943			Assistant Regina Coeli North Side	Ordained June 6. Assistant Regina Coeli North Side	
1944					Ordained June 11. Assistant Regina Coeli North Side
1945			Pastor Madonna of Jerusalem Sharpsburg		
1946		Assistant St. Januarius Renton			
1951	Pastor Immaculate Conception Bloomfield	Pastor St. Philip Neri Donora		Assistant St. Vitus New Castle	
1952					Assistant Mother of Sorrows McKees Rocks
1955				Assistant St. Michael, Butler	

The Five Farina Brothers: Priests of the Diocese of Pittsburgh, 1928-1994 (continued)

Dates and Locations of the Farina Brothers' Ministry					
Year	Albert L. (1904-1969)	Louis A. (1907-1981)	Joseph E. (1911-1979)	Edward R. (1917-1997)	Wilbert A. (1919-1982)
1957					Assistant Immaculate Conception Bloomfield
1958			Pastor Mother of Sorrows McKees Rocks	Assistant Madonna del Castello Swissvale. Pastor Christ the King Ambridge	
1959					Pastor, St. Lucy Mahoningtown
1960		New church dedicated March 27. Resigned due to ill health May 31			
1961	New church dedicated October 1				Pastor, Madonna del Castello, Swissvale
1964	Rt. Rev. Monsignor January 13			New school built	
1966					New church dedicated August 21
1967			New church dedicated, May 21		
1969	Died January 13				
1971					Resigned due to ill health
1979			Died February 2		
1981		Died March 27			
1982					Died April 28
1986				Chaplain, Little Sisters of the Poor	
1994				Retired	
1997				Died March 19	

Endnotes

- 1 “Italians in Pennsylvania” appearing at the website: <http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/groups/4286/italians/471928>.
- 2 Linda K. Pritchard, “The Soul of the City: A Social History of Religion in Pittsburgh” in Samuel P. Hays (ed.), *City at the Point: Essays on the Social History of Pittsburgh* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1989), 339. Pritchard’s source for this statistic is O.M. Walton, *Story of Religion in the Pittsburgh Area* (Pittsburgh: Committee on Religion of Pittsburgh Bicentennial Association, 1958), 30.
- 3 James M. O’Toole, *The Faithful: A History of Catholicism in America* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2008), 98-99.
- 4 Philip Jenkins, “The Ku Klux Klan in Pennsylvania, 1920 – 1940,” *Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine* 69 (April 1986), 128.
- 5 An English translation of the encyclopedia, promulgated on December 10, 1888, appears at the website: <http://www.papalencyclicals.net/Leo13/113imi.htm>.
- 6 James Hannan, “Divided by One Faith”, *Commonweal* (July 10, 2015) 32, 33. This article is a review of the book by Paul Moses, *An Unlikely Union, The Love-Hate Story of New York’s Irish and Italians* (New York: New York University Press, 2015).
- 7 John Bodnar, Roger Simon, and Michael P. Weber, *Lives of Their Own: Blacks, Italians, and Poles in Pittsburgh, 1900–1960* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1983), 177.
- 8 *Ibid.*, 77.
- 9 “New Head of Diocese and Italian Envoy in Hulton Near-Tragedy,” *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* (July 4, 1921), 1. The platform holding the dignitaries for the event collapsed. Bishop Boyle was hailed as a hero because he calmly took charge and prevented a panic.
- 10 Interview of author with Joseph Brochetti (July 20, 2015). Obituary of Catherine Farina Borgo, *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* (September 24, 1999), 52.
- 11 The census of 1910 appears at <http://www.mocavo.com/1910-United-States-Census/126211/004973377/124>.
- 12 “St. Anthony’s Village Run on Ten Commandments,” *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, (November 22, 1938), 3.
- 13 Interview of author with Raymond Brochetti (July 5, 2015). At the time of the interview, Mr. Brochetti was celebrating 96 years. The 1910 census listed the Brochettis as living next door to the Farinas, but Mr. Brochetti said that was not accurate. He was a cousin to the boys, their mothers were sisters, and he was a good friend of Edward. The Brochettis moved to Emporium from Rural Valley in 1931.
- 14 “Mother of Five Priests Buried,” *The Pittsburgh Catholic* (January 18, 1951), 8
- 15 St. Mary, Mother of God Parish is a partner parish of St. Mary, Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, Kittanning, in the Diocese of Greensburg, with a website at: <http://www.saintmaryatesboro.org/Pages/default.aspx>.
- 16 Interview of author with Raymond Brochetti (July 5, 2015).
- 17 Interview of the author with Nicholas Parrendo (July 1, 2015).
- 18 *Ibid.*
- 19 “Clergymen Join in Welfare Move,” *The Pittsburgh Catholic* (October 19, 1933), 1.
- 20 “Schedule of Retreats for Laity Being Compiled,” *The Pittsburgh Catholic* (February 27, 1941), 15.
- 21 Dorothy Day “Death of Father Onesimus Lacouture, S.J.,” *Catholic Worker* (December 1951), 1, 8.
- 22 Benjamin T. Peters, *John Hugo and an American Catholic Theology of Nature and Grace* (Ph.D. Diss., University of Dayton, 2011), 54.
- 23 *Ibid.*, 3-4.
- 24 Dorothy Day (Robert Ellsberg, ed.), *The Duty of Delight: The Diaries of Dorothy Day* (Milwaukee: Marquette University, 2008), 148.
- 25 Dorothy Day, *Leaves and Fishes: The Inspiring Story of the Catholic Worker Movement*, 61, as quoted in Mark and Louise Zwick, *The Catholic Worker Movement: Intellectual and Spiritual Origins* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, Mahwah, 2005), 39.
- 26 William D. Miller, *A Harsh and Dreadful Love: Dorothy Day and the Catholic Worker Movement* (New York: Liveright, 1973), 190.
- 27 *2001 Encounter with Silence, A Scriptural Retreat* — a tri-fold brochure promoting the retreat at the Martina Spiritual Renewal Center, 5244 Clarwin Ave. Pittsburgh, PA 15229. Two retreats were conducted June 10-17 (directed by Fr. Frank G. Erdeljac) and August 12-19 (directed by Fr. Jerome A. Dixon).
- 28 “Evidence Guild To Begin Outdoor Work Next Week,” *The Pittsburgh Catholic* (May 14, 1942), 1.
- 29 “Evidence Guild Begins Outdoor Activities Here,” *The Pittsburgh Catholic* (June 4, 1942), 1, 16.
- 30 “Evidence Guild Activities,” *The Pittsburgh Catholic* (July 16, 1942), 8.
- 31 “Catholic Evidence Guild Activities,” *The Pittsburgh Catholic* (August 8, 1942), 8.
- 32 “Evidence Guild Activities,” *The Pittsburgh Catholic* (August 20, 1942), 13.
- 33 “Evidence Guild Plans Day of Recollection,” *The Pittsburgh Catholic* (January 8, 1942), 13.
- 34 “Orphanage Director to Explain Its Work,” *The Pittsburgh Catholic* (July 23, 1937), 12.
- 35 “St. Anthony’s Guild to Publish Bulletin,” *The Pittsburgh Catholic* (December 9, 1927), 9.
- 36 “St. Anthony’s Village Run on the Ten Commandments,” *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* (November 22, 1938), 3.

# Reporting on Dorothy Day and the Church: Past, Present, and Future

Paul Dvorchak and James K. Hanna

From April 10 to April 12, 1939, St. Joseph's House of Hospitality hosted a Colloquium on Social Catholicism at the Tannehill Street location in Pittsburgh's Hill District. The topics discussed at the Colloquium were listed in *The Pittsburgh Catholic* of April 13, 1939: liturgy, Catholic sociology, voluntary poverty, anti-Semitism, peace, agrarianism, and labor. Members of the Catholic Worker Movement from across the United States and Canada and scholars involved in the Liturgical Reform movement attended the Colloquium in Pittsburgh.



**Dorothy Day conference poster.**

Source: Paul Dvorchak and James K. Hanna

The present authors — members of the Catholic Historical Society — travelled to Fort Wayne, presented papers on Dorothy Day, and participated in the conference. Following are our observations.

One of the first impressions from the conference was the diversity of the attendees. One of the most gratifying elements of this diversity was the number of young people in attendance. They were both members of Catholic Worker Communities and scholars making presentations at the conference.

Brandon Vogt, Robert Ellsberg (editor of Dorothy Day's diaries and letters), and Martha Hennessy (Dorothy Day's granddaughter) presented plenary sessions. Mass was celebrated each day and the final Mass was celebrated by Archbishop José Gomez of Los Angeles.

The topics of the breakout sessions were quite varied and too numerous to list in their totality. The organizers of the conference are to be commended for their efforts to bring a more general awareness of the importance of Dorothy Day to the Catholic Church in America. Jim Hanna's presentation was *Detachment as a Hallmark of Dorothy Day's Spirituality* and Paul Dvorchak's presentation was *Dorothy Day and Pittsburgh's Catholic Radical Alliance*. The organizers of the conference plan to compile the presentations in a book to be published at a later date.

From May 13 to 15, 2015, a gathering of followers of Dorothy Day addressed many topics and themes similar to those at the earlier Colloquium. The University of Saint Francis in Fort Wayne, Indiana, held a conference titled, *Dorothy Day and the Church: Past, Present, and Future*. As in the Colloquium held in Pittsburgh, Catholic Workers and scholars from the United States and Canada met and discussed the life and influence of the Servant of God Dorothy Day (1897-1980), the co-founder of the Catholic Worker Movement and newspaper.

The conference featured four breakout sessions, two each on Wednesday and Thursday. Each session provided attendees a choice of four, five or six rooms where one, two, or three papers were presented consecutively; hence, the approximate 200 attendees had a difficult choice of where to spend each session.

The breakout sessions totaling 42 presentations were loosely organized around themes such as Dorothy Day's spirituality, the history of the Catholic Worker, personalism, distributism, politics, liturgy, and tradition.

True to the spirit of Dorothy Day and the Catholic Worker movement, there was and continues to be a lot of discussion as to why Day herself would not want her canonization process to continue. Some Catholic Workers in attendance thought the process cost too much and that the efforts should be applied to more pressing issues in the Church and society.

The conference was sponsored by Our Sunday Visitor Publishing and hosted by the University of Saint Francis, an institution established as Saint Francis College in Lafayette, Indiana in 1890 by the Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration (Olpe, Germany). The college moved to its current Fort Wayne location in 1944 and continues to be staffed in part by the Sisters.

The Thursday, May 14 Mass was celebrated in Fort Wayne at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. In the Fort Wayne-South Bend diocese, the Feast of St. Matthias was celebrated while in the Pittsburgh diocese that day, the Feast of the Ascension was celebrated — hence Pittsburgh attendees “missed” the Ascension!

Thursday evening featured the plenary address of Archbishop Gomez, delivered at the USF Robert Goldstine Performing Arts Center in downtown Fort Wayne, and open to the public. Regarding the canonization process, the archbishop said, “I don't know if Dorothy Day is a Saint, that is up to the Church to decide, but I do know that she makes me want to be a saint.”

The conference took place days after the release of the Pew Research Center's Religious Landscape study that reported that the Christian share of the U. S. population is declining and the decline among Roman Catholics is especially sharp. Joshua Brumfield of Catholic University of America presented one breakout session titled: *The Dorothy Option? Dorothy, Benedict, and the Future of the Church*. Some presenters mentioned the Pew report but Brumfield's presentation seemed to offer a solution. He referred to Peter Maurin's famous essay from the first edition of the *Catholic Worker* newspaper titled “Blowing the Dynamite.” Maurin stated, “It is about time to blow the lid off so the Catholic Church may again become the dominant social dynamic force.” Brumfield's suggestion was that the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy might be the wick to ignite this dynamite, especially in the upcoming Year of Mercy proposed by Pope Francis. This presentation of Mr. Brumfield was just a small example of the stimulating and inspiring exchanges that occurred at the conference.

# The Many Missions of Father Richard F. Wersing, C.S.Sp.

James K. Hanna

In the years following his 1937 ordination as a Holy Ghost Father,<sup>1</sup> Wilkesburg (Pennsylvania) native Richard F. Wersing, C.S.Sp., would be known not only as a Roman Catholic priest but also a missionary, street preacher, parish founder, combat chaplain, graduate student, university professor, and archivist. A man of varied interests, he was a collector of stamps and coins, a voracious reader, poet, theater *aficionado*, humorist, public speaker, photographer, gardener, and a world traveler who maintained an active social life until his death at age 96 in 2006.

In his nearly seven decades of priesthood, Fr. Wersing served the Church in many of the United States, as well as France, Germany, Korea, Tanzania and elsewhere. For recreation he visited many countries including Ireland, Japan, Algeria, Israel, Morocco, Netherlands, Italy, and Mexico.

Richard Francis Wersing was born on February 12, 1910 to Margaret (Reott) and John Killian Wersing. He was one of six children, including brothers Martin and Paul, and sisters Margaret, Marian and Helen. His mother was the homemaker and his father a foreman at Westinghouse Electric.

It was his father's position at Westinghouse that ignited his philatelic interests at age 13. John Wersing's department was in receipt of much foreign correspondence with envelopes covered front and back with stamps.<sup>2</sup> At his death in 2006, Wersing still maintained the original collection he had begun in 1923.

He attended St. James grade school where he was taught by the Sisters of Charity, "at a time when they burned the crosses atop Wilkesburg Hill and the Ku Klux Klan marched through the streets of Wilkesburg; at a time when a Catholic boy had to battle his way to and from school and was called a Mickey!"<sup>3</sup>

It was at St. James that he had his first attraction to the priesthood. It was this writer's privilege to know Father Wersing the final four years of his life and to listen to his many remembrances. I asked him about his first interest in becoming a priest. "It was the subtle influence of pastors. Great men; respected and dignified, especially Father Lambing," he said.<sup>4</sup>

Andrew A. Lambing (1842-1918) was a diocesan priest and historian who established the Ohio Valley Historical Society in 1879, a forerunner to the Catholic Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania.<sup>5</sup> "Father Lambing," Wersing shared, "came to check our catechetical knowledge weekly and our classroom deportment. As a schoolboy I attended my first funeral Mass upon his death."<sup>6</sup>

Following grade school he attended Duquesne Preparatory School (operated by Duquesne University until 1941) for ninth grade before entering St. Fidelis Preparatory School (operated by the Capuchins) in Herman, Pennsylvania, from which he graduated in 1929. It was at St. Fidelis that he became acquainted with the library and was fascinated by leisurely reading.<sup>7</sup>

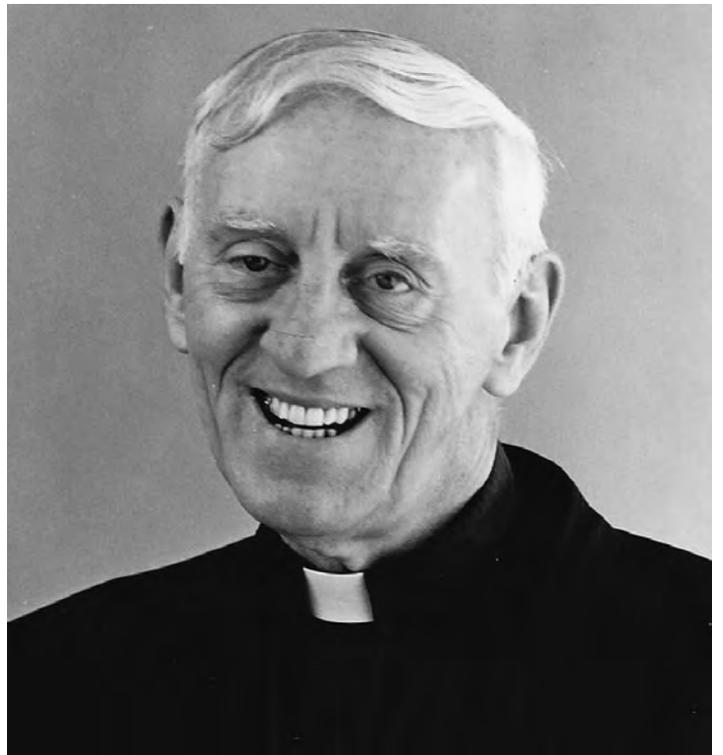
He once shared with this author a complete list of the books he read while at St. Fidelis. They numbered sixty-seven. Among the titles demonstrating his varied interests were *Stoddard's Lectures*, *Mirror of*

*Shallot*, *The Mill Town Pastor*, *Treasure Island*, *Kidnapped*, *Journey to the Center of the Earth*, *Courtship of Miles Standish*, *Gold-Bug*, *A Tale of Two Cities*, *Percy Wynn: That Football Game*, *Lucky Bob: On the Run*, *That Office Boy*, and *Gascoyne*.

Wersing was enrolled at Duquesne University of the Holy Ghost (founded in Pittsburgh in 1878 by the Congregation of the Holy Ghost as the Pittsburgh Catholic College) from 1929 to 1933 and received a Bachelor of Arts degree in English.<sup>8</sup>

His extracurricular activities in college included writing a weekly drama article for *The Duke* and articles for *The Duquesne Monthly*. He was a founding member of the Spectator Club of the College of Arts and Letters, "a senior honorary study group that ran open-forum discussions and, oddly enough for a study group, hosted dances and social affairs."<sup>9</sup> He was the manager for a number of three-act plays produced on campus and taken on the road. He was also a four-year member of the Pennsylvania National Guard.<sup>10</sup>

During his time at Duquesne he made the decision to pursue seminary studies with the Holy Ghost Fathers. His attraction to the Holy Ghost Fathers was rooted in the congregation's missionary zeal for the continent of Africa. This was the reason he chose the congregation over the Pittsburgh diocese. "The diocese wanted me," he told this author, "but I wanted to go to the missions in sub-Saharan Africa."<sup>11</sup> He did not get his wish until age 77, when he took a sabbatical year to establish archives for the diocese of Arusha, Tanzania.



**Father Richard F. Wersing (ca. 1985)**

Source: James K. Hanna

## The Many Missions of Father Richard F. Wersing, C.S.Sp. (continued)

Following graduation in 1933 he went to the novitiate in Ridgefield, Connecticut where he professed his first vows on August 15, 1934.<sup>12</sup> A story he shared with me about his year in the novitiate demonstrates his love of poetry:

We were not allowed to read anything but our textbooks and I missed reading poetry. Every thirty days we were assigned a new evening job. I was once assigned a job to sweep and clean a small dining room. On the first day I found a copy of Francis Thompson's *The Hound of Heaven*. It is 182 lines, and I figured I could look at it once a day for the next thirty days, so I memorized about six lines a day, and by the time of my next monthly job assignment I had it learnt.<sup>13</sup>

After Ridgefield he spent the next three years at St. Mary's, the major seminary known as "Ferndale" in South Norwalk, Connecticut. While at Ferndale he became interested in gardening and also continued his interest in theater by producing plays that were running concurrently on Broadway using, out of necessity, fellow seminarians for female roles.<sup>14</sup>

He professed his permanent vows in 1936 and was ordained September 8, 1937 in the chapel at South Norwalk by Bishop Maurice F. McAuliffe of Hartford.<sup>15</sup>

While the congregation's overseas missionary emphasis was Africa, its charism also included ministry among African-Americans in rural areas of the southern and western states. Father Wersing's first assignments were under the tutelage of older priests: a one-year stint at a mission parish in Opelousas, Louisiana, aptly named Holy Ghost parish, followed by a year at St. Monica in Tulsa, Oklahoma.<sup>16</sup>

His solo missionary work began in 1939 when he was sent to Muskogee, Oklahoma where he started as a street preacher.<sup>17</sup> There were few Catholics and no church building. He convinced a local funeral parlor owner to allow him to use a room for Sunday Masses.<sup>18</sup> Wersing's vibrant personality, sense of humor and quick wit resonated with the Oklahomans, both Catholic and non-Catholic, and he attracted a number of converts to the faith. By 1943 he built a congregation and a church building, as founder and pastor of St. Augustine Mission Church for the Colored, since closed and served by St. Joseph parish.

As the St. Joseph parish website notes,

Complicated is the how and why of the parish of St. Augustine (1939), set aside to serve Muskogee's African-American Catholics in another time that accepted segregation as a given. This was closed in 1969 as integration brought all of Muskogee's Catholics together.<sup>19</sup>

During his time in Muskogee the United States entered World War II. After the December 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor, Wersing knew he wanted to ask his superiors for permission to become a military chaplain, but his dedication to building a parish in Muskogee was paramount.

In 1943, having accomplished his parish goal, he asked his superiors for permission to become a military chaplain. Permission was granted and he enlisted with the Army at Tulsa, Oklahoma on November 1, 1943 and four days later was assigned to chaplaincy duties in Arkansas at Camp Joseph T. Robinson.<sup>20</sup>

Camp Robinson housed a large German prisoner of war facility, with a capacity of 4,000 prisoners<sup>21</sup> and he remained there until departing for Europe except for six weeks of January and February 1944 when he was sent to Harvard University for chaplain school.<sup>22</sup> Though his time at Harvard was brief he managed to become an honorary member of the Hasty Pudding drama club.<sup>23</sup>

He departed for Europe as an active duty combat chaplain on June 18, 1944 and did not return to the United States until December 15, 1946. His battle and campaign ribbons during that time include Normandy, Northern France, Rhineland, Ardennes and Central Europe. His decorations and citations included the Army Commendation Ribbon, European African Middle East Campaign Medal, World War II Victory Medal, Army of Occupation Medal, and American Campaign Medal.<sup>24</sup>

It was in Europe during World War II that his numismatic interest was kindled. He began collecting coins for himself and paper currency for his brother, Martin,<sup>25</sup> who was in the Pacific and did the reciprocal. Through this exchange they both managed to assemble large collections.<sup>26</sup>

After his 1946 discharge from active duty the Spiritan Congregation sent Father Wersing on another domestic mission; this time to Kentucky as the first pastor of Rosary Chapel Catholic Church, in rural Paducah. The parish exists yet today.

According to its website:

Rosary Chapel Parish was established in 1947 by Rev. Albert Thompson, pastor of St. Francis de Sales Church. Because segregation prevailed at that time, Fr. Thompson felt that Black Catholics had no sense of identity at St. Francis, and needed a parish of their own. The parishioners of Rosary participated in building Rosary by contribution time and labor to help renovate the first buildings.

The property consisted of three houses, one of which was



**Father Wersing as chaplain**

Source: James K. Hanna

## The Many Missions of Father Richard F. Wersing, C.S.Sp. (continued)

converted to a small chapel. The other two houses were connected and used as classrooms for Rosary Chapel School. The first Mass was offered in the spring of 1947 and school opened in September. Fr. Richard Wersing, C.S.S.P. was the first pastor. Ursuline sisters from Maple Mount, KY taught and maintained the school.<sup>27</sup>

Following his nearly two years in Kentucky, Wersing was assigned as chaplain to the Veterans Administration Hospital in Tucson, Arizona. While there he also studied Shakespeare at the University of Arizona's graduate school, and visited Mexico.

In 1950, when the Korean War started he returned to duty as a combat chaplain, and remained on active duty until May 1, 1967. The Korean conflict lasted until the middle of 1953 during which time he served with the 15<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment (Third Infantry Division).

In 1952 he once celebrated Mass under hostile fire. An eyewitness, soldier Jim Tiezzi, shared the story:

We met several times on the front lines of Hill 355. Wherever he went he always gathered as many GI's as he could to say Mass; sometime there were only a few and other times over 100. On one occasion he said Mass on the reverse side of Hill 355. All of a sudden the enemy started shelling our position and all of us GI's had been trained to duck and put our helmets back on. They had been off because we were in 'church', so we put them back on and kept them on for the remainder of the Mass. As I looked up at Father Wersing, there he was still standing up continuing to say Mass like nothing else mattered except the completion of the Mass. Some enemy shells had landed nearby and fortunately no one was hit, however dirt and mud had splattered his vestments.<sup>28</sup>

Later, he was nominated for and awarded the Bronze Star for valor.<sup>29</sup>

When this writer asked Wersing about this episode he said that he

heard a shell fly past his head during the consecration, but thought since it didn't hit him that "God wanted me to finish."

His dedication to liturgy and boundless creativity is also evidenced in a 1951 dispatch he sent from Korea to the congregation's provincial office for publication in its magazine.

It was glorious weather for a glorious day, so, after a rough day of training, we had Mass yesterday for Corpus Christi at 6:00 p.m. in the outdoor hillside chapel at 3rd Bn.

At 6:30 we had Benediction for our first time here. Our charcoal was burnt wood from a Korean home; the incense was real and it was placed in a Japanese brass ashtray and ladled out with a large brass Korean *kinchi* spoon. The center was a Korean rice bowl of brass. I punched three holes in it and strung it with three dog tag chains - my own and my two assistants'. The censer held a glowing fire producing billows of incense quite in keeping with the prayers of the men. I know their prayers were rising as surely as the fragrant incense cloud-odors.

The monstrance was my tiny G.I. ciborium. I placed a large Host inside the opened lid, covered it with cellophane and tacked that back with scotch tape. There was no humeral veil. The Protestant chaplain's organist played the hymns on the little field organ and all the men sang beautifully!

Immediately afterwards, we hurried along the road for a brisk half-hour and arrived at 2nd Bn. for another Benediction at 7:30. Here wind blew out most of the candles, we had no organist and one chain pulled though our make-shift censer. We put the censer together with our telephone wire and proceeded to have a beautiful *a capello* Benediction.<sup>30</sup>



**Father Wersing says Mass in Korea in 1952**

Source: James K. Hanna

## The Many Missions of Father Richard F. Wersing, C.S.Sp. (continued)

Returning to the states from Korea in 1953, he was given both domestic and foreign chaplaincy assignments by the Army over the next fourteen years. The first of these was in New Mexico at Sandia Base, home of the atomic energy project near Albuquerque. There he started a theater group for the military families, and also studied modern British poetry at the graduate school at nearby University of New Mexico.<sup>31</sup>

After Sandia, and during the Vietnam era, he was assigned to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Armored Division and from 1957 to July of 1964 alternated duties between Fort Hood, Texas and Bad Kreuznach, Germany.<sup>32</sup> At Fort Hood, he won awards for photography<sup>33</sup> and was elected the president of the Killeen-Fort Hood Toastmasters Club.<sup>34</sup> One speech he gave at Toastmasters was on the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous and titled *A Good AA*:

The stature of a good AA is measured, not by the height of his body, but by the depth of his soul; not by the height to which he reaches for learning, but by the depth to which he stoops for serving. A good AA is not concerned with wrong judgement of himself by others, but takes every precaution not to pass judgement on others at all. A good AA is thankful for what he may get; he is grateful for what he can give. Your good AA is the one who always makes the best of it when he gets the worst of it. A good AA spends the moment of silent meditation before meetings reflecting on the smallness of self; he says the Our Father after meetings proclaiming the greatness of God. Your good AA strives not for cleverness, but for wisdom; he would rather be right than popular. And a good AA would rather make ten costly mistakes in judgement than one cheap mistake in charity. He would rather be called foolish by a man than selfish by God.

The good AA is neither a saint nor a soldier, neither a doctor of medicine nor a pundit of philosophy; nevertheless, he is spiritually inspired and intuitively trained in the gentlest and the most beautiful of arts – the art of healing. His battlefields are the homes of the hopeless, the dreary and shabby rooms of the desolate, the jails, hospitals, and prisons where those abandoned by others turn to him in hope. And well do we know that it is not the strength of his will but the gentleness of his touch which soothes the most desperately sick of men: The Alcoholic.<sup>35</sup>

Wherever he was stationed, his preaching resonated with military personnel and families. A note written in 1964 to his provincial read:

I am a convert with an extremely sketchy early religious education; as a matter of fact, the first Catholic to reappear in the family since the reformation. At Pentecost, Father Wersing opened new doors for me. His sermon on the Holy Ghost, and the subsequent days of worship and instruction illuminated new corridors of grace, and has ever since been a source of daily prayer and a bulwark of strength. There is another thing about Father Wersing: a unique quality of saintliness. It shone about the man. The essence of the Holy Spirit was palpable. I shall forever be indebted to him, and hence his Order, for the inspiration of his guidance.<sup>36</sup>

He once paid a visit to the Bavarian town of Konnersreuth where he met Therese Neumann (1898-1962).<sup>37</sup> He shared the event with me:

I remember she was fascinated with the (Army) jeep. In fact we gave her a ride around the block. Later, I walked her home from

the church. It was really quite an experience, a very fortunate one for me, to just be walking along with a stigmatic and mystic; just walking her home. She was quite unremarkable; very plain and down to earth; not the least bit pretentious.<sup>38</sup>

There were many other stories of his wartime experiences, as noted in his news obituary appearing in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*: “So many of the stories he would later weave stemmed from his adventures there. Some such as the tale that he was the first to cross the Rhine River to greet the Russians are almost mythical.”<sup>39</sup> Wersing also told the present author that he sat for two entire days in the back row of the courtroom during the Nuremberg trials in 1946, fascinated by the proceedings.

From July 1964 to March 1966, Fr. Wersing was assigned as Catholic Chaplain to the U.S. Army War College at Carlisle Barracks in Carlisle, Pennsylvania,<sup>40</sup> before returning to Korea where he spent the final fourteen months of active duty. Prior to discharge, he travelled to Hong Kong and Saigon. He was honorably discharged from the Army as a Lieutenant Colonel on May 1, 1967 and in August, at age 57, was assigned to Duquesne University where he enrolled as a graduate student. He spent the next two years completing two master’s degrees — the first in Education and the second in English.<sup>41</sup> He then taught literature and poetry to freshman and sophomores at Duquesne from 1970 to 1975 when he reached the University’s then-mandatory retirement age for professors.

Father Wersing’s professorial effectiveness is illustrated by an inscription in the frontispiece of a poetry book given him by a student:

Dear Father Wersing, when I first came to Duquesne I came from a world of newsprint where people were concerned about saying things in the most literal fashion possible. It was your English course that brought me back to the beauty and real possibilities of the language. Without your course I could not have appreciated this book. I hope you can appreciate it as well.<sup>42</sup>

Following his five-year collegiate teaching experience he was assigned to the University of Maryland and American University for one year of archival studies. In 1976 he received accreditation as an archivist from the National Archives in Washington, D.C.<sup>43</sup>

He returned to Duquesne and served as the archivist until 1996, during which time he prepared several notable exhibits of the University’s history.<sup>44</sup> One of these was a display for the University’s centenary entitled “100 Years, 100 Photos, and 1,000 Faces”.<sup>45</sup>

In 1987 he took a sabbatical and finally fulfilled his dream of seeing sub-Saharan Africa. He spent most of the year in Arusha, Tanzania, where “he helped the diocese develop an archive so historians could better research the activities of Catholic missionaries. When he wasn’t doing that, he was giving parishioners rides to Mass and buying them food.”<sup>46</sup>

During the stateside civilian period of 1967-1998 he was active in many organizations including the Willa Cather Society, the Flannery O’Connor Society, the Catholic Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania, and the Men’s Garden Club of Western Pennsylvania. During this time, he also served as chaplain to the Fraternal Knights

## The Many Missions of Father Richard F. Wersing, C.S.Sp. (continued)

of St. George—Branch 8222, the 99<sup>th</sup> Army Reserve Group, the American Legion Post 106, and the ROTC programs at Duquesne University, the University of Pittsburgh, and Carnegie Mellon University.<sup>47</sup>

He retired as Duquesne's archivist in 1998 at age 88 but continued to live on campus at Trinity Hall until 2001 when he moved to Libermann Hall, the Spiritan congregation's retirement facility in Bethel Park, Pennsylvania. Though he suffered from both macular degeneration and hearing loss, he stayed active at Libermann Hall.

