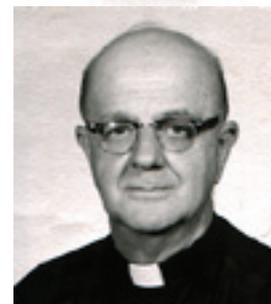
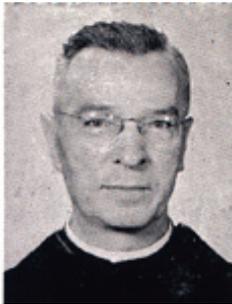


Windows IV: Foreign Assumptionists in North America



**Short Biographies of Assumptionist Religious
who
Worked in North America
1850-2000**

**Foreign Assumptionist Religious
of the
North American Province
1850-2000**

Jean-Paul Périer-Muzet, A.A.

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Brighton, MA - Yale, MI

2006

Short Biographies of Foreign Assumptionist Religious
In the North American Province
1850 – 2000

Windows III
on
Assumptionist History

Province of North America
United States – Canada - Mexico
1850 - 2000

Acknowledgements

Windows III on Assumptionist History presents the religious from other countries who worked in our North American Province.

This project follows that of Fr. Robert Fortin presented in *Windows on Assumptionist History* published by Bayard Press in 2002. I present a translation of 97 Assumptionists from other countries who worked in the North American Province.

I proceeded to translate all of the biographies from Fr. Jean-Paul Périer-Muzet's five-volume work entitled *Notices Biographiques des Religieux de l'Assomption, 1850-2000, Contribution à l'Histoire de l'Assomption*. With each biography is included a small picture of the religious of Part III except thirteen. I hope to find some of them after printing this text. I have also culled from the archives and other sources **Addenda** to complete these biographies.

I wish to thank Fr. Robert Fortin for his translations and comments as well as Fr. Richard Richards, the archivist of the Province of North America for his great help. I would be remiss if I did not mention those who helped me: Fr. Claude Grenache and Fr. Richard Richards were the proofreaders; Fr. Richard, Fr. Yves Garon, and Fr. Joseph Laffineur for their help with pictures; Fr. Yves Garon for a dossier on Bro. Marie-Armand Dupras; as well as the various people from the chanceries and libraries who helped in our research.

Windows II and III will provide a much-needed text in English for our Province and our English speaking religious. The lacunas in the text are mine. In the future, I hope to be able to complete these biographies with an update starting from the year 2000 to the present. I place this work under the protection of Our Lady of the Assumption.

joseph fredette, A.A.
Brighton, MA

August 15, 2006

Foreign Assumptionist Religious who worked in the Province of North America

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José Allavena Orengo

1893-1983

Italo-Chilean Religious of the Province of South America.

A religious from the ranks.

Born August 15, 1893 in a humble and Christian family at Castel Vittorio in Italy, José Allavena Orengo studied in the alumnates of Vinovo (1907-1911) and Ascona in Switzerland (1911-1913). He took the religious habit August 14, 1913 at the Limpertsberg novitiate in the Grand-Duchy of Luxemburg. He was tied down there like his companions during most of the war in 1914-1918. After novitiate, he began studying philosophy, but he had to also work in the neighboring farms so as not to die of hunger. He successfully reached Louvain in 1918 where he made his first vows May 19 of that same year and finished his philosophy. In 1919, he was exempted from military service. He then studied theology and was ordained to the priesthood July 23, 1922. His perpetual profession was also held at Louvain August 25, 1921. Fr. José began his ministry in the U.S.A. at the college in Worcester (1922-1923). He understood that this milieu was not suited to him and asked to be sent to Latin America in 1924. It was there that he spent the rest of his life. As associate pastor of the parish of San Juan de Matta at Concepción in Chile during four years (1924-1928), he was a marvelous confessor. He was then sent to Buenos Aires in Argentina (1928-1932). He returned for good to Chile in November 1933: at Lota as associate pastor till 1937, at the Mendoza apostolic school barely a month, and then again to Concepción where he was once more associate pastor from 1937 to 1960. After a year at the Los Andes novitiate, he returned a third time to Concepción as acting pastor. His work was very humble but most appreciated. This parish was returned March 20, 1962 to the archbishopric after an earthquake. In 1954, he made an official request to be transferred to the Province of South America. Again associate pastor at Lota for three years (1963-1966), Fr. José lived for a time at the novitiate of Los Andes, then, starting in August 1967, he was named to the sanctuary of Our Lady of Lourdes in Santiago. Having understood that heretofore his apostolate would consist in acceptance of his illness and old age in a spirit of faith, he made of his room a tiny sanctuary; he prayed constantly for his brothers until his death February 4, 1983 in his eightieth year. He was buried in the Assumption vault in the Santiago sanctuary.



Prayer at the tomb of the Religious of San Remo (November 1965).

In 1965, while with his family near San Remo (Italy), Fr. Allavena wrote: *“I decided to stop at San Remo for two reasons: the desire to pray at the tomb of our 23 Assumptionist religious that died here while Fr. Ferréol Poux-Berthe was superior. I did this upon arriving. While I was kneeling down and praying the rosary, two women passed by and seeing that our two tombs had no flowers, they filled two vases with flowers and lit two candles. I thanked them and they said that they brought flowers to the tombs that had none and seemed to be abandoned. That was the case for our two tombs. The other reason was to be able to celebrate tomorrow the three masses for the dead. I would not have been able to do this in my village. From my room here, I can come directly down to the church without leaving the pastor’s house. He gave me a gift, an accordion for the Los Andes novitiate. This will put a bit more joy on feast days since the community doesn’t even have a harmonium. November 3, I leave for Valparaiso... to continue sanctifying myself in Chile.”*

Addenda.

Letter to the Provincial of North America, Fr. Henri Moquin, dated 18 October 1955.

A letter from Fr. Régis, my Provincial, gave me great joy when he said that, as a souvenir of my humble services at the big house in Worcester during 1922-1924, you had given me your electric razor. I don’t merit such a gift! But I want to tell you that I am very thankful. Since I have the joy of shaving with this electric razor, I don’t cut my face as I used to and I no longer get boils on my face. This is a great help for my health. Once again a thousand thanks from the bottom of my heart.

