

Province of The Most Holy Name

Franciscan Fathers

135 WEST 31ST STREET
NEW YORK 1, NEW YORK

OFFICE OF THE PROVINCIAL

March, 1956

My dear Confrere:

On December 17, Fr. Eustace Smith made an appointment to come to my office the morning of Tuesday, December 20. Upon his arrival he carefully closed both doors and stated that what he had to tell me was to be kept in the most strict confidence and secrecy. The secret had to do with the Holy Office, the Apostolic Delegate, Fr. Thomas Plassmann and myself. Many thoughts raced through my head. I was relieved when he informed me that he was to be made a Bishop.

Fr. Eustace was consecrated February 2 at Mt. Saint Sepulchre, Washington, D.C., by the Apostolic Delegate Archbishop Cicognani; Auxiliary Bishops John M. McNamara of Washington, D.C., and Leo R. Smith of Buffalo were Co-Consecrators. Archbishop John F. O'Hara of Philadelphia preached. Since his consecration, Bishop Eustace Smith has given of himself and his time pontificating at various houses of the Province. He plans to leave for Rome around April 16 and arrive in Beirut May 3 for his Installation which will follow immediately after his arrival. At the invitation of Bishop Smith, Fr. John L. Rowan and I plan to attend the Installation.

May I take this means of offering our confrere, Bishop Eustace J. Smith, the congratulations, felicitations and the best wishes of each and every member of Holy Name Province. All join me in wishing him God's blessing and peace in this new assignment; our prayers will be with him as he assumes the burdens and duties of his high office.

Congratulations also to all our Jubilarians. To the four Fathers celebrating the Fiftieth Anniversary of their priesthood: Very Rev. Frs. Mathias Faust and Thomas Plassmann, and Rev. Frs. Luke Panfoerder and Ferdinand Heckmann; and to the ten Fathers celebrating their Silver Jubilee: Rev. Frs. Gregory Smith, Winfrid McCarthy, Rupert McCann, Francis Sullivan, Maurus Fitzgerald, Irenaeus Herscher, Austin Goff, Roch Knopke, Justus Sweeney and Aloysius Reilly.

Fr. Mathias Faust's celebration will be held at St. Francis, New York, April 2. I will offer the Mass. Fr. Thomas Plassmann will hold his jubilee at Christ the King Seminary, April 4. I shall offer Mass for Fr. Ferdinand Heckmann at Warwick, April 17. Fr. Luke Panfoerder will celebrate his jubilee at the Novitiate, June 4.

The Class of 1931 will celebrate as a class at St. Bonaventure Monastery in Paterson, N. J., Thursday, June 14.

I am sure all Fathers, Brothers and Clerics in the Province will join the Reverend Golden and Silver Jubilarians in thanking God for having given them these many years in the Priesthood and for allowing the apostolates of Holy Name Province to benefit so greatly from their combined 450 years of priestly service.

The new St. Francis Monastery and chapels in Providence, R. I., are beginning to take shape. With the living rooms and a good part of the rest of the building already plastered and new equipment installed, the forecast is for a June opening. As you perhaps remember, after we began to renovate

this building, the walls had to be taken down and new ones erected. Thus to all practical purposes St. Francis is actually a completely new building. The only major item of old equipment remaining is the elevator. Frs. Paul Power and Timothy Judson opened an office on Dorrance Street in Providence about February 1, and since then have been keeping daily hours from 10 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. for the purpose of becoming acquainted, taking donations and pledges for memorials in the chapel, and doing other business incident to establishing the house in Providence. The reception has been most heartening. The Fathers commute back and forth each day from Arch Street.