A fellow Spiritan, Father Joseph Kelly, recorded an indication of Fr. Wersing's mindfulness that occurred in December of 2003:

An unexpected event happened one night here in Bethel Park, the fire alarm rang out. The police arrived, the fire truck was being prepared for action and the confreres had come out of their rooms to see what was happening; but there was no sign of Father Dick Wersing, who is now 93, frail and with very poor eyesight.

It was soon discovered that the source of the emergency was not an enveloping fire but a small piece of toast someone was making which got burnt and gave off the smoke that tripped the alarm. The cause of the alarm had been discovered but there was still no sign of Father Dick, until one of us went to the chapel and there he was. When he heard the alarm, he had hobbled to the chapel to be ready to remove the Blessed Sacrament if there was a need.<sup>48</sup>

It was this writer's privilege to visit Father Wersing in Bethel Park frequently in his last years. We went for drives to visit Father's sister Marian, attend a St. James reunion, and call on old friends at Duquesne University. Mostly we talked and often we prayed. One of his favorite prayers was the Litany of Loreto.

He was briefly hospitalized in Mercy Hospital the weekend Pope John Paul II died (April 2, 2005). My wife and I stopped to visit him on Sunday afternoon. I remember looking at my watch, seeing it was 2:35 p.m. and saying, "Father, Alice and I have to leave soon, would you like to pray the Litany before we go?" And we did. Later, I discovered the Pope had died at 2:37 p.m. Eastern time. I couldn't wait to tell Father. When he heard we had been praying the Litany when the Pope died, his face lit up and with a big grin he exclaimed, "Man! That is wonderful! What a beautiful thought!"<sup>49</sup>

We also walked and prayed the outdoor Stations of the Cross at Bethel Park. Toward the end of his life, Fr. Wersing was using a wheelchair and was nearly blind. He had a wonderful modification of saying the Stations that reflected his love of mankind. For instance, at the Fifth Station where Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus carry the Cross, Father would in his own words prayerfully thank God for all the men God had put in his life to help him along the way. And at the Sixth Station where Veronica wipes the face of Jesus he would say

a prayer of gratitude for the women God had put into his life; and so it went with each Station.

Father Wersing died peacefully on August 23, 2006 at Libermann Hall and a Mass of Resurrection was celebrated there in the chapel on August 26. Family members, Spiritan priests Christopher Promis and Leonard Tuzzolo, and the present author attended the interment on September 19 at Arlington National Cemetery where he was buried with full military honors.

After his death, the Society of the Third Infantry Division reprinted, in its official publication *The Watch on the Rhine*, a Memorial Day address Father Wersing had written and delivered in Korea:

Gentlemen: it is altogether right and profitable that we should gather on this Memorial Day to honor our departed comrades. We of the 15<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment leave three hundred and thirty-two graves amid the hills of Korea; we ponder the fate of 47 MIA; we revere the memory in death of 31 soldiers of the Republic of Korea who lost their lives while alongside of us; we pay humble tribute to the valiant dead of the Greek Expeditionary Forces who died here; and now many a mound of Korean soil contains Can Do personnel sleeping in this "Land of the Morning Calm."

Death and its memories are a common inheritance to mankind. Common, because they deal with human hearts and death with its memories breaks hearts and disrupts homes. And no matter where and no matter how roughly we live, there - for the moment - is our home. On the line, in headquarters, in the rear echelon, home will always have this in common with the city dweller and the farmer, that homes are the same the world over: the same at least in that they are the theaters wherein and the stages whereon are played the dramas of hearts understanding and loving other hearts. The mother of a family realizes this for it is her privilege to forget herself so that no one else will be forgotten. The soldier in battle fundamentally realizes this also for it is his preference to endure the roughness in the field - to slog up mountains in mud - to know privations amid blood and pain and death simply to keep the knowledge of these hardships away from the folks on the home front. The soldier fights so that loved ones will never know the meaning of real warfare.

All this is true, because we inherit and hold onto our liberties as free citizens. Liberty lies in the hearts of men and women. When it dies there, no law, no constitution can then do much to help it.<sup>50</sup>

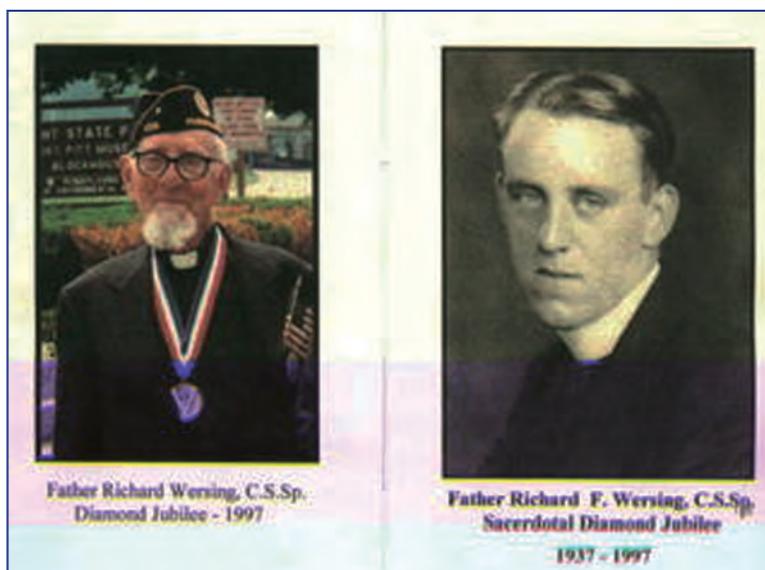
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**Suggested reading** on the life of Fr. Richard Wersing, C.S.Sp.: (1) Arlington National Website obituary: <http://www.arlingtoncemetery.net/richard-wersing.htm>, and (2) The Hound of Heaven blog at: <http://thehoundofheaven.blogspot.com/>.

# The Many Missions of Father Richard F. Wersing, C.S.Sp. (continued)

## Endnotes

- 1 The Holy Ghost Fathers — officially The Congregation of the Holy Spirit (full title: Congregation of the Holy Spirit under the protection of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and in Latin: *Congregatio Sancti Spiritus sub tutela Immaculati Cordis Beatissimae Virginis Mariae*, hence abbreviated C.S.Sp.) — is a Roman Catholic congregation of priests, lay brothers and, since Vatican II, lay associates. Congregation members are known as Spiritans in continental Europe, and as Holy Ghost Fathers in English-speaking countries, but today have become known as Spiritans in most all locales. The Spiritans were founded in Paris in 1703. In 1848, Fr. Francis Liberman and his Congregation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary merged with the Spiritans. Exiled from Prussia during Bismarck's *Kulturkampf*, members of the congregation's German province emigrated to the United States. Pittsburgh Bishop Michael Domenec invited the American superior, Rev. Joseph Strub, to settle in the diocese of Pittsburgh in 1874. The congregation opened the Pittsburgh Catholic College of the Holy Ghost (today, Duquesne University) in Pittsburgh in 1878. See Henry J. Koren, *The Serpent and the Dove: A History of the Congregation of the Holy Ghost in the United States 1745-1984* (Pittsburgh: Spiritus Press, 1985), and Joseph F. Rishel, "*The Spirit that Gives Life*": *The History of Duquesne University, 1878-1996* (Duquesne University Press, Pittsburgh, 1997).
- 2 Duquesne University Archives, Biography Files – Box 27: Wersing to Wright, Gumberg Library, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (hereinafter "DUA"), Bob Highberger, "Interview with Father Richard Wersing" (1981) [typed, with a note in Wersing's handwriting "Bob Highberger, 1981, spring semester"] (hereinafter cited as "Highberger Interview").
- 3 Archives of James K. Hanna (hereinafter cited as AJKH), Frankie Sapienza, *Diamond Jubilee Dinner Talk* (September 14, 1997) [printed program]. Sapienza was a lifelong friend of Fr. Wersing and delivered the talk at Duranti's Restaurant, Oakland, Pittsburgh, PA, on the occasion of Wersing's sacerdotal diamond jubilee.
- 4 AJKH, Contemporaneous notes taken by this author at the time of discussions with Fr. Richard Wersing 2002-2006 (hereinafter cited as CN).
- 5 See the Catholic Historical Society's website at <http://catholichistorywpa.org>.
- 6 AJKH, CN.
- 7 DUA, Highberger Interview.
- 8 DUA, Fr. Richard F. Wersing's self-prepared typed resume on Duquesne letterhead (undated).
- 9 Rishel, "*The Spirit that Gives Life*": *The History of Duquesne University, 1878-1996*, op. cit., 55.
- 10 DUA, Highberger Interview.
- 11 AJKH, CN.
- 12 AJKH, Sapienza, *Diamond Jubilee Dinner Talk*, loc. cit.
- 13 AJKH, CN.
- 14 DUA, Highberger Interview.
- 15 DUA, Fr. Richard F. Wersing's self-prepared typed resume on Duquesne letterhead (undated). See also "Four Priests Will Sing First Masses," *The Pittsburgh Catholic* (September 2, 1937), 12.
- 16 AJKH, Sapienza, *Diamond Jubilee Dinner Talk*, loc. cit.
- 17 "Catholic Priest Assigned War Prisoners," *The Guardian* [now *Arkansas Catholic*] (December 10, 1943), 3, appearing at the newspaper website: <http://arc.stparchive.com/Archive/ARC/ARC12101943p03.php>.
- 18 Joseph Kelly, C.S.Sp., "Prepared for Everything," *One Heart, One Spirit* [Spiritans newsletter] (December 2003), 4-5.
- 19 As of 1992, St. Joseph became the title of a single combined parish for all Catholics in Muskogee. See the St. Joseph parish website at <http://stjosephok.com/parish-history> (accessed May 22, 2015).
- 20 DUA, Military Record and Report of Separation Certificate of Service (28 February 1947). Wersing gave the original to the present author, who later donated the document to DUA.
- 21 "Camp Joseph T. Robinson," appearing at the website: <http://www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net/encyclopedia/entry-detail.aspx?entryID=2262>.
- 22 DUA, Military Record and Report of Separation Certificate of Service.
- 23 DUA, Highberger Interview.
- 24 DUA, Military Record and Report of Separation Certificate of Service.
- 25 Martin Wersing became a labor organizer in New York City and a friend to Dorothy Day, co-founder of the *Catholic Worker* newspaper and movement. Day mentions Martin in her 1952 autobiography, *The Long Loneliness* (San Francisco: Harper, 1952), 220.
- 26 DUA, Highberger Interview.
- 27 "Rosary Chapel History" appearing at the parish website: [http://www.rosarychapel.org/html/about\\_us.html](http://www.rosarychapel.org/html/about_us.html) (accessed May 22, 2015).
- 28 AJKH, CN.
- 29 DUA, Fr. Richard F. Wersing's self-prepared typed resume on Duquesne letterhead (undated).
- 30 DUA, Fr. Richard F. Wersing, "Corpus Christi in Korea," [unidentified Holy Ghost Fathers missionary publication] (1951), 6-7. Wersing gave a copy of this article to the present author, who donated it to DUA.
- 31 DUA, Fr. Richard F. Wersing's self-prepared typed resume on Duquesne letterhead (undated).
- 32 AJKH, Frankie Sapienza, *Diamond Jubilee Dinner Talk*, loc. cit. During the Cold War, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Armored Division of the U.S. Army was primarily based at Fort Hood, Texas, and had a reinforced brigade forward stationed in West Germany. For 50 years (1951-2001), Bad Kreuznach was home to a United States Army base, Rose



## The Many Missions of Father Richard F. Wersing, C.S.Sp. (continued)

- Barracks, including headquarters of the U.S. 8<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division and later the U.S. 1<sup>st</sup> Armored Division.
- 33 "Hood Men Win 4<sup>th</sup> Army Phase of Photo Contest," *Armored Sentinel* [Fort Hood, TX], Vol. 18, No. 25 (September 23, 1960), 1, appearing at the website: <http://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph254653/m1/1/>.
- 34 "Chaplain Wersing Elected President Of Toastmaster," *Armored Sentinel* [Fort Hood, TX], Vol. 17, No. 42 (March 18, 1960), 4, appearing at the website: <http://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph254626/m1/4/>.
- 35 AJKH, Richard F. Wersing, "A Good AA" (undated), given by Wersing to the present author.
- 36 AJKH, Letter of Marjorie B. Stacy (Mrs. Walter S. Stacy) to Rev. Vernon F. Gallagher [Provincial], [location undetermined] (ca. May 17, 1964). Wersing, who acknowledged the letter on October 30, 1964, gave the original letter to the present author.
- 37 Therese Neumann was born in 1898 in the village of Konnersreuth in Bavaria, Germany, the first of eleven children. When she was twenty years old, an accident left her partially paralyzed. In 1919, she was blinded completely and various other accidents left her bedridden. Therese had a great devotion to St. Therese of Lisieux and credited her with healing of her paralysis and bedsores. In 1926, Therese developed the stigmata. She was also reported to have had visions of Christ. Controversy surrounded Neumann's wounds but several sources say these wounds never healed, never became infected and were present at her death. In addition to the stigmata, she was reported to have consumed no food other than the Eucharist for a period of forty years. A medical doctor and four Franciscan nurses kept watch over her for a period of two weeks and confirmed that she consumed nothing except the Eucharist. She suffered no ill effects, loss of weight or dehydration. During the time of the Third Reich in Germany, Neumann was the target of ridicule. The Nazis knew of her opposition to them and while she was never physically harmed, her family's home, her parish church and the priest's house all received direct attacks. Forty thousand people signed a petition asking for her beatification. In 2005, Bishop Gerhard Muller of Regensburg formally opened the Vatican proceedings for her beatification.
- See <http://www.papalartifacts.com/collection/venerable-therese-neumann/>. Further information on Therese Neumann is available at the website: [www.mysticsofthechurch.com](http://www.mysticsofthechurch.com).
- 38 AJKH, CN.
- 39 Kate McCaffrey, "Missionary Priest and Duquesne Professor," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* (August 25, 2006), E5.
- 40 The Army War College is a senior service college of the U.S. Department of Defense and provides graduate level instruction to senior military officers and civilians to prepare them for senior leadership assignments and responsibilities. Graduates receive a Master's Degree in Strategic Studies. An overview of the college appears at the website: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United\\_States\\_Army\\_War\\_College](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Army_War_College).
- 41 DUA, Fr. Richard F. Wersing's self-prepared typed resume on Duquesne letterhead (undated).
- 42 Inscription by student "A.S." (initials), as viewed and copied by the present author in 2005.
- 43 AJKH, Sapienza, *Diamond Jubilee Dinner Talk*, loc. cit.
- 44 McCaffrey, "Missionary Priest and Duquesne Professor," loc. cit.
- 45 Kelly, "Prepared for Everything," loc. cit.
- 46 McCaffrey, "Missionary Priest and Duquesne Professor," loc. cit. The diocese of Arusha had been established in 1963 and entrusted to the Spiritans. The first bishop was Dennis V. Durning, C.S.Sp., who was still ordinary of the diocese at the time of Fr. Wersing's assignment there.
- 47 AJKH, Sapienza, *Diamond Jubilee Dinner Talk*, loc. cit.
- 48 Kelly, "Prepared for Everything," loc. cit.
- 49 AJKH, CN.
- 50 Chaplain LTC Richard F. Wersing, "Memorial Day Address," *The Watch on the Rhine* [official Publication of the Society of the Third Infantry Division, U.S.Army], Vol. 88, No. 6 (June 2007), 22, appearing at the website: [http://www.warfoto.com/watch\\_May-Jun%202007.pdf](http://www.warfoto.com/watch_May-Jun%202007.pdf).

# Daily Life at the Pontifical North American College

Rev. Michael P. Conway, S.T.L.



**Pope Francis visits Pontifical North American College on May 2, 2015.**

Source: NAC

The historical connections between the Diocese of Pittsburgh and the Pontifical North American College, America's Seminary in Rome, have been well documented. The importance of an institution like the North American College — known more informally as “the NAC” — has also been long-established. But what is life like behind the walls of *Via del Gianicolo, #14*? In this piece, my goal is to take you, my reader, through a typical day at the NAC.

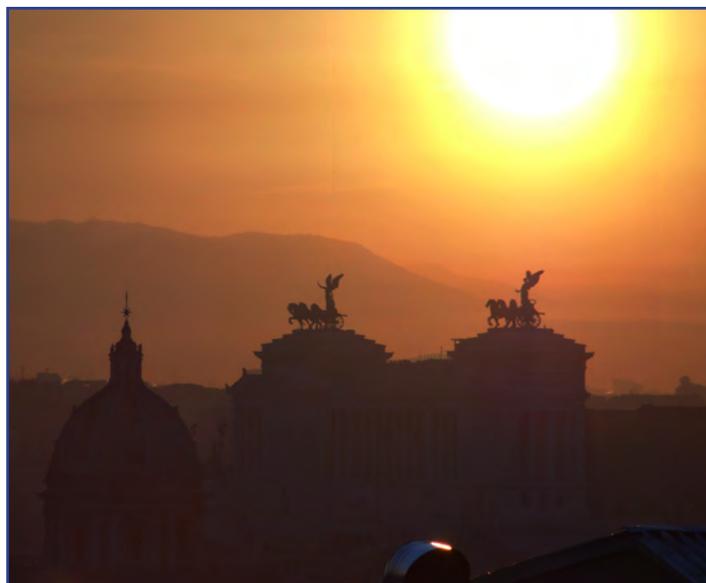
In a certain sense, I've already failed you, because there is no such thing as a typical day at the College. Sure, there are schedules, and plans, but due to the unique setting of the place, such things can quickly go awry. For example, there is nothing normal about daily life during a consistory, or when the bishops are on their *ad limina* visits, and certainly not during a conclave. Still, I'll do the best I can.

Most days, a seminarian's first scheduled activity is at 6:15 AM, when he is expected to be in the chapel for morning prayer. Theoretically, this means you can sleep as late as 6:10, provided you can dress quickly and have a room in the wing closest to the chapel, but those sitting next to you would probably have you get up earlier and shower. So realistically, the day starts much earlier. Morning prayer generally takes about 15 minutes, and is followed immediately by Mass. Most days, one of the faculty members presides and preaches at Mass, but there are days when students who are deacons will preach. Once a week, one of the student priests will preside and preach. Of course, when a bishop or cardinal is visiting the College, they are offered the opportunity to preside and preach. Most tend to avail themselves of it, but not all.

The chapel is more or less empty by quarter after seven, as the community moves towards breakfast. While there are some

that insist that breakfast is the most important meal of the day, this scribe begs to differ. An Italian breakfast is generally small; some sort of pastry, coffee, and juice. In some rare instances, you might see someone eating a bowl of cereal, but probably with yogurt instead of milk. The kitchen staff at the college tries to accommodate American breakfast tastes by making pancakes (which aren't bad) and French toast (which is bad) several times a week, as well as eggs — but I would estimate that at least half of the house tends to just give up and either skips breakfast altogether or eats elsewhere.

No matter which option a student chooses, he must be quick about it, because in all likelihood, he will soon be leaving for class. For the first three years a man is in Rome, he is engaged in what is called the “first cycle” of studies, which culminates in obtaining his STB degree — a Bachelor of Sacred Theology, or *Sacrae Theologiae Baccalaureus*. (Don't let the name fool you; it's actually a graduate-level degree.) At the NAC, all of the first cycle students attend either the Gregorian University, *Santa Croce*, or the *Angelicum*. This writer attended the Gregorian for first cycle, as most of the Pittsburgh seminarians do. The majority of guys walk there every day. It's really a beautiful walk through some of the historic areas of Rome, crossing through *Piazza Navona* and passing the Pantheon before arriving at the Greg, as it is (semi) affectionately known. It takes roughly 25 minutes on foot, so it's a nice stretch of the legs. Some prefer to drastically shorten their commute by riding a bike to school, but that adds a certain element of risk — sharing the road with Roman drivers is not for the faint of heart. Bike parking can also be at a premium. In inclement weather — and winter in Rome is generally rainy — some will take a bus, and in some extreme cases, guys have been known to call for taxis.



**Dawn: View of the dome of the Church of the Most Holy Name of Mary at the Trajan Forum and the Victor Emmanuel II Monument.**

Source: Rev. Michael P. Conway

## Daily Life at the Pontifical North American College (continued)

Once the man arrives at school, he is immediately confronted with the universality of the Church. This is especially true for the men studying at the Greg, which is the largest of the three universities. His classmates come from all corners of the globe, and all walks of life. In general, most are seminarians for various dioceses or religious orders, but there are also a goodly number of religious sisters from various orders. There are also a number of committed lay faithful who are there of their own volition to study theology. At both the Gregorian and at *Santa Croce*, classes are taught exclusively in Italian. Some, like this author, found this to be mentally draining, but others who are more gifted at languages seem to pick it up quickly. The Americans at the Greg have developed a note-taking system that benefits all who participate in it. Three or four students who are more proficient at Italian are assigned to take notes for a given class. They forward their notes to a team of redactors who condense those notes into one set, and then a final team of editors will compare those notes with the previous year's notes and supplement them with some additional research. At the end of the term, the notes are printed, bound, and distributed. Not only are they handy for studying for the exams, but they're quite useful in later ministry, too.

After four hours of class, it's time for the walk back home. The route might remain the same, but this trip is going to be a lot different than the morning commute. Rome has awakened by this point, and so have her tourists. On more than one occasion, large groups of seminarians have noticed tourists discreetly (or not) trying to snap a photo of them. And plenty of tourists stop seminarians to ask for directions – even those tourists who speak neither English nor Italian. (It's always fascinating when the American tourists seem so surprised to encounter other Americans abroad, too.) After arriving back at the college, the seminarians have a few minutes to freshen up before *pranzo*, the mid-day meal.

This is the main meal of the day, and is served family-style in the refectory. A deacon leads the community in prayer, and everyone is seated six to a table. A different group of seminarians serves each day. The first course is usually a pasta. The second course is the meat dish and a vegetable – although there is never meat served on Fridays, in keeping with tradition. For dessert, fresh fruit is usually served, although once or twice a week it is supplanted by *gelato* or something else sweet. The food is actually pretty good, considering that the kitchens are cooking for over 250 people at a time. Some of the pastas, especially, can rival anything you would get at a *trattoria* around Rome. It's a good thing that the walk to class and back is as long as it is.

The rest of the afternoon is a little more open, at least for the first-cycle students. Most days, they won't have afternoon class at all, which gives them a number of options on how to fill that time. Naturally, one must make time for prayer and study, but one also needs to take time for recreation. The NAC has a large sports field at its disposal, complete with a running track. There are also outdoor tennis and basketball courts. With a student population now in excess of 200 men, it's fairly easy to get a group together to play some kind of pick-up game. There is also a fitness center inside the building for those who want to lift. Some choose to eschew the NAC's facilities altogether and go for a run in the city. It's a great way to get to learn Rome and see a lot of history all at once. Those less-inclined towards physical pursuits might gravitate towards one of the common rooms. The main student lounge, in addition to having a bar area that sells various treats, also has a ping-pong table, a foosball table, and a pool table. There is also an extensive library of DVDs to peruse. Groups of guys tend to congregate in the smaller lounges throughout the building for regular showings of favorite programs. *M\*A\*S\*H*, *The West Wing*, and *Star Trek: The Next Generation* all had very loyal followings.



**Pontifical North American College atop the Janiculum Hill.**

Source: NAC

## Daily Life at the Pontifical North American College (continued)

As mentioned, afternoons are not all fun and games, however, as a seminarian is also responsible for an apostolic work. This may mean serving Rome's poor or homeless in one of the many shelters the Church administers, or it may mean doing evangelization work in St. Peter's Square, or doing chaplaincy work for American students studying abroad, or other activities. Additionally, a seminarian meets monthly with his formation advisor and meets every other week with his spiritual director. He is also responsible for his "house job", which is a certain responsibility he has to fulfill towards the community. Sometimes these can be handled in the afternoons, but not always — for instance, the sacristans have to arise well before the rest of the community in order to make sure that the chapel is set up for that day's Mass.

Those seminarians in the second-cycle of studies see things a bit differently. For them, the schedule is a bit inverted, because generally speaking, more of their classes will be in the afternoons. So they must use their mornings more wisely, as they will be away from the building the rest of the day.

Afternoon seems to last later in Rome than it does in the US, but at the NAC, it ends at a very definitive time — 6:45 PM. At this point, the entire community has reconvened in the chapel for evening prayer together. Most have already been there, as every evening the Blessed Sacrament is exposed for an hour of silent Adoration. Following the conclusion of evening prayer, dinner, or *cena*, is served. More often than not, the remaining pasta from lunch makes an appearance, but there are some other items available as well. It is intended to be a smaller meal, and is not the big production that Americans tend to think of when they think of the evening meal. This is served buffet-style, and guys are free to leave when they're done eating — not nearly as formal as *pranzo* was. When the exchange rate is favorable, guys will frequently skip this meal to go out and try some of the local restaurants.



**Donald Cardinal Wuerl with NAC seminarians from Pittsburgh. The author is on the cardinal's left.**

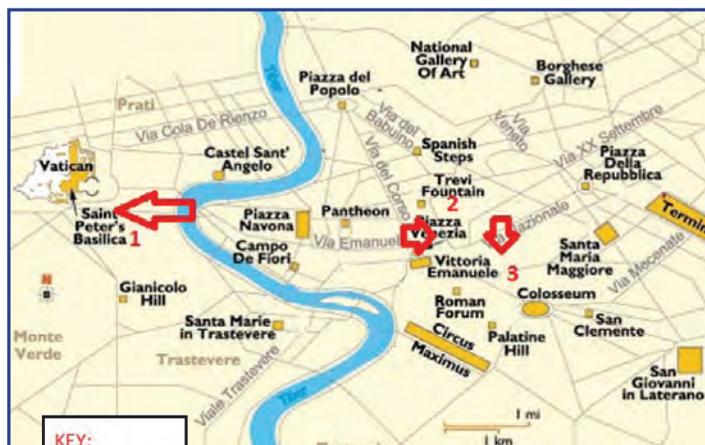
Source: Rev. Michael P. Conway

As the evening wears on, the seminary remains fairly abuzz with activity. The student lounge is open again, and many tend to congregate there. Some are back at work in the NAC's library, which is — unsurprisingly — the largest English-language library in Italy. Others, mindful of the time difference between Italy and the U.S., are using this chance to catch up with loved ones at home. Depending on the day of the week, seminarians might be gathering together based on geographic region to hang out for a while, have some refreshments, and just relax. (For example, Pittsburgh Night was always on a Tuesday. Illinois Night was always on a Thursday. Just two examples.) At 10 PM, "quiet hours" officially begin, so that the early risers can get their rest. Although one might think that most seminarians would be turning in at this point, there are always a few night owls who have lights on well into the wee hours of the morning. Regardless of when they do go to bed, however, the next morning will still start at 6:15 in the chapel.



**NAC rector and seminarians. The author is in last row, far right.**

Source: Rev. Michael P. Conway



**KEY:**  
1. NAC  
2. Gregorian  
3. Angelicum

**Rome, showing NAC, the Angelicum, and the Gregorian University.**

Source: Rev. Michael P. Conway

## Daily Life at the Pontifical North American College (continued)

But like any good schedule, this is all subject to change!

### Suggested reading:

(1) *Stephen M. DiGiovanni, The Second Founder: Bishop Martin J. O'Connor and the Pontifical North American College* (Bloomington, IN: Trafford Publishing, 2013), (2) *The Pontifical North American College: Celebrating 150 Years of Priestly Formation in the Eternal City* (Cincinnati: Making Everlasting Memories, 2010), (3) Archbishop Philip M. Hannan, *Rome: Living Under the Axis – A Look Back at a Turbulent Time in History Through the Letters of a Young Seminarian and Future Archbishop 1936-1940* (McKees Rocks, PA: St. Andrew's Productions, 2003), (4) Brian Murphy, *The New Men: Inside the Vatican's Elite School for American Priests* (New York: Grosset/Putnam,

1997), (5) Aldo Cicinelli (Daniel P. Daley, trans.), *The Church of S. Maria dell'Umiltà and the Chapel of the North American College* (Rome: Marietti, 1970), (6) Robert F. McNamara, *The American College in Rome 1855-1955* (Rochester, NY: Christopher Press, 1956), (7) Francis A. Tournier, *The North American College: Historical Summary and Guide to the New Site on Janiculum Hill* (Catholic Records Press, 1953), (8) Martin W. Doherty, *The House on Humility Street: Memories of the North American College in Rome* (New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1943), (9) Henry A. Brann, *History of the North American College, Rome* (New York: Benziger Bros, 1910), and (10) *Ad Multos Annos: The Tribute – The Pontifical North American College* (CD).



**Pope Francis celebrates Mass in the Chapel of the Immaculate Conception at the NAC in honor Blessed Junipero Serra (May 2, 2015).**

Source: NAC

# Discovering a Catalonian Perspective on Miquel Domènech i Veciana, Second Bishop of Pittsburgh and First Bishop of Allegheny

Alexander J. Schrenk

The idea for our trip to Tarragona was spontaneous, but then, most of our travel plans at the North American College are. In addition to Christmas and Easter breaks, the administration of the College encourages seminarians to leave Rome once a month and travel the rest of the continent — an opportunity to relax, but also a way to deepen our experience of the Catholic Church in its many diverse and meaningful manifestations in Europe and beyond. It's a tradition among us Pittsburgh seminarians in Rome to use one such travel period a year for a fraternal trip. With five full days available after final exams this past February, we knew that there was potential for something memorable. A few suggestions were put forth, but the most attractive was one that tied into the history of the diocese. We knew that our second bishop, the Vincentian missionary Michael Domenec, was a native of Spain and had died there while visiting his homeland in 1878. And it was decided: we — Father Mike Conway, Father Tom Schlupe, Adam Potter, Tom Gramc, and I — were going to Spain to see our bishop!

The details of the trip came together in a way that might best be described as providential. Consultation of some volumes of diocesan history revealed that Bishop Domenec had been laid to rest in the Cathedral of Tarragona, a seaside city in northeast Spain in the region of Catalonia,<sup>1</sup> not far from his birthplace of Reus (about 7.5 miles northwest of Tarragona). We wanted to be sure, however, that the tomb of Bishop Domenec was in a place that was open for visits, and that our two student-priests, Fathers Conway and Schlupe, could celebrate a Mass nearby. Not expecting an extensive response, I sent an inquiry to the cathedral's main office by email. A reply came a week later, but I was surprised to see that it came not from a secretary, but from the personal account of the cathedral's rector, *Mossèn* Josep Queraltó Serrano.<sup>2</sup> As it turned out,

*Mossèn* Queraltó had studied Canon Law at the Gregorian University in Rome with two priests from Pittsburgh: Father Brian Welding, current rector of Saint Paul Seminary, and Archbishop Bernard Hebda. As a self-professed friend of Pittsburgh, *Mossèn* Josep wanted to handle everything — he'd pick us up from the airport, host us at the archdiocesan seminary, and celebrate Mass with us at the altar near Bishop Domenec's tomb. Our Spanish pilgrimage was set for February 10 to 15.