I constantly keep a good memory of you as well as our Father General, Fr. Braun and all those of your generation. I even often regret having asked to change hemisphere and province, since I really liked the college, the Fathers who were there and the good and dear students of that time. But oftentimes, the Superiors don’t realize the pain they cause their subordinates. During two years I had asked for an English teacher and for reasons unknown to me, this was refused. When I went out to celebrate mass in an English speaking convent or to the City farm where the

director came to see me after mass and wanted to speak with me, I was unable to do so. What a suffering for a priest who lives in that country and doesn't even speak the tongue or its street talk. You can imagine. That is why, although I liked the college and the dear friends and confreres that I had in that house, I felt obliged to ask for a transfer to South America. Here I felt immediately at ease since I could already understand and speak Spanish quite well and I am happy and hope to be able to do some good for the glory of God and the salvation of souls.

Please give my regards to all the elders: especially Frs. Rolland, Hermes, Odilon, Philippe, etc. When Fr. General came to visit Concepción, we spoke at length of the past: the college, the other houses, all the elders of whom many have already gone to Our Father's house.

Portrait.

This religious with a simple heart and a trusting faith didn't go any great works. Everywhere he went his work was very humble and devoted. He left a witness of being a modest religious, hidden, and with a big heart. He was faithful, knew how to love and lived as a saint close to the poor that he always received without any discrimination. On his 28th birthday, the anniversary of his baptism, he pronounced the vow, in the presence of the Holy Trinity with the permission of his superior, Fr. Possidius Dauby, and his confessor, to recite the rosary every day of his life.

'Moved by a filial love of the Blessed Virgin, Mother of the Assumption, in thanksgiving to the Lord for all the favors received, with full trust in the intercession of Mary, I pronounce this vow as a proof of my fidelity until I die.'
(The original of this text is signed in his own blood. It is kept in the archives of the Province of South America.)

From the archives in Chile.

His parents were Francesco Allavena and Antonia Orengo. He was baptized 24 August 1893 in the parish church of San Stefano in Vittoria and confirmed in the same parish on 19 March 1902. He did his philosophy from 1915-1916 in Luxemburg and then in 1918 at Louvain. From 1918 to 1922 he did his theology at Louvain. He received the religious habit from the hands of Fr. Emmanuel Bailly. He made his perpetual profession on 15 August 1921 in the hands of Fr. Possidius Dauby. In 1932, after a time in Argentina, he returned to Concepcion, Chile.

Crescent Armanet

1879 – 1955

French religious, superior of the North American Vicariate.



Youth.

Born November 24, 1879, in Chatonnay, near Saint-Jean de Bournay (Isère), Crescent first attended school with the Brothers of the Sacred Heart (1885-1891), then became an alumnist in Miribel-les-Echelles, Isère (1891-94), and in Brian, Drôme, (1894-96). He entered the novitiate in Livry (Seine-Saint-Denis) in August 1896, where he took his first vows September 8, 1897, and his final vows September 6, 1898, in the hands of Fr. Emmanuel Bailly. He went to Notre-Dame de France in Jerusalem for his philosophy and theology (1898-1902), then to Kadi-Koy, Turkey, in 1903, for a third year. Bishop Bonetti ordained him a priest in Constantinople 20 December 1903.

A teacher in the East.

Fr. Crescent was first assigned to teach in Assumptionist schools in Turkey: Eskishehir (1903-04) and Brousse (1904-06), then in Plovdiv, Bulgaria (1906-09). He wrote many picturesque descriptions of missionary life for the Mission Review of the Augustinians of the Assumption:

“On several occasions, I saw the Turkish soldiers, who were escorting us, approach an angel [a pupil of the Oblate Sisters of the Assumption] who had strayed from the ranks and gently bring this angel back, tapping the child lightly on the cheek. These Turkish soldiers are very nice people. They put their heart and soul into their police work, imposing silence on the talkative, brushing aside the unwanted, and punishing the recalcitrant, without ever losing their majestic gravity!”

Missionary in England.

From 1909 to 1912, Fr. Crescent was sent to England to initiate himself into parish ministry. He first went as a curate to Brockley (1909-11), then to Rickmansworth (1911-12), perfecting his command of the English language. This proved to be important for the rest of his life and ministry.

Superior of Assumption College in Worcester (USA).

From 1912 to 1952, Fr. Crescent was assigned to the relatively recent Assumptionist foundations in the United States, first as a curate at Our Lady of Esperanza parish in New York City (1912-14) and again from 1919 to 1929 but especially as the young director of the Franco-American college in Worcester, Massachusetts (1929-35). The only break in his long stay in the New World occurred during the war of 1914-19 when he was called up for military service and assigned first to the paramedical corps in Bordeaux (Gironde), then with the High Command in Paris.

In Worcester, he successfully faced the college’s financial crisis that accompanied the country’s own economic crisis, thanks to benefactors whom he invited to the institution, asking them to help develop it and improve its reputation. The Cross of the Legion of Honor that he received from the French government underlined the competence of the Director and excellence of the school’s educational program. In 1929, he was appointed Vicar Provincial of the religious in North America, a position he held until 1946 when the Vicariate (United States, Canada, and Mexico) became a Province.

Return to France.

In 1952, he definitively left the United States, after having had the pleasure of greeting his successor, Fr. Wilfrid Dufault, a former superior of the College and provincial of the North American Province, who was elected Superior General of the Congregation. Assigned to the Congregation’s Development Office in Marseilles, where he was also the superior, he died there December 18, 1955, at the age of 76. Presided by Fr. Wilfrid Dufault, his funeral took place December 20th in Marseilles’ church of the Sacred Heart. He was laid to rest in his family’s vault in Chatonnay, near Vienne (Isère). “Fr. Crescent was a pleasant man who loved his Congregation and community life. He is remembered as a vigilant superior who did not hesitate to say what he thought, and whose personal regularity regarding community exercises led him to be concerned about religious discipline in general.”

Addenda.

Fr. Richard Richards wrote in the ANA (Assumption North America , v. xxxv #4, 4-5):

After the war, from 1919 to 1929, he served at Our Lady of Esperanza. During this time he wrote a 160-page book on the history of the church and its decorations. Then 1929 to 1935, he was Superior/President at Assmption College in Worcester, as well as Vicar Provincial. Many interesting events took place during his term as President. Probably the most important one was when Fr. Crescent announced that as of September 1930, Assumption would accept externs, i.e. dayhops. Until then all the students had been residents. This change was made partly for financial reasons, and partly to respond to the desires of the Franco-American clergy and parents in Worcester. Tuition would be \$100.00 per year, and the dayhops could, if they so desired, have their noon lunch for \$7.00 per month. At first, they had to arrive by 8:00 a.m., but that was changed to 8:30 after a short while.

