

## Province of The Most Holy Name Franciscan Fathers

135 WEST 31ST STREET

NEW YORK 1, NEW YORK

OFFICE OF THE PROVINCIAL

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My dear Confrere:

MAY THE LORD GIVE YOU HIS PEACE!

Saturday, November 15, Fr. Sebastian Egan and I left New York shortly after noon for the Canonical Visitation of our houses in the South. We stopped over night at Holy Name College and arrived in Triangle, Va., Sunday noon, just as the Fathers were finishing the parish Masses.

The Southern Parishes: As you remember, St. Francis Parish in Triangle was organized by Fr. Gervase McMillen with weekend assistance from Holy Name College. Fr. Patrick Adams, present pastor, and Fr. Jordan Charbonneau, his assistant, now have an eight-room school, complete with an auditorium which serves as the parish church. The parish serves the local area and the families of Marine personnel stationed at Quantico. Since the main body of parishioners are Marines and Marine families, and therefore transients, it is necessary to charge tuition at the school. The Fathers and the Allegany Sisters rent their respective residences. However, there is neither a chapel nor adequate consultation facilities at the Fathers' house.

It is a two-and-a-half-hour drive from Triangle to Emporia, Va. Fr. Kevin Farrell, the pastor here, has repainted the church. Fr. Leo Brown, who resides with Fr. Kevin, is promoting a new parish hall at Lawrenceville, a mission of Emporia. Fr. Leo is contributing solidly to the expenses of the new hall by making and selling ceramics. On the way to Clarksville, our other residence in southwest Virginia, we visited Lawrenceville and South Hill. Frs. Victorian Gass and Kenan Morris care for the missions at South Boston and South Hill from Clarksville.

From Clarksville, the drive to Winston-Salem, N. C., is again about two and a half hours. Frs. Francis Gorman and Thaddeus Rooney, the pastor and assistant, administer a well-regulated parish. Both Fathers are teaching; Fr. Francis carries a full schedule at St. Ann's Academy. At Lenoir, Fr. Remigius Fleishell is planning a combination school and convent. The Province has donated land, and the Diocese is expected to loan money for the building. When this is completed Fr. Remigius will move back to the rectory, which is now used as convent and school. He presently lives one mile from the church. In Statesville, Frs. Alan Foran and Colum Dillon have difficulty meeting the demands of the Ordinary. The desired building program is beyond the financial ability of the parishioners. Frs. Marcial Doyle and Xavier Simonetti in Asheville are proud of their parishioners, who are meeting their responsibilities to the new Catholic central high school with great generosity. Their contribution record is higher percentagewise than that of their fellow citizens.

The magnificent autumn mountain scenery made the drive from Statesville through Asheville to Greenville, S. C. most enjoyable. Frs. Gordon Krahe, Leander Hartdegen and Brendan Pyle administer the parishes at Greenville and Anderson. In Greenville they also assist the Poor Clares. It will soon be necessary to inaugurate a residence in Anderson. At Columbia, Frs. Theophilus McNulty and Christian Malone operate the Catholic Information Center and its auxiliary enterprises at the University of South Carolina.

The work of the Newman Club in the Athens and Atlanta, Ga. areas has progressed so rapidly that more help is needed, especially in Atlanta. Fr. Cronan Kelly is in charge at Athens and Fr. Giles Webster at Atlanta. The new parish of the Immaculate Conception in Atlanta keeps Frs. Leonard Kelly, Raymond Beane, Rayner Dray and Hilary Deck busy. In Americus, Fr. Henry Madden will begin a new rectory very soon. Fr. Finian Reilly has completed the chapel at Montezuma. His Mexican charges have added to his responsibilities. Fr. Martin Bangert is in charge of the missions at St. Jerome, Americus, and St. Clare, Albany.

Before visiting Thomasville, Ga., I made a round-trip flight from Albany to Pensacola, Fla. At Pensacola, Fr. Arthur Butler has recently completed repainting and other necessary maintenance jobs. Brother Antonine Masson is quite handy with tools and a genuine help. While in Pensacola, I met a young man interested in serving our foreign missions as a lay missionary. He is an architect and light-plane pilot.

I returned to Thomasville where Fr. Gerard McDonald is superior and pastor. Fr. Gerard has slightly realigned the duties here. Fr. Frederick Kirchner is in charge of Tifton and Camilla, Fr. Linus Tigue, Moultrie and Spence Air Force Base, Fr. Finian Kerwin continues at Bainbridge and the Air Force Base there. We ask your prayers that we will be able to obtain Sisters for this area.

During my stay at Thomasville, Bishop McDonough dedicated the new parish church and hall at Bambridge. This building is well planned, tastefully appointed and soundly constructed. The windows from Garfield are most appropriate. Congratulations to Fr. Finian Kerwin, who supervised this construction.

On December 1, I concluded the Southern Visitation at Miami with visits from Frs. Eugene Seraphim, Edgar Barrett and Ronan Giehl. I understand we will be requested to accept a chaplaincy at Tampa next fall.

During the Southern Visitation I had ample opportunity to hear of and see the results of the great work being accomplished by Fr. Benedict Ballou. Beginning at Baltimore each month, Fr. Benedict brings spiritual direction to priests, Sisters and people at various places throughout the South. His terminus is Florida. He conducts days of recollection for the Friars at four locations. Beginning at either Clarksville or Winston-Salem he goes on to Greenville, Atlanta and Thomasville. His continued interest and spiritual direction has made an invaluable contribution to the work of all, especially the Sisters, in the South.