Almost immediately upon establishing contact with *Mossèn* Josep, I realized that we would be treated to a unique historical and cultural perspective on Bishop Domenec's life. Only a half hour after his initial message, I received another email with a full transcription of the Latin text on the bishop's tomb. *Mossèn* Josep wrote that he knew it well; it was located in the cathedral's cloister, in the chapel of *Nuestra Señora de la Guía* (Our Lady of the Way). As a canon of the cathedral, he had celebrated Mass very often nearby. The text he provided, and which we later saw many times in person, read as follows:

*D. O. M. – Hic in Dño jacet – I. R. D. D. Michael Domenech et Veciana, – Pitsburgensis America Septentrionalis episcopus – Federatis in Statibus, – á Reusense civitate natales hausus, olim – S. Vicentii a Paulo congregationem vitá, – disciplinã ornavit; – Litterarum amore, studiorum diligentia, – religiosã professione etiam parissiorum – S. Lázari ampliavit domum; – catholicam nec non ecclesiam zelo, vigili curã – centum ferè sacris – e radice structis fanis, scholarum, hospitalium – erectione nobilitavitque: – Tarracone postremum consecuturus brabium – obiit veluti Christi pauper, – die 7 Januarii an. 1878, – honorificentissimo conditus funere – pontif. an. 17 et. vero 62 – R. I. P.*

A translation of the above would be:

D. O. M.<sup>3</sup> — Here rests in the Lord the Most Eminent and Reverend Michael Domenech y Veciana, Bishop of Pittsburgh in the United States of North America. Taking his origins from the city of Reus, he once honored the Congregation of Saint Vincent de Paul with his life and instruction, and ennobled the House of Saint-Lazare in Paris<sup>4</sup> with his love of learning, diligence in study, and religious profession. And with zeal and watchful care he increased the glory of the Catholic Church with the construction of schools and hospitals, having built almost a hundred churches from the ground up. His final prize was to be won in Tarragona; he died poor like Christ on January 7, 1878 and was buried



**The Cathedral of Tarragona**

# Discovering a Catalanian Perspective on Miquel Domènec i Veciana, Second Bishop of Pittsburgh and First Bishop of Allegheny (continued)

with a most honorable funeral, having been a bishop for 17 years, and at 62 years of age. — May he rest in peace.

This inscription began to paint a picture for us. While American accounts of his life focus on Bishop Domènec's activities as a missionary in Missouri and Philadelphia and his accomplishments (and difficulties) as bishop of our diocese, it is clear from reading the above that Bishop Domènec was not regarded in his homeland as merely an obscure bishop from some far-off part of the world, but as an illustrious missionary and propagator of the Catholic faith.

Our guide, *Mossèn* Josep, certainly seemed to agree. As we found when we met him in Barcelona on February 10, he had conducted extensive research on Bishop Domènec before our arrival. Considering his demanding positions as pastor of the cathedral parish, canon of the cathedral, and defender of the bond in the archdiocesan tribunal, we were extremely grateful for his attention to us and his interest in the purpose of our journey. We were practically treated as long-gone native sons ourselves, with *Mossèn* Josep giving us a gracious welcome, tours of the city and surrounding area, and even the opportunity to meet Archbishop Jaume Pujol Balcells, the current ordinary of the archdiocese.

As far as historical favors go, we were granted much more than just being able to see Bishop Domènec's tomb. We were also treated to scans from the parish register which note Domènec's baptism on December 27, 1816, a copy of the archdiocesan necrology recording extensive details about his last days and funeral rites, and a visit to nearby Reus (Bishop Domènec's birthplace). *Mossèn* also provided us with copies of a historical-archeological description of the Chapel of Our Lady of the Way, which transcribes the bishop's tomb inscription and makes some reference to his background. By the end of the trip, we felt that we had come to know our bishop very well.

For the benefit of the readers of this journal, I want to present some of the documents mentioned above in as compact a manner as possible. I will transcribe exactly the baptismal register, but will summarize the necrology, which consists of several pages. First, the baptismal register:

*Dit dia: En los fonts baptismals de la Yglesia Parroquial de Sant Pere de Reus Arquebisbat de Tarragona, per mi Joseph Font Pvre y Vicari de dita Yglesia, fou solemnement batejat, Miquel, Joan Joseph, nat avny á dos quarts de dos de la tarde, fill de Joseph Domenech Mestre Argenter de Reus y de Tecla Viciana del Masricar conjuges. Padrins Joan Bigayre Mestre Sastre y Estanquer de Reus y Josepha Bigayre y Masana de Vilafranca del Panades Bisbat de Barcelona. Avissats de doctrina y parentiu.*<sup>5</sup>

A translation of that baptismal record is as follows:

On the same day: in the baptismal font of the Parish Church of Saint Peter of Reus, Archdiocese of Tarragona, by me, Josep Font, Priest and Vicar of the said church, was solemnly

baptized Miquel Joan Josep,<sup>6</sup> born at half past two in the afternoon, son of Josep Domènec, master silversmith, of Reus, and Tecla Viciana<sup>7</sup> del Masricar, his wife. The godparents [were] Joan Bigayre, master tailor and tobacconist of Reus, and Josefa Bigayre i Masana from Vilafranca del Penedès, Diocese of Barcelona. Assured of religion and parentage.

The above, of course, is interesting in that it gives some details of Bishop Domènec's background. His father, as a master silversmith, while not a nobleman, was of high merchant class. Associates of the family, like Joan (John) Bigayre, were other similarly well-established merchants and tradesmen.

The necrology account of Bishop Domènec's last days, which I will summarize, may benefit from some prior explanation. After the erection of Allegheny as a diocese separate from Pittsburgh in 1875, Domènec was made bishop of the new diocese. That decision, however, proved financially disastrous for the Diocese of Pittsburgh, and the new bishop of that diocese, John Tuigg, agitated for a solution. Bishop Domènec traveled to Rome in 1877 to present the problem to the Holy See. The judgment came down that Allegheny and Pittsburgh would be reunited, and Bishop Domènec resigned, leaving Tuigg as both Bishop of Pittsburgh and Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Allegheny until its suppression in 1889. Domènec was therefore left a bishop without a diocese to govern. (It is revealing to note how the Spanish sources about his life tend to call him Bishop of Pittsburgh rather than Bishop of Allegheny.) While passing through Catalonia in 1877 on a preaching tour, he became ill with pneumonia and died in Tarragona on January 7, 1878.

*Mossèn* Josep, while walking through Tarragona with us, would readily point out various landmarks that he had discovered had some connection with the life of our former bishop. One such was the old hospital, near the ancient Roman walls of Tarragona, where we were informed Bishop Domènec had died. The necrology account begins by describing how it was there that "Don Miguel Domènec y Veciana, former Bishop of Pittsburgh" received the holy Viaticum from the hands of the Archbishop of Tarragona<sup>8</sup> who was accompanied in that task by the all the canons and clergy of the cathedral, the college seminary, and many other faithful. The bishop died shortly after noon on January 7.

Afterwards, the funeral obsequies for the departed missionary bishop began. His body was placed in a nearby church while the cathedral chapter prayed the Office of the Dead. This vigil lasted until the afternoon of the next day. The archbishop himself then once again participated, singing "the three responses in procession, as usual, for the repose of the late illustrious bishop, who was placed in pontifical dress on a handsome bier."

On the next day, a general notice was sent out by newspaper to the inhabitants of the city, so that they could attend Bishop Domènec's burial in the cloister of the cathedral. The necrology notes that his remains were "brought to his final resting place with the same pomp and circumstance as the Archbishops." Moreover,

## Discovering a Catalonian Perspective on Miquel Domènec i Veciana, Second Bishop of Pittsburgh and First Bishop of Allegheny (continued)

the archdiocese “spared no expense, so that the burial and funeral rites would be a worthy representation of a prince of the Church who died suddenly while he was waiting for papal documents to take possession of his new diocese.”<sup>9</sup> The translation of his body from the smaller church to the great Metropolitan Cathedral of Tarragona was accompanied by civil officials, two military marching bands, and a large crowd of onlookers.

After describing the funeral rites, the necrology goes on to praise Bishop Domenech himself. It describes how he had “died in the manner of one who spent his life doing good for all, working and suffering persecution, to spread the Kingdom of Christ in remote regions,” and that he had “won many souls for Jesus Christ, erected many temples and shrines dedicated to the worship of the true God, and had many Catholic schools set up, since winning over children makes the conversion of parents and adults easier.”

The necrology then provides a biographical sketch of the bishop, beginning with his birth on December 27, 1816 to José Domenech<sup>10</sup> and Tecla Veciana and his early education under the Franciscans (taking care to note his “unblemished piety” as a student). It goes on to recount how in 1832, at age 16, young Domenech joined the missionaries of the Congregation of St. Vincent de Paul in Madrid, and made his novitiate there. In 1834, it continues, he was sent for further education in the town of Guissona in Catalonia. Political circumstances, however, necessitated the transfer of that community to Paris, which is where Domenech spent three years devoted to the study of theology. The necrology makes no mention of it, but it was in Paris that Domenech met Pennsylvania native Father John Timon (later, the first Bishop of Buffalo), a fellow Vincentian, who invited him to join the American mission.

The necrology then describes how at the age of twenty-two and one-half, Domenech received ordination to the priesthood with a special dispensation from the Holy Father (since the normal minimum age for ordination was then 25).<sup>11</sup> He was then sent to the missions in Missouri, where the account notes that he “achieved conversion to the true faith of many people mired in the Protestant heresy or in unbelief, becoming ‘everything to everyone,’ and earning the respect of many of these dissenters or unbelievers.” In 1845, he was appointed superior of the Vincentians in Philadelphia, in which place the necrology notes that he built “a grand church” dedicated to St. Vincent de Paul, “whose construction, which lasted ten years, cost two million *reals*.”

The necrology attributes to these successes Bishop Domenech’s appointment as the Bishop of Pittsburgh and his episcopal consecration on December 8, 1860, “with the assistance of two archbishops and five bishops.”<sup>12</sup> The necrology finishes by recounting Bishop Domenech’s prior voyage to Rome to attend the 1862 canonization of the Martyrs of Japan and his attendance at the First Vatican Council (1869–1870), noting with some resignation that it had “done nothing but lightly outline the public life of that successor of the Apostles.”

A light outline it may have been, but it provided a fascinating angle on the life of Bishop Domenech — the perspective of his own people. He was seen as a zealous and effective missionary

and a prestigious native son. That was the impression that we, as seminarians of the diocese, took away from our five memorable days in Tarragona as well. We are grateful to *Mossèn* Josep Queraltó Serrano for his extraordinary hospitality and enthusiasm, and his generosity in sharing so much of the local history of Bishop Domenech with us.

While the various documents and places that we were shown helped us understand and appreciate the life of our second bishop with much greater profundity, the culmination of the visit was a Mass that Fathers Conway and Schlupe celebrated alongside *Mossèn* Josep on the morning of Saturday, February 14. They offered that Mass for the repose of Bishop Domenech’s soul, at an altar right next to his final resting place in the medieval cloister of the cathedral. More than anything else, that celebration strengthened and reconfirmed our diocesan connection to Michael Domenech, who, as we prayed, “has gone before us with the sign of faith and rests in the sleep of peace.”

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**Suggested reading** on the life of Bishop Domenech: (1) John Canova, “Bishop Michael Domenech and Bishop John Tuigg 1860–1889” in *Catholic Pittsburgh’s One Hundred Years 1843–1943* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1943), 38–52, (2) Sister Cecilia Murphy, R.S.M., *A Reevaluation of the Episcopacy of Michael Domenech, 1860–1877, Second Bishop of Pittsburgh and Only Bishop of Allegheny* (Ph.D. Diss., Saint Louis University, 1974), (3) “Part Two” [“New Bishop – New Problems,” “More About Domenech and Phelan,” and “A Suffering Bishop”] in John B. McDowell, *I Am Going to Tell You A Mystery: the Life of Bishop Richard Phelan, D.D., Fourth Bishop, Diocese of Pittsburgh* (Pittsburgh, 2002), 23–44, and (4) “The Right Reverend Michael Domenech, C.M., D.D. — 1860-1876, Second Bishop of Pittsburgh” in John B. McDowell, *A Brief History of the Pittsburgh Diocese* (Pittsburgh, 2005), 36–43.

### Endnotes

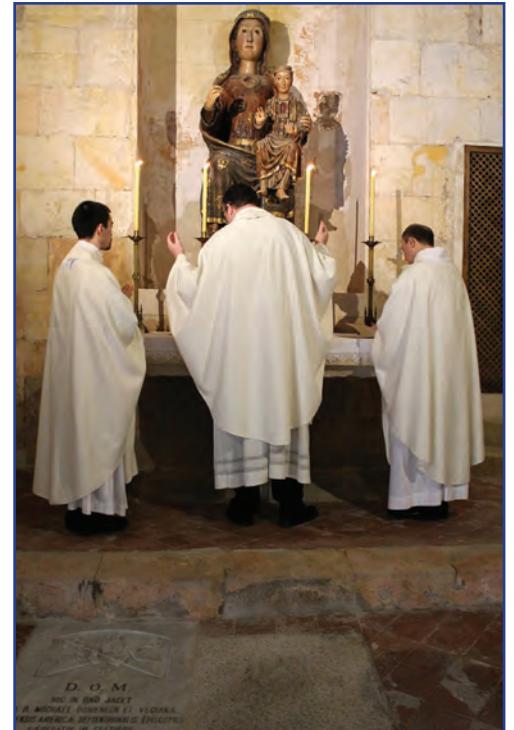
- 1 Catalonia comprises four Spanish provinces: Barcelona, Girona, Lleida, and Tarragona. It is bordered by France and Andorra to the north, and by the Mediterranean Sea on the east. Spanish and Catalan are official languages.
- 2 *Mossèn* is the Catalan-language term for “Father,” equivalent to our term “Monsignor,” except that it is used as a term of address for all priests.
- 3 D. O. M. is a standard Latin formula that is often seen in funerary inscriptions in Europe. It comes from an ancient Roman abbreviation, *I.O.M.*, for *Iovi Optimo Maximo* (“to Jupiter, greatest and best”), which was later Christianized to *Deo Optimo Maximo*, “to God, greatest and best.”
- 4 The Lazarite or Lazarist Fathers are a French branch of the Congregation of the Mission, also called the Vincentians. Bishop Domenech’s family left Spain in the early 1830s and came to France, where Domenech studied at the Vincentians’ College of Montolieu in Aude. After joining the order, he lived at the motherhouse of Saint-Lazare in Paris until 1838.
- 5 The text is from the baptismal register of the Priory Church of Saint Peter in Reus (*Església Prioral de Sant Pere de Reus*): book 20, folio 109, for the year 1816, on December 27. The original text is in a faded cursive script, and utilizes abbreviations. *Mn.* Josep Queraltó Serrano transcribed the text, which is in Catalan.

## Discovering a Catalonian Perspective on Miquel Domènec i Veciana, Second Bishop of Pittsburgh and First Bishop of Allegheny (continued)

- 6 As a native speaker of Catalan, Bishop Domeneç's full name at birth was *Miquel Joan Josep Domènec i Veciana*. As customary in Catalonian and Spanish-speaking cultures, a child takes both his father's and mother's surnames. In Spanish, which is also used in the area, the name would have been *Miguel Juan José Domènec y Veciana*. The surname *Domènec* appears to have been altered in the United States to "Domeneç," which is the spelling found in most diocesan sources in Pittsburgh. Moreover, as a missionary in the United States, Bishop Domeneç used the Anglicized spelling of "Michael" in preference to the Catalan *Miquel* or the Spanish *Miguel*.
- 7 While the baptismal register spells his mother's maiden name as *Viciana*, most other sources, such as the archdiocesan necrology record, use the standard spelling of *Veciana*.
- 8 The Archbishop of Tarragona at the time of Bishop Domeneç's death was Constantino Bonet y Zanuy (1808–1878), who died in October of the same year.
- 9 There seems to have been speculation that Bishop Domeneç, being between dioceses at the time, was about to receive a prestigious appointment in America.
- 10 Note that *José* is the Spanish equivalent for the Catalan name *Josep*.
- 11 According to the 1917 Code of Canon Law, the minimum age for ordination to the subdiaconate was 22 (*ante annum vicesimum primam completum*); to the diaconate, 23; and to the priesthood, 25 (Canon 975). The 1983 Code of Canon Law requires a minimum age of 26 for priests and 24 for transitional deacons (Canon 1031). Of course, Bishop Domeneç was ordained a priest before the promulgation of the 1917 Code. The situation before the codification of the body of legislation was very complex, with thousands of often contradictory norms in effect, but I provide the 1917 canon as a point of reference for what later became the standard age.
- 12 Domeneç was ordained bishop and installed by Archbishop Francis P. Kenrick of Baltimore in St. Paul Cathedral (Downtown), Pittsburgh. Appointed first bishop of Allegheny on January 11, 1876, Domeneç was installed in St. Peter Cathedral in the City of Allegheny on March 19, 1876.



**The high altar and choir stalls of the Cathedral of Tarragona.**



**Mass in the Chapel of Nuestra Señora de la Guía in the Cathedral of Tarragona, in front of the tomb of Bishop Domeneç. Father Michael Conway celebrant, Fathers Thomas Schlupe and Josep Queraltó Serrano, rector of the cathedral, concelebrating.** (Bishop Domeneç's tomb is visible at the bottom left.)

# Africa Comes to Western Pennsylvania: The White Fathers' Seminary in Venango County

John C. Bates, Esq.

## Early Farm History

Atop a hill overlooking the Allegheny River in Cranberry Township, Venango County, Pennsylvania — located between Oil City and the city of Franklin — is the historic River Ridge Farm. Here oil millionaire and U.S. Congressman Joseph C. Sibley (1850-1926) lived with this family. The history of the estate and its early residents is chronicled in Jack May's book, *Destiny's Gentleman*.<sup>1</sup> Here President Woodrow Wilson and William Jennings Bryan drafted the "Fourteen Points" that formed the basis for peace after World War I.

A combination of political reversals<sup>2</sup> and health issues affecting Sibley and his wife led Sibley to return from Washington, D.C., to their home in Franklin, Pennsylvania, where his wife died in July 1911. On November 15, 1911, Sibley purchased the River Ridge Farm, the heart of which was the original 760-acre Argeon Farm owned by Robert G. Lamberton. Sibley expanded the farm, adding tracts until the farm totaled 1,038 acres — 200 under cultivation and the rest woodland timber.

## The Mansion

Architect Louis Stevens (1880-1961) of Pittsburgh was engaged to design a mansion below the crest of the mountain that dominated the farm. Construction of the mansion on the site began in April 1913. At one point, some 250 men were at work, including 100 "foreigners" of whom 75 were Italian stonemasons. Sibley moved in just six months later — ahead of completion of construction, which occurred on November 29, 1913. The result was a stunning 33-room French Provincial mansion, constructed of stone quarried locally and used in the exterior. The two-story edifice had three wings and two four-story square towers. The floors of the mansion were of hard maple. The main living room measured 50x25 feet, and the library was 40x25 feet. There was a ballroom. Bathrooms were many: nine in one wing, six in another, four in another, four in the towers, and more in the main part of the mansion. The original

roof was of red tile. The front of the mansion offered a beautiful view of the Allegheny River, and the property fronted three miles of that river. Route 8 would later be constructed along that section of the river. In 1914, the mansion was augmented by the erection of a stone campanile 20 feet high, complete with chimes: the bells weighed 12,500 pounds and were first played on Memorial Day 1914, using a keyboard.

The mansion was the heart of a complex of some 22 buildings.<sup>3</sup> All told, the buildings contained 143 rooms. Most of the buildings, walls, six bridges, and gatehouses were constructed of stone. The buildings were supplied from two central water systems fed from springs, and had natural gas heating and two central sewage systems. The many out buildings included the Franklin Gate House, the original Lamberton brick farm house, the Featherstone Cottage, gardener's cottage, a blacksmith shop, automobile repair shop, greenhouses, and even a log cabin — in addition to picnic grounds, flower gardens and orchards. The farm also boasted of 66 operating oil wells and some eight miles of private roads, and 21 head of cattle.

The Pennsylvania Railroad, running between Oil City and Franklin, traversed the property along the Allegheny River's edge and the Prentice station was open there for the benefit of the farm complex and its visitors. The entranceway to the grounds from the train stop was a stone-framed gate surmounted by a 22-ton capstone.<sup>4</sup>

The farm was the "show place of the area" and became one of the first farms in the nation where scientific farming was practiced. It figured prominently in the development of purebred cattle and horses, and was nationally noted for its advances in seed testing, fertilizing, cropping, fruit raising, and poultry. Thousands of plants were tested here and when World War I war gardens were started, plants were widely distributed and land was donated to supply "patriotic food." Animal feeds, as well as plants, were developed on site.

## Enter the White Fathers

Sibley died on May 19, 1926, but his two daughters continued to live there and operated the farm until 1946. The 1,038-acre site — consisting of the mansion, the almost two dozen out buildings, the 66 operating oil wells, and the miles of private roads — was put up for sale in 1946. By 1947, a Catholic religious order of men — the White Fathers — emerged as the buyer. This missionary society — popularly known as "White Fathers" because of their white robes which resembled those of Algerian Arabs (a cassock or *gandoura*, and a mantle or *burnous*) — was founded in 1868 by the first archbishop of Algiers, Charles Martial Cardinal Allemand-Lavigerie (1825-1892),<sup>5</sup> as the Missionaries of Our Lady of Africa to undertake the conversion of Arabs and blacks in northern and central Africa.<sup>6</sup> While the garb was identical to that of the North African Arabs, each cleric wore a 15-decade rosary looped around the neck.



J.C. Sibley Residence River Ridge Farms near Franklin, Pa.

## Africa Comes to Western Pennsylvania: The White Fathers' Seminary in Venango County (continued)

Reflecting its French origin, the order spread to French-speaking Canada, establishing a headquarters in Montreal. By the late 1940s, the Order operated a novitiate in Montreal,<sup>7</sup> and desired to enter the United States and open a house of formation. A province in the United States was established in 1948. Simultaneously with the purchase of River Ridge, the White Fathers selectively opened a few small houses, from which members were to travel extensively throughout the country showing films on Africa and speaking at parishes, schools, colleges, organizations and various groups promoting knowledge of Africa and the White Fathers' work there. Invariably, the lecturers were returned missionaries, who could speak from their personal experiences.<sup>8</sup>

The society intended to use River Ridge for three purposes: a seminary (novitiate or scholasticate) for the training of young men for the priesthood who would undertake missionary service in Africa, a school for the training of lay brothers for African service, and a rest home for returned missionaries of the Order back from years of work in Africa.

However, a bitter family dispute between Sibley's one daughter (Josephine Sibley Heathcote) and her own daughter (Josephine Heathcote Haskell) with attendant litigation<sup>9</sup> delayed sale until 1948,<sup>10</sup> when the land and buildings<sup>11</sup> — minus the furnishings — were sold to the White Fathers of Africa Society of Washington, D.C., the legal name under which the Society had incorporated in the United States. The seller had entered into a sales agreement with the Provincial of the White Fathers and placed in escrow a deed to the White Fathers dated February 4, 1948. The White Fathers publicly announced completion of arrangements for the sale on February 16.<sup>12</sup> The granddaughter thereafter filed two successive lawsuits, in June 1948 and February 1949, each seeking an injunction to prevent the sale. The White Fathers were joined in the litigation, which was finally resolved in favor of the seller and the White Fathers by the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania on November 14, 1949.<sup>13</sup> The mansion's furnishings were sold at a three-day auction conducted by Sutton Place Galleries of New York in July 1948.

Taking occupancy, the Fathers immediately reconfigured much of the second floor of the mansion to create additional bedrooms for the priests, brothers, and seminarians. The original red tile roof was replaced with standard shingles. A chapel was placed in the left wing of the mansion in the former music room. The novitiate was removed from the outside world, so that the young men could make their final decision on whether or not to join the Order. Classes each year averaged about 12 young men.

On August 15, 1951 (the feast of the Assumption), Bishop John Mark Gannon of Erie — in whose diocese the new establishment of the White Fathers was located — dedicated the former mansion as "Our Lady of River Ridge Seminary." The announcement of the dedication noted that the seminary would serve as a school of philosophy for 22 clerics.<sup>14</sup>

When the White Fathers purchased the property, they anticipated that the acreage could be used to pay operational costs for the

seminary. The brothers and seminarians would continue to farm the property and raise livestock. The Fathers initially intended to open the farm to tours, where the public could see the work carried out there. The Fathers soon learned that the farmland, set up by Sibley for scientific and experimental purposes, was costly to operate.

The White Fathers began encouraging visitations to their new seminary. The September 18, 1952 issue of *The Pittsburgh Catholic* reported that Court Lambing of the Catholic Daughters of America would visit the seminary on September 21, by bus.<sup>15</sup> The White Fathers regularly placed ads in various Catholic newspapers, seeking vocations. The ads built on their French roots and African mission by captioning the ads "Join Christ's Foreign Legion." Inquiries were to the "Vocational Director" at the River Ridge Seminary.<sup>16</sup>

### The White Sisters

Obtaining missionary vocations sufficient for the conversion of Africans was not reserved only to the White Fathers. The Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Africa (the "White Sisters") had arrived in Canada from France in October 1903. Like their male counterparts, the members of the order adopted the white dress common among the Arabs as their habit, which resulted in their being known as the "White Sisters." Decades later, they spread to the United States.<sup>17</sup>

Resident at River Ridge, the Sisters operated a postulant program for young women attracted to the sisterhood. Diocesan newspapers carried the order's vocation ads<sup>18</sup> and routinely noted the entrance of local women to the order at River Ridge.<sup>19</sup> In the 1950s, young women who wanted to join the order would enter the Postulate located at River Ridge, and after six months would continue their training for another year and a half at the White Sisters' Novitiate in Belleville, Illinois. They would then pronounce their first vows and sail immediately for Africa.<sup>20</sup>

### Hammermill Buys Most of River Ridge

In less than 10 years, the White Fathers stopped farming and on February 16, 1957 sold 940 acres of land along the river and most of the out buildings to the Hammermill Paper Company of Erie<sup>21</sup> for \$175,000 for timber and a possible plant site. The White Fathers retained the mansion and 100 acres of land surrounding it, a mile of private road, 20 pumping oil wells, and 165 feet of frontage on the Allegheny River.

Strenuous local opposition from sportsmen to the Hammermill plans led to the company's abandonment of its project, and the land was put up for sale in 1973. In November of that year, 835 acres were sold to the newly formed River Ridge Development Company, which envisioned clearing of the timber, followed by camping and residential development.<sup>22</sup> By 1987, plans for conversion of the site to an 18-hole golf course and winter sports complex surfaced, but those plans came to naught.

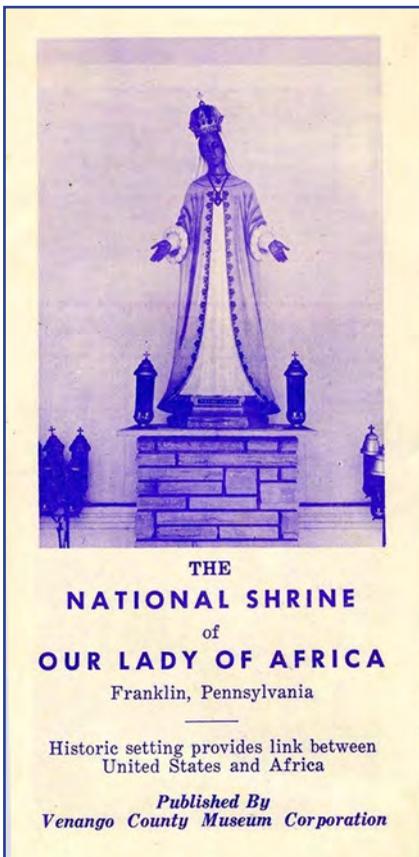
### The National Shrine of Our Lady of Africa

Freed of the cumbersome obligation to farm the land, and with the availability of the land sale proceeds, the White Fathers could now focus on developing a public profile using the remaining ten percent of the original acreage.

## Africa Comes to Western Pennsylvania: The White Fathers' Seminary in Venango County (continued)

The White Fathers decided to create a national shrine that would serve as the center for pilgrimages within the United States. Accordingly, they constructed an outdoor shrine atop the hill behind the mansion, complete with an almost life-size stone statue, dedicated to Our Lady of Africa. The shrine's grotto setting for the statue reflected a Moorish architectural style, intentionally evoking North Africa. The statue was a reproduction of the original.

The original "Our Lady of Africa" statue was a dark-hued bronze (now black with age) of the Immaculate Conception ordered by Archbishop Hyacinthe-Louis de Quélen of Paris in 1838 and given to the first bishop of Algiers by a French sodality. It was intended to be the "Protectress of the Mohammedans and the Negroes" with the express role of bringing peace between Muslims and Christians. The statue was later enshrined by Cardinal Lavigerie in the newly built neo-Byzantine Basilica of Our Lady of Africa (*Notre Dame d'Afrique*) in Algiers in 1872, and became known as "Our Lady of Africa." Pope Pius IX donated a golden diadem with precious stones with which the statue was crowned in 1876. Cardinal Lavigerie thereafter placed his newly founded White Fathers under the protection of Our Lady of Africa. Muslims venerated the statue as *Lala Meriem* (Blessed Virgin). The outstretched arms, smiling face, and inclined head mark her as a type of Madonna called "Our Lady of All Graces." The statue was covered with a richly embroidered Muslim robe in the *Tlemcen* (Algerian) style.<sup>23</sup> The feast of Our Lady of Africa was celebrated on April 30.



Postcard and all brochure pictures courtesy of John C. Bates.

On May 17, 1957, the White Fathers announced that they would dedicate a national shrine to "Our Lady of Africa" on Sunday, June 2, on the grounds of Our Lady of River Ridge Seminary. The dedication would take place on the eve of the 71<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the execution of the Martyrs of Uganda — Charles Lwanga and his companions, pages at the court of the King of Buganda, were converted to the Catholic faith by White Fathers and burned to death on June 3, 1886 for refusing to renounce their faith.<sup>24</sup>

On June 2, 1957, the White Fathers dedicated Our Lady of Africa Shrine with Auxiliary Bishop Edward P. McManaman of the Diocese of Erie officiating.<sup>25</sup> Government and civic officials from Sudan, Ghana, Nigeria, and Uganda attended the ceremony, with one hailing the dedication as "a tribute to the faith the United States has in Africa and its people."<sup>26</sup> Four months later, Bishop McManaman returned to dedicate the newly completed outdoor Stations of the Cross. The shrine and its stations thereafter attracted thousands of visitors, many arriving as part of formal pilgrimages. While the Society advertised the Shrine in Catholic newspapers and magazines as a place of pilgrimage,<sup>27</sup> individual parishes organized many of the pilgrimages.<sup>28</sup> Businesses in the vicinity of the shrine were quick to take advantage of the large number of visitors to the rural area. A descriptive 6-page fold-out tourist brochure was published by Venango County officials.<sup>29</sup> Reflecting the shrine's geographical distance from major cities, the inadequacy of local rural roads, and winter weather in the northern part of western Pennsylvania, while the shrine was open year-round, public pilgrimages to the shrine were limited to the period between April and November of each year. Mass and meals were included in tours, and days of recollection were also available. A prayer card and pendant medal were made available for distribution to the faithful.