Father Crescent wanted to found a small aluminate in Barre, MA, but when that proved impossible, he started the Apostolic School at the High School and College under the direction of Fr. Odilon Dubois. The Apostolic School continued until the Prep School closed in 1970. As Superior, Father Crescent tended to be quite authoritarian, even tough. But he also had a knack for obtaining generous benefactors, and that enabled him to make important improvements on campus. For the Silver Jubilee of the College in 1929, Father Clodoald Serieix had ordered from Brussels a statue of Father d'Alzon... The sculptor died suddenly and the statue had to be finished by another sculptor... It befell Father Crescent to have it unveiled in front of the College wing on November 24, 1930.

The year 1930 also saw the Assumptionists purchase one side of Baker Lake near Webster and build under the tree, The Villa d'Alzon, complete with chapel, to serve as a summer recreation house for the Assumptionists of Worcester and New York City.

In 1932, thanks to a generous gift from Father J.M. Marceau, pastor in Millbury, MA, a new Lourdes grotto was built near the road going up to the baseball field. The first grotto had had to be destroyed when the College wing and gym had been built. The stones for the grotto had been brought from Jefferson, MA in a truck sent by another benefactor, Mr. John Tinsley, Vice-President of Crompton-Knowles Loom Company.

The land in front of the grotto was soon called Crescent Park and in it, Father Crescent placed a fine bronze statue of St. Joan of Arc, which is now on the grounds of St. Anne Shrine in Sturbridge.

The most notable and noticeable improvement on the campus was the opening, in November 1934, of the new entrance to the campus from West Boylston Street. The Assumption Avenue approach was horrible, especially in winter. Crescent had obtained a generous gift from a true Francophile, Mrs. Homer Gage, who paid for the road, and had had pillars built at the entrance as well. Maple trees were planted along the road.

Mrs. Gage was a generous benefactress in other ways as well: she kept subscribing to important French magazines for the College library. And she donated for the eventual college "museum" a series of 24 lithographs of scenes of heroism in World War I, made by Lucien Jonas in France. They used to hang in the High School study hall.

While he was President of the College, Fr. Crescent received two decorations from the French government. On January 4, 1932, from the Ministry of Public Instruction and Fine Arts, he received the decoration "Officier d'Académie." This was partly due to the monthly articles he wrote for La Croix, by which he tried to give to the French clear ideas on the political and economic life in the USA. And it was partly for his work at Assumption College, which helped spread French culture in the USA. Then on June 13, 1934, the French Consul General in New York, Charles de Ferry Fontnouvelle, by virtue of the powers he had as Consul General, and in the name of the President of France, made Fr. Crescent a Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur.

Before coming to the United States, Father Crescent Armanet directed schools in Turkey, taught at Plovdiv, in Bulgaria, did parish work in England, and fought in World War I. From 1912 to 1914, he was at 156th Street and from 1919 to 1929, Superior and President of Assumption College and Prep for the next six years, then returned to Our Lady of Esperanza in New York as Superior, while remaining Vice-Provincial for North America. Our Province owes much to him and it is largely due to him that we became a province in 1947. He spent the last three years of his life as Superior at Marseilles.

Arnaud (Alfred) Arnaud

1888-1976

Religious of the Province of Paris.

A youth traveling the roads of the world.

Alfred was born in Paris June 28, 1888 in the XVIIIth district where his dad worked, but his childhood was spent in Savoy at Gilly-sur-Isère. He was accepted at the Notre-Dame des Châteaux aluminate in September 1899 and witnessed the search of the house on November 11. In 1903, he went to Mongreno near Turin to the villa 'Madonna del Buon Consilio' where he finished his high school studies (1903-1904). He chose the Assumptionist life and traveled to Louvain, Belgium, to begin his novitiate with 27 companions September 18, 1904 under the direction of Fr. Benjamin Laurès. He pronounced his first vows there September 18, 1905. Traveling again, he was off to Rome where he did his philosophy (1906-1909). At the Angelicum he got his doctorate and made his perpetual profession in the Eternal City June 7, 1907. His health faltered and he was sent to rest at San Remo from 1909 to 1911. From there, he left for Jerusalem where he studied theology (1911-1914) and was ordained a priest May 17, 1914.



Thirty years of ministry in England.

Although declared unfit for the military, Fr. Arnaud had to leave Jerusalem: Turkish staff occupied Notre-Dame de France. After a short stay in Rome (1915), he reached England where he witnessed the raid by the zeppelins (blimps). He took the time to first anglicize himself, at the aluminate of Bethnal-Green (1915-1923), then at the Charlton parish (1923-1929). Fr. Clodoald Serieix, recently named provincial, asked him to accept to become the director of the Archconfraternity of Prayer and Penance in the U.S.A. (1929-1934). Having finished this task, he returned to England as curate in New Haven and in 1935 replaced Fr. Bal-Fontaine, the pastor, who was named provincial. During 10 years, he was a much appreciated, zealous, and attentive pastor. He welcomed to Bethnal-Green the Little Sisters of the Assumption whose convent was destroyed by bombs in 1940. The Sisters set up camp in the refectory and were very embarrassed to undress under the watchful eyes of a framed picture of Fathers d'Alzon, Picard, Bailly, Maubon, and Quenard who watched them from the wall. The war was trying for this religious whose health changed from precarious to sickly: pleurisy, appendicitis, intestinal ulcer, and chronic bronchitis. From October 1945 to September 1949, he took refuge at the convent of the Holy Family at Littlehampton (Sussex). He then went back to the Paris province, his original province.

Fifteen years as chaplain.

In the space of fifteen years, Fr. Arnaud was to have fifteen residences as chaplain. These would bring him from the Midi to Portugal until he was attached to the provincial house of Denfert-Rochereau Avenue. Up to 1964, he ministered to the Carmel of Créteil where his sermons were simple but doctrinal and he was known for a more than monastic regularity. The hour for his retirement was clear: in 1964 he accepted to go to Chanac (Lozère) where he spent twelve years (1964-1976). In September 1969, he paralyzed on one side, and that forced him to keep to the residence although he remained very active. He stayed in his room but never missed the 'radioscopic' program by Jacques Chancel. Bit by bit, he lost his sight but never his critical sense. He died suddenly on Sunday, November 28. His funeral was celebrated on Tuesday, November 30 and the burial took place at the tomb of the religious in the Chanac cemetery. For someone who was curious about everything, and especially concerning spiritual things, he could now understand fully the Gospel phrase: 'Eternal life is to know You, You the only true God and the One that you sent'.