In September, 1954, I visited Bishop Connolly of Fall River Diocese to seek permission to purchase the Oursler property at Falmouth. After completing this business, His Excellency requested that the Province consider the establishment of a mid-town chapel in New Bedford, Mass. I told Bishop Connolly I felt the Definitorium would favor this venture but it would take us about two years to become established. Since New Bedford should be ready to open in June, we will be two months ahead of my prediction. After much investigation of New Bedford's possibilities by ourselves and others, we settled on the Michael Lahey Building as a site for our chapel there. The Lahey Building, formerly used as a clothing store, is well constructed, well kept and completely air-conditioned. After negotiating with Mr. Edward Lahey, a nephew of the owner, and with the Smith family, owners of the neighboring building (a part of which we need for an exit), we made the following arrangements: we leased the Lahey Building for ten years and the smaller Smith store for five years with an option for five more. Frs. David Fleming and Philip Lavere, in charge of this project, have already begun renovating the Lahey Building. The chapel, capable of holding about 300, will be on the street floor level. What had been show windows in front of the building will be enclosed with marble and glass brick and will make, on one side, an office, and, on the other side, an information center. A stairway will connect the information center to the basement where parlors will be installed. Until such time as we are able to purchase the property and build up one more story for living quarters, the friars will live in separate quarters about one mile from the chapel. Rented from Mr. Ed Lahey, the temporary living quarters are completely furnished with furniture from the old monastery at Arch Street. At the chapel itself there will be accommodations for the friars when off duty. On the same basis as the Fathers in Providence, Frs. David and Philip have opened up an office in New Bedford.

The work in Puerto Rico continues to boom so that we find it necessary to send another man there this summer. Bishop Davis has deeded to us the Mother Cabrini Chapel and its land. We are now in the process of building an addition to the chapel which is located on the outer edge of the territory assigned to us. The building plans call for a U-type building with a chapel and a good-sized auditorium connected to it. The auditorium, of course, can be used as an auxiliary chapel when needed. Another wing with five classrooms will complete the U. Over the auditorium there will be living quarters for six friars. This building should be ready in September, at which time we hope to start a couple of grades of grammar school taught by lay teachers. The next step now planned in the development of our area is for the Puerto Nuevo section. We are presently negotiating for property on which to build a combination hall and chapel in this area.

On January 5, 1956, I received a letter from His Excellency Bishop Peter Ireton of the Diocese of Richmond inviting the Province to take a parish at Triangle, Va., located on the edge of the Quantico Marine Base. The Definitorium has appointed Fr. Gervase McMillen now being separated from the Navy to manage the new project. We hope his health will permit this.

Some months ago we received an invitation from the Most Rev. Umberto Mozzoni, Apostolic Nuncio to Bolivia, to take over a territory there that may become a Prelacy or an independent Ecclesiastical unit as soon as we can supply sufficient manpower. We are interested and will probably accept the invitation. I am leaving New York March 19 to spend two days in La Paz, Bolivia, investigating the proffered territory and conferring with His Excellency. We hope to have our mission assignments, including those for Bolivia, if any, ready by the May edition of the "Annals." If you are interested in volunteering for the Bolivian mission, write to me at once.

We wish to congratulate St. Bonaventure University and Siena College on being the recipients of a total of a half million dollars from the Ford Foundation.

When you receive this letter I will have completed the Visitation of our houses south of Washington, Denver, Arch Street, Brookline, the Novitiate, and all the clericcate houses. I combined the Visitation of the South with the preaching of a retreat to the superiors of our Southern houses at the Trappist Monastery in Conyers, Ga.

Fr. Maynard Geiger of the Santa Barbara Province, collaborator in the Cause of Junipero Serra, will visit our clericcate houses this spring to describe the latest developments in Fr. Serra's Cause.

I am sure everyone is interested in the progress of the retreat movement in Paterson. To date nine retreats for laymen have been conducted with an average of twenty men each week end. I would like especially to mention the co-operation received from some of our Jersey parishes: Assumption in Wood-Ridge, Holy Name in Garfield, St. Elizabeth's in Wyckoff, St. Mary's in Pompton Lakes, and St. Leo's in East Paterson. All have had groups on retreat. The retreats will continue up to and including the last week end in June and will be resumed for the first week end of September. I would be very happy if the other Jersey parishes and the parishes in New York would encourage the use of the Paterson retreat house. The monastery, recently reconditioned, is ideally situated for retreats and the food is good. There are plenty of openings for spring and fall retreats. Contact Fr. Simon at Paterson for your group's reservations.