Reflective of the size of organized pilgrimages was a report published in the *Pittsburgh Catholic* at the conclusion of the fifth season in November 1961: 1,700 pilgrims attended in 41 organized pilgrimages. Hundreds of others visited individually or in small groups. They came from many areas in the United States and from Canada. Specifically reported were pilgrimages from these communities in Western Pennsylvania: Butler, Pittsburgh, Latrobe, New Castle, Sharpsville, Pitcairn, McKeesport, Verona, Renfrew, Library, Ellwood City, Baden, Erie, Meadville, Tionesta, Warren, Marienville, Clarion, Oil City, and Franklin. Also noted were pilgrimages from Cleveland, Youngstown, and Mayville (NY).<sup>30</sup>

The Catholic Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania organized one of these pilgrimages on July 29, 1958, when almost 100 members of the Society undertook a pilgrimage to the National Shrine of Our Lady of Africa at River Ridge Seminary. Leaving St. Mary of Mercy Church in Downtown Pittsburgh at 8:15 A.M., they arrived for the 11:15 A.M. Mass at the seminary. The Society's members were the guests of the White Fathers and enjoyed a luncheon following Mass. Led by Father J. Donald Murphy, superior of the seminary, the group walked in procession to the shrine, which was a short distance from the seminary building. The members then returned to the seminary for a movie and a lecture on the order's missionary work in Africa. Benediction closed the day.<sup>31</sup>

The 1950s were a period of expansion for the order in the United States. A novitiate in the United States was opened at Alexandria Bay in upstate New York in 1952 and officially transferred to River Ridge in 1959. But a period of contraction was to occur in the 1960s as the impact of the Second Vatican Council and broader secular influences were felt in American Catholicism.

## Africa Comes to Western Pennsylvania: The White Fathers' Seminary in Venango County (continued)

### Closure of the Seminary

In 1967, a General Chapter of the White Fathers held in Rome re-evaluated the Order's educational program and concluded that future education should take place directly in centers of learning. By that year, for the first time, there were less than the minimum 10 novitiates to form a class at River Ridge. Student attitudes had also changed: young men no longer desired the cloistered life at River Ridge, preferring instead to be closer to universities with broader educational and spiritual opportunities. Until then, River Ridge had been affiliated with the University of Dayton (Ohio).

The decision to close the River Ridge seminary led to several sequential actions. In 1967, the White Fathers sold the chimneys in the Bell Tower to the Church of *Notre Dame D'Anjou* in Montreal, Canada.<sup>32</sup> The White Fathers officially closed their novitiate at River Ridge on August 14, 1968, and immediately put the property up for sale at the asking price of \$255,000. The novitiate was to be moved to Washington, D.C., for proximity to the Catholic University of America, and the White Fathers purchased two houses there to achieve that result. The seminary's closure also affected the White Sisters,<sup>33</sup> who resided in the Mary Glenn building; they relocated to Plainfield, New Jersey. But most notably affected were the Catholic faithful in the Mid-Atlantic and North East who had taken part in the increasingly popular pilgrimages to the Our Lady of Africa Shrine. This shrine was dismantled and removed prior to sale of the property. The shrine had continued to advertise for pilgrims in 1967, with its last ad in the Pittsburgh diocesan newspaper appearing in late Spring of that year.<sup>34</sup>

Three priests and one brother remained until February 15, 1969. Finally, on June 17, 1969, the White Fathers sold the remaining 100 acres and buildings to Life Ministries, Inc. for \$150,000.<sup>35</sup> The buyer was a Presbyterian-related organization formed in 1949 as a missionary movement to Christianize Japan. It is still the current owner of that portion of the original River Ridge Farm.

### The White Fathers in Later Years

By the time of closing of River Ridge, the White Fathers had expanded their American presence to Los Angeles, Chicago, Washington D.C., Metuchen (New Jersey) and Wayland (near Boston). Today, the Missionaries of Africa maintain a development office in Washington, D.C. (at 1624 – 21<sup>st</sup> Street, N.W.) and a house in St. Petersburg (Florida), but do not maintain a seminary within the United States.<sup>36</sup> The Province of the Americas is headquartered in Montreal. Worldwide, there are presently some 1,400 Missionaries of Africa, comprised of 37 nationalities, working in 217 communities in 44 countries. The historic work of the Society in Africa is preserved in the White Fathers photographic collection of some 20,000 photographs — used in such publications as the Order's *White Fathers Magazine* — that was transferred by the Society's Washington office in September 1998 to the Smithsonian where they now constitute the "White Fathers Photographic Collection, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution" located in Suitland, Maryland.<sup>37</sup>

### Endnotes

- 1 Jack Mays, *Destiny's Gentleman* (Seneca, PA: Seneca Printing, 1979). See also the two-volume work by James Scarborough Sibley, *The Sibley Family in America, 1629-1972: Genealogical Data*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (J.S. Sibley, 1982). See further: (1) Lucille Tabler, "The Kootenay Ram of Politics," *Western Pennsylvania History* 96:1 (Spring 2013), 49-61, and (2) Lewis Wesley Rathgeber, Jr., *Joseph C. Sibley, Pennsylvania's Political Maverick* (M.A. Thesis, University of Pittsburgh, 1951). Sibley served in the U. S. House of Representatives from Pennsylvania 1893-1895 and 1899-1907.
- 2 President McKinley was traveling in 1901 in Sibley's private railroad car when the President was assassinated in Buffalo.
- 3 A description of the farm complex appears in "Life Ministries Retreat Center (Joseph C. Sibley Estate, 'River Ridge Farm') in Lu Donnelly, H. Daniel Brumble IV, and Franklin Toker, *Buildings of Pennsylvania: Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2010), 527-528. See also Joseph C. Sibley (Margaret A. Mong, ed.), *Views of River Ridge Farm—Franklin, PA* (Oil City, PA, 1925 [reprint 2006]). A website for the River Ridge Farm appears at: <http://www.riverridgefarm.org/>.
- 4 Carolee Michener, "Album Highlights: Stone Worker Was Key to River Ridge Project," *The News Herald* (n.d.).
- 5 Lavigerie was a native of southwestern France who was successively ordained a priest of the Archdiocese of Paris at age 23, became bishop of Nancy in northeastern France at 37, appointed Archbishop of Algiers (Algeria was then a French colony) at 41, created Cardinal at 56, and lastly appointed Archbishop of the re-established historic see of Carthage (Tunisia was also a French colony) at 59. He died at age 67.
- 6 The "Missionaries of Africa" is a division of the Society of Missionaries of Africa, Inc.; incorporation information appears in a later footnote. As to the history of Cardinal Lavigerie and his Society, see François Renault (John O'Donohue, trans.), *Cardinal Lavigerie: Churchman, Prophet and Missionary* (London: Athlone Press, 1994); William Burridge, *Destiny Africa: Cardinal Lavigerie and the Making of the White Fathers* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1966); Jose de Arteche (Mairin Mitchell, trans.), *The Cardinal of Africa, Charles Lavigerie: Founder of the White Fathers* (London: Catholic Book Club, 1964); Glenn D. Kittler, *The White Fathers* (New York: Harper, 1957); Donald Attwater, *The White Fathers in Africa: The Society of Missionaries of Africa* (London: Catholic Truth Society, 1938).
- 7 A seminary was also opened in Vanier, Ottawa, in 1938; it closed in the late 1960s and was expropriated by the city of Vanier in 1974. "Community to Take Over Monastery," *The Citizen, Ottawa* (May 5, 1978), 4.
- 8 See, for example, the public relations and promotional work of River Ridge Seminary's bursar, Rev. Charles E. Lebel, in "Former Resident in New Post at White Fathers' Seminary," *The Lewiston Daily Sun* (December 9, 1957), 12.
- 9 The first lawsuit was filed on June 2, 1948 and Judge Lee A. McCracken of the Venango County Court of Common Pleas ruled in favor of the defendant seller and White Fathers on June 22, 1948. The ruling was appealed to the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, which reversed and returned the case to the Venango County Court of Common Pleas for further proceedings. *Haskell v Heathcote*, 360 Pa. 578, 62 A.2d 852 (1948). The escrowed deed to the property was thereafter recorded. On February 11, 1949, the granddaughter filed a second action in the same court, seeking reconveyance of the property by the White Fathers. On May 2, 1949, Judge McCracken again ruled in favor of the defendants. On May 18, the plaintiff filed an appeal of that ruling with the Pennsylvania Supreme Court. On November 14, 1949, the Supreme Court affirmed the county judge's ruling — finally concluding almost one and one-half years of litigation and permitting the White Fathers to proceed with their original plans for River Ridge. *Haskell v. Heathcote*, 363 Pa. 184 (1949).
- 10 Deed to Rev. James Alfred Richards, Provincial, dated Feb. 4, 1948 and filed of record on Sept. 1, 1948 in the Office of the Venango County Recorder of Deeds.
- 11 "The River Ridge Farm," *The Oil City Derrick* (Feb. 16, 1948), 6; "Missionary Order of White Fathers Buys River Ridge," *The Oil City Derrick* (Feb. 18, 1948), 1-2.

## Africa Comes to Western Pennsylvania: The White Fathers' Seminary in Venango County (continued)

- 12 "White Fathers Buy Estate in Diocese of Erie," *The Pittsburgh Catholic* (February 26, 1948), 2.
- 13 *Haskell v. Heathcote*, 363 Pa. 184 (1949), Opinion by Justice Patterson (November 14, 1949).
- 14 "Blesses Seminary of White Fathers," *The Pittsburgh Catholic* (August 23, 1951), 8. The White Fathers opened a novitiate on September 7, 1952 in Alexandria Bay in the Thousand Islands in upstate New York at the American-Canadian border. William G. Connare, "Society for the Propagation of the Faith," *The Pittsburgh Catholic* (August 21, 1952), 5. The White Fathers purchased the long-closed Stony Wold Sanitarium in the Adirondack Mountains (at Onchiota on Lake Kushaqua [the Thousand Islands] in the hamlet of Franklin, Franklin County, near Saranac Lake) in 1958 and converted it to St. Joseph Seminary, which opened in 1959 with Bishop Fulton J. Sheen giving the sermon. The White Fathers opened St. Joseph Seminary as a major seminary to serve the entire U.S. in September 1959 with 156 students. "Ex-TB Sanatorium to be Seminary," *Pittsburgh Catholic* (January 29, 1959), 1; "Greets Bishop," *The Lewiston Daily Sun* (August 26, 1959), 14. "Camp Lavigerie" operated there in the summers. The seminary closed in 1972, and most of the 1,400 acres (except the chapel and two cottages) was acquired by the State of New York in 1974 as a forest preserve. St. Joseph Seminary moved to the University of Dayton (Ohio) in 1966, re-opening in four residences near the campus. "White Fathers Move Seminary," *Pittsburgh Catholic* (October 6, 1966), 5.
- 15 "Catholic Daughters of America," *The Pittsburgh Catholic* (September 18, 1952), 8.
- 16 See, for example, the ads "Join Christ's Foreign Legion," *Pittsburgh Catholic* (April 19, 1956), 11, and (April 26, 1956), 10. See also "Start Your Safari for Souls in Africa," *Pittsburgh Catholic* (April 3, 1958), 8 and (April 17, 1958), 8. A 1960 ad, "Wanted 1,000 Priests and Brothers to Bring Christ to Africa," *Pittsburgh Catholic* (April 28, 1960), 10, was the first to direct inquiries to the White Fathers in Washington, D.C. Representative of articles noting locals who entered the order at River Ridge is "Pittsburgh Man in White Fathers," *The Pittsburgh Press* (August 31, 1963), 4 [James Miller of Lawrenceville took vows as a Brother after two years of study at River Ridge].
- 17 As to the order's history, see Sister Mary John Rigby, *Aflame for Africa: The White Sisters in Africa* (Liverpool: Birchley Hall Press, 1953). Between 1903 and 2003, 464 Canadians and 93 Americans entered the White Sisters. The order's numbers peaked in 1966 at 2,163 members.
- 18 "Have YOU heard the CALL to be a Missionary in Africa: The White Sisters," *Pittsburgh Catholic* (April 3 1958), 8.
- 19 See, for example, "Pittsburgh Girl Enters African Mission Novitiate," *Pittsburgh Catholic* (November 3, 1960), 2.
- 20 *White Sisters: Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Africa* (brochure, ca. 1950s). At this time, the order numbered 1,970 Sisters including 1,579 African Sisters. With 150 missions and 17 novitiates in Africa, the order operated 54 hospitals, 51 maternity hospitals, 110 dispensaries, and 5 leper settlements. They also published the *White Sisters Magazine*, with a subscription price of \$1 per year. Ibid.
- 21 Hammermill Paper Company, located on the shore of Lake Erie, was founded by the Behrend family in 1898 as the first paper mill in the city of Erie. Hammermill created the first xerographic copier papers and was the first to market laser paper. The company was purchased by International Paper Company in 1987.
- 22 "835 Acres Sold at River Ridge," *The Derrick* (November 5, 1973), 13.
- 23 See "Our Lady of Africa, or *Madame l'Afrique*, Our Lady of Algiers" appearing at the website: <http://www.interfaithmary.net/pages/Algiers.htm>. Of significance to our world today is the inscription on the wall of the basilica's apse: *Notre Dame d'Afrique priez pour nous et pour les Musulmans* ("Our Lady, pray for us and for the Muslims").
- 24 "Franklin, Pa.," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* (May 17, 1957), 2. See also "Franklin, Pa.," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* (June 1, 1957), 2; "Dedication Set for Shrine of Our Lady of Africa," *Beaver Valley Times* (May 17, 1957), 1; "Our Lady of Africa Dedication June 7 [sic]," *The Afro-American* (May 25, 1957), 17, and *Washington Afro-American* (May 21, 1957), 17. The African martyrs were canonized in 1964.
- 25 "Lady of Africa Shrine Dedication June 2," *Pittsburgh Catholic* (May 23, 1957), 6; "Our Lady of Africa Shrine," *Pittsburgh Catholic* (June 13, 1957), 6.
- 26 Robert P. Balfour, chief transport officer of Ghana, as quoted in "African Leader Hails Shrine in Franklin," *Pittsburgh Catholic* (June 6, 1957), 6; see also "Our Lady of Africa Shrine," *Pittsburgh Catholic* (June 13, 1957), 6.
- 27 See, for example: "Plan a ... Pilgrimage to the National Shrine of Our Lady of Africa," *Pittsburgh Catholic* (July 1, 1965), 12; "Plan A Pilgrimage," *Pittsburgh Catholic* (April 28, 1966), 12; "Plan A Pilgrimage," *Pittsburgh Catholic* (April 13, 1967), 10.
- 28 For example, see "Pilgrimage Planned to Franklin, Pa.," *Pittsburgh Catholic* (September 29, 1960), 8 [Resurrection Guild and Christian Mothers, Resurrection Parish, Pittsburgh]; "Pilgrimage to Visit Shrine at Franklin," *Pittsburgh Catholic* (August 16, 1962), 12 [Nativity Parish, Broughton]; "St. Stephen Sodality Schedules Pilgrimage," *Pittsburgh Catholic* (October 21, 1961), 12 [St. Stephen, Hazelwood]; "Group Visits Franklin," *Pittsburgh Catholic* (July 24, 1958), 8 [Christian Mothers of Corpus Christi Parish, Pittsburgh]; "Mothers' Group Visits Franklin," *Pittsburgh Catholic* (September 4, 1958), 8 [Christian Mothers of St. Mark Parish, McKees Rocks]; "St. Joseph, Sharpsburg," *Pittsburgh Catholic* (June 23, 1960), 8 [Christian Mothers of St. Joseph Parish, Sharpsburg]; "Pilgrimage to Franklin," *Pittsburgh Catholic* (November 7, 1957), 11 [Catholic Business and Professional Women's Association].
- 29 *The National Shrine of Our Lady of Africa* (ca. 1950s).
- 30 "Franklin Shrine Ends Season," *Pittsburgh Catholic* (November 23, 1961), 7.
- 31 "Historical Tour July 20," *Pittsburgh Catholic* (July 3, 1958), 3; "100 Make Pilgrimage to Franklin," *Pittsburgh Catholic* (July 31, 1958), 3.
- 32 Influenced by Vatican II, the parish's modernist church with campanile was erected 1961-1964. The church remains open despite a recent regrouping with three other area churches in Montreal. See both (1) <http://www.imtl.org/montreal/image.php?id=7420> and (2) <http://www.diocesemontreal.org/en/the-church-in-montreal/our-churches/our-parishes/paroisse/notre-dame-danjou.html>.
- 33 The Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Africa, popularly known as the White Sisters, were founded in 1869. In 1893, Rome gave formal recognition. Today, they number about 900, with half in Europe and a quarter in Africa. There are individual Sisters in the United States.
- 34 "Plan a Pilgrimage to the National Shrine of Our Lady of Africa," *Pittsburgh Catholic* (April 13, 1967), 10.
- 35 White Fathers Novitiate Closed at River Ridge; To Sell Mansion," *The Oil City Derrick* (August 14, 1968); Martha Arkwright, "Missionary Organization Buys River Ridge," *The Derrick* (June 18, 1969), 1.
- 36 The Society of Missionaries of Africa, Inc. was successively incorporated in Maryland in 1944, in the District of Columbia in 1956, and in Florida and California in 1985. The Society's federal trademark logo — a cross over a map of Africa superimposed on an outline of the globe — was registered in 1984.
- 37 See the Collection's description at the Smithsonian website: <http://sirirs-archives.si.edu/ipac20/ipac.jsp?uri=full=3100001-1256470!0>.

# The See of Allegheny

John C. Bates, Esq.

The death of Michael Cardinal Egan, retired archbishop of New York, on March 5, 2015, highlighted the fact that he was one of the few prelates to have held the **titular see of Allegheny**. Blessed Pope Pius IX created the Diocese of Allegheny (in Latin, *Dioecesis Alleghensis*) on January 11, 1876 by the papal bull *Quod Venerabiles Fratres* — splitting the see of Pittsburgh (*Dioecesis Pittsburgensis*) in two.<sup>1</sup>

The Diocese of Allegheny comprised 6,530 sq. miles in eight and one-quarter counties: the City of Allegheny [today, the North Side of the City of Pittsburgh] and the counties of Allegheny (north of the Allegheny and Ohio Rivers), Butler, Armstrong, Indiana, Cambria, Blair, Huntingdon, Bedford, and Westmoreland. St. Peter Church served as the cathedral of the new diocese.

The Diocese of Pittsburgh retained 4,784 sq. miles in six and three-quarters counties: the City of Pittsburgh [which then included the central district and the South Side, but not the future North Side] and the counties of Allegheny (south of the Allegheny and Ohio Rivers), Washington, Greene, Beaver, Lawrence, Fayette, and Somerset.

Platted on a map, the boundaries of the two dioceses gave the impression of ecclesiastical gerrymandering.<sup>2</sup>

Statistics<sup>3</sup> for the two dioceses were as follows:

1877	Pittsburgh	Allegheny
Priests	65	95
Churches	64	52
Colleges	0	2
Schools	3	2
Hospitals	2	0
Catholic population	approx. even split of estimated total population of 135,000-200,000	

Michael Domenec, C.M., a native of the Catalonian region in Spain, served as Allegheny's first and only bishop (1876–1877). Subsequent to Domenec's resignation as ordinary on July 29, 1877, the Diocese of Allegheny was administratively reunited to the Diocese of Pittsburgh. Pittsburgh Bishop John Tuigg (1876–1889) served as administrator of the vacant see of Allegheny until the latter was canonically suppressed on July 1, 1889 by order of Pope Leo XIII and the territory reunited to Pittsburgh.

Such suppressed non-functioning dioceses were termed "titular" sees and over time were assigned to auxiliary bishops and others. This practice preserved the memory of earlier sees.

Only five prelates<sup>4</sup> have been named to the titular see of Allegheny:

- **George Leo Leech** (Oct. 19, 1971–March 12, 1985), following his resignation of the see of Harrisburg in 1971. He held the titular see until his death at age 94.
- **Edward Michael Egan** (April 1, 1985–November 5, 1988), while serving as auxiliary bishop of New York. He subsequently

served as bishop of Bridgeport (1988–2000) and archbishop of New York (2000–2009) and was created Cardinal in 2001.

- **Patrick Joseph McGrath** (December 6, 1988–June 30, 1988), while serving as auxiliary bishop of San Francisco. He subsequently served as coadjutor bishop of San Jose (1998–1999) and bishop of San Jose (1999–to date).
- **Robert Joseph McManus** (December 1, 1988–March 9, 2004), while serving as auxiliary bishop of Providence. He currently serves as bishop of Worcester (2004–to date).
- **John Walter Flesey** (May 21, 2004–to date), who is serving as auxiliary bishop of Newark (2004–to date).

## Endnotes

- 1 A copy of the bull appears in Donald C. Shearer, *Pontificia Americana: A Documentary History of the Catholic Church in the United States (1784-1884)* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University Press, 1933), 372-373.
- 2 Gerrymandering is the practice of establishing electoral district boundary lines to establish a political advantage. Some writers have questioned the motivations that led to the selection of counties comprising the new Diocese of Allegheny, which created administrative and financial issues for both sees.
- 3 Sister Cecilia Murphy, R.S.M., *A Reevaluation of the Episcopacy of Michael Domenec, 1860-1877, Second Bishop of Pittsburgh and Only Bishop of Allegheny* (Ph.D. Diss., Saint Louis University, 1974), 161-262, 274.
- 4 Additional information on these prelates appears at the website: [www.Catholic-Hierarchy.org](http://www.Catholic-Hierarchy.org).



**St. Peter's Cathedral, Ohio Street and Sherman Avenue, City of Allegheny**

Courtesy of John C. Bates.

# The Pittsburgh Mass Mob

John C. Bates, Esq.

The years following World War II witnessed a gradual, then massive, migration of Catholics from their traditional ethnic neighborhoods in the large cities in the northeastern United States to the developing suburbs. Left behind were magnificent churches and attendant parish facilities that had been built from the sacrificial offerings of immigrants. In time, the immigrants' children and grandchildren who populated the suburbs became increasingly distanced from the urban centers with their old neighborhoods in the northeastern quadrant termed the "Rust Belt." By the 1990s, canonical suppression of many of these once-vibrant urban parishes was underway in a number of cities, with the vacant churches sold or demolished. Other churches survived, but often precariously.

The third millennium has witnessed the utilization of social media such as Facebook and Twitter to produce "flash mobs" (events at which people would gather in a particular location, often for a seemingly spontaneous musical performance for onlookers) and "cash mobs" (flash mobs who spend money as a group at small, local businesses). Inspired by the success of these practices, Christopher Byrd of Buffalo decided to harness the idea to create a "Mass Mob" that would inspire suburban Catholics to attend Mass at selected inner-city churches and to become acquainted with the architectural heritage and history of churches that faced financial difficulties.

The effort began with the creation of a Facebook page for "Buffalo Mass Mob" in mid-April 2013.<sup>1</sup> The first Mass Mob took place at St. Adalbert Basilica on November 2, 2013. The basilica was a logical choice since it had organized, just a few years earlier, a "Facebook Mass" encouraging its Facebook friends to come to a Sunday morning Mass. Electronic communication and social media — including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Meetup, and websites — would play a central role in spreading word about the Mass Mob event. Several hundred people attended.<sup>2</sup> The Mass Mob concept was off and running in true grassroots fashion.

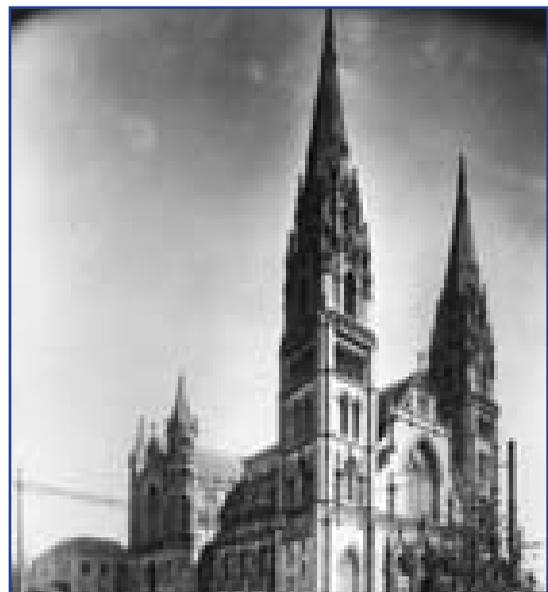
A February 2014 article by the Catholic News Agency<sup>3</sup> spread the word to Catholics across the country. Mass Mobs popped up in Cleveland and Detroit. The Associated Press quickly carried the Buffalo story to the secular world,<sup>4</sup> reaching many Catholics both practicing and non-practicing. *The New York Times* subsequently ran an article with a Cleveland dateline, which noted that a Byzantine Catholic church there had been mobbed.<sup>5</sup> Variations of the original approach soon developed. Some were organic, led by laity. Others were clerical in character. The Detroit archdiocese fully participates; indeed Archbishop Allen Vigneron of Detroit has recorded a video celebrating Mass mobs. The Knights of Columbus were involved in South Bend's effort. Organizers ranged from priests to seminarians, deacons, and youth ministers. Even an ecumenical approach was tried. Popular, on-line, votes for the churches to be mobbed became the norm. Cleveland has mobbed on weekdays. Mobbings have taken place at churches that had been closed, and even sold to private entities. Some mob Masses were said by bishops. The movement spread to greater Cincinnati (Covington), Saint Louis, Memphis, and even Davenport with plans to mob rural

churches. In some cities such as Philadelphia and New Orleans, initial efforts ended quickly.<sup>6</sup> Yet, the phenomenon shows no signs of petering out; indeed *The New York Times*, in a January 2015 article, noted increased mobbing as the Archdiocese of New York prepared to close or merge 112 parishes.<sup>7</sup>

The organizers and the participants in all of these cities have focused on four simple objectives: select an historic Catholic church, attend Mass there, take a tour to learn about the church's architecture and history, and provide needed financial support — while meeting other Catholics both at the Mass and at a subsequent social gathering at the church. As a tool of evangelization, the mobbings are drawing the participation of Catholics who had left the Church.

The Pittsburgh Mass Mob was organized in June 2014 after a local Catholic woman, Elizabeth Davis, noted the success that other cities with Mass Mob movements were experiencing.<sup>8</sup> Reflecting Pittsburgh's historic working class moniker — the Steel City — the local group adopted the phrase "Steeled in Faith" to identify the Pittsburgh Mass Mob.

With more than 200 members, these local Catholics have welcomed suggestions as to the selection of churches for monthly worship. The Pittsburgh group sought to highlight the beautiful historical churches in and around the city of Pittsburgh, and to provide financial support for these structures in older neighborhoods where population demographics have often witnessed significant population changes. These gatherings provide an opportunity for suburbanites to visit churches where their parents or grandparents were baptized or married. Experiencing the historic roots of the Catholic community in Pittsburgh also affords an opportunity to meet other like-minded Catholics.



**St. Paul's Cathedral, 1906**

Courtesy of John C. Bates.

## The Pittsburgh Mass Mob (continued)

The Pittsburgh Mass Mob first met for Mass in July 2014 at Sacred Heart Church in Pittsburgh's Shadyside section. As of the date of this writing, the monthly mobbings have occurred (or are planned) as follows:

No.	Date	Church	Location
I	July 27, 2014	Sacred Heart Church	Shadyside
II	August 24, 2014	St. Paul Cathedral	Oakland
III	October 26, 2014	St. James Church	Wilksburg
IV	November 16, 2014	St. Stephen Church	Hazelwood
V	December 28, 2014	Immaculate Heart of Mary Church	Polish Hill
VI	January 4, 2015	Church of the Epiphany	Lower Hill District
VII	February 22, 2015	St. Mary Church	Sharpsburg
VIII	March 21, 2015	St. Anthony Chapel	Troy Hill
IX	April 19, 2015	St. Stanislaus Kostka Church	Strip District
X	May 24, 2015	St. Mary of the Mount Church	Mt. Washington
XI	June 21, 2015	Good Shepherd Church	Braddock
XII	July 19, 2015	St. Mary, Help of Christians Church	McKees Rocks
XIII	August 16, 2015	St. Augustine Church	Lawrenceville
XIV	September 20, 2015	Saint Agnes Center of Carlow University	Oakland
XV	October 4, 2015	St. Therese of Lisieux Church	Munhall
XVI	November 1, 2015	All Saints Church	Etna

These mobbings include a post-Mass tour of the church typically given by the parish's pastor or a parish docent, followed by refreshments at a concluding social. The architectural styles and histories are many and varied, but the following brief comments will illustrate the rich histories of the churches that have comprised the Pittsburgh Mass Mob's local program:

**Sacred Heart Church** in Shadyside is that parish's second church, as designed by architect Carlton Strong and completed by architect Alfred Reid, Sr. It was constructed over several decades with completion of the church's central tower in 1954. The church was designated a Historic Landmark in 1970.

**St. Paul Cathedral** is the third cathedral church of the diocese of Pittsburgh. Completed in 1906, it was designed in the decorated Gothic style by the architectural firm of James J. Egan and Charles H. Prindeville of Chicago. The cathedral was designated a Historic Landmark in 1975.<sup>9</sup>

**St. James Church** was designed by William P. Hutchins and completed in 1930. The 1,200 seat Gothic structure contains a 35-foot altar screen and Italian mosaic altar. Hand-carved oak statues and green marble columns from Genoa complement the sanctuary design. The parish celebrated its 145<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2014. Msgr. Andrew A. Lambing, the legendary historian of the Pittsburgh diocese, served as pastor of this parish from 1885 until his death in 1918.

**St. Stephen of Hungary Church** was designed by the prolific architect Frederick Sauer and dedicated on December 20, 1925. A canopied high altar and magnificent stained glass windows highlight the sanctuary.

**Immaculate Heart of Mary** is an historic Polish parish, located in the heart of the Polish Hill neighborhood. Its Romanesque design by architect William P. Ginther was modeled on St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. The church, designated a Historic Landmark in 1970, was magnificently decorated for the Mass Mob gathering during the Christmas season.

The **Church of the Epiphany** was designed by architect Edward Stotz as a Romanesque church with Byzantine details. Its stained glass windows were the work of George Sotter. Interior design was the work of the famed Catholic architect John T. Comès. The church served as the pro-cathedral of the diocese in the three-year period (1903-1906) between closing of the second St. Paul Cathedral on Fifth Avenue (Downtown) and the opening of the third St. Paul Cathedral in Oakland. The church was designated a Historic Landmark in 1998. The parish's early pastor, Fr. Lawrence O'Connell, served for a record 54 years (1905-1959).

**St. Mary's** in Sharpsburg was dedicated on October 14, 1917 for its German ethnic congregation. It survived the St. Patrick's Day Flood of 1936, when water reached the top of the pews. The twin-towered church contains a magnificent *baldachino* over the high altar. Pope St. John Paul II beatified one of the church's early pastors, Fr. Francis Seelos, C.Ss.R., in 2002. The church is now part of the merged St. Juan Diego parish.