Addenda.

Portrait.

Anecdotes are not lacking to pad the life of this religious: in November 1908, he had the honor to accompany Msgr. Biolley, as a Savoy compatriot, to the papal audience of Pius X who called him a "rascal" and gave him a glorious slap. Perfect Anglophone, to the point that one noticed his Oxford accent, he was the only Frenchman to understand the game of cricket and enjoy it! As a religious, he intimidated others since he was of a fiery temperament and could make biting remarks, but under these explosive appearances, he hid a heart of gold that was warm and full of attentions. He was extremely devoted during the bombings of London in 1940, and would get up in the middle of the night to help the wounded and the dying. To be sure, some of his religious confreres found his frankness too rough

and his character as intolerant as he was intolerable! He was always on time, and held himself to a rigorous observance of the rules. On the doctrinal level, his totalitarian character made him uncompromising to the point of being feared, even though he remained very human in his contacts with others.

Etienne-Marie (Louis) Aubert

1898-1976

Religious of French Origin of the Province of North America.

At first a European journey.

Louis René Henri, the future Fr. Etienne-Marie Aubert, was born October 4, 1898 at Fécamp in Normandy (Seine-Maritime). His formation was begun at the Caen minor seminary from 1910 to 1914 and then at the Assumptionist alumnates: Vinovo in Italy (1914-1915) and Ascona in Switzerland (1914-1915) during a time when the French Assumption was forbidden to live on French soil and had moved its activities to the neighboring countries. In August 1917 he entered the Lumières novitiate, situated in Goult (Vaucluse), at the time when the expelled religious started to re-enter clandestinely under cover of the First World War. Although deferred in 1916, he fulfilled his military duties from 1918 to 1921. He made his first vows at Saint-Gérard (Belgium) with the name of Brother Etienne-Marie. He began philosophy at Taintegnies and continued his clerical studies at Louvain from 1922 to 1928. He was perpetually professed April 16, 1925 and ordained to the priesthood in Louvain July 29, 1928 by Bishop Legraive. His apostolic life began as a teacher at the college of Sens (Yonne) for three years (1928-1931). During vacations, he gladly accompanied the young orphans of the Halluin house in Arras to the beach of Merlimont, on the North Sea. Was it there that he heard the call of the ocean?



In the service of the U.S.A. Assumption during more than thirty years.

At that time, the Province of Paris was in charge of a vicariate that consisted of England and North America. In 1931, he was sent to the college in Worcester (Massachusetts) to teach languages, a task that he accomplished with zeal and humor, to the high school seniors and first two years for college students. It was said of this young religious that he had a nice smile but gave low marks. From 1935 to 1948, he was named dean of discipline and willingly accepted to be in charge of a drama club. He based his actions on a double base of trust and loyalty without sparing stiff rebukes... A man of boiling ardor and who was athletic, he accompanied the sports teams with verve and earned the nickname of 'Pop' because he was esteemed. He even helped with the student newspaper, *The Heritage*, as he inspired and corrected the French parts. In March 1947, he requested and obtained his affiliation to the newly created Province of North America. Because of the excellence of his teaching service, in 1950 he was decorated with the *Palmes Académiques* and, in 1966, he was made a knight of the National Order of Merit by the ambassador, Charles Lucet. Besides teaching, he had other ministries: weekend ministry, chaplain for the French Consulate in Boston, the Alliance Française, and member of the Society of French Assistance. He didn't forget his native land that he occasionally visited and the Second World War had not spared. The bombings at the time of liberation in June 1944 struck cruelly in Normandy, especially the city of Caen where his family lived. His brother, a priest, died in 1948 and his sister took care of his elderly mother who was already 88 in 1953. His other brother, a cabinetmaker, lost everything in the bombings. In 1953, Fr. Etienne-Marie would live through similar emotions, even if he came out safely from the terrible tornado that struck the college at Worcester in June. It lasted only ninety seconds, but the spectacle cannot be described. It was just like bombardments during wartime. Fr. Engelbert died as well as two Antonian of Mary sisters and Fr. Louis-Robert Brassard escaped with a broken leg. Fr. Etienne-Marie, also known by the Hispanic name of Esteban, died October 9, 1976 at the age of 78 after having lived a full life and whose activity in the midst of a college prolonged his youth. His funeral was held at the church of Holy Name in Worcester with the participation of many alumni who kept fond remembrances of him. Was it not there, in that church, that he spent more than thirty years faithfully and devotedly on weekend ministry?

Addenda.

When he received from the hands of the Hon. Charles Lucent, French Ambassador to the United States, the Cross of Chevalier, National Order of Merit, from the French government on May 3, 1966, he received the highest French award to civilians in foreign countries. He was buried in Ste-Anne's cemetery in Fiskdale on October 12, 1976.

Text taken from the funeral mass homily preached by Fr. Edgar Bourque, Provincial (Assumption North America v. x # 8, 3):

There is no doubt about the fact that Father Etienne largely deserved all the teasing he received for his power of moaning and groaning – "in season and out of season." I suppose that a modern translation of that would

be “in times of real suffering and in times of a good show.” But we would be shortsighted and of very small hearts and minds to close our eyes to the fact that there was a great deal of suffering in his life. He left his family and country as a young priest. He suffered the loss of his parents and family. There was always the worsening condition of serious cases of asthma, emphysema, and heart trouble, not to mention the long sleepless nights that these caused him. We cannot overlook either the exaggerated amount of work that his health allowed him because of a youthful strength that was only lessened by age. To this, we can add the suffering brought about by the tornado of 1953 and the even greater hurt that came with the closing of a school that had been such a great part of his life. Finally, there was old age and death that had to be faced.

Fr. Etienne was a man of faith and could take all of this and make it part of the cross he carried with Christ for the salvation of the world. That he could do as a Christian. But a special calling and generous response had made of him over fifty years ago a religious and a priest. This helped him deepen his call to identification with Christ, whether it be as he lived out his obligation of community life, taught his truth in the classroom, preached the Word of God, or offered the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. Here, at the breaking of the bread, he could recognize Christ in his turn and all that was being asked of him every day of his religious and priestly life. His heart too burned within him as he too could say with Saint Paul: “It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.”