Very Rev. Paschal Kinsel, Commissary of the Holy Land, has been appointed to succeed Very Rev. Fr. Mathias Faust as Delegate General of the Custodies and Commissariates of the United States. May we take this opportunity to congratulate both Fr. Paschal on having been chosen and the Custodies and Commissariates on receiving his fine leadership.

Very Rev. Fr. Bertrand Campbell, delegated to make the Visitation and conduct the Chapter of the Allegany Sisters, has already completed the Visitation in Brazil and Jamaica. He is now visiting houses of the Allegany Sisters in the Southern States.

Fr. David Sweeney stationed at Rye Beach spends one hour each Sunday evening giving a refresher course in Religion at the Philip Exeter Academy, Exeter, N. H. In an attempt to relieve the pressure of the work at Arch Street, Fr. Rayner Bradshaw will work there five days each week. He will return to Rye Beach on the week ends to supervise the Procuration work at Rye Beach.

Listed below are the names and new addresses of our chaplains:
Lcmdr. Raymond Beane, ChC. Hqtrs. Support Activity, Navy 3923, Box 9 FPO San Francisco, Calif.
Lt. Brendan Bradley, ChC., San Francisco Naval Shipyard, Code 814, San Francisco 24, Calif.
Cmdr. Gordian Ehrlacher, ChC. USS Shangri La (CVA-38) FPO, San Francisco, Calif.

Capt. Urban Cain, ChC. Hqtrs. 10th Tac. Rec. Wg. APO 123, New York, N. Y.
Lt. Louis A. Foley, ChC. Office of Division Chaplain 5th Armored Div.,
Camp Chaffee, Ark.
Lt. Lawrence Pafchik, ChC., US Naval Hospital, St. Albans, N. Y.
Chaplain Flavian Tobin, Office of Catholic Chaplain, Hqtrs., 2nd Bn. 31st
Regt. APO 7, San Francisco, Calif.
Lt. Cormac Walsh, ChC., Office of Catholic Chaplain, Hqtrs. A S A T C 8622
DU, Chapel # 10, Camp Devens, Mass.

The following personnel changes have been made recently:

Fr. Urban Scanlon to Paray Rest in Catskill; Fr. Francis P. Duffy to Pensacola where it is hoped during the next few months he will recuperate from his recent illness; Fr. Stephen Hartdegen temporarily to Christ the King Seminary; Fr. Honorius Corbett to St. Patrick's, Buffalo; Fr. Boniface McConville to Paterson; Fr. Brian Boyle to Lafayette; Fr. Clement King to Brookline; Fr. Columban Duffy to Denver; Frs. Germaine Badgley and Donnon O'Neill to East Rutherford; Fr. Timothy Judson to Providence; Frs. David Fleming and Philip Lavere to New Bedford; Msgr. Dillon, Frs. Paul Seibert and Kieran Cassion to Arch Street; Fr. Dunstan Carroll to Beach Haven; Fr. John Bosco Valente to Statesville. Fr. Benedict Gilmartin has been appointed Procurator and Sub-syndic at Paterson. Fr. David Sweeney will be relieved from duty for the summer and fall semester to complete his thesis for his degree in history at Catholic University. Fr. Juniper Carol has been assigned to the mission in Puerto Rico; Fr. Henry Sharp will return to Clason Point.

The following Brothers have been reassigned: Bro. Boniface Sutter to Rye Beach and eventually to Croghan to teach bookbinding in the Brothers' Training Program; Bro. Claude Apotosky to Callicoon; Bro. Andre Thibault to Lafayette; Bro. Salvator Leising to Obernburg and eventually to Lafayette to assist Fr. Venard Crawford; Bro. Fintan Duffy to Callicoon. Bro. Vincent Hall of Brookline has had his leg amputated and is now in Mother Schervier Hospital.

Frater Cyril Slaby is now stationed at Clason Point; Frater Ronan Reilly is hospitalized at St. Elizabeth's, Boston.

The departure ceremony for this year's missionaries will be held at St. Bonaventure Monastery, Paterson, Sunday, June 10, at 8 p.m.

WE NEED VOLUNTEERS FOR THE MISSION IN BOLIVIA! NOW!

Sincerely and fraternally,

Jesus Wheeler, ofm.

Minister Provincial