**St. Anthony Chapel** was built in 1880 (with an addition in 1892) by Fr. Suitbert Mollinger, pastor of nearby Most Holy Name of Jesus Church. This Belgian-born priest amassed the second largest collection of relics in the world, which is housed in this spectacularly decorated but intimately small chapel. The building was restored in the 1970s, with the late Society Board Member Mary Wohleber playing a lead role in that endeavor. The chapel was designated a Historic Landmark in 1968 and received City of Pittsburgh Historic Designation in 1977.

## The Pittsburgh Mass Mob (continued)

**St. Stanislaus Kostka Church** dominates the Strip District. Designed by architect Frederick Sauer and opened in 1891 as the first Polish parish in the diocese of Pittsburgh, the church contains beautiful stained glass windows manufactured at the Royal Bavarian Institute. Designated a Historic Landmark in 1970, the church was added to the National Register of Historic Places two years later in 1972. Pope St. John Paul II visited this church when he was still Karol Cardinal Wojtyła.<sup>10</sup>

**St. Mary of the Mount Church**, a brick Gothic structure designed by architect Frederick Sauer, was opened for service in 1896. The church, which occupies a commanding presence atop Mt. Washington, was designated a Historic Landmark in 1998.

**Good Shepherd Church** in Braddock is the former St. Michael the Archangel (Lithuanian) Church — a brick building in the Romanesque style, modest and unobtrusive, designed by Carlton Strong. While the current building was opened in 1930, its predecessor was the only safe meeting place for strikers during the Great Steel Strike of 1919 — and a Pennsylvania State Historic Marker notes the significance of the site. The current parish was created in 1985 as a merger of seven parishes.<sup>11</sup>

A cathedral-size structure was built in McKees Rocks as **St. Mary Help of Christians Church** for a German parish established in 1855. William Ginther was commissioned to design the stone church with twin Gothic steeples and stained glass windows from Munich. In 1993, this parish was merged with six others to form St. John of God Parish.<sup>12</sup>

Our Lady of the Angels parish was established in 1993 as a merger of four parishes. The sole surviving church in that merger is **St. Augustine Church**, which was built for the original German ethnic parish. Famed architect John T. Comès designed this brick German Romanesque structure, which was dedicated in 1901. The current parish and its predecessor have been served continuously by Franciscan Capuchin friars from the adjacent St. Augustine Monastery.<sup>13</sup>

**St. Agnes Church**, dedicated in 1917, is a Lombardic Romanesque basilica built in brick with stone trim and two belfries. The façade is dominated by a monumental arch that frames a rose window behind a Calvary group. Closed as a parish church in 1993, it is now the St. Agnes Center of Carlow University. The church was designated a Historic Landmark in 2000 and received a Pennsylvania State Historical Marker for architect John T. Comès in 2013.<sup>14</sup>

**St. Therese of Lisieux Church** opened in 1958. It contains a chapel dedicated to the “Little Flower of Jesus.” Its stained glass windows depict scenes from both Old and New Testaments, as well as Pittsburgh. Mass Mob participants were offered the opportunity to partake in an outdoor procession, which was the culmination of a nine-day novena in honor of the church’s patronal saint.<sup>15</sup>

**All Saints Church** is a brick and stone basilica-style church designed by architect Comès, with a large front porch of medieval design. The church, dedicated in 1915, was closed for six months to repair flooding damage from tropical storm Ivan in 2004. It was designated a Historic Landmark in 1997.

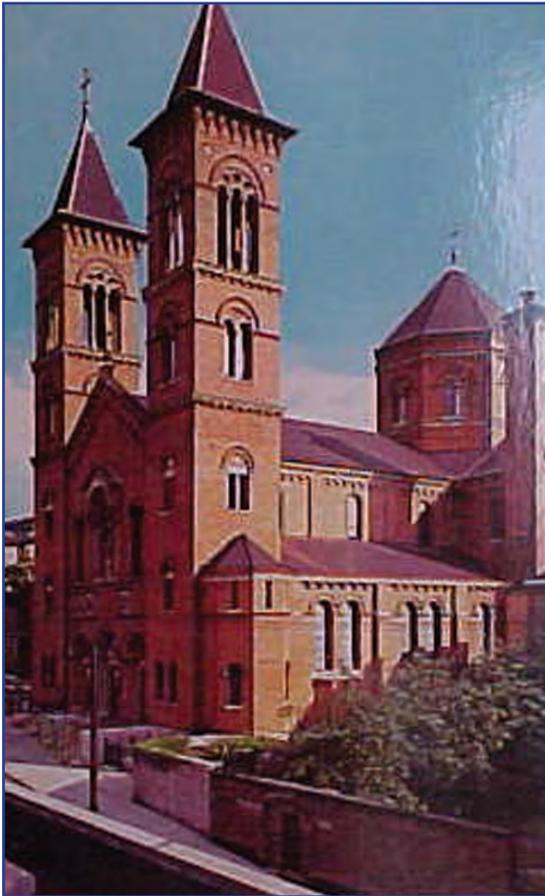
The Pittsburgh Mass Mob maintains a website, complete with photographs and historical details of these churches, at <http://www.meetup.com/Pittsburgh-Mass-Mob/>. In addition, the group has created a YouTube presence with its “Pittsburgh Mass Mob Church Tours” at [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCFnz7wE6wW-mwrQ-uNYz\\_BA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCFnz7wE6wW-mwrQ-uNYz_BA). The group’s savvy use of modern media is reaching Catholics who would not otherwise be aware of the Mass Mob community. Like other Mass Mob communities, the Pittsburgh group’s evangelization is bringing back people to Mass and the sacramental life of the Church.<sup>16</sup>

### Endnotes

- 1 The Buffalo Mass Mob’s website appears at <https://www.facebook.com/BuffaloMassMob>.
- 2 The Buffalo history is recounted in “The First Buffalo Mass Mob” (Oct. 24, 2013), appearing at <http://buffalorising.com/2013/10/the-first-buffalo-mass-mob/>. See also T.J. Pignataro, “Buffalo’s ‘Mass Mobs’ Filling Pews Here and Elsewhere,” *Buffalo News* (Nov. 1, 2014), appearing at <http://www.buffalonews.com/city-region/buffalo/buffalos-mass-mobs-filling-pews-here-and-elsewhere-20141101>.
- 3 “Catholic ‘Mass Mobs’ Boost Attendance at Buffalo Parishes” (Feb. 6, 2014), appearing at <http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/catholic-mass-mobs-boost-attendance-at-buffalo-parishes/>.
- 4 Carolyn Thompson, “Mass Mobs Fill Pews, Lift Prayers at NY Churches” (Feb. 1, 2014), appearing at the website: <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/mass-mobs-fill-pews-lift-prayers-ny-churches>. The AP story carries a Buffalo byline.
- 5 Michael Paulson, “At Forlorn Urban Churches, Mass Gets Crowded in a Flash,” *The New York Times* (Oct. 12, 2014), A1; also appearing at the newspaper’s website: <http://www.nytimes.com>. The Huffington Post and NPR also reported the growing trend in urban Catholicism; see (1) Carol Kuruvilla, “‘Mass Mobs’ Are Filling the Pews at Detroit’s Catholic Churches,” *Huffington Post* (Oct. 12, 2014), appearing at the website <http://www.huffingtonpost.com> and (2) Sarah Hulett, “Mass Mobs Bring Thousands to Detroit Church Services,” NPR (Oct. 12, 2014), appearing at the website <http://www.npr.org>.
- 6 A comprehensive national overview appears at the blog: <http://clevelandmassmob.blogspot.com/2015/02/a-brief-history-and-meddlesome-kids.html>.
- 7 Vivian Lee, “‘Mass Mob’ Fills a Church With Hopes of Saving It,” *The New York Times* (Jan. 26, 2015), A17.
- 8 Background to the formation of the Pittsburgh Mass Mob is given in the article by Bill Vidonic, “Jackson Woman Organizes ‘Mass Mobs’ to Fill Pews, Coffers,” *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review* (Dec. 27, 2014), appearing at the paper’s website: <http://triblive.com/news/butler/7416102-74/church-mass-churches#axzz3SdPd1tE9>. See also Rita McConnell, “Mass Mob Shows Love for Churches,” *Pittsburgh Catholic* (March 13, 2015), 1, 7.

## The Pittsburgh Mass Mob (continued)

- 9 The Mass mobbing at the cathedral was highlighted in the article by Bill Zlatos, "Mass Mob Works to Bolster Turnout at Catholic Churches," *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review* (August 24, 2014), appearing at the paper's website: <http://triblive.com/news/allegheeny/6608669-74/mass-mob-church#axzz3SdPd1tE9>.
- 10 See "Mass Mob," *Pittsburgh Catholic* (April 17, 2015), Insider.
- 11 See "Mass Mob," *Pittsburgh Catholic* (June 12, 2015), 8.
- 12 A YouTube video tour of St. Mary Help of Christians Church appears at: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pY23yoeSX\\_c](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pY23yoeSX_c).
- 13 See "Mass Mob," *Pittsburgh Catholic* (August 14, 2015), 10. A YouTube video tour of St. Augustine Church appears at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BnhE-26wkrS>.
- 14 See "Mass Mob," *Pittsburgh Catholic* (September 11, 2015), 9; "Mass Mob Gathering," *Pittsburgh Catholic* (Community Calendar, September 2015). A YouTube video tour of St. Agnes Church appears at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O-ZYK-j1JIE>.
- 15 A YouTube video tour of St. Therese of Lisieux Church appears at: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fmZ\\_AiKzRGI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fmZ_AiKzRGI).
- 16 An excellent analysis of the spiritual impact of Mass Mobs was offered by Carolyn Pirtle, Assistant Director of the Notre Dame Center for Liturgy, on October 12, 2014 at her blog: <http://blogs.nd.edu/oblation/2014/10/20/mass-mobs-the-ultimate-flash-mob/>.



**St. Augustine**

Courtesy of John C. Bates.



**St. Anthony's Chapel**

Courtesy of John C. Bates.

## Our Authors

**John C. Bates, Esq.** is a graduate of Duquesne University (B.A., M.A., and J.D.). He is the retired Associate Regional Counsel for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, a Member of the Board of Directors of The Catholic Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania, and a former president of the organization.

**Rev. Michael P. Conway, S.T.L.™**, is a graduate of Duquesne University and completed four years of study while resident at the Pontifical North American College in Rome. He served as “Roman Correspondent” for The Catholic Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania during his time in the Eternal City. He was ordained a priest of the Diocese of Pittsburgh on June 28, 2014 and is currently serving as parochial vicar at Immaculate Conception Parish in Washington, PA.

**Alan B. Delozier** is University Archivist/Associate Professor at Seton Hall University and Executive Director of the New Jersey Catholic Historical Commission. He holds a Doctor of Letters in Irish and Irish-American Studies from Drew University (2015), in addition to a B.A. from St. Bonaventure University, an M.A. from Villanova University, and a M.L.S. from Rutgers-The State University of New Jersey. He has written and spoken extensively on various aspects of American Catholic History and his family has connections to Western Pennsylvania through Prince Gallitzin and his missionary trails in the region.

**Paul Dvorchak** is a graduate of the University of Pittsburgh, with a M.A.T. from that university and a M.A. from Duquesne University. He served as Assistant Director of St. Joseph House of Hospitality in Pittsburgh 1987-2001 and as Director 2001-2012, retiring in 2012.

**Rev. James W. Garvey** is a retired priest (2008) of the diocese of Pittsburgh. With a Bachelor's degree from the University of Pittsburgh and a Master of Divinity from St. Francis Seminary in Loretto, he was ordained in 1976. He has written the histories of seven parishes in the diocese of Pittsburgh, and a memoir about riding the streetcar: *A Transfer Please*. He writes for the *Pittsburgh Catholic* and local journals. A long-time member of the Catholic Historical Society's Board of Directors, he served two terms as President. One of the founders of Jubilee Soup Kitchen, he was Director of St. Joseph's House of Hospitality for seven years — with many years of ministry devoted to the poor, the homeless, and low-income housing in the inner city. He reads the Scriptures for a small Catholic radio network, WAOB-FM.

**Grant Gerlich** is Archivist of the Mercy Heritage Center in Belmont, NC. He is a Certified Archivist with over 15 years' experience in the museum and archival field. He has worked as the Curator of Collections at Soldiers and Sailors Military Museum in Pittsburgh PA. Grant then represented West Overton Museums in Scottdale PA and Georgia's Old Capital Museum in Milledgeville GA as Executive Director. In addition, Grant has served on the board of several historical societies including the Lawrenceville Historical Society. He taught a course in Museum Studies and Historical Organizations at Georgia College and has instructed several archival seminars. Before becoming Archivist and Director of the Mercy Heritage Center, Grant was archivist for the McGreal Center for Dominican Historical Studies in River Forest IL. Grant has an M.A. in History with a concentration in Archival, Museum and Editing studies from Duquesne University and a Master of Library and Information Science from Dominican University.

**James K. Hanna** is a true Pittsburgher: he holds an A.A. in Liberal Arts from Robert Morris College, a B.A. in Social Sciences from the University

of Pittsburgh, and an M.A. in Theology from Duquesne University of the Holy Spirit. He is an online instructor for the University of Notre Dame's STEP program and a freelance writer whose articles have appeared in *OSV Newsweekly*.

**Barbara Hecht** is Director of Communications for the Sisters of St. Joseph of Baden, PA, and has served in that position since 2000. After graduating from Duquesne University with a B.A. in Journalism, Barbara began her career at *The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* where she worked in various posts that included education reporter, copy editor and assistant city editor. She subsequently was employed by the North Hills School District as communications coordinator. She is a current member and former board member of the national Communicators for Women Religious.

**Katherine Koch** is a member of Phi Beta Kappa and a *summa cum laude* graduate of Kent State University, with a B.S. in computer science. She has many Passionists in the family tree, including Fr. Viktor Koch, C.P., the founder of the Passionist German-Austrian foundation, and Fr. Basil Bauer, C.P., one of the many missionaries who worked in China. She is an independent scholar of Passionist history. She is finishing a historical fiction novel about Fr. Viktor's travails in Nazi Germany, presently titled *The Sower of Black Field*. Additional information is available at [www.viktorkoch.com](http://www.viktorkoch.com) and at the Passionist historical archives website at <http://cprovince.org/archives>.

**Blanche McGuire** is a graduate of Baylor University (B.A., M.A.) and the University of Pittsburgh (M.B.A.). She is a retired Senior Vice President of Marketing Strategy for Ketchum Directory Advertising. Her special interest is Catholic history in colonial Maryland and Pennsylvania. Many of her ancestors were Prince Gallitzin's parishioners. She is Acting President of The Catholic Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania as well as former President and Vice President. She is a published author.

**Alexander J. Schrenk** is a seminarian for the Diocese of Pittsburgh. He holds B.A. (Classical Languages and Philosophy, 2011) and M.A. degrees (Philosophy, 2013), both from Duquesne University. He is currently in his third year of theological studies at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome, on track to complete coursework for an S.T.B. degree later this year before beginning work on an S.T.L. in 2016. During the school year he resides at the Pontifical North American College in Rome, and is looking forward to Summer 2017, the prospective date of his ordination to the priesthood.

**Kathleen Washy** is Archivist for the Sisters of St. Joseph of Baden, a position which she has held since 2013. Prior to that, she served as Archivist for Mercy Hospital/UPMC Mercy for more than twenty years. Since 1991, she has been a member of the Board of Directors of the Catholic Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania, holding many offices, including her current role as Treasurer. She also has served as Consulting Archivist for Mercy Behavioral Health. She holds a B.A. in History & Anthropology from Gannon University, a M.A. in History from the University of Toronto, and a M.A. in History & Archival Administration, with a Certificate in Museum Studies, from Case Western Reserve University.

**Dennis Wodzinski** is Archivist of the Sisters of St. Francis of the Providence of God in Whitehall, PA. He holds a B.A. from John Carroll University and a M.A. from Duquesne University, both in the field of history. He occasionally serves as an adjunct instructor for the Duquesne University Classics Department, and is presently an instructor at La Roche College.

# News from The Catholic Historical Society

## PERSONS

**Sister Sally Witt, CSJ**, a former Society Board Member and former Archivist of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Baden, announced the publication in September 2014 of her latest history, *A Hidden Spirit: The Sisters of the Holy Spirit of the Diocese of Pittsburgh*. She is presently working on the history of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia, Kansas.

**Rev. James W. Garvey**, Board Member Emeritus, saw publication of his latest book in November 2014: the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary history of St. Anne Parish in Castle Shannon (Allegheny County), PA. He was also pictured in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette's* coverage of the anniversary Mass that concluded the celebration.

**Kimberly Lytle**, curriculum director for the **Catholic Schools Office of the Diocese of Erie**, has self-published *The Catholic Community of Pennsylvania: Past and Present* in order to educate fourth through sixth grade students about the history of Catholicism in the Keystone State. Both a Student Workbook (with 31 lessons and 70 pages of handouts) and a Teacher Manual are now in use in schools and home schools. Detailed information appears at the website: [www.teachcatholichistory.com](http://www.teachcatholichistory.com).

**Rev. Thomas E. Smith, Pittsburgh's "Singing and Dancing Priest"** died April 20, 2015 at age 90. After roles in the Ziegfeld Follies

and Billy Rose's Diamond Jubilee Horseshoe Night Club, he entered St. Vincent Seminary and was ordained a priest of the diocese of Pittsburgh in 1951. He then organized parish musical and theatrical shows, and took to the stage himself. Bishop John Wright approved his theatrical evangelism. Smith appeared on national TV and joined with priest friends as the "Four Fathers" at dinner theater productions.

**Paul Dvorchak**, former Society Board Member, presented a paper on Dorothy Day at the "Dorothy Day and the Church: Past, Present, and Future" conference held at Saint Francis University in Ft. Wayne, Indiana, on May 13-15, 2015. His paper was entitled "Dorothy Day and Pittsburgh's Catholic Radical Alliance." At the same conference, Society member **Jim Hanna** presented "Detachment as a Hallmark of Dorothy Day's Spirituality." The two presentations will be included in a book to be published before Christmas by Solidarity Hall Press of Valparaiso, IN. Inquiries can be directed to Dr. Lance Richey, Dean of the School of Liberal Arts and Sciences, University of Saint Francis, Fort Wayne, Indiana at [Lrichey@sf.edu](mailto:Lrichey@sf.edu) or (260) 399-8112. Other presenters, among the more than 40 papers delivered, included the Archbishop of Los Angeles, the editor of Day's diaries and letters, and Day's granddaughter.

**Rev. Cyprian Davis, O.S.B.**, who delivered the Society's Lambing Lecture on April 14, 1991 on the topic "Black Catholics in the United States," died on May 18, 2015 at age 85. A Benedictine for 65 years, he was professor of Church History at St. Meinrad's Seminary in Indiana.

**Architect Stanley S. Pyzdrowski**, who oversaw the construction and design of more than 200 Catholic churches, schools, convents and nursing homes in Western Pennsylvania, Ohio and Western Virginia, died at age 98 on August 21, 2015. His work, and that of his father Anthony, spanned the period 1918 through 2004. His architectural works included St. Margaret of Scotland in Greentree, St. Hilary in Washington, St. Germaine and St. Valentine in Bethel Park, St. Gabriel in Whitehall, St. Norbert in Overbrook, and St. Teresa of Avila in Perrysville — as well as the renovation of St. Paul Cathedral in Oakland in 2004.

**Rev. Joseph Mele, Rev. Michael Conway**, Pittsburgh seminarian **Alexander Schrenk**, and Society Secretary **John Bates** met on August 24, 2015 to plan the research and writing of a commemorative history that will celebrate the 50 years of **St. Paul Seminary** in Pittsburgh. The collegiate institution opened in September 1965, with students attending Duquesne University.

## Three more bishops from Western Pennsylvania!

- (1) **Gregory John Mansour**: Born November 11, 1955 in Flint, MI (Diocese of Lansing). Ordained a priest of the Eparchy of Saint Maron of Brooklyn (Maronite) on September 18, 1982 by Bishop John Chedid at Our Lady of Lebanon Church in Flint, MI. Served as pastor of St. George Maronite Church in Uniontown, PA (Fayette County), 1983-1994. Incardinated as a priest of the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon of Los Angeles (Maronite) on February 19, 1994. Appointed Bishop of Saint Maron of Brooklyn (Maronite) on January 10, 2004. Ordained bishop on March 2, 2004 by Nasrallah Cardinal Sfeir (Patriarch of Antioch-Maronite) in Lebanon. Installed as bishop of Saint Maron of Brooklyn on April 27, 2004 in the Maronite Cathedral of Our Lady of Lebanon in Brooklyn, NY.
- (2) **George Demetrius (Giorgio Demetrio) Gallaro**: Born January 16, 1948 in Pozzallo, Province of Ragusa, Sicily, Italy (Archdiocese of Palermo). Immigrated to the United States and was ordained a priest of Los Angeles on May 27, 1972 by Archbishop Timothy Manning in St. Vibiana Cathedral, Los Angeles, CA. Incardinated into the Melkite-rite Eparchy of Newton, MA, in September 1987. Served in the Archdiocese of Pittsburgh-Ruthenian 2005-2015 as judicial vicar, professor at SS. Cyril & Methodius Byzantine Seminary, and administrator of St. Andrew Byzantine Parish in Gibsonia, Allegheny County. Appointed bishop of Piana degli Albanesi in Sicily, one of three dioceses forming the Byzantine Italo-Albanian Catholic Church, on March 31, 2015. Ordained bishop and installed on June 28, 2015 by Bishop Donato Oliverio of Lungro degli Italo-Albanesi in the Cathedral of *San Demetrio Megalomartire* [St. Demetrius the Great-Martyr] in Piana degli Albanesi.
- (3) **Edward Charles Malesic**: Born August 14, 1960 in Harrisburg, PA (Diocese of Harrisburg). Ordained a priest of Harrisburg on May 30, 1987 by Bishop William H. Keeler in St. Patrick Cathedral, Harrisburg, PA. Appointed bishop of Greensburg on April 24, 2015. Ordained bishop and installed on July 13, 2015 by Archbishop Charles J. Chaput, O.F.M. Cap., in Blessed Sacrament Cathedral, Greensburg, PA.

These episcopal ordinations bring to 146 the number of bishops who either were natives of or worked in Western Pennsylvania. Biographies of the other prelates appeared in the 2014 *Gathered Fragments* issue, including its special Supplement devoted exclusively to those bishops. In addition, Pittsburgh native **Bernard A. Hebda**, coadjutor archbishop of Newark, was appointed Apostolic Administrator of the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis on June 15, 2015.

## EVENTS

The Archbishop of Atlanta honored **Fr. Emmeran Bliemel, O.S.B.** (1831-1864), on the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the latter's death (August 31, 1864) as the first chaplain to die in an American military battle (the battle of Jonesborough, Georgia). The Bavarian-born Benedictine had studied and was ordained at **St. Vincent Seminary in Latrobe** by Pittsburgh Bishop Michael O'Connor. After several years of service in Western Pennsylvania parishes, Bliemel was assigned to Nashville where he volunteered as a Confederate chaplain to the 10<sup>th</sup> Tennessee Regiment. He was decapitated by a cannonball while administering the last rites to a dying Confederate colonel on the battlefield. Initially buried near the battlefield by the Holliday family (later famous because of two members, gunfighter Doc Holliday and *Gone with the Wind* novelist Margaret Mitchell), Bliemel was posthumously awarded the Confederate Medal of Honor. A military service at historic Clayton County Courthouse, a Mass, and luncheon comprised the memorial activities. During the ceremony, Father Brian Boesel, O.S.B. of St. Vincent Archabbey (and a doctoral candidate in Church History at Catholic University of America) recounted the life of Bliemel, who is known as one of the "Sons of Thunder" of Georgia.

The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission unveiled a new **Pennsylvania State Historical Marker** at the entrance to **St. Vincent College** (near the entrance booth and the Fred Rogers Center) on September 10, 2014. The original marker had been placed in 1946 on Route 30 near St. Vincent Drive. After decades in that location, the marker had disappeared. Reference the article on this subject in the Fall 2013 issue of *Gathered Fragments*.

**St. Vincent College** in Latrobe hosted its **5<sup>th</sup> Nationwide Juried Catholic Arts Exhibition** October 28–December 7, 2014. Nationally renowned artist Janet McKenzie was the Juror. She is known for her distinctive iconography of sacred subjects. Her solo exhibitions included Carlow University in Pittsburgh. Her works can be found in St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church in Carnegie, PA. The book, *The Way of the Cross – The Path to New Life*, features her Stations of the Cross with reflections by religious writer **Sr. Joan Chittister, O.S.B.** The St. Vincent Gallery also contains exhibits on "Sacred Relics of Saint Vincent Archabbey" and "Boniface

Wimmer, O.S.B.: Visions of a Founder." Complimentary booklets accompany both exhibits. The Gallery is located on the third floor of the Robert S. Carey Student Center on the college campus.

An era in Pittsburgh Catholicism ended with the death of the last member of the **Ursuline Sisters of Pittsburgh** in November 2014. While the Pittsburgh-based order had merged into the Ursuline Sisters of Louisville, Kentucky, in 1958, the Sisters here continued to operate Ursuline Academy in the Bloomfield section of Pittsburgh until 1981.

**Dennis Wodzinski**, Society Board Member and Archivist of the **Sisters of St. Francis of the Providence of God**, conducted a holiday tour of the order's Motherhouse in suburban Whitehall on December 11, 2014. He guided guests through 90 years of history and holiday traditions in the festively decorated Mount Providence Motherhouse and Mary Immaculate Chapel.

The Andy Warhol Museum in Pittsburgh hosted the Exhibit "Someday is Now: The Art of Corita Kent" from January 31 to April 19, 2015. This was the first major museum show to survey the entire career of **Sister Corita Kent** (1918-1986) as the "**World's Only Pop-Art Nun.**" A member of the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in Los Angeles until her departure in 1968, she chaired the order's college art department. She was a designer, teacher, feminist, and activist for civil rights and anti-war causes. Her thousands of posters, murals and signature serigraphs reflected her passion for faith and politics. Kent was one of the most popular graphic artists of the 1960s and 1970s, and her works have become iconic symbols of those turbulent decades. She designed the U.S. Post Office's "Love" stamp in 1985.

The **Diocese of Greensburg** conducted a book signing on February 1, 2015 for the newly published history of Blessed Sacrament Cathedral at the Bishop William G. Connare Center. A resin cathedral replica was also unveiled. A tour of the Diocesan Heritage Center was offered. The book (which is reviewed in this issue of *Gathered Fragments*) and the cathedral replica are available through the cathedral parish and the diocesan pastoral center.

An Exhibition entitled "Behind the Murals: Histories and Other Stories" was held Feb. 7–March 27, 2015, to present the history of the **Maxo Vanka murals in St. Nicholas Croatian Church in Millvale** and provide an update on the conservation project that has been shepherded by the nonprofit Society to Preserve the Millvale Murals of Maxo Vanka, which were created by the famed Croatian artist between 1937 and 1941. There are 22 murals, covering 11,000 square feet. Two scholarly lectures were given: on February 27, Dr. Sylvia Rohr spoke on "Vanka in Context: Pittsburgh's Mural Culture in the Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century"; on March 13, Dr. Charles McCollester spoke on "Out of Depression and War: Transcendent Hope and Maternal Protection." The Society conducted its second annual fundraising event, "Cocktails and Conservation," on March 6 at the church.

In mid-February 2015, **Duquesne University's Gumberg Library** announced completion of its **digitization project** of more than 150 years' worth of America's oldest Catholic newspaper in continuous operation, the *Pittsburgh Catholic*. The digitization project began in 2008, based on microfilm reels of the newspaper that had been undertaken by the Catholic Historical Society in 1950. Users can now access issues published between 1844 and 2001. In March 2015, the Gumberg Library completed digitization of all issues of the Society's journal, *Gathered Fragments* — covering the period from 1986 to 2014. Both the *Pittsburgh Catholic* and the Society's *Gathered Fragments* are accessible in the Gumberg Library Digital Collections at <http://digital.library.duq.edu/>. All issues of both publications are word-searchable. Kudos to Duquesne University archivist and Society Board Member Thomas White for preserving, for future generations of researchers and scholars, these fundamental documents that tell the story of Western Pennsylvania Catholic history.

Pittsburgh Tours & More offered shuttled tours every Friday from February 20 to March 27, 2015, as "**Fish Fry Friday Tours: Pittsburgh Lenten Series.**" Each tour included a visit to a Pittsburgh-area Catholic church along with a fish-fry meal, some for lunch and others for dinner. The churches included St. Maximilian Kolbe in Homestead, St. Scholastica in Aspinwall, Most Holy Name of Jesus in Troy Hill, Epiphany in the Lower Hill District,

## News from The Catholic Historical Society (continued)

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton in Carnegie, and Holy Angels in Hays. The tours celebrated Pittsburgh's heritage of historic churches, neighborhoods, cultural traditions, and iconic foods.

On April 11, 2015, the Diocese of Greensburg opened its second public exhibition, "**The History of the Diocese of Greensburg: A View of the Bishops,**" at the Diocesan Heritage Center. The exhibit includes a section devoted to each of the first four bishops of Greensburg (Hugh Lamb, William Connare, Anthony Bosco, and Lawrence Brandt) with photographs, episcopal vestments, and other items. The center is located in the Bishop William G. Connare Center on Route 30 near Greensburg.

The first **South Side Church Crawl** took place on Sunday, April 19, 2015, as visitors stepped inside eight churches on the South Side Flats and Slopes and marveled at their history and beauty. Participating in the guided tours were five Catholic churches: St. Adalbert Church and St. Peter Church (comprising Prince of Peace Parish, which was a 1992 merger of seven parishes), St. Paul of the Cross Monastery, St. John the Baptist Ukrainian Church, and St. John the Baptist Byzantine Church. The churches also rang their bells simultaneously in the "Calling of the Bells."

The Washington County History and Landmarks Foundation conducted a historic church tour on April 19, 2015 that included **SS. Mary and Ann in Marianna**, which was dedicated on July 4, 1913 by Bishop J.F. Regis Canevin. The church is now part of St. Oliver Plunkett parish.

**Fr. Robert Carbonneau, C.P.**, Passionist historian and executive director of the U.S. Catholic China Bureau in Berkeley, California, gave a presentation to the **Sisters of St. Joseph of Baden** at their Motherhouse on April 29, 2015 on the topic "Come See Hunan with Me! Photographs of CSJ Baden in 1920s China." The Sisters of St. Joseph worked with the Passionists in the province of Hunan, China, 1921-1948. Fr. Carbonneau is overseeing the digitization of the Passionist China Collection — consisting of over 5,000 photographs from Hunan Province, and some 50,000 letters and documents — at the Ricci Institute in San Francisco, which tell the story of the order's work in China 1921-1955.