In 1944, he became an American citizen. He died of a ruptured abdominal aneurysm with a massive hemorrhage during the operation.

During his 35 years at Assumption Preparatory School, Fr. Etienne Aubert has taught French and Latin, served as Director of Athletics, prefect of Discipline, Choir Director, and a Director of the Dramatic Club and Glee Club. He was named Officier d’Académie by l’Académie Française in 1950. Father Etienne was also formerly a member of the administrative staff and faculty member of Assumption College.

The Hon. Charles Lucent, French Ambassador to the United States, will present the Cross of Chevalier, National Order of Merit, to the Rev. L. Etienne Aubert, A.A. of Assumption Preparatory School at a special reception in Father Aubert’s honor at the French Consulate in Boston. The award, the highest given by the French government to civilians in foreign countries, will be made at 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, May 3, 1966, at the Consulate, 3 Commonwealth Ave., Boston, MA.

The award is being made in recognition of Father Etienne’s outstanding contributions to the promotion of French culture in the United States, particularly to the French colony in Boston.

A native of France, Father Etienne is an instructor in French at Assumption Preparatory School, where he has been a member of the faculty since 1931.

He attended St. Gerard, Taintegnies and Louvain in Belgium, where he was ordained an Assumptionist in 1928.

Father Etienne is the first Assumptionist priest in the United States to receive the award. Before joining the Congregation, he served from 1918 to 1921 in the French Army.

Letter by the Provincial, Rev. Edgar Bourque to Rev. Roland Hebert, Pastor, Holy Name of Jesus Church, Worcester, dated 18 October 1976

This is just a little note to give you a big word of thanks for your many kindnesses to the Assumptionists on the occasion of Father Etienne’s death and funeral. We all thought that it was extremely thoughtful and generous of you to offer the use of your church for the funeral mass. It was as obvious to us as it is to you that this was the place to do it. This is why we had no hesitation in accepting. I feel very certain that this would have pleased Pop very much. Everyone knows how much he loved going to your parish week after week over the past 30 years. I don’t know which to admire most: his devotion or the hospitality that made him feel so welcome.

Marie-Rogatien (Paul) Bahuaut

1879-1949

Religious of the Province of Bordeaux.

An outstanding pilgrimage.

Born in Nantes May 11, 1879, Paul began his secondary studies at the diocesan minor seminary of Des Couets (1891-1897). In 1896, he took part in a penitential pilgrimage to Jerusalem and was impressed by Fr. Picard, a religious of faith and certitude: it was there that he discovered his Assumptionist vocation. He took the religious habit October 28, 1897 at the Livry-Gargan (Seine-Saint-Denis) novitiate under the name of Marie-Rogatien. He spent the second novitiate year at Phanaraki (Turkey) and it was there that he made his first vows that were also his perpetual vows December 8, 1899. While at Jerusalem, he did all of his philosophy (1899-1901). It was at Eski-Chéïr that he became a French teacher (1901-1904), then went on to Kadi-Keuï and Phanaraki at the end of 1904, and studied theology at Louvain (Belgium) in 1905-1906. He was ordained a priest there in July of 1908.



An emeritus professor who cultivates paradox.

His vocation was to teach: at Bizet (Belgium) 1908-1910, at Ascona (Switzerland) 1910-1913 where he revealed that he was an outstanding teacher by the quality of his knowledge and intellectual enthusiasm that he stimulated in his students, and in Worcester (U.S.A.) 1913-1919. He was exempt from military service because of myopia. In 1919, he went to Charlton, England, as chaplain but also educator. From 1924 to 1929, he taught in the scholasticates of Belgium: Taintegnies and Saint-Gérard where his science became the formation of souls. He was called to be superior and professor in 1929 at the aluminate of Melle (Deux-Sèvres), and in 1932 the Saint-Caprais College in Agen benefited of his services. He spent six years there giving the full measure of his gift for organization and formation of the whole being.

But his health did not get any better and his sight diminished dangerously. In 1938, he went off to rest in Bordeaux. The war in 1939 mobilized all of the young religious and he was greatly needed at the aluminate for humanities of Cavalerie (Dordogne) to which was attached the diocesan Bergerac minor seminary. He made up for the lack of his sight by the depth of his psychological insight, which permitted him to understand and guide in depth the youth entrusted to him.

At the peril of his life, in July of 1944 he saved the house of Cavalerie and its inhabitants thanks to his calm and courage. The situation became once again normal in 1946 and Father Marie-Rogatien was discharged from his position as superior and became an itinerant preacher: *“There are two men in me: one hides the other, the spiritual one and the joker. I do not pretend that they are both transcendent. I have an original cast of mind.”*

A way of the cross.

The last part of the life of Fr. Marie-Rogatien was marked by long physical and mental sufferings. His work had to be given up and he was separated from his religious family. An illness of acute furuncles (boils) transformed his body in constant sores that gave him many nights of insomnia. *“I understood what the gridiron of Saint Lawrence was.”* On April 18, 1948, while preaching the monthly retreat at Sacré-Coeur of Angoulême, he had to be taken urgently to the Sainte-Marthe clinic for an operation. He would never leave it. *“It is through suffering that I think I arrived at habitual union with Our Lord.”* On the morning of March 8, 1949, he lost consciousness and his heart weakened. Fr. René Gaury administered the sacrament of the sick and that night all hope of amelioration was abandoned. He died with no contraction or even a movement of the eyes around 10:35 p.m. The funeral was celebrated in the church of Sacré-Coeur d’Angoulême and the body buried in the Soyaux cemetery. Father Marie-Rogatien had spent the last eleven months of his life in hospital.

Addenda.

Father Marie-Rogatien found his vocation on the occasion of a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. He was a born educator, capable of provoking personal thought on the part of the students and of eliciting the best out of them. His preferred subject was literature, in which he excelled. He taught in many countries: in Turkey at Eski-Chéïr before his ordination, then in Switzerland at Ascona and at Assumption College in Worcester from 1913 to 1919; then, after a

short stay in England, he taught philosophy at Taintegnies and St. Gerard in Belgium until 1929. He was then Superior at the college level aluminate of Melle in the Province of Bordeaux and at the College of St. Caprais at Toulouse (?Agen?). During World War II, in spite of his lost eyesight, he still taught the aluminate students of Melle, moved to the free zone of France, as Melle was in the section of France occupied by the Germans.