I resumed the Provincial Visitation January 9, at Denver. The Friars there are very busy with both the demands of the parish and the heavy Home Mission schedule. Fr. Jeremias McGinley will go to Denver for the months of February and March as a missionary.

On the way to Denver I visited Fr. Carmel Lluia and Fra. Cyril Slaby at Council Bluffs, Iowa. Both are seriously ill. Returning from Denver, I stopped in Chicago to attend a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Mens' Conference, held January 13. The Conference is now planning the agenda for the September meeting. I returned to New York the same evening. The following day, Fr. Salvator Phillips and I left New York at 1:00 p.m. via Pan-American flight #201 for Sao Paulo, Brazil. At the airport I discovered my passport had expired two months earlier. After a short discussion I was permitted to depart. I had the passport renewed at Sao Paulo before returning to the States. The visit to Brazil was short but fruitful. My arrival coincided with the Friars' retreats at Anapolis. I was thus able to visit with each Friar during the last day of the first retreat and the first day of the second retreat. I sought and found information concerning a few current and important problems.

Two partial power failures made the return flight somewhat eventful. On the first leg, from Anapolis to Sao Paulo, I waited from 7:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. for the take-off. Rain held us down. During this flight we landed at some airport, and sat around four hours awaiting a mechanic. We arrived seven hours late in Sao Paulo. I left Sao Paulo on schedule the next evening and arrived one hour late in Belem, again because of engine trouble. This time we waited three hours before the take-off. The highlight of the return trip was a visit with the Friars at Puerto Rico.

I may note here that the Friars at Anapolis spent a rather busy Christmas season. It began raining Christmas night and continued during four days. A strong, continuous east wind accompanied the rain. Houses began to topple, leaving the people homeless and hungry. It recalled one of the floods at Olean in 1942. The Friars and the Sisters rose to the occasion. School not being in session, they were able to house and feed a large number of the homeless. The facilities of Fr. Bernard's Social Action Group, especially its soup kitchen, were pressed into service. A great work was done and the city was grateful. A fine compliment was paid the Friars by a Masonic judge in Anapolis. In a little speech to Fr. Bernard he said: "The Franciscans are the one force that has destroyed the strength of Communism in Anapolis."

In mid-October past, two pastors from Syracuse consulted me in New York relative to our accepting a high school in West Syracuse. One of them, Msgr. Callaghan, Superintendent of Schools, is the brother of Fr. Patrick Callaghan, O.F.M., of Siena College. I made certain proposals, and a meeting was arranged with the Ordinary and his Auxiliary. At the meeting the school project and the possibility of a downtown chapel were discussed. Later a letter from the Bishop cancelled the chapel proposition. I am now awaiting a concrete show of interest concerning the school. If it does not come soon we will drop the idea. Using the next three classes to consolidate our progress would perhaps be of more advantage to us.

About ten years ago, Fr. Salvator Phillips assumed the management of the Franciscan Family Circle and began the development of its favorite project, the Franciscan Tours. Through these Tours many people who otherwise could not afford it have made pilgrimages to Franciscan and other shrines. The gratitude of these tourists has expressed itself in generous

financial help to our Seraphic Seminary. Fr. Salvator has finally admitted need for a well-earned rest. He has been granted a year's leave of absence. After some hospitalization he will live at Lafayette.

Congratulations to Bishop-elect James Schuck and the Golden Jubilarians Fr. Berard Vogt (Priesthood) and Fr. Samuel Grega (Profession).

Notes: Brother Cajetan will inspect the Butler Monastery to examine possibilities of renovating it as a house of retirement for Fathers and Brothers. Fr. Justus Sweeney conducted the Friars' retreats in Brazil and Bolivia. Fr. Zachary Callahan has been assigned to the F.M.U. The new facilities provided by expanding the Provincial Office space are now in use. The extension provides office facilities for the Pious Union, St. Francis Monastery office personnel, Franciscan Tours as well as the Provincial Office staff. In a short time the new and expanded quarters of the Third Order Fraternity will also be ready. At Siena College the new dormitory is progressing on schedule and should be ready for the fall term. Despite hampering weather, the foundations for the new Siena dining hall have been laid. The new classroom building at St. Bonaventure will be ready for dedication at commencement and we expect construction of a new monastery to begin during the current year.

We are awaiting the Most Reverend Father General's spring and summer schedule in connection with the Commencements at St. Bonaventure and Siena.

The Holy See has made it most clear to Superiors of Religious Communities in the United States that they are to expend every possible effort to assist the Church in South America. Rome has decreed prelaties in Brazil (Cristalandia) and Bolivia (Coroico). The Most Reverend James Schuck has been named Prelate of Cristalandia and another Friar of the Province will be named Prelate of Coroico. We are, of course, most anxious to co-operate with the Holy See regarding the missions in South America. Our principal need is men. We send only volunteers and the list of volunteers is not sufficient to fill our needs. We need three more volunteers for Brazil and three more for Bolivia to complete our quota for 1959.

Sincerely and fraternally,

*James Whelan, O.F.M.*

Minister Provincial