On May 2, 2015, the Catholic Historical Society co-sponsored "History and Witness before the Suffering Cross: Pittsburgh Passionist Missionaries in World War II Germany and Twentieth Century China" — consisting of two lectures: **Father Robert Carbonneau, C.P.**, on "Using Photography to Reinterpret Passionist Missionaries' Religious and Political Relationships in 20<sup>th</sup> Century China" and **Katherine Koch** on "An American Priest in Nazi Germany: The Story of Fr. Viktor Koch, C.P." The afternoon of lectures was followed by a reception, Mass in the retreat house chapel, and dinner in St. Paul of the Cross Monastery complex on Pittsburgh's South Side Slopes. Society Secretary **John Bates** introduced the lecturers. Ms. Koch's presentation is available on YouTube, and can be accessed at the website <http://www.viktorkoch.com/pittsburgh>.

**Kathleen Washy**, Society Treasurer and Archivist of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Baden, conducted a **Stroll Through Time: A Walking Tour of the Baden Campus of the Sisters of St. Joseph** on June 18, 2015. The evening tour of the Beaver County campus included the Motherhouse and Mount Gallitzin Academy (opened in 1902), as well as Villa St. Joseph (a long-term care facility opened in 1997). The tour provided historical highlights and anecdotes about the Motherhouse, grounds (including labyrinth, community gardens, and an orchard), grotto, statues, and cemetery. A reception for participants followed. The event marked the Year of Consecrated Life, which Pope Francis proclaimed to celebrate religious vocations. A YouTube video of the event appears at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D2N2Hu6Q1ps>.

On June 20, 2015, a **Pennsylvania State Historical Marker** was unveiled for **St. Nicholas Roman Catholic Croatian Church** at the site of the former first Croatian church on East Ohio Street on Pittsburgh's North Side — along with a ribbon cutting ceremony for the **Interpretive Panels and Memorial Wall at the St. Nicholas Church Historic Site**. The guests included Josko Paro, Croatian ambassador to the U.S. Pictures of the dual event appear at the website of the Preserve Croatian Heritage Foundation: [www.stnicholasns.org](http://www.stnicholasns.org).

June 24, 2015 marked the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Franciscan presence in North America.

On June 24, 1615, two Recollect priests, who had accompanied Samuel de Champlain in his journey to New France, celebrated the first Mass on Montreal Island — the beginning of Catholic religious life in North America. The Recollects were a reform branch of the Franciscans (founded by St. Francis of Assisi in 1209) who served as chaplains to the military in France and French Canada. These included **Father Denys Baron**, who was the chaplain at **Fort Duquesne** (1754-1756) and celebrated the first Mass in what today is the city of Pittsburgh. This year also marks the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Order's restoration in Canada after a 127-year absence following the British conquest of French Canada in 1763 and legislative suppression. The 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary included a June 11-13 symposium organized by the Institute of Cultural Heritage, in collaboration with Université Laval's Faculty of Arts and Human Sciences. June 24 is *Saint Jean Baptiste* Day, which honors the patron saint of French Canadians.

The popularity of food and Catholic churches was reflected in Myers Coach Lines of Export, PA (Westmoreland County), offering a "**Faith & Food Historic Churches Dine-A-Round**" to Cumberland, MD. Two tours, in June and August 2015, included St. Paul Catholic Church (ca. 1849) with its colonial religious history and German strudel.

**St. Alphonsus Church in Wexford** celebrated the 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the dedication of its first church on July 19, 2015. The parish also marked the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the parish school. Both buildings are landmarks in suburban Wexford (Allegheny County). Redemptorists who initially served the parish included **St. John Neumann** and **Blessed Francis Seelos**. The anniversary reception included the display of historical photos, items, and sacramental record books with signatures of Neumann and Seelos. **Father Suitbert Mollinger** was the parish's first resident pastor before becoming founding pastor of Most Holy Name of Jesus parish and building the famed St. Anthony Chapel in Pittsburgh's Troy Hill neighborhood.

**St. Ann Parish in Waynesburg** (Greene County) celebrated its 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary on July 25, 2015. An archives room, with a docent to answer questions, was part of the celebration. The history of Catholicism in Greene County

## News from The Catholic Historical Society (continued)

goes back to 1785, when 70 Catholic settlers in the area appealed to Bishop John Carroll of Baltimore to have a priest visit them at least once a year.

**Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation's** 2015 tours included both a July 25 "Oakland Walking Tour: Mellon Institute, **Central Catholic**, and More" and a November 7 "**John Comès Churches: A Bus Tour to Lawrenceville, Etna, and Oakland**" of 6 hours. Tour details appear at <http://www.phlf.org/>.

The **Pittsburgh Steelers** celebrated 50 years of Summer Training Camp at **St. Vincent College** in Latrobe (Westmoreland County) with the arrival of the team and its first practice on July 27, 2015. The practice field is just a few minutes walk from St. Vincent Archabbey. The college published an anniversary book (which is reviewed in this issue of *Gathered Fragments*) in connection with the 50<sup>th</sup> Summer Training Camp.

The **garden courtyard of St. Patrick Church** in Pittsburgh's Strip District was the scene, on August 1, 2015, of the inaugural event commemorating the centenary of the Irish Easter Rising of 1916. The Pittsburgh 1916 Easter Rising Committee hosted a re-creation of Pdraig Pearse's oration at the gravesite of Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa that is considered to be the triggering event that led to the Rising — the opening battle in Ireland's war for independence which ended with establishment of the Republic of Ireland comprising 26 of Ireland's counties. A year of activities will follow the theme "Easter 1916: Pittsburgh Remembers."

**Mt. Nazareth Commons**, a 42-unit apartment complex located in the former Motherhouse of the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth in Ross Township (Allegheny County), opened in 2015. The \$8 million transformation of the interior of the former motherhouse on the 32-acre site was designed for low- to moderate-income seniors. Some 200 children attend day care at Mt. Nazareth Learning Center in the building, which is adjacent to Holy Family Manor, a personal care home located on the campus. The Motherhouse, at 250 Nazareth Way, was sold to Ross Presbyterian Senior Housing LP in March 2014 for \$530,000.

On September 10, 2015, St. Vincent Gallery of St. Vincent College in Latrobe opened an Exhibition of artwork by four

Benedictine monks, entitled "**Monk-Artists of Saint Vincent.**" The featured artists were Benedictines: Father Vincent de Paul Crosby (liturgical linens), Brother Mark Floreanini (stained glass, spun and crocheted wool), Brother Etienne Huard (photography), and Father Robert Keffer (oil painting); their works included a variety of media and styles. The Exhibition concluded on October 4.

The **Sisters of St. Francis of the Neumann Communities** celebrated 150 years of service in Western Pennsylvania with an open house on September 20, 2015 at St. Francis Convent on the campus of **Mount Alvernia in Millvale** (their former Motherhouse, prior to merger with the Syracuse Franciscans), which included guided tours covering historical, cultural and artistic topics.

### OTHER

Most of **Msgr. Andrew A. Lambing's** publications — including those he authored, edited, and translated — are now available in reprint editions through **Amazon.com** and **AbeBooks.com**. Simply search using his initials "A. A. Lambing". Lambing founded the first Catholic historical society in Western Pennsylvania in 1884 and served as the first Pittsburgh diocesan historian.

The **Catholic Historical Society's 1943 published history of the diocese of Pittsburgh** — *Catholic Pittsburgh's One Hundred Years 1843-1943* — is available electronically at the website of Historic Pittsburgh: <http://digital.library.pitt.edu/images/pittsburgh/>.

Further information as to churches designed by famed **Pittsburgh Catholic architect John T. Comès** has surfaced. Supplementing the extensive list of churches contained in the Fall 2013 *Gathered Fragments* are the following: (1) **Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church**, Camden, South Carolina (Diocese of Charleston) — a 300-seat Spanish-style building with campanile, completed in 1914, which is located within the City of Camden Historic District listed on the National Register; (2) **St. Paul Church**, Weirton, West Virginia (Diocese of Wheeling), completed in 1918 and demolished in 1972; (3) **St. Benet Hall** at St. John University, Collegeville, MN — a five-story brick classroom and dormitory in Spanish-Romanesque style, with an attached archway, completed in 1922; and (4) **St. Aloysius Church**, Bowling Green (Diocese of Toledo), completed in 1925; its

immense sanctuary mural by Felix Liefertucher was restored in January 2015.

The 2013 *Gathered Fragments* article "John T. Comès, Catholic Architect" listed the many area Catholic buildings he designed. Of those, the former **St. Jerome School** (which operated until 1992, when it was renamed Madonna Regional School, ultimately closing in 1998) in Charleroi has since been demolished.

Further research has identified an additional thesis relating to Western Pennsylvania Catholic history: Timothy J. Harrington, *Edward P. McManaman, Priest, Educator, Bishop* (B.A. Thesis, Mercyhurst College, 1988).

**Paul Dvorchak's** article published in the 2014 *Gathered Fragments* — "Dorothy Day and the Beginning of St. Joseph House of Hospitality in Pittsburgh, 1936-1941" — was added to the blog "Friends of St. Joseph House of Hospitality, appearing at <http://fosjhob.blogspot.com/>.

**Katherine Koch's** article published in the 2014 *Gathered Fragments* — "An American Priest in Nazi Germany: The Story of Fr. Viktor Koch, C.P." — has been added to her website, [www.viktorkoch.com](http://www.viktorkoch.com).

**Rev. Rene Kollar's** article published in the 2014 *Gathered Fragments* — "An Old Tradition and a New Beginning: The Evolution of Freshman Orientation at Saint Vincent College" — was noted in the Winter 2014-2015 issue of St. Vincent Archabbey's magazine, *Heart to Heart*.

In mid-August 2015, the **Diocese of Greensburg** advertised the position of **Curator/Collections Manager of the Diocesan Heritage Center and Archivist** of the diocese. While the diocese was established in 1951, its territory includes rich history dating back to colonial times.

On August 17, 2015, Arcadia Publishing released Gerard F. O'Neil's new book, *Pittsburgh Irish: Erin on the Three Rivers*. This work credits the Catholic Historical Society's Archives for several included photographs, cites the Society's 1943 diocesan history (*Catholic Pittsburgh's One Hundred Years 1843-1943*), and includes the Society in the list of archival sources. The book also includes a photograph of famed Irish political leader **Éamon de Valera** (1882-1975) with the mayor of Pittsburgh and the maternal grandparents of Society Secretary **John Bates**, during de Valera's 1930 visit to Pittsburgh.

## News from The Catholic Historical Society (continued)

In mid-September 2015, Pittsburgh City Council began consideration of whether to begin the process that would culminate in the nomination of **Lawrenceville** as a historic district with the National Register of Historic Places. Historic **St. Augustine Church** and several other now-closed Catholic churches in that neighborhood would fall within the district's boundaries. There are 29 designated historic districts in the city.

Set for publication in 2016 are:

- (1) a biography of **Passionist Fr. Fabian Flynn** (1905-1973) by Sean Brennan, associate professor of history at the University of Scranton. Flynn spent the years 1943-1962 in Europe. He served as the first Catholic chaplain at the International War Crimes Tribunal in Nuremberg, and later served with Catholic Relief Services. The book is to be entitled *The Life of Father Fabian Flynn: A Catholic Warrior of the Second World War and the Cold War*. Professor Brennan recently published "From Harvard to Nuremberg: Father Fabian Flynn's Service as Catholic Chaplain to the 26<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, 1942-1946" in the *U.S. Catholic Historian* (Vol. 33, No. 1, Winter 2015), 1-24. Professor Brennan also delivered a lecture on this topic on April 9, 2015 at the Weinberg Memorial Library on the campus of the University of Scranton. Additional information appeared on the blog "Religion in American History" at <http://usreligion.blogspot.com>.
- (2) Shannen Dee Williams's *Subversive Habits: Black Nuns and the Struggle to Desegregate Black America after World War I*. This work by an assistant professor of history at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville will be the first historical monograph to examine the lives and labors of black Catholic Sisters in the 20<sup>th</sup>-century United States. It will include the story of Patricia Muriel, who was denied admission to the **Sisters of St. Joseph of Baden** in 1960, only to become the first black sister in the **Sisters of Mercy of Pittsburgh** in 1961 — Sister Martin de Porres, R.S.M.
- (3) Katherine Koch's *The Sower of Black Field*. This historical fiction novel follows the travails of **Fr. Viktor Koch, C.P., an American Passionist from Sharon, PA**, who was sent to co-found a new branch of his monastic order in 1920s Germany. While struggling to lead the Province through the chaos of Nazi rule, Fr. Koch became the revered spiritual leader to citizens of the devout Catholic town of Schwarzenfeld. His influence and presence in the Bavarian town proved especially vital in the final days of World War II, when American forces discovered a mass grave on Schwarzenfeld's border and threatened reprisals against the townspeople. Additional information about the book and Fr. Viktor's story can be found at the website: <http://viktorkoch.com>.

### LOOKING FORWARD:

- (1) In 2018, the **Diocese of Pittsburgh** will celebrate the **175<sup>th</sup> year of its establishment** on August 11, 1843 by Pope Gregory XVI's papal bull, *Universi dominici*. The diocese would have been established in the early 1830s had Philadelphia Coadjutor Francis P. Kenrick been able to overcome the opposition (in the several Provincial Councils of Baltimore) of Bishop John England of Charleston to the division of the see of Philadelphia.
- (2) **St. Bernard of Clairvaux parish in Mt. Lebanon** will celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its establishment in 1919. The parish has begun work on its archives and parishioner Dennis Roddy is working on an updated parish history — a sequel to Father Thomas R. Wilson's monumental *St. Bernard Church* (1995).

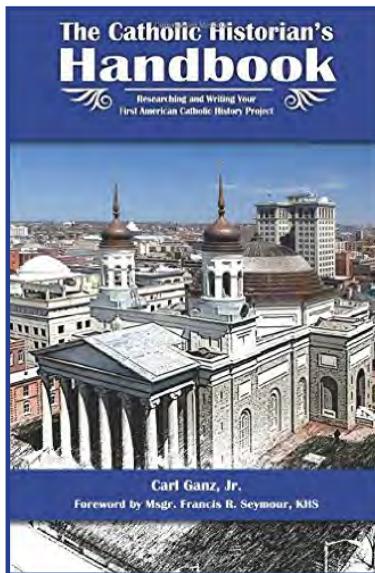


**Lectures at St. Paul of the Cross Monastery (May 2, 2015). L to R: Katherine Koch, Rev. Robert Carbonneau, C.P., and John C. Bates.**

Source: Gary Koch

## Drink with the Saints

Looking for a unique birthday or Christmas gift? A Texas professor, Michael P. Foley, has written a book that is sure to be popular with Catholics — *Drinking with the Saints: The Sinner's Guide to a Holy Happy Hour* (Washington, D.C.: Regnery History, 2015). You can pub crawl your way through the sacred seasons with a collection of cocktail recipes, distilled spirits, beer, and wine for every occasion on the Catholic liturgical calendar. The 487-page book is one part bartender's guide, one part spiritual manual — with a dash of irreverence, mixed with love. The front cover — with the image of a cardinal raising a brandy — says it all: a celebration of the Catholic contribution to the spirits world and to the spirit world. Definitely something for every sinner and every saint!



## How to Write a Catholic Parish or Institutional History

Mid-July 2015 witnessed publication of *The Catholic Historian's Handbook: Researching and Writing Your First American Catholic History Project* by Carl Ganz, Jr. The book presents advice, guidance, and the extensive experience of the members of the New Jersey Catholic Historical Commission and the Diocese of Metuchen Historical Records Commission. The book's unofficial title — *Everything We Wish We Knew Before Starting Our First Catholic History Project* — aptly describes this wonderful effort to provide first-time writers of parish and institutional histories with the accumulated wisdom of those who have been doing such research and writing for decades in the field of American Catholic history. **The Catholic Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania** is identified as one of the “best places” to start research. This unique 61-page “how-to” guide will help amateur historians achieve their goal. It is available at [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com).

## BOOK REVIEWS

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John C. Bates, Esq.

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Mike Dudurich, *Pittsburgh Steelers Training Camp: 50 Years at St. Vincent* (Latrobe, PA: St. Vincent College, 2015), softcover, illus., 40 pp.

This work opens with a welcoming message from Benedictine Archabbot Douglas Nowicki — an apt introduction to the textual and pictorial story of the Pittsburgh Steelers at their summer camp on the campus of St. Vincent College in Latrobe for 50 years. The book is divided into four chapters based on the team's head coaches. For Steelers fans, this is a “must buy” item.

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Rev. Richard Gribble, *Navy Priest: The Life of Captain Jake Laboon, SJ* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America, 2015), softcover, table of contents, illus., epilogue, bibliography, index, 376 pp.

This is the biography of Pittsburgh native, Jesuit priest, and Navy chaplain John (Jake) Laboon (1921-1988). A World War II submarine officer who earned the Silver Star, Laboon entered the Jesuits upon discharge from the military and was ordained in 1956. He re-entered the Navy in 1958 and thereafter served as first chaplain for the Fleet Ballistic Missile Submarine Program, chaplain at the U.S. Naval Academy, and Fleet Chaplain of the Atlantic Fleet. He was awarded the Legion of Merit during a tour of duty in Vietnam. In 1995, the destroyer USS Laboon was commissioned in his honor. The author makes clear that Father Jake was a model of Christian fidelity, faith, and complete dedication to God and country. The Laboon family is well known — five siblings entered religious life, and their father was director of the Allegheny County Department of Works who superintended building of the Liberty Tunnels (1919-1924). The author is a Holy Cross priest who, like Fr. Laboon, graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy.

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Ralph Gray, *A Mission in the Valley: A History of Saint Kateri Tekakwitha Roman Catholic Church in Penns Valley* (CreateSpace, 2015), softcover, table of contents, illus., index, 236 pp.

Catholic residents of Penns Valley, in rural central Pennsylvania, had to travel many miles to State College or Bellefonte to attend Mass. This book tells how a small group of devout Catholics planted a seed that grew into a parish, named for a Native American saint, in a largely Protestant area of Centre County in the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown. The author is one of the founding parishioners.

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Gino Carlotti, *Flashbacks: From the Other Side of the Tracks* (Santa Fe, NM: Via Media Publishing Co., 2015), table of contents, illus., 110 pp.

This is a compilation of “flashback” stories from an Erie native who grew up in that city's “Little Italy” during the 1930s-1950s — replete with stories of Catholic schools, Sisters, Bishop John Mark Gann, and Gannon University. The author is a gifted story teller.

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Tom Roberts, *Joan Chittister: Her Journey from Certainty to Faith* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2015), softcover, illus., 240 pp.

An editor for the *National Catholic Register* has chronicled the life of one of the best-known spiritual leaders in the American Catholic Church: Benedictine Sister Joan Chittister of Erie, PA. This volume is not only the story of her personal journey, but also covers the evolution of the Erie Benedictines, post-Vatican II religious life, and the struggle for women's equality in the Church. The personal Chittister comes through clearly.

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Jack Lee Downey, *The Bread of the Strong: Lacouturisme and the Folly of the Cross, 1910-1985* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2015), table of contents, endnotes, bibliography, index, 352 pp.

This work offers new insight into the history of the Catholic Worker movement and the influence of *Lacouturisme*, largely under Pittsburgh Father John Hugo, on the spiritual formation of Servant of God Dorothy Day (1897-1980). The author examines the extremist intersection of Catholic contemplative tradition and modern political radicalism. While offering a new perspective on the movement's founder and namesake, Quebec Jesuit Onesime Lacouture, the author also depicts the reciprocal relationship between Day and Hugo — covering pacifism, conscientious objection, Christian antiwar work, and ascetical theology. This study of Lacouture, Hugo and Day in the context of the retreat movement explores the relationship among contemplative theology, asceticism, and radical activism.

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Gerard F. O'Neil, *Pittsburgh Irish: Erin on The Three Rivers* (Charleston, SC: History Press, 2015), softcover, table of contents, illus., 160 pp.

This volume traces the arrival of the Irish in Pittsburgh from the Great Famine in the 1840s, through their military service in the Civil War, their role as labor agitators in the developing union movement, political and religious leaders. Some were well known, others less so — but many were true visionaries. Catholicism is woven throughout the story of the local Irish. The author holds a M.A. from Duquesne University, where he serves as an archivist.

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Ed Salamon, *Pittsburgh's Golden Age of Rock 'n' Roll* (Los Angeles: Archer Books, 2015), softcover, table of contents, index, illus., 256 pp.

This history of the numerous rock and roll artists and groups that came out of Pittsburgh in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s is a tribute to the many Catholic ethnic groups that populated the Renaissance City. Included in this volume are such well-know local groups as the Rouletes (formed at North Catholic High School in 1958, with such songs as “Please Say You Want Me” and “In the Still of the Night”) and the Headliners (a garage band from South Catholic High School, who played many record hops for KQV and WAMO and recorded “Little Latin Lupe Lue”). Lou Christie (Lugee Alfredo Giovanni Sacco) and Bobby Vinton (the family name was originally Vintula) were numbered among these local Catholic natives. Groups such as the Del Vikings, Skyliners, Marcells, Vogues, and Jaggerz figure among other notables from this area. This book is a must-have for all local nostalgic baby boomers!

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## BOOK REVIEWS (continued)

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John A. McCoy, *A Still and Quiet Conscience: The Archbishop Who Challenged a Pope, A President, and a Church* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2015), softcover, table of contents, sources, illus., bibliography, index, 344 pp.

This is an intriguing biography of Raymond Hunthausen, archbishop of Seattle (1975-1991). While known as the first American bishop to urge tax resistance as a protest against nuclear war preparations, he is better known for his sharp conflict with Pope John Paul II. This book is of interest to western Pennsylvanians due to its extensive treatment of the tempest faced by Pittsburgh native Donald Wuerl, who was named auxiliary bishop of Seattle “with special faculties” in 1985 and served there 1986-1987. Hunthausen, now retired, is still alive at age 94. The author is the former communications director for the archdiocese of Seattle.

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Joseph A. Comm, *Legendary Locals of Latrobe* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publications, 2015), softcover, table of contents, illus., 128 pp.

This publication is part of the Arcadia series of local histories and focuses on the notables who are local legends in Latrobe — including Archabbot Boniface Wimmer and several lay Catholics such as Suzanne Pohland Paterno (wife of former Penn State football coach Joe Paterno) and Bibiana Boerio (interim president of Seton Hill College).

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Rev. Luis Fernando Escalante (ed.), *Letters to or about Demetrius Gallitzin* (2015), softcover [and Kindle edition], table of contents, 204 pp.

This is the first edition of many letters addressed to Servant of God Demetrius Gallitzin (1770-1840) or related to him, and the second volume of a collection edited by the Roman Postulator of the Cause for Father Gallitzin’s sainthood.

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Dorothy Day (Lance B. Richey, ed.), *House of Hospitality* (Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor, 2015), table of contents, notes, appendix, 287 pp.

This is the 75th anniversary reprint — with a preface by Timothy Cardinal Dolan and explanatory notes — of the original 1939 account by Dorothy Day of her initial encounter with Peter Maurin and the beginnings of *The Catholic Worker* newspaper. The book was written over five years and published on the eve of World War II. Fathers Charles Owen Rice and Carl Hensler and Bishop Hugh Boyle’s brother (Michael, sheriff of Cambria County, who played a role in the Johnstown steel strike) are noted in this phase of Day’s life which entailed protests and strikes, hunger and soup lines, and the spirituality of poverty. Those interested in Day’s cause for canonization will find this volume to be essential reading.

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Joann Cantrell and James Wudarczyk, *Lawrenceville* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2015), table of contents, illus., 128 pp.

This is the pictorial story of the 200 years of Lawrenceville, which was annexed to the city of Pittsburgh in 1868. This district has seen growth, decline, and rebirth. While its boundaries contained a mosaic of ethnic Catholic churches — St. Mary (Irish), St. Augustine (German), Holy Family (Polish), St. Mary Assumption (Slovenian), St. Kieran (Irish), and St. John the Baptist (Irish) — the neighborhood was predominantly Polish by the last half of the 20th century. St. Francis Hospital overlooked the neighborhood. Alas, both that hospital and all but one of the Catholic churches are now gone. This work recalls that rich Catholic history, in text and picture.

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Joe Farrell and Joe Farley, *Pittsburgh Region: Keystone Tombstone — Biographies of Famous People Buried in Pennsylvania* (Mechanicsburg, PA: Sunbury Press, 2015), softcover, table of contents, index, 152 pp.

The authors explore local cemeteries in search of interesting graves and stories — including several noted Catholics from western Pennsylvania: boxer Billy Conn, actor Frank Gorshin, Pittsburgh mayor and Pennsylvania governor David L. Lawrence, footballer Johnny Unitas, football owner Art Rooney, and artist Andy Warhol. The Johnstown Flood Victims and the Flight 93 crash site are also included. The cemeteries include Calvary, Christ Our Redeemer (North Side Catholic), St. John the Baptist Byzantine, St. Catherine’s, and Franciscan Friars.

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Rose Sanford, *What You Should Know About Pittsburgh – 316 Things You Should Know* (Brisbane, Australia: Emereo Publishing, 2015), softcover, table of contents, 206 pp.

This is a unique Pittsburgh guide, with comprehensive answers, extensive details, and references. The topics include a considerable amount of Catholic information: educational institutions, religious orders, organizations, and individuals. Even long-time city residents will enjoy this publication.

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Jim O’Brien, *Golden Arms: Six Hall of Fame Quarterbacks from Western Pennsylvania* (Pittsburgh: Jim O’Brien, 2015), softcover, illus., 640 pp.

Six of the 23 modern-era quarterbacks honored in the Pro Football Hall of Fame are from Western Pennsylvania: Johnny Unitas, George Blanda, Joe Namath, Joe Montana, Danny Marino, and Jim Kelly. This volume provides an incisive look at the personal and professional lives of these well-known Catholics. Four hundred photographs, including 32 pages in color, accompany the well-written text by a Pittsburgh sports writer.

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Joseph F. Rishel and Helen K. Rishel, *A Holy Dwelling Place: The History of Blessed Sacrament Cathedral* (Greensburg: Catholic Diocese of Greensburg, 2014), table of contents, bibliography, appendices, illus., 168 pp.

This is the long-planned history of the Greensburg cathedral. It chronicles the story of the Greensburg Catholic community that dates from the late 1700s, was canonically organized as a parish in 1847, and undertook construction of the present church in the 1920s. The parish was under the care of Benedictines from St. Vincent Archabbey until 1953. In 1951, Greensburg was established as a diocese separate from Pittsburgh. Biographies of Greensburg’s bishops are also included in this profusely illustrated work written by a retired Duquesne University history professor and a retired art teacher.

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## BOOK REVIEWS (continued)

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John Craig, *The Ku Klux Klan in Western Pennsylvania, 1921-1928* (Lanham, MD: Lehigh University Press, 2014), table of contents, bibliography, index, illus., 274 pp.

The Ku Klux Klan appeared in Pennsylvania in 1921 and during its heyday 1923-1925 spread terror in the 25 western counties where it enjoyed its greatest numerical strength. This work examines the wide variety of KKK activities, but devotes special attention to the deadly Klan riots in Carnegie (Allegheny County) and Lilly (Cambria County). Disdaining the rule of law, these vigilantes sought mayhem and murder in their targeting of Catholics, Jews, and African-Americans. This volume reveals what the KKK did to earlier generations of Catholics in Western Pennsylvania — from the erection of a huge cross on Grandview Avenue in Pittsburgh's Mount Washington section just one hundred feet from St. Mary of the Mount Church, to the burning of a 16-foot high cross over the Catholic cemetery in Greenville (Mercer County), to the KKK directive to “go over the top and not leave a Catholic living in Scottsdale or Everson” (Westmoreland and Fayette Counties).

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Mary Ann Novak, *The Making of a Martyr: Father Richard Novak, C.S.C.*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. [Kindle edition: Amazon Digital Services, 2014], table of contents, appendices, 104 pp.

Richard Novak was born in Johnstown, Pennsylvania, in 1935 — the grandson of Slovak Catholic immigrants. He joined the Holy Cross Fathers and after dedicating his life to the Muslim apostolate, was sent to Dacca in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh). His murder there came during an errand of mercy to those threatened by horrific communal Hindu-Muslim violence on January 16, 1964. This volume represents his younger sister's research into the facts surrounding his death. A martyr is one who has died giving witness to Christ — and that sense is vividly conveyed in this small volume.

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Wayne Stewart, *America's Cradle of Quarterbacks: Western Pennsylvania's Football Factory from Johnny Unitas to Joe Montana* (Carlisle, PA: Tuxedo Press, 2014), softcover, table of contents, appendix, bibliography, index, illus., 198 pp.

The National Football League has been dominated through the years by quarterbacks from Pittsburgh and surrounding small towns in Western Pennsylvania. In explaining why this area produced such outstanding athletes, the author provides insights into the Catholic family upbringing and Catholic school education of such pro footballers as Joe Montana, Joe Namath, Jim Kelly, Johnny Unitas, and Dan Marino. Many others are also mentioned. These grandsons and great-grandsons of working men who toiled in the factories, mills, and rail yards owed much to the Catholicism that has been woven into the fabric of life in Western Pennsylvania.

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Stan H. Greave, *Catholic Mutual Group: 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Pictorial History* (Virginia Beach, VA: Donning Company, 2014), table of contents, bibliography, appendices, illus., 128 pp.

In 1885, Omaha bishop James O'Connor (a former priest of the diocese of Pittsburgh and brother of Pittsburgh's first bishop, Michael O'Connor) initiated work to establish a mutual aid society — under the direction of the American hierarchy — that would provide insurance to parishes in the event of catastrophic loss of their buildings. At that time, many churches were uninsured and others were insured by financially unsound companies. This attractive volume tracks the 125th history of the society, as formally established by O'Connor in 1889 and incorporated in 1896. It is lavishly illustrated with photographs of a multitude of cathedrals, churches, and institutions in the U.S. and Canada that are insured by the renamed Catholic Mutual Group. Cardinals Wuerl and DiNardo, former Pittsburghers, are trustees of the Group. This volume also offers unique insights into insurance issues arising from the sexual abuse crisis, Hurricane Katrina, and other catastrophes.

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Rev. Patrick J. Sullivan, *Catholic Labor Priests in the United States: A 20<sup>th</sup> Century Story of Solidarity, Volume I* (Washington, D.C.: Pacem in Terris Press, 2014), softcover, table of contents, glossary, appendices, bibliography, 332 pp.

This is the first volume in a series that will examine the contribution of Catholic labor priests in the United States during the twentieth century. This work identifies more than 400 of these priests (including Pittsburgh's Msgr. Charles Owen Rice) and highlights five “giants” in the U.S. bishops' Social Action Department. Pittsburgh's Father James Cox and Msgr. Carl Hensler are also noted in this work.

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Rev. Luis Fernando Escalante (ed.), *Discourse on the Life and Virtues of the Rev. Demetrius Augustine Gallitzin and Complete Bibliography of the Servant of God* [Kindle edition, 2014], table of contents, 86 pp.

This is the first annotated edition of the oldest biography of Father Demetrius Gallitzin, and the third volume of a collection edited by the Servant of God's Roman Postulator of the Cause. The collection work of Loretto residents Frank and Betty Seymour is noted.

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Mary Beth Fraser Connolly, *Women of Faith: The Chicago Sisters of Mercy and the Evolution of a Religious Community* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2014), table of contents, endnotes, glossary, bibliography, index, illus., 356 pp.