During his later years, he preached retreats. Here, as in his teaching, he was always original in his manner of presenting ideas. He had a good sense of humor, but also a sense of the paradoxical, which often caused misunderstandings. He died after a long and painful illness. (Notes by Fr. Armand Desautels.)

Portrait.

“Tall, handsome, with a quite severe aspect under his thick glasses of a half-blind person, with a short beard that he retained from his being formerly an artillery captain. He was brave, taking everything in, retaining all. And what speech! He used the precise word, to bring forth an image or a contrast, and was very clear as he chose his expressions carefully: originality. He was concise and harmonious. In fact, his ministry was spent preaching: in the Orient, Belgium, Switzerland, and North America. He preached in cathedrals and humble shrines. His three favorites were Bossuet, Newman, and Louis Veuillot. He always returned to these three preferred authors finding in their style contentment because of their solid logic and base. He was energetic and was not afraid of death. The Germans noticed this when in 1944 they kept him under fire from their machine guns during two hours. ‘Aren’t you afraid?’ a professor asked him. ‘How do you want this to worry me? You know that I am blind. I never saw the German!’”
(Voulez-Vous? 1949.)

Bernardin (Jean-Pierre) Bal-Fontaine

1887-1978

Religious of the Province of France, Provincial.

A Savoyard in the world.

Jean-Pierre was born May 25, 1887, in Hauteluce (Savoie), a small village not far from the Notre Dame des Châteaux aluminate which he attended from 1899 to 1903. He found refuge from the newly enacted anti-clerical laws at “Villa Madonna del Buon Consiglio” in Mongreno, Italy, located some 4 km (2 ½ miles) from Turin (1903-1904). He entered the novitiate in Louvain September 18, 1904 with 27 companions. Fr. Vincent de Paul Bailly gave them the religious habit and Fr. Benjamin Laurès guided their first steps in religious life. He took his first annual vows September 18, 1905. In October 1906, Jean-Pierre, having become Brother Bernardin, went to Rome, Piazza de Ara Coeli, to follow courses at the Angelicum (1906-1909), crowning them with a doctorate in philosophy. He made final profession in Rome June 7, 1907. According to custom, he was sent to teach at Elorrio (Spain) from 1909 to 1911, discovering the country and learning to speak its language fluently. He then went to Jerusalem to pursue studies in theology (1911-1914), receiving priestly ordination from Patriarch Camassei May 17, 1914. However, in December 1914, the Turks expelled him from the country along with 30 other Assumptionists. Three weeks of travel by both land and sea finally brought them to Rome in January 1915, after a difficult odyssey where he finished his fourth year of theology.



Years of wandering.

In September 1915, Fr. Bernardin was sent to the aluminate in Vinovo (Piedmont), which also served as a temporary novitiate. Typhoid fever in 1915 obliged the novices to go to Rome. Thanks to Archbishop Latty of Avignon, the quarters next to the shrine of Notre Dame des Lumières (Vaucluse) were placed at the disposal of the Assumptionists in May 1916. Transferred from the aluminate to the novitiate, Fr. Bernardin found himself in Provence from 1916 to 1919. Those were hard working but exquisite years during which he cumulated several positions: master of novices, director of the shrine, local treasurer, and host for the soldier-brothers on leave. In September 1919, Fr. Bernardin was sent to England where he spent 16 years: chaplain in New Haven (1919-22), Brockley (1923-29), and Bethnal-Green (1929-35). A model pastor, he was seduced by the English culture, learning the language of the country, which he spoke with a bit of a French accent, but to the point of being able to pass for a perfectly refined and meticulous gentleman. He was Provincial of Paris before, during, and after the war.

This nomad had not finished touring Europe. At the General Chapter of 1935, Fr. Clodoald Sérieix, having underlined his fatigue, was relieved of his responsibility as Provincial of Paris. On February 2, 1935, Fr. Bal-Fontaine was appointed as his successor, a position he held for 11 years (1935-46). Before the war, his plan was clear: “I draw your attention to three points: religious fervor, the need for intensive recruiting, and the need to strengthen our finances.” Are not the soul, manpower, and money the order of priority of all development? Vérargues (Hérault) was enlarged in 1936, as was Les Essarts. Perpignan and Nîmes were growing. Montéchor (Pas-de-Calais) was opened in 1937, and Soisy (Essonne) in 1938. The Vicariate in England was becoming more and more promising.

But war broke out. Some 90 religious of the Province were called into active military service, and 6 houses were requisitioned. At the debacle of May 1940, even the Provincial had to flee to Nîmes until April 1943. In May-June 1944, the orphanage in Arras was bombed four times; on June 22, the house in Saint-Denis was devastated by the explosion of a V1; Le Bizet, which had become a munitions depot, exploded; Les Essarts was pillaged and ransacked: “*All the houses of the Province of Paris suffered from the scourge of war.*” And to complete the martyrology, Fr. Bal-Fontaine, in his report of 1946, also mentioned the houses in England that had been the victims of air raids: New Haven, Bethnal-Green, Brockley, Charlton, etc.

After 1945, everything had to be rebuilt or repaired as well as possible, but materials and money were lacking: “Everyone had to camp out.” At the General Chapter of 1946, the Provinces of England and North America were canonically erected and detached from Paris. In 1946, Fr. Rémi Kokel succeeded Fr. Bal-Fontaine who was elected Assistant General.

Assistant General in Rome.

Fr. Bernardin accepted the new position that lasted six years. He was greatly appreciated for his calm and level-headedness of his opinions, particularly in financial matters. A practical man, he was wary of ideas that were not backed up by reality. He spent his free time visiting the Eternal City and guiding pilgrims, especially in 1950, his mastery of four languages serving him in good stead. In 1952, when his term was over, he returned to his province, accepting to become the superior of the community in Nîmes.

Final years.

Fr. Bal-Fontaine was 65 years old at the time. For 6 years, he ably and confidently directed the college in Nîmes. In 1958, he was placed in charge of Saint Peter in Gallicantu in Jerusalem, located at the time in Jordan. Because the residence had been leased, after the departure of the Sisters of Saint Joseph, to an Arab family to be used as a hotel, the Silver Tower, he and the community were obliged to live a Spartan existence in what was formerly known as the “farm.” In 1962, he moved to Notre Dame de France where he managed to save the archives that had accumulated over a period of 80 years. In 1963, he returned to France, accepting to become chaplain to the Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Mary in Vendôme (Loir-et-Cher). He died in a hospital January 3, 1978, and was buried in Vendôme January 6, 1978.