Pittsburgh was the first foundation in the New World of the Sisters of Mercy, who arrived from Ireland with Bishop Michael O'Connor in 1843. Three years later, Mother Francis Warde set out with five others to establish a Mercy community in Chicago. This work traces the history of that community, established by those transplanted Pittsburghers, as it spread to form eight independent Mercy communities in the Midwest and later united as the Chicago Regional Community. The volume, which provides an in-depth examination of the challenges both before and after Vatican II, is a masterful history of the Mercy order and the larger story of women religious in the United States.

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## BOOK REVIEWS (continued)

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Joseph Dever, *Cushing of Boston: A Candid Portrait*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Wellesley, MA: Branden Books, 2014), softcover [and E-book edition], table of contents, illus., 236 pp.

This is the second edition (2014) of a 1965 ecclesiastical biography of Boston's long-serving Richard Cardinal Cushing (1944-1970), which provides historical insights about his protégé, John Cardinal Wright, who served as bishop of Pittsburgh (1959-1969).

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Matthew Markovic, *Prince Gallitzin and the Lost World of American Catholics: "the prince priest" Demetrius Gallitzin (1770-1840): A Historical Novel and Popular History* [Kindle edition, 2014], 343 pp.

This is a historical novel and popular history of Father Gallitzin that combines biography and Catholic history in a work of historical fiction. It is a realistic portrayal of the daily adventures of an early American priest in a wilderness environment.

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Ray Naar, *All My Sisters: Psychotherapy with Catholic Nuns* (Bloomington, IN: XLibris, 2014), table of contents, 144 pp.

This work, by the former Chief of Psychology at St. Francis General Hospital in Pittsburgh, reflects his participation in the hospital and the diocese of Pittsburgh's Joint Counseling Program with more than 180 Sisters. While changing the names of his former patients, the non-Catholic doctor details their dynamic lives, the nature of their conflicts, and the power and honesty of their struggles. The therapy sessions enabled the Sisters to move on in their chosen lives.

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Matthew Markovic, *"The Prince Priest" D.A. Gallitzin from European Aristocrat to American Catholic Priest 1770-1840* [Kindle edition, 2014], table of contents, 18 pp.

This is a brief biography of a pioneer Catholic priest in Western Pennsylvania, now a candidate for canonization.

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René Henry Gracida, *An Ordinary's Not So Ordinary Life: The Most Reverend Bishop René Henry Gracida's Autobiography* (Pijart Productions Press, 2014), softcover, illus., partial bibliography, epilogue, 207 pp.

This is the story of the New Orleans-born René Henry Gracida, of French Acadian and Mexican heritage, who entered St. Vincent Archabbey in Latrobe in 1951 and was ordained a priest of that order in 1959. Dispensed from his Benedictine vows two years later, he became a priest of the Miami diocese. Ten years later he became auxiliary bishop of Miami, and was successively appointed first bishop of Pensacola-Tallahassee in 1975, and then bishop of Corpus Christi in 1983. He retired from the latter see in 1997. The volume pulls no punches, and includes his conflicts with Benedictine Archabbot Dennis Strittmatter and Pittsburgh Bishop Donald Wuerl. It also includes the history of Gracida's role in the 1955 remodeling of St. Vincent Archabbey church and insightful comments about Pittsburgh-native Coleman Carroll, who served as first bishop/archbishop of Miami.

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Sister Mary Ewens, O.P., *The Role of the Nun in Nineteenth Century America: Variations on the International Theme* (Thiensville, WI: Caritas Communications, 2014), table of contents, illus., 376 pp.

The author, a Sinsinawa Dominican, undertook this historical work in order to assist her congregation and others in understanding their 19th century origins so as to be able to adapt to modern cultural challenges in light of Vatican II. The significance of Pittsburgh, the Sisters of Mercy, Bishop Michael O'Connor, and anti-Catholic campaigns to prevent religious women from teaching in public schools in Pittsburgh and Gallitzin is explored in this work.

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Rev. James W. Garvey (Lori Mitchell McMahon, ed.), *Celebrating 125 Years: St. Anne Parish 1889-2014* (Pittsburgh: St. Anne Parish, 2014), softcover, illus., table of contents, endnotes, appendices, 123 pp.

This volume by Pittsburgh's noted priest-historian celebrates the 125th anniversary of the "mother parish" of Pittsburgh's South Hills, and the 120th anniversary of the parish's school. St. Anne's — originally staffed by the Passionists and predominantly German — experienced explosive post-World War II multi-ethnic growth which necessitated the construction of a new parish complex that was crowned by a 1,000-seat church with distinctive architectural features. Its pastors included labor-priest Msgr. Charles Owen Rice, and the parish's sons include Daniel Cardinal DiNardo.

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Sister Sally Witt, *A Hidden Spirit: The History of the Sisters of the Holy Spirit of the Diocese of Pittsburgh* (Tarentum, PA: Word Association Publishers, 2014), softcover, table of contents, endnotes, bibliography, appendices, index, 634 pp.

This volume by historian and St. Joseph Sister Sally Witt chronicles the history of the Pittsburgh-based Sisters of the Holy Spirit. The history begins in Russian-occupied Poland, moves to Detroit with arrival of Sisters in the United States, and then turns into a search for a new home that leads the small congregation to Donora in the diocese of Pittsburgh in 1911 to minister to Polish immigrants. The expansion and contraction of this small but determined diocesan congregation is detailed, and the author's finesse in portraying the Sisters' story is evident throughout the work. The author previously penned a history of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Watertown, New York, and is currently writing the history of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia, Kansas.

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## BOOK REVIEWS (continued)

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Sister Mary Lou Kownacki and Mary H. Snyder (eds.), *Joan Chittister: Essential Writings* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2014), softcover, table of contents, bibliography, 256 pp.

A Benedictine nun and the director of the Philosophy Department at Mercyhurst University have collaborated to edit and publish the major spiritual writings of Sister Joan Chittister — a Benedictine Sister from Erie who has published over 50 books, won 14 Catholic Press Association Awards, and is one of the most sought-after speakers on spirituality today. This volume is a collection of the best from Chittister's many works. Snyder had previously edited a 2001 volume of essays in honor of Chittister.

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River Adams, *There Must Be YOU: Leonard Swidler's Journey to Faith and Dialogue* (Eugene, OR: Resource Publications, 2014), softcover, table of contents, bibliography, 296 pp.

This is the biography of Dr. Leonard Swidler (b. 1929), aspiring Norbertine priest and History professor at Duquesne University (1960-1966), who was the son of a Jewish Ukrainian immigrant father and an Irish Catholic mother. The spiritual story of "the Father of Dialogue" reflects American modernity: roots in the Great Depression, a search for faith, struggle with diversity, and the fight for social justice — truly a cultural history. Swidler became professor of Catholic Thought and Interreligious Dialogue at Temple University and co-founder/editor of the *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*.

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John C. Unitas, Jr. and Edward L. Brown, *Johnny U and Me: The Man Behind the Golden Arm* (Chicago: Triumph Books, 2014), table of contents, appendix, index, 368 pp.

This is the touching biography of Pittsburgh native Johnny Unitas (1933-2002), who is considered by many to have been the finest pro football quarterback. Unitas was a proud graduate of now-defunct St. Justin High School in Pittsburgh's Mt. Washington neighborhood, where the Sisters of Mercy of Erie taught him. You don't have to be a football fan to enjoy this well-told story of "The Golden Arm" as told by his son.

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James T. O'Reilly and Margaret S. P. Chalmers, *The Clergy Sex Abuse Crisis and the Legal Responses* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), table of contents, chronology, bibliography, index, 472 pp.

The sexual abuse of youths by rogue Catholic priests has produced legal cases that have made for scandalous headlines and intense public discussion about the crisis, with its price tag approximating \$3 billion. The authors explore the interplay between civil damages law and canon law. The book covers the efforts of Bishop Donald Wuerl to overturn a Vatican verdict in the case of a Pittsburgh priest, the canonical contributions of current Pittsburgh vicar general Fr. Lawrence DiNardo, and the role of former Duquesne Law School Dean Nicholas Cafardi. Author O'Reilly is a professor of law and former president of the Archdiocese of Chicago Pastoral Council; author Chalmers is a civil and canon lawyer and Chancellor of the Personal Ordinariate of the Chair of Saint Peter.

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Joseph F. Rishel and Helen K. Rishel, *Making Music: The History of Duquesne University's Mary Pappert School of Music* (Pittsburgh: Dorrance Publishing Co., 2014), softcover, table of contents, illus., index, 200 pp.

Duquesne University established a Music School in 1926. This internationally recognized school provides musical education that includes sacred music. It has produced many organists that serve Catholic churches in Western Pennsylvania and beyond. Besides the work's inclusion of nationally known musicians, it also notes locals such as Fr. Carlo Rossini, and a large number of religious Sisters and Spiritan priests.

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Ann E. Kessler, O.S.B., *Benedictine Men and Women of Courage: Roots and History*, rev. ed. (Seattle: Lean Scholar Press, 2014), table of contents, endnotes, bibliography, index, 518 pp.

This book surveys the saints, scholars, mystics, and reformers who shaped worldwide monastic life over fifteen centuries. This unique history covers both male and female Benedictines — treating social, intellectual, cultural, and gender issues. Extensive coverage is given to Boniface Wimmer's Benedictine establishment in Latrobe, the development of monastic foundations out of St. Vincent Archabbey, and the arrival of Benedictine nuns in Western Pennsylvania. The author is a Benedictine at Sacred Heart Monastery in Yankton, South Dakota, who holds a Ph.D. in history from Notre Dame University.

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Karen Mocker Dabson (Nicholas S. Hrenda, ed.), *The Muralist's Ghost* (Columbia, MO: Covered Bridge Publishing, 2014), softcover [and Kindle edition], 276 pp.

In this novel based on actual events, famed Croatian artist Maxo Vanka (1889-1963) comes face to face with the phantom who haunts St. Nicholas Croatian Church in Millvale, as Vanka paints his second set of murals (in 1941) for the church. The theme appeared in Louis Adamic's article, "The Millvale Apparition" in *Harper's Magazine* in April 1939. In preparing this work, the present author interviewed St. Nicholas parishioners and Vanka family members, and visited the Vanka villa in Croatia. The book's back story appears at the author's website: <http://www.mockerdabson.com/>.

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## BOOK REVIEWS (continued)

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Pat Farabaugh, *An Unbreakable Bond: The Brotherhood of Maurice Stokes and Jack Twyman* (Haworth, NJ: Saint Johann Press, 2014), softcover, illus., 324 pp.

The National Basketball Association career of 6'7" Maurice Stokes, a Rankin native and an All-American at St. Francis College in Loretto, came to a dramatic end on March 12, 1958, when he suffered an on-court accident that left him paralyzed from the neck down. Stokes's teammate, 6'6" Jack Twyman — a graduate of Central Catholic H.S. in Pittsburgh — became his legal guardian and tireless fundraiser to pay medical bills. Stokes was black, and Twyman was white — but the story transcends race. Stokes died in 1970 and was buried in Franciscan Friar Cemetery on the St. Francis campus. Twyman died in 2012 at age 78. Their relationship was portrayed in the 1973 movie "Maurie." The book's author is a professor at St. Francis University.

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Steven M. Avella, *Confidence and Crisis: A History of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee 1959-1977* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 2014), table of contents, footnotes, sources, index, illus., 344 pp.

This history of a tumultuous era of Catholic life in southeastern Wisconsin not only presents a lucid overview of dramatic changes affecting Catholic culture, race, contraction of parochial schools, declining vocations to priesthood and religious life, and polarization in the Church — but also describes the transitional arrival of Archbishop Rembert Weakland, a native of Western Pennsylvania and former archabbot of St. Vincent Archabbey in Latrobe. The author is a former president of the American Catholic Historical Association and also a priest of the archdiocese of Milwaukee.

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Delma Tallerico, *Ecclesiastical Architects, Artists, and Artisans in America: 1860-1920*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (Pittsburgh, 2014), table of contents, citations, bibliography, index, illus., 292 pp.

This is the latest version (the first iteration of 126 pp. was in 2011, with the second of 192 pp. in 2012, and the third of 268 pp. in 2013) of an examination, by a Pittsburgh-area independent scholar, of ecclesiastical architecture in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The four editions include treatment of a number of Catholic churches, their interior and exterior artwork, and architects and artisans active in Western Pennsylvania. In addition, the volumes provide an improved list of the many churches designed by the most prolific architect of American Catholic churches, Patrick Charles Keely (1816-1896). The author was a contributor to the recently published history of the Pittsburgh cathedral.

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Margaret M. Grubiak, *White Elephants on Campus: The Decline of the University Chapel in America, 1920-1960* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2014), softcover, illus., 184 pp.

The author, an associate professor of architectural history at Villanova University, presents a study of the construction of secular university chapels as an attempt by university officials to provide Christian worship space for a community largely disinterested in public worship. Building ornate chapels signaled continued university support for a vaguely Christian-related campus that had embraced a secular reality. The University of Pittsburgh's construction of the neo-Gothic Heinz Memorial Chapel (finished in 1938) emerges as the book's apogee of the creative synthesis of old and new.

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Bill Stout and Jean Domico, *Millvale* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2014), softcover, table of contents, illus., 128 pp.

This volume in the Arcadia "Images of America" series focuses on the borough of Millvale, located on the Allegheny River north of Pittsburgh. Included are the historic churches of St. Ann, St. Anthony (German) designed by famed architect John T. Comès, and St. Nicholas (Croatian) with its famed murals by Maxo Vanka — with some interesting stories reflecting the ethnic histories of the early parishioners of these churches. The Motherhouse of the Sisters of St. Francis is also included in the history of Millvale.

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Kevin J. Bozant, *Crescent City Saints: Religious Icons of New Orleans* (New Orleans: Po-Boy Press, 2014), softcover, illus., 176 pp.

"Oh, when the Saints go marching in!" If you want to be in "that number," you'll have to take a spiritual journey to houses of worship in New Orleans — which include the national shrine of Blessed Francis Xavier Seelos (former pastor of St. Philomena's in the Strip District) and Xavier University, founded by St. Katharine Drexel (another former Pittsburgh resident) for African-Americans. The book provides a unique perspective on Catholic history and life in New Orleans.

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Jo Piazza, *If Nuns ruled the World: Ten Sisters on a Mission* (New York: Open Road Integrated Media, 2014), softcover, table of contents, bibliography, 272 pp.

A veteran reporter and TV commentator profiles ten religious sisters and the causes to which they devoted their lives. Included in the stories is Sister Maureen Fiedler who passed through both the Sisters of Mercy in Erie and Pittsburgh in her work for civil rights for African-Americans — and her observations about the race riots that erupted in Pittsburgh after the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in 1968. She was later involved in anti-Vietnam War and women's rights movements.

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## BOOK REVIEWS (continued)

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Matthew Markovic, *The Catholic Struggle in Early America: American Catholic History 1776-1860* (Johnstown, PA: St. Matthew Books & Editorial, 2011) [Kindle edition], table of contents, bibliography, 239 KB/114 pp.

This work, geared to the general Catholic reader, covers the period from the Revolution to the eve of the Civil War. Included is treatment of Father Gallitzin, missionary work in the Alleghenies, Captain McGuire's settlement in Western Pennsylvania, frontier missions in Western Pennsylvania, Fr. Peter Heilbron at Sportsman's Hall, Catholic development in Johnstown, and Fr. Peter Lemke.

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John Troan, *Passport to Adventure: Memoirs of a Twentieth Century News Correspondent and Science Writer* (Pittsburgh: Geyer Printing, 2013), softcover [and kindle], table of contents, 892 KB /352 pp.

This is the fascinating story of John Troan, who retired as Editor of *The Pittsburgh Press* in 1983 after 44 years with the Scripps-Howard newspaper organization. It provides a fascinating look into the Slovak-descent author (nee Troanovitch)'s Greek Catholic background (including Vatican approval of his transfer from the Byzantine to Latin rite) and the persons and events that dominated Pittsburgh news (such as the Donora "death smog" and Jonas Salk's polio vaccine) for several decades. The author, now in his mid-90s, hasn't lost his ability to write and hold the reader's attention.

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Rev. Ivan Kaszczak, *Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky and the Establishment of the Ukrainian Catholic Church in the United States* (Toronto, ON: Basilian Press, 2013), table of contents, bibliography, index, appendix, illus., 214 pp.

The author, a Ukrainian-rite priest in New York with a Ph.D. in Religious Education from Fordham, gives an insider's view of the origins of this Eastern-rite church in the U.S. He details the conflict between the Ukrainians and Ruthenians (now organized in the U.S. within the Byzantine-rite), and the challenges posed by the Latin-rite hierarchy. Ukrainians in Western Pennsylvania were originally within the jurisdiction of the Archeparchy of Philadelphia, until formation of the Eparchy of Parma (Ohio) in 1983 — whose first bishop was Carnegie native Robert Moskal. This well-documented work is an excellent primer in the history of the Eastern Catholic churches in this country.

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Timothy L. Wesley, *The Politics of Faith during the Civil War* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2013), table of contents, endnotes, index, illus., 320 pp.

The author, a former Fellow at the Civil War Era Center at Penn State University, examines the engagement of northern and southern preachers in politics during the American Civil War. Pittsburgh's Bishop Michael Domenec is identified as strongly pro-Union, given his public addresses. The volume makes clear that bishops, priests, and ministers faced ostracism and even violence both for what they said and for what they did not say during the four years of violence.

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Barbara Johnstone, *Speaking Pittsburghese: The Story of a Dialect* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), table of contents, endnotes, index, 288 pp.

This work explores the history of the language of Pittsburgh — the urban dialect known as Pittsburghese. This language is one of the most resonant symbols of local identity in the United States today. The contributions of Catholics are duly noted. The author is professor of rhetoric at Carnegie Mellon University.

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Clark DeLeon, *Pennsylvania Curiosities*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (Guilford, CT: Morris Book Publishing, 2013), softcover, table of contents, index, illus., 320 pp.

The Keystone State is home to unique places and phenomena. This volume — a cross between travel guide, almanac, and news gazette — includes St. Anthony's Shrine and St. Mary of the Mount Church in Pittsburgh, and St. John Church in New Baltimore with its steps from the Pennsylvania Turnpike (between the Bedford and Somerset exits). St. John Neumann (who labored in Pittsburgh) and other aspects of Pennsylvania Catholic history are treated in the volume. The tone is light and entertaining!

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Alexandra Kowalski Everist (Celeste Mickiewicz and Yvonne Tuchalski, eds.), *Alliance College 1912-2012: Sto Lat!* (CreateSpace Independent Publishing, 2012), softcover, table of contents, references, illus., 346 pp.

This is the history of Alliance College, located in Cambridge Springs (about 20 miles south of Erie, in Crawford County), which was sponsored by the Polish National Alliance. President Taft attended the opening of the school. Ignacy Paderewski gave the first commencement address. The school was famed for its *Kujawiaki* folk dance ensemble. Its library housed the largest Polish collection in North America. The strong relationship with the Catholic Church, especially the bishops and Polish priests in Erie, is chronicled in this work. The student population peaked in 1968 and the school later closed in 1990.

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Joseph A. Laker, *Wheeling Jesuit University* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2012), softcover, table of contents, bibliography, illus., 128 pp.

This history of the Jesuit school closest to Pittsburgh includes the role of Western Pennsylvania native Rev. Clifford Lewis (born in Meadville, Crawford County), who established the school in the early 1950s. An historian, Lewis served as the school's archivist while handling fundraising and public relations.

## BOOK REVIEWS (continued)

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John P. Bowen, *The Missionary Letters of Vincent Donovan 1957-1973* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Pub., 2011), softcover, table of contents, epilogue, bibliography, index, illus., 252 pp.

The subject of this work is Spiritan Father Vincent Donovan, best known as the author of the bestsellers *Christianity Rediscovered* (1978) and *The Church in the Midst of Creation* (1989). The present book contains the monthly letters he wrote home while serving as a missionary in Tanzania between 1957 and 1973. They offer insight into his missionary spirit and work. The book's concluding section examines his legacy in both missionary and renewal movements. Donovan later served as campus minister at Duquesne University. He died in 2000. His Pittsburgh connections permeate this work.

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Delma Tallerico, *Beauty Dreamer: The Life and Times of Joseph Sibel — Nineteenth Century, German-American Ecclesiastical Sculptor* (Pittsburgh: Blurb, 2011), table of contents, appendices, endnotes, bibliography, index, illus., 330 pp.

This is a biographical study of German-born sculptor Joseph Sibel (1850-1907). The success of his artwork in the Hartford cathedral and St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City led to his undertaking both interior and exterior statuary decoration at St. Paul Cathedral, Pittsburgh. His sculpture came to portray uniquely American figures, such as Isaac Jogues, Kateri Tekakwitha, and Rose of Lima. This volume is beautifully illustrated with Sibel's works.

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Carol DeChant (Gregory F. Augustine Pierce and L.C. Fiore, eds.), *Great American Catholic Eulogies* (Chicago: ACTA Publications, 2011), table of contents, endnotes, appendices, 410 pp.

A spectrum of American Catholic history is presented through the lives of the men and women whose eulogies appear in this volume. Those memorialized made significant contributions in social, political, ecclesiastical, or military service or through art, literature, media, or sports. This book reintroduces such notables with ties to western Pennsylvania as Mother Katharine Drexel, Dorothy Day, and Andy Warhol. The several dozen persons included constitute a Catholic Who's Who.

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Thomas J. Craughwell, *Saints Preserved: An Encyclopedia of Relics* (New York, Image Books, 2011), softcover, table of contents, index, illus., 336 pp.

This work opens with quoted praises from former Pittsburgh bishop Donald Wuerl and Society Board Member Mike Aquilina — noting that relics are the visible reminders of heroes of the faith and provide inspiration for contemporary readers. The significant collection of relics at St. Anthony Chapel in Pittsburgh's Troy Hill neighborhood provides a framework for a portion of this volume. The lives of St. John Neumann, Blessed Francis Seelos, and St. Katharine Drexel are included in the history presented. The author is a columnist for Catholic diocesan newspapers.

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Dan Haga, *Urban Atrophy* (Atglen, PA: Schiffer Publishing, 2011), illus., 184 pp.

This is an examination of abandoned structures in the Mid-Atlantic, including the historic SS. Peter and Paul (German) Church in Pittsburgh's East End. Compelling text complements some 560 photos. The famed St. Mary (Redemptorist) Seminary in Ilchester, MD, is also included. The author transports readers to "another world, a surreal dream where people just disappeared and left everything behind."

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John Ochsendorf, *Guastavino Vaulting: The Art of Structural Tile* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2011), table of contents, appendices, endnotes, bibliography, index, 256 pp.

This work, by a structural engineer at MIT, celebrates the architectural legacy of Spanish immigrant Rafael Guastavino (1842-1908) and his family which oversaw the construction of thousands of spectacular self-supporting arches and vaults (using inter-locking terra cotta tiles and layers of mortar) across the U.S. between the 1880s and the 1950s — including in Pittsburgh: Rodef Shalom, buildings at Carnegie Mellon University and the University of Pittsburgh, Buhl Planetarium (now the Children's Museum), Allegheny County Courthouse, and the famed St. Boniface Church (now part of Holy Wisdom parish). The extensive list of extant buildings constructed with Guastavino is a master list of American architectural marvels, built for the ages.

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Frank A. Kravetz, *Eleven Two: One WWII Airman's Story of Capture, Survival and Freedom* (Stahlstown, PA: Silverbear Graphics, 2010), softcover, table of contents, references, illus., 320 pp.

Autobiographies of American servicemen who served in World War II are receiving particular attention as the number of survivors continues to decline as seven decades have passed since that wartime period. This work is one of the better ones — the story of a son of Slovak immigrants in East Pittsburgh, who attended St. Helen's (Slovak) Church, and enlisted in the Army Air Corps where he served as a gunner on a B17. At age 21, he became a POW. His Catholic faith sustained him during his time in German captivity. The author later served as a National Director of the American Ex-Prisoners of War for many years. His is an inspiring story.

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## BOOK REVIEWS (continued)

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Rev. Blaine Burkey, O.F.M. Cap., *Seelos: The Cumberland Years — The Life & Labors of Blessed Francis Xavier Seelos in Maryland's Allegheny Mountains 1857-1865* (New Orleans: Seelos Shrine, 2010), softcover [and Kindle edition], table of contents, endnotes, bibliography, 240 KB/92 pp.

This volume covers the years of Blessed Francis Seelos subsequent to his ministry in Pittsburgh, including the Civil War period. The sources reflect Seelos's correspondence with the Redemptorists who remained in Western Pennsylvania. The author is a native of Cumberland and a Capuchin archivist.

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*Millvale Murals at St. Nicholas Croatian Catholic Church* (2010), softcover, illus.

This is the latest publication detailing the famous Yanka murals at St. Nicholas Church in Millvale, and contains vivid photographs by Mark Perrott and Renee Rosensteel. A preservation society was initiated in 1990, and conservation work continues.

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David S. Bovee, *The Church and the Land: The National Catholic Rural Life Conference and American Society, 1923-2007* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2010), table of contents, bibliography, index, illus., 399 pp.

This is the first scholarly history of the Catholic rural life movement in the U.S. Farm families, agricultural laborers, and others who lived in the American countryside were a neglected backwater of the Church. The NCRLC was formed in 1923 to address the needs of Catholic rural America. The ground-breaking initiative of Pittsburgh's Confraternity of Christian Doctrine in providing religious instruction to those in rural southwestern Pennsylvania is noted, as is the historic role of Bishop James O'Connor (bishop of Omaha and former priest of the diocese of Pittsburgh) in rural Catholic colonization projects.

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Thomas A. McCabe, *Miracle on High Street: The Rise, Fall and Resurrection of St. Benedict's Prep in Newark, N.J.* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2010), table of contents, endnotes, index, illus., 340 pp.

Archabbot Boniface Wimmer, who established the first Benedictine abbey in the New World at St. Vincent in Latrobe, also established a Benedictine abbey in Newark, New Jersey, to serve German immigrants. This volume tells of Wimmer's foundational work, arrival of Benedictine Sisters from St. Mary's (PA) to staff the parish school, establishment of St. Benedict's prep school, the school's closing (reflecting the precipitous decline of the city of Newark after race riots in 1967) and later re-opening. The author is a former teacher and administrator at St. Benedict's. He superbly traces the role of Wimmer and his philosophy of Benedictine education, which sustained the Newark school in times good and bad.

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Bridget Mary Meehan, *Living Gospel Equality Now: Loving in the Heart of God – A Roman Catholic Woman Priest Story* (College Station, TX: Virtualbookworm.com Publishing, 2010), softcover [and Kindle edition] table of contents, illus., 3259 KB/202 pp.

The author, a former Immaculate Heart of Mary Sister, was among the first twelve women ordained a "priest" on July 31, 2006 aboard the riverboat *Majestic* while sailing on Pittsburgh's three rivers. This volume tracks her story and that of others in the Women Priests' Movement, recounting an ongoing conflict with church authorities and a conscious decision to separate from the Roman Catholic Church.

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Shaun A. Casey, *The Making of a Catholic President: Kennedy vs. Nixon 1960* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), table of contents, notes, index, illus, 272 pp.

The 1960 presidential campaign, one of the closest and most contentious in history, resulted in the election of the first Catholic — the exact opposite of the result in the 1928 presidential campaign which witnessed the crushing defeat of Catholic Al Smith. John Kennedy saw the "religion issue" as his greatest impediment to the White House. This book traces how he transformed this liability into an asset. While the book cover displays the historic photograph of Francis Cardinal Spellman with candidates Kennedy and Nixon at the 1960 Al Smith Dinner, it was actually Pittsburgh Bishop John J. Wright who played a critical role in educating Kennedy and enabling him to effectively deal with Methodist bishop C. Bromley Oxnam — the closest thing to an American Protestant cardinal due to his founding role in Protestants and Other Americans United for the Separation of Church and State (POAU) and his prominence as president of the precursor of the National Council of Churches. While the book is a historical delight, it is also relevant to present politics where politicians' religious beliefs seem increasingly important.

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Richard Loughheed, *The Controversial Conversion of Charles Chiniquy* (Toronto: Clements Academic, 2009), softcover, table of contents, 384 pp.

Quebec's best-selling author was Charles Chiniquy (1809-1899), who was ordained a Catholic priest in 1833 for service in the Archdiocese of Quebec, but later emigrated to Illinois where his conduct ultimately led to his excommunication by the bishop of Chicago. Leaving the Catholic Church, Chiniquy became a Presbyterian minister. He authored *Fifty Years in the Church of Rome* and *The Priest, The Woman and The Confessional*, and traveled throughout the United States (including Western Pennsylvania) to win Catholics to Protestantism. His works are still in circulation as anti-Catholic tracts, and his myths continue unabated on the Internet. This biography by a Canadian Mennonite specialist in French Protestant history admittedly invites "further research."

## BOOK REVIEWS (continued)

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Ciarán O'Carroll, *Paul Cardinal Cullen: Portrait of a Practical Nationalist* (Dublin: Veritas Publications, 2008), table of contents, endnotes, index, illus., 321 pp.

This is the most recent biography of Paul Cullen (1803-1878), who — after spending almost 30 years in Rome as rector of the Irish College and rector of the College of *Propaganda Fide* — returned to his native Ireland in 1850 to become successively archbishop of Armagh, primate of all Ireland, Apostolic Delegate to Ireland, archbishop of Dublin, and in 1866 the first Irish Cardinal. He was the most important political figure in Ireland in the thirty years between Daniel O'Connell and Charles Parnell. This work addresses the fact that Cullen almost became the first bishop of Pittsburgh, when in 1837 Philadelphia Bishop Francis Kenrick sought establishment of a new diocese in Pittsburgh. How different the history of Ireland and Western Pennsylvania would have been!

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Daire Keogh and Albert McDonnell (eds.), *The Irish College, Rome and its World* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2008), table of contents, 296 pp.

The Irish College was established in Rome in 1628 to prepare priests for missionary work in Ireland, where the occupying English had outlawed Catholicism. The institution served as seminary, embassy, and focus of Irish Catholic interests until Ireland established diplomatic relations with the Holy See in the 20th century. Pittsburgh's first bishop, Michael O'Connor, lived here as a seminarian, served as vice-rector, and was ordained bishop in the college's chapel; his brother James (a priest of the diocese of Pittsburgh, confessor to St. Katharine Drexel, and bishop of Omaha) was in residence there.

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Lynne Conner, *Pittsburgh in Stages: Two Hundred Years of Theater* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2007), table of contents, endnotes, bibliography, index, maps, illus., 320 pp.

Theater productions can be a barometer of civic life in a community. This volume examines the history of theater, including its personnel and cultural brokers, in Pittsburgh. It vividly demonstrates the deep ties of Pittsburgh theater to ethnic and religious communities. The historic role of Catholics and the significance of the Catholic Theatre Guild, the Veronica's Veil Players, the Newman Players, and Benedict's Players (of St. Benedict Church in the Hill District) are integrated in this cultural presentation. The author is an associate professor of theater arts at the University of Pittsburgh.

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Suzanne Brown-Fleming, *The Holocaust and Catholic Conscience: Cardinal Aloisius Muench and the Guilt Question in Germany* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2005), table of contents, appendices, endnotes, bibliography, index, illus., 256 pp.

This work by an official at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum examines the role of Aloisius Cardinal Muench (1889-1962), the bishop of Fargo (North Dakota) who served as the Vatican's representative to occupied Germany and then as papal nuncio to Germany between 1946 and 1959. The author argues that Muench helped legitimize the Church's failure to confront, in the post-World War II era, its complicity in Nazism's anti-Jewish ideology. The roles of Pittsburgh's Msgr. Walter Carroll (head of the English language desk in the papal Secretariat of State) and Erie's Bishop John Mark Gannon in the post-war period are duly noted.

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Ruggero J. Aldisert, *Road to the Robes: A Federal Judge Recollects Young Years & Early Times* (Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2005), softcover, table of contents, illus., 444 pp.

This autobiography of U.S. Third Circuit Judge Ruggero J. Aldisert (1919-2014) opens with the story of the Ku Klux Klan terrorizing his Italian family in Carnegie (Allegheny County) in 1922. The volume provides a candid look at his Italian and Catholic heritage. Aldisert served as president of the Italian Sons and Daughters of America from 1954 to 1968.

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Rev. Ivan Kaszczak, *The Education of Ukrainian Greek Catholic Clergy (1882-1946)* (Lviv, Ukraine: Svichado Publishers, 2005), table of contents, footnotes, bibliography, appendices, illus., 235 pp.

This scholarly work by a Polish-born priest of the Ukrainian rite focuses on the history of seminary education of Ukrainian-rite clergy in Eastern Europe — and includes seminary formation in Rome and the United States. Of particular interest is the identification of Western Pennsylvania natives who entered the seminary program. Priestly education is described against the backdrop of political upheavals that convulsed Europe during two World Wars and culminated in the closing of seminaries and attempted extermination of the "Greek Catholic" church by Soviet Russia. The author holds a Ph.D. from Fordham and is pastor of a Ukrainian-rite church in New York.

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Allan Urbanic and Beth Feinberg (eds.), *A Guide to Slavic Collections in the United States and Canada* (New York: Routledge, 2005), table of contents, index, 214 pp.

This is a survey of 85 libraries that house Slavic and East European research materials in print, microfilm, and electronic formats. Each institution's librarian or archivist wrote the individual entries. Included are SS. Cyril & Methodius Seminary on Pittsburgh's North Side, the University of Pittsburgh, Penn State University, and the Polish National Catholic Church based in Scranton. This volume is an essential time-saving resource for anyone seeking Slavic research materials.

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## BOOK REVIEWS (continued)

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Walter C. Kidney, *Pittsburgh Then and Now* (San Diego: Thunder Bay Press, 2004), illus., 144 pp.

Arthur G. Smith, *Pittsburgh Then and Now* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 1990), table of contents, 336 pp.

These two attractive volumes match historic images of early Pittsburgh with modern photographs. Included in the first are a number of historic Catholic churches, including the second St. Paul Cathedral, St. John the Baptist Ukrainian on the South Side, St. James in the West End, St. Peter in the Lower Hill District, and many others. The narrative contextualizes these churches, some of which have been demolished. The second volume includes famed Strip District churches (St. Philomena, St. Patrick, St. Elizabeth, and St. Stanislaus), St. John Chrysostom in Greenfield, and the current St. Paul Cathedral.

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John T. McGreevey, *Catholicism and American Freedom: A History* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2004), softcover, table of contents, endnotes, index, 432 pp.

A University of Notre Dame assistant professor of history has addressed the interplay and tension between Catholic ideals and American politics with respect to ideas of freedom. Controversial topics impacted by Catholic thought and action include education, nationalism, slavery, social welfare, and abortion — to name but a few. This thought provoking work provides a unique slant on the sizeable role Catholicism has played on the American stage. The significant intellectual contribution of Pittsburgh Bishop John Wright is duly examined.

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Leslie Woodcock Tentler, *Catholics and Contraception: An American History* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004), table of contents, epilogue, endnotes, glossary, index, illus., 352 pp.

This work, by a history professor at the Catholic University of America, is a critical study of Catholics' reception of the church's doctrinal position on contraception, and an examination of cultural change and the development of mores regarding sex and reproduction over the century leading up to the 1968 issuance of *Humanae Vitae* by Pope Paul VI. Pittsburgh's Bishop John J. Wright figured prominently in the American articulation and implementation of the encyclical; the different role played by Pittsburgh's former bishop (John Dearden of Detroit) is also noted. There is an intriguing photograph of the pastor and Sisters of Mercy at a First Communion breakfast at St. Peter parish in Somerset. This volume is one in the Cushwa Center's studies of Catholicism in twentieth-century America.

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Robert W. Cherny, William Issel, and Kieran Walsh Taylor (eds.), *American Labor and the Cold War: Grassroots Politics and Postwar Political Culture* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2004), table of contents, index, 312 pp.

Robert E. Weir and James P. Hanlan (eds.), *Historical Encyclopedia of American Labor, Volume 2* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 2004), table of contents, appendices, bibliography, index, illus., 392 pp.

Ronald L. Filippelli and Mark D. McColloch, *Cold War in the Working Class: The Rise and Decline of the United Electrical Workers* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1995), table of contents, appendix, endnotes, bibliography, index, 318 pp.

Ronald W. Schatz, *The Electrical Workers: A History of Labor at General Electric and Westinghouse 1923-1960* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1983), table of contents, bibliography, index, tables, charts, illus., 302 pp.

The first work is a collection of essays that addresses the history of labor in the postwar years by exploring the impact of the U.S.-Soviet struggle on American workers and labor unions. The pivotal role of the Catholic Church is integrated in the essays. Pittsburgh's Msgr. Charles Owen Rice receives extensive treatment. The second work is a guide for those undertaking research projects in labor history and contains almost 400 cross-referenced entries on unions, labor leaders, events, court cases, and labor terminology —including extensive treatment of Pittsburgh's famed labor priests: Msgrs. Charles Owen Rice, Carl Hensler, and George Barry O'Toole. The third work is an engaging study of one of the most powerful unions of the CIO era, and candidly presents the ideological conflicts of the early Cold War era — and the prominent role of Msgr. Rice in the anti-Communist efforts within trade unionism. The fourth work is a highly informative study of labor's struggle to unionize, the conflict of right and left, the fratricidal war over Communism, and the continuous presence of the Catholic Church in the form of its labor priests (principally, Msgr. Rice). The last author debunks some widely held notions about American labor history.

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Nicholas Svensson Karas, *Hunky: The Immigrant Experience* (Bloomington, IN: 1stBooks 2009), table of contents, appendix, illus., 580 pp.

The author, a New York Times columnist, has purposely titled his book with the provocative "Hunky" — a term of derision given to Rusyns who emigrated to the United States from the Carpathian Mountains, and later applied to other Eastern European peoples — to attract attention to his work. The volume is the story of two families, spanning three generations, who leave the oppression of their homeland for an American life working in Pennsylvania coal mines and steel mills. The author adroitly blends history, biography, autobiography, and historical fiction.

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## BOOK REVIEWS (continued)

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Jeremy Bonner, *Called Out of Darkness into Marvelous Light: A History of the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh, 1750-2006* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2009), softcover, table of contents, bibliography, illus., 364 pp.

This balanced history of the diocese that has been at the epicenter of the conflict between Anglicans and Episcopalians/conservatives and liberals is of particular interest to Catholics in light of the diocese's evangelization of fallen-away Catholics, role of former Catholic priests, and conflicts with the local Catholic Church. This work was commissioned by then-Pittsburgh Bishop Robert Duncan for the planned 2008 celebration of 250 years of Anglican presence in southwestern Pennsylvania since the expulsion of the Catholic French from Fort Duquesne in 1758.

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Deborah Fraioli and Earle Havens, *Joan of Arc: Rare Books and Objects of Art from the Cardinal Wright Collection of the Boston Public Library* (Boston: Boston Public Library, 2006), illus., bibliography, 75 pp.

This is a catalogue presentation of the exhibition "10,000 Joans: Treasures from the Joan of Arc Collection of the Boston Public Library, March 21-August 15, 2006." John Cardinal Wright (bishop of Pittsburgh 1959-1969) assembled a famed Joan of Arc collection over many decades, which was deposited with the Boston Public Library following his death in 1979.

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Patrick W. Carey, *Orestes A. Brownson: American Religious Weathervane* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2004), table of contents, bibliographical note, index, 448 pp.

Orestes Brownson (1803-1876) was a New England philosopher, essayist, and minister whose ideas influenced the social and religious mores of his day. Brownson moved from Calvinist Congregationalism to Presbyterianism, and ultimately to Catholicism in 1844. His newfound religious zeal led him to be harshly critical in defense of the Catholic Church — which brought him into conflict with Catholic bishops. This new biography by a philosophy professor at Marquette University recounts the conflict between Brownson and Pittsburgh Bishop Michael O'Connor regarding the extent of the pope's temporal authority. Brownson, who coined the term "Americanization," is buried in the crypt of the basilica at the University of Notre Dame.

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Arthur P. Miller, Jr. and Marjorie L. Miller, *Guide to the Homes of Famous Pennsylvanians: Houses, Museums, and Landmarks* (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 2003), softcover, table of contents, map, index, 224 pp.

This volume profiles 39 famous Pennsylvanians, and provides a guide to the houses and museums that memorialize their accomplishments. Among these 39 are former Pittsburghers St. John Neumann and St. Katharine Drexel — and Andy Warhol. Additional famous Catholic personalities, without museums, are also included, such as Johnny Unitas (graduate of St. Justin H.S. in Pittsburgh). The authors are a former *National Geographic* editor and an American Red Cross administrator.

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Daniel J. Brabender, Jr., *That Championship Season: The Story of the 2000 Cathedral Prep Ramblers* (Meridian Creative Group, 2002), table of contents, index, illus., 122 pp.

Daniel J. Brabender, Jr., *1924-1999 Ramblers: The History of Cathedral Prep Football* (Erie, PA: Daniel J. Brabender, 2000), 929 pp.

These two volumes present the exciting history of football at the Cathedral Preparatory School, established by then-Bishop John Mark Gannon of Erie as the only boy's high school in the city of Erie.

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John H. Hinshaw, *Steel and Steelworkers: Race and Class Struggle in Twentieth-Century Pittsburgh* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2002), table of contents, endnotes, index, 366 pp.

This is a fresh examination of an old theme: the forces that shaped "Hell with the lid off" Pittsburgh, industry, and labor through rapid industrialization beginning in the 19th century and precipitous deindustrialization at the end of the 20th century. The roles of Catholics, the Catholic Church, Catholic organizations, and Msgr. Charles Owen Rice receive comprehensive treatment. The author, a History professor at Lebanon Valley College, obtained both his M.A. and Ph.D. from Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh.

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Walter C. Kidney, *Henry Hornbostel: An Architect's Master Touch* (Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation, 2002), table of contents, appendices, map, index, illus., 249 pp.

Henry Hornbostel (1867-1961) was a prolific *Beaux Arts*-trained architect whose Pittsburgh works included Carnegie Mellon University, Rodef Shalom synagogue, Soldiers and Sailors Memorial, and the City-County Building. This lavishly illustrated work includes Hornbostel's Holy Rosary School in the Homewood section of Pittsburgh.

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## BOOK REVIEWS (continued)

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Sister Helen Herbstritt, O.S.B., *Benedictine Harvest: Historical Sketches for Benedictine Communities of Women* (St. Marys, PA: Benedictine Sisters of St. Joseph Monastery, 2002), softcover, illus., 74 pp.

Sister Laura Swan, O.S.B., *History of North American Benedictine Women: A Bibliography* (New York: Writers Club Press, 2001), softcover, 132 pp.

Sister Helen Herbstritt, O.S.B., *First Benedictine Convent in the United States and the Work of God* (St. Marys, PA: St. Joseph Convent, 1985)

Sister Mary Louis Morkin, O.S.B., *Wind in the Wheat: A Century of Prayer and Work in Erie — The Sisters of Saint Benedict, 1856-1956* (Erie, PA: McCarty Printing, 1956), 312 pp.

These are several of the histories of the two communities of Benedictine Sisters in northwestern Pennsylvania that have been published in the last six decades. The St. Mary's (Elk County) community was established in 1852 from a group of immigrant Sisters from St. Walburg Abbey in Eichstätt, Germany. In 1856, the Erie community was established out of St. Mary's. The St. Mary's community, the first in the New World, no longer exists.

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David Leopold, *The Gift of Sympathy: The Art of Maxo Vanka* (Doylestown, PA: James A. Michener Art Museum, 2001), softcover, illus., 56 pp.

This is a descriptive catalogue of an Exhibition held consecutively at the James A. Michener Art Museum in Doylestown, PA and the Senator John Heinz Center in Pittsburgh in 2001 and 2002. It identifies the works of the famed Croatian muralist, Maxo Vanka (1889-1963). The profuse illustrations are in color and black/white — and include the famed murals in St. Nicholas (Croatian) Church in Millvale. Vanka's titles accompany the reproduced works; for untitled works, descriptive titles are provided in brackets.

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Vinson Synan, *Century of the Holy Spirit: 100 Years of Pentecostal and Charismatic Renewal 1901-2001* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2001), table of contents, endnotes, index, illus., 512 pp.

This is the definitive study of the Pentecostal/Charismatic renewal movement in the United States and the world. It makes clear that the movement is not solely Protestant; indeed, the work covers such local Catholic contributions as retreats at the Ark and the Dove retreat house, the 1966 National Cursillo Convention in Pittsburgh, and Duquesne University's significant charismatic renewal beginning in 1967. The author is Dean of the School of Divinity at Regent University in Virginia Beach.

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Patricia Costa Viglucci, *Growing Up Italian in God's Country: Stories from the Wilds of Pennsylvania — Four Generations Meld Cultures in the Allegheny Mountains* (Rochester, NY: Stone Pine Books, 2001), table of contents, maps, illus., 251 pp.

Alfred Borelli, *The East Fork Revisited: A Memoir* (Rochester, NY: Stone Pine Books, 2005), table of contents, illus., 160 pp.

The first work covers four generations of Italian-Americans in Potter and McKean Counties (in the diocese of Erie) between 1891 and 1950 and is distinctive in presenting the rural experience of Italian immigrants, contrasting with the urban life typically chronicled. Stories of life in northern Pennsylvania are intertwined with those of the author's search for her ancestral roots in Italy. All nationalities can identify with the family's story, candidly presented. Catholic churches, existing and long-gone, are noted. The second work, by a relative of the first author, is the product of a Potter County native (b. 1925) who paints a humorous picture of rural life, including some Catholic stories. The author later became a teacher, professional musician, and filmmaker.

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Lawrence Barriger, *Glory to Jesus Christ! A History of the American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Church* (Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2000), table of contents, endnotes, bibliography illus., 152 pp.

This is the story of the tempestuous times that surrounded the departure of Rev. Orestes P. Charnock and a group of 37 Ruthenian Catholic parishes (many located in southwestern Pennsylvania) from the Catholic Church over differences regarding clerical celibacy and Latinization. The separation occurred at a November 23, 1937 meeting in Pittsburgh. Charnock became the first bishop of the newly-formed church in September 1938. The group is within the Orthodox communion. Today, the church comprises about 15,000 members in 78 parishes, and is headquartered at Christ the Saviour Cathedral in Johnstown, PA. The author, who is vice-chancellor of the diocese, had previously authored a 1984 biography of Charnock entitled *Good Victory*.

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Philip Jenkins, *The Cold War at Home: The Red Scare in Pennsylvania, 1945-1960* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), table of contents, endnotes, index, tables, 288 pp.

Pennsylvania was the scene of some of the fiercest anti-Communist activism in the United States, and this work examines the Red Scare's reverberations in politics, labor movement, ethnic organizations, schools, and religious organizations in the Keystone State. Pittsburgh's noted labor priest, Msgr. Charles Owen Rice, receives significant treatment. The role of Matt Cvetic, a Pittsburgher who infiltrated the Communist Party, is also treated. The author is a professor at Penn State University.

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## BOOK REVIEWS (continued)

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Sister Virginia Ann Gardner, *Let It Be: A Catholic Sister Remembering the Past, Living the Present, Pondering the Future* (Erie, PA: Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern PA, 1998), table of contents, illus., 191 pp.

Recollections of life by a Sister of St. Joseph of Erie, Pennsylvania, and the ministries of her community.

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Thomas J. Hunt, *Doctoral Dissertations on Catholic Schools in the United States 1988-1997* (Washington, D.C.: National Catholic Educational Association, 1998), softcover, 115 pp.

This invaluable resource provides readers with a synopsis of the 302 doctoral dissertations on Catholic schools written between 1988 and 1997, including works relating to Catholic Western Pennsylvania. This work would be of interest to anyone interested in Catholic education.

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Dorothy M. Brown and Elizabeth McKeown, *The Poor Belong to Us: Catholic Charities and American Welfare* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), softcover, table of contents, sources, notes, index, 284 pp.

This work by two history professors at Georgetown University is an incisive study of the evolution of American Catholic charities from volunteer and local origins into a centralized and professional effort that cared for Catholic families and resisted Protestant and state intrusions. In the development of this largest private system of social welfare in the country, Pittsburgh Bishop J. F. Regis Canevin laid the groundwork, on which his successor (Bishop Hugh C. Boyle) built. Catholics' massive efforts had enormous ramifications for the country and its approach to social welfare.

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Mary J. Oates, *The Catholic Philanthropic Tradition in America* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1995), table of contents, endnotes, bibliography, index, 248 pp.

This work traces the history of organized Catholic charitable activities (schools, hospitals, orphanages), noting diminished personal service and, since the 1960s, reduced financial contributions relative to income. The volume notes the significant role that Pittsburgh Catholics played in this history. The author is a Sister of St. Joseph of Boston and professor of Economics at Regis College.

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John R. Burgoon, Jr., *The First Seventeen: Growing Up in Pennsylvania 1924-1941* (Lulu Publishing, 1994), softcover, table of contents, illus., appendices, 260 pp.

The author — an entrepreneur in California — provides a glimpse of life growing up in the 1920s and 1930s in the Farrell/Sharon area (Mercer County). A descendant of one of the early families that comprised Fr. Gallitzin's colony in Western Pennsylvania, he describes life as a Depression-era all-American Catholic kid — replete with Latin and the ritual of becoming an altar boy.

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Walter H. Maloney, *Our Catholic Roots: Old Churches East of the Mississippi* (Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Publishing, 1992), table of contents, bibliography, index, illus., 591 pp.

A Washington lawyer traveled throughout the United States researching 59 of the most historic Catholic churches in the country. Among those presented in this work is famed St. Michael's in Loretto. Integral to this history are three figures: Continental Army Captain Michael McGuire, missionary Father Demetrius Gallitzin, and industrialist Charles Schwab. Those desirous of understanding the Catholic roots of many communities (in sharp contrast to the often-painted picture of Catholics as "outsiders") will find this volume gives context to our American Catholic experience.

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Robert Hessen, *Steel Titan: The Life of Charles M. Schwab* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1990), table of contents, appendices, endnotes, index, illus., 376 pp.

Kenneth Warren, *Industrial Genius: The Working Life of Charles Michael Schwab* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2007), table of contents, endnotes, bibliography, index, illus., 304 pp.

Charles Schwab (1862-1939) was a native of Mechanicsburg (PA), who moved at age 12 to Loretto in Cambria County, where he was enrolled in a school conducted by the Sisters of Mercy. While he began as an engineer in Andrew Carnegie's steelworks, by age 35 he became president of Carnegie Steel Company and later became the first president of U.S. Steel Corporation. The first volume is an exhaustively researched work and remains the definitive personal biography of Schwab; the second volume, reflecting a different focus and more recently available records, is an intriguing business biography. Together, they paint a clear picture of a generous contributor to the Catholic Church (such as a \$2 million endowment to St. Francis College in Loretto, funds for convents in Loretto and Cresson, and churches in Braddock). They also contrast Schwab's strict Catholic upbringing with his later "fast-lane" lifestyle and his labor clashes with immigrant Catholic workers who were backed by Pittsburgh priests. Despite his colossal achievements, Schwab died in poverty. One of his great mansions is now part of St. Francis University in Loretto.

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## BOOK REVIEWS (continued)

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Rev. Donal O'Donovan, *The Rock from Which You Were Hewn: A History of the Catholic Church in Lewis County, WV, and St. Patrick Parish, Weston* (Parsons, WV: MCP, 1989), table of contents, endnotes, 224 pp.

Pittsburgh was a jumping off point for travelers headed to western Virginia in colonial days. Likewise western Pennsylvania supplied itinerant priests who ministered in the southern Appalachian Mountains. This volume highlights the work of priests from Pittsburgh who, along with many others, missioned the faith in what is now central West Virginia. The author was a Cork-born priest of the diocese of Wheeling, who died in 2012.

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Sister Eunice Carlos, SSJ, *A Short History of Villa Maria College: 1925-1984* (Erie, PA: Villa Maria College, 1984), 31 pp.

This work is a brief history of the college established by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern Pennsylvania in Erie, at the behest of then-Bishop John Mark Gannon. The school ultimately amalgamated into Gannon University, which sprang from Villa Maria College.

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Henry J. Koren, *A Spiritan Who Was Who: In North America and Trinidad 1732-1981* (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1984), table of contents, 442 pp.

This volume celebrates 250 years of service of the Spiritans (formerly known as the Holy Ghost Fathers) by providing 1,109 biographical profiles of members of the order, accompanied by annotated citations. This work is invaluable in identifying those who contributed to early educational and parish development in Western Pennsylvania and beyond.

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James P. Gaffey, *Francis Clement Kelley and the American Catholic Dream*, 2 vol. (Bensenville, IL: Heritage Foundation, 1980), table of contents, chronology, genealogy, references, index, illus., 452 + 476 pp.

This is the definitive biography of Bishop Francis C. Kelley (1870-1948), a Canadian-born priest who founded the Catholic Extension Society in 1905 to bring the Catholic faith to rural and mission areas in the United States. He established the famed *Extension Magazine*, with three million subscribers. These volumes hold particular interest to western Pennsylvanians because they describe the roles of Pittsburgh bishops John Canevin and Hugh Boyle in actively supporting the Society, and the historical development of Montezuma Seminary in New Mexico under the direction of then-Bishop (later Archbishop) John Mark Gannon of Erie.

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Luis Medina Ascencio S.J., *Historia del Seminario de Montezuma: Sus Precedentes Fundación y Consolidación 1910-1953* (Mexico City: Editorial Jus, 1962), softcover, illus., 318 pp.

Jose Maclas, S.J., *Bodas de Plata: Montezuma 1937-1962* (Santa Fe: Archdiocese of Santa Fe, 1962), illus., 47 pp.

Very Rev. Msgr. James M. Powers, *Memoirs: The Seminary of Montezuma: Documents and Writings of Most Reverend John Mark Gannon, Chairman of the Bishops' Committee for Montezuma Seminary and His Episcopal Associates* (Easton, PA: Mack Printing, 1953), table of contents, epilogue, illus., 225 pp.

Most Rev. Laurence Fitzsimon, *The Story of Montezuma Seminary* (Amarillo, TX, 1952), 259 pp.

Anne M. Martínez, "From the Halls of Montezuma: Seminary in Exile or Pan-American Project," *U.S Catholic Historian*, Vol. 20, No. 4 (Fall, 2002), 35-51.

Collectively, these four volumes and one article detail the role of Archbishop John Mark Gannon of Erie in the establishment and operation of Montezuma Seminary. Located in New Mexico, the seminary — officially known as the Pontifical Mexican National Seminary of Our Lady of Guadalupe, which operated from 1937 to 1972 — served as the principal educational institution for Mexican seminarians during and after the decades of violent persecution that enveloped Catholic Mexico. The first two volumes were published to commemorate the silver anniversary of the seminary. The principal value of the third work, written by Gannon's diocesan director of charities, lies in its incorporation of the key documents related to the bishops' committee; the then-Apostolic Delegate to the U.S., Archbishop Amleto Cicognani, provided the Foreword.

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Rev. Lawrence G. Lovasik, S.V.D., *Our Lady's Knight: The True Story of Technical Sergeant Leo E. Lovasik (1921-1943)* (Boston: St. Paul Edition, 1960), bibliography, 203 pp.

This is the biography of Tarentum (Allegheny County) native Leo Lovasik (1921-1943), an Air Corpsman killed when his B-24 went down in World War II — as told through the extensive letters written to his mother and his sweetheart during the war. In 1947, his body was removed from London to St. Clement Cemetery in Tarentum. More than 100,000 copies of this work were distributed. The author (1913-1986) was the subject's older brother, a much-published missionary in the Society of the Divine Word who founded the Sisters of the Divine Spirit in Erie in 1956 (due to declining numbers, the Sisters moved to a nursing home in Canton, Ohio in 2010).

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## BOOK REVIEWS (continued)

Beatrice M. Fabre, *Gannondale: A Self-Study of an Institution* (Washington, D.C.: National Conference of Catholic Charities, 1959), table of contents, 182 pp.

A history of Gannondale, a school for troubled young girls established by then-Bishop John Mark Gannon of Erie, and operated by the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity of Refuge under the auspices of Catholic Charities. The institutional name reflects the founder's surname.

Rev. Felix Fellner, O.S.B., *Archabbot Boniface and His Monks*, 5 vol. (Latrobe, PA: St. Vincent's Archabbey, 1956), 731 pp.

This is the comprehensive story of the founder of St. Vincent Archabbey in Latrobe, Archabbot Boniface Wimmer. The author (1874-1963) was Bavarian-born, a long-time professor of History at St. Vincent's, and one of the original eight founders of the Catholic Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania.

Rev. Theophane Maguire, C.P., *Human Harvest* (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing, 1946), illus., 192 pp.

This is the autobiography of a Passionist missionary, Father Theophane Maguire (1898-1975) in Hunan Province in western China. Maguire entered the Passionist novitiate at St. Paul of the Cross Monastery in Pittsburgh. Following ordination, he served in China 1923-1929 — along with companions Basil Bauer of Sharon (Mercer County) and Dominic Langenbacher of Pittsburgh. Maguire later became editor of *The Sign* magazine (1934-1943). This volume was written following the missionary's return from China.

Rev. Albert H. Ledoux, *Catholic Vital Records of Central Pennsylvania, Volume 1, 1793-1839* (Altoona, PA: A.H. Ledoux, 1993) [318 pp. — 5,500 records]; *Volume II, 1840-1849* (1994) [328 pp. — 6,275 records]; *Volume III, 1850-1857* (1994) [538 pp. — 9,355 records]; *Volume IV, 1858-1864* (1996) [602 pp. — 10, 611 records]; *Volume V, 1865-1869* (1996) [476 pp. — 8,564 records], indices.

*Early Parish Records of St. John Gualbert Co-Cathedral, Johnstown, PA: Transcribed from Original Church Records, Volume 1, 1844-1862; Volume 2, 1863-1889; Volume 3, 1890-1899; Volume 4, 1900-1907; Volume 5, 1908 to Sept. 1913* (Altoona, PA: Blair County Genealogical Society, 1987), indices.

These volumes preserve, by transcription, the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century parish records of births and marriages in what is now the diocese of Altoona-Johnstown — the counties of Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Centre, Clinton, Fulton, Huntingdon, and Somerset. Each volume contains an index to the persons baptized, married, and buried. These church records are of invaluable assistance to genealogists and historians. Father Ledoux, who holds a Ph.D. from the Catholic University of America, was a faculty member of Mount St. Mary Seminary in Emmitsburg, MD, at the time of writing; he is now pastor of St. Demetrius Parish in Gallitzin.

## ARTICLES

Colleen McDannell, "Photography, Teenie Harris, and the Migration of Catholic Images," *Catholic Historical Review* Vol. 101, No. 1 (Centennial Issue 2015), 80-98.

This article by a professor of Religious Studies and History at the University of Utah analyzes the online archive of Pittsburgh photojournalist Teenie Harris (1908-1998) — a long-time staff photographer of the *Pittsburgh Courier* — to reveal that African-Americans utilized Catholic devotional arts in their homes and churches. Catholic images spoke to their need for an embodied Christianity. This well-written article illustrates how photographic archives provide important insights into how religion is lived, and the degree to which Catholic imagery has been absorbed outside of traditionally perceived denominational boundaries. The pictures accompanying the article tell the real story.

Amanda Bresie, "Mother Katharine Drexel's Benevolent Empire: The Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions and the Education of Native Americans, 1885-1935," *U.S. Catholic Historian* Vol. 32, No. 3 (Summer 2014), 1-24.

Jerome Oetgen, "Day of Fire and Ice," *St. Vincent Magazine* Vol. 10, Issue 2 (Winter 2013), 5-12.

This article recounts the disastrous fire at St. Vincent Archabbey and College in Latrobe that took place on a bitter cold morning, January 28, 1963. The financial cost topped \$2 million, with the old students' chapel, belltower, and biology lab totally destroyed; other buildings were damaged; the basilica, choir chapel, and monastic refectory sustained extensive damage from smoke and water. Almost 100 monks were displaced. Thankfully, no one died in the tragedy. The author is a 1969 St. Vincent College graduate, who served successively as a professor at Seton Hill University and as a U.S. Department of State Foreign Service Officer.

## ARTICLES (continued)

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Edward Brett, "A Monument to Catholic Social Justice: The Maxo Vanka Murals of St. Nicholas Croatian Church, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania," *American Catholic Studies* Vol. 122, No. 1 (Spring, 2011), 101-107.

The author, a now-retired professor of history at La Roche College, traces the life of Croatian artist Maxo Vanka and the two cycles (1937 and 1941) during which he painted the murals on the walls and ceiling of St. Nicholas Church in Millvale (Allegheny County), Pennsylvania. The murals have been featured in *Life*, *Harper's*, and *National Geographic*. *Time* magazine in 1937 referred to the first series of murals as "one of the few distinguished sets of church murals in the U.S."

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Clifford M. Lewis, S.J., "French Jesuits in Western Pennsylvania," *The Woodstock Letters: A Record of Current Events and Historical Notes Connected with the Colleges and Missions of the Society of Jesus*, Vol. LXXVI (1947), pp. 130-158.

The author, a native of Meadville (Crawford County), traces the early missionary efforts of the Jesuits, both as part of French expeditions and independently, into Western Pennsylvania before, during and after the period of the existence of Fort Duquesne [later Pittsburgh] 1754-1756. [Text available at [www.jesuitarchives.org](http://www.jesuitarchives.org).]

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Clifford M. Lewis, S.J., "French Priests in Western Pennsylvania 1739-1759," *Mid-America* (April 1947), 92-121.

The author covers all French priests who labored in Western Pennsylvania, both Recollects and Jesuits — including Frs. Denys Baron PR (1716-1758), Jacques-Quintin de la Bretonnière SJ (1689-1754), Joseph-Pierre de Bonnécamp SJ (1707-1790) (who accompanied the explorer Pierre-Joseph Céloron de Blainville in his 1749 expedition along the Ohio and Allegheny Rivers), and Claude François-Louis Virost SJ (d. 1757) (who celebrated the first Mass in Beaver County in 1757) — during the extended struggle for possession of the area west of the Allegheny Mountains between the French and the English.

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## OTHER MEDIA

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*Maxo Vanka's Masterpiece: The Murals at St. Nicholas Church* [DVD] (Pittsburgh: Kenneth A. Love LLC, 2012).

This 56-minute videodisc presents the famous Vanka murals at the Millvale church. Narrated by Pittsburgh bishop David Zubik, the documentary film debuted at Duquesne University in January 2012.

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