Addenda.

Traits of a real d'alzonian.

“The resemblance of Fr. Bernardin to Fr. d’Alzon, especially after his fiftys, is quite clear: same forehead, high and wide, same look, same profile with a slightly hooked nose. The moral character of Fr. Bal-Fontaine owes even more to the Congregation’s founder. His fidelity to the Church, lived as a fidelity to the Pope and the hierarchy, his faithfulness to his religious commitments expressed in a perfect regularity, his filial devotion to the Virgin, and especially by his love of the Eucharist, all of this is specifically Assumptionist...

Fr. Bal-Fontaine is a true son of Fr. d’Alzon by the various periods of his priestly ministry: parishes, responsibilities as Provincial and Assistant, Director of a high school, chaplain. His spiritual life bases itself on the Eucharist that explains all of his priestly life, his charity that colors all of his works, his hope that fills his life because it is sustained by that of the Risen one...” *Fr. Arandel, table companion and assistant to Fr. Bernardin at Vendôme from 1970 to 1978.*)

Anastase (Eugène-Louis) Baudart

1882-1948

Religious of the Province of Paris.

A child from the North.

Eugène was born in the diocese of Arras at Guemps in Pas-de-Calais. His pastor, Father Ledoux noticed him and passed on to him certain original ideas that he always held on to. Eugène lived in the alumnates, first at Sainghin in the North from 1896 to 1898 and then at Clairmarais in Pas-de-Calais, near Saint-Omer from 1898 to 1900. Fr. Edouard Bachelier left his imprint on Eugène's character. He entered the Gempe novitiate in Holland September 18, 1900 and finished his novitiate at Phanaraki in Turkey (Asia) where he made his profession of first vows September 18, 1901 with the name of Brother Anastase. He then went to an apostolic house at Gallipoli (1902-1903), this time in European Turkey. It was there that he pronounced his perpetual vows January 1, 1903. He was once again named to the mission of Zongouldak in Turkey on the Black Sea (1903-1904), then to that of Ismidt (1904-1905). At this point he studied theology at Jerusalem from 1905 to 1910 where he was ordained to the priesthood July 10, 1910.



First stay in Worcester, U.S.A.

From the Orient, he went to the New World as a teacher at the college in Worcester for four years (1910-1914). Although he was short and had a weak voice, it was not long before he became a real orator, even though there was no echo of this facet of his life except for a mention of great sympathy in this Francophile milieu.

The years of the war of 1914-18.

On the other hand, his military obligations requisitioned him for many years during which he left many expressions of affection. He mostly served in the infirmary service during the different sections of the campaign that brought him to Dordogne as well as in Doubs, the Vosges and especially the sector of Verdun. This war was very trying for him and his family since he lost two brothers, a brother-in-law, and four cousins, on the battlefield. August 26, 1916 he wrote:

I have spoken to you of the disappearance of my brother. I have just learned that he fell at Verdun July 11. He was married and the father of a child. My poor parents, almost in their eighties, are in a very deep desolation.... Because of military censure, it was not always possible to fix the locality of his personal position. He wrote October 16, 1916:

" Here I am again in the woods in a post. I will take over in the village just like in May. The wounded are not numerous, but during the whole day we have to dig passages. We are in the middle of rain and snow and in our windowless shelter, it is absolutely forbidden to build a fire. I hope to be sent to a post where I shall have more time to do my religious exercises...." There was no doubt that this period of his life marked him deeply. He was discharged in January 1919 and once again sent to the college in Worcester.

A second stay in Worcester, 1919-1929.

He returned with joy to the college that he had left five years before. Of the 24 members that were part of the college, a certain number, including himself, were freed up to exercise an apostolate of missionary preaching. In 1929, he asked to go for a visit to the tomb of his deceased parents who died in 1920. He was then given more pastoral works in France: the parish of Clairmarais (1929-1932) and Montmirail-Gault-la-Forêt (1932-1947). He was named to Montpellier in 1947 where he was chaplain at the neighboring orphanage of Bon-Secours. On Saturday, June 19, 1948, he complained of stomach problems. He died suddenly at the entrance to the door around seven p.m. from an angina attack. He was buried the following Monday, June 21, and rests next to Frs. Augustin Nègre and Sernin Baron.

Addenda.

Father Anastase's early ministry was in Jerusalem. Twice he was stationed at Assumption in Worcester, from 1910 to 1914 and from 1919 to 1929, when he taught in the Prep School classes. Later, he was one of the team of parish priests covering a large territory from a central rectory at Montmirail, in France. (Notes by Fr. Armand Desautels.)

Fr. Anastase, a well tested catechist.

“A few years after he returned from Worcester, one day I met Fr. Anastase in a rectory at nearby Montmirail. He was gifted with a strong will and a persevering devotion, but these were hidden talents. He raised chickens, took care of a garden, and taught catechism with perfection, for he has a passion for the catechism and had inherited from his first pastor several teaching aids and even a methodology that he had placed on large charts that were worthy of being printed.

On reading the Bulletin of Montmirail, it is striking to see the activity and the many sermons, meetings, and masses that he took care of on Sundays. At the time, there was an auto that took him to the various parishes where he ministered. When the war came in 1939, he had to use a bicycle and push it up the hills of the rugged roads of his parishes, in all sorts of weather, rain or snow. At times, he came back exhausted, very tired...” (*Lettre à la famille, 1948*).

Léocade (François Joseph) Bauer

1891-1967

Religious of the Province of Paris.

An 'Alsatian-Lorraine of the interior' in the exterior.

François Joseph was born July 19, 1891 at Achères, today in the Yvelines, of an Alsatian father, François, and a mother from Lorraine, Marie Villen. The Alsatian family from Guebwiller left their native soil in 1870. Three children became religious: one a Lazarist, another a brother of the Holy Cross, and a third a Franciscan brother. This last was martyred in China by the Boxers in July of 1900 and was beatified by Pius XII November 24, 1946. François Joseph's infancy was put to the test by the death of his mother, a little sister, and in 1897, his dad. He was an intern student with the Brothers of Holy Cross at Bourgeuil (Indre-et-Loire). A Little Sister of the Assumption put him in touch with the Assumption through Fr. François Mathis who guided him to the Clairmarais aluminate (Pas-de-Calais) in September 1903. He then went to Bizet in Belgium (1904-1906), next to Saint-Trond, then Zepperen, and finally to Taintegnies where he studied until 1908. He was a very sharp adolescent, an artist, but was a bit withdrawn. He entered the Louvain novitiate and took the habit August 28, 1908 under the name of Brother Léocade. Fr. Antoine de Padoue Vidal was in charge of him at Gempe where he made his perpetual vows August 30, 1910, on the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Fr. d'Alzon. He started philosophy at Louvain September 1, 1910. In August 1913, he was named to teach at Brousse in Turkey, but military hostilities forced him to go from Phanaraki in August 1914 to Ismidt at Kadi-Keuï and finally Plovdiv until the expulsion of the religious in November 1915. He was among the religious that from Rumania, Russia, Finland, Scandinavia, and England returned to France to do their military service. In January 1917, he was called up and named to health services until August 1919. He could then get back to his theological studies at Louvain where he was ordained a priest August 7, 1921, at age 30.



After the Orient, America (1921-1940).

Fr. Léocade who studied English in London (Bethnal-Green: 1915-1916) was sent to the college in Worcester, U.S.A. from 1921 to 1931. A demanding teacher, he received the nickname of 'Hot Dog'. The students also liked him because he published the magazines '*L'Assomption*' and '*L'Almanach de l'Assomption*'. He was involved in theatrical representations where his talents for staging plays, wardrobe master, and musician were exploited. His much-appreciated sermons earned him another nickname, this time a more admiring one: 'the little saint Anthony'. In 1931, he was sent to Quebec, at Bergerville, as master of novices where he gave himself totally with his heart and ingenious energy to the formation of a young generation of American religious. Various illnesses obliged him to request that he be sent back to France in 1940.

At Nîmes (1941-1966).

At first it was at the college of Nîmes where he was spiritual dean until 1948. He was then involved in the Institut d'Alzon of the Oblate Sisters at Séguier Street where he gave a spiritual ministry of quality: retreats, chaplaincy, catechetics, and missionary formation. For the younger students, he adopted the custom of 'godmothers'. In doing so, the older ones were better formed on the religious level and they became more responsible. He took over very naturally the groups of the Noël and organized trips to foreign countries that enlivened and gave a boost to the work for the year.

The last stage: Paris (1966-1967).

At the request of Fr. Brajon September 8, 1966, he accepted the chaplaincy for the Sisters of Sainte Marie, in Paris, at Bara Street. He died there December 21, 1967 of a heart attack. The funeral was held December 26 in the chapel of the Bon Secours Hospital where Fr. Léocade was urgently transported the night of December 21. He was buried in the Montparnasse Cemetery.

Addenda.

Fr. Léocade was most hospitable to any American going to Nîmes.

In North America (1921-1924) by M.V.

His letter of obedience sent him to Assumption College in Worcester (Mass.) He arrived in September 1921. During 10 years, he devoted himself as a monitor at first, then teaching Latin to 1st year high, and finally he taught the seniors. Fr. Louis-Robert Brassard, one of his former students, describes his teacher: "Fr. Léocade had the reputation of being demanding. That is where his nickname "Hot Dog" came from. He knew his subject matter and his methodology was week-adapted to beginners. With him, it was impossible not to learn." Besides teaching, he was in charge of the College magazine: "L'Assomption". Each year at Christmas time, he published the "Almanach of the Assumption". This was most appreciated by the teaching sisters and the students of the Franco-American schools...

He was gifted as an organizer. "In 1929, for the silver Jubilee of the College, he was put in charge of the program of celebrations. The preparation lasted six months and revealed his many great qualities of spirit, heart, and imagination. Everything was a success, especially the exposition of photos and charts illustrating the history of our College and the Assumptionist works in the world. I can still see Fr. Wilfrid Dufault – at the time a philosophy student – spending hours looking at these paintings. They most likely gave him his first overview of the Congregation that he would later be in charge of. Fr. Léocade also solidly established the Drama Club of the college. His great success was "Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme" of Molière. All had to be done: costumes, scenery, music, and ballets... The end result was an unheard of success..."

"These endeavors in no way impeded his ministry of souls: at the college, he confessed and guided spiritually a good number of students; and outside, he preached, gave retreats and conferences, plus regular weekend ministry in New England parishes. Father would come each weekend to our parish of St. Cecilia in Leominster to help. His preaching was solid and eloquent and this enthused the faithful. He was soon nicknamed: "the little Saint-Anthony". During these visits, only God knows how many young girls were guided toward religious life, especially for the Congregation of the Daughters of the Holy Spirit of Saint-Brieuc." (Fr. J.R. Brassard)

In 1931, Fr. Léocade was sent to Bergerville (Canada) as Master of Novices. He kept this position until 1940 when illness forced him to ask to go back to France. What he was like as master of Novices can be surmised by reading the Novitiate courses found in his things... We get a better picture by listening to Fr. Brassard. "What could have been discouraging – given the climate, isolation, solitude (since I was the only novice) – did not take place. The same energy, the same ingenious devotedness that characterized his years in Worcester made these fifteen months under his guidance the most interesting and encouraging for a young religious." The many religious that he formed could most likely sign this testimony. So could other appreciations formulated by Fr. Brassard: "Fr. Léocade was for many American Assumptionists a light and a model. He was one of the best builders of our young American Province. The American Assumption is greatly indebted to him. The work that he did here, the vocations that he nurtured, encouraged, guided are the greatest monument to his memory. We were preparing to receive him this year to celebrate his priestly Jubilee. God decided otherwise and called him to his eternal reward. This is far greater than anything that America could have offered him."

He was in North America from 1921 to 1940. First, he was a teacher of freshmen in the Prep School. He was severe and knew how to obtain hard work from many enthusiastic students. Many an Assumptionist vocation is due to him at a time when the American vocations were only starting. Then, from 1931 to 1940, he was Master of Novices in Quebec. Because of poor health, he requested to return to France and was spiritual director at the College of Nîmes and at the 'Institut d'Alzon' conducted by the Oblates of the Assumption in that city. He kept doing this work for 25 years. At the same time, he was active with the 'Noël' and led the Nîmes train of pilgrims to Lourdes for the national pilgrimage. His last two years were spent in Paris as chaplain to Sisters.

Father Léocade Bauer arrived in Sillery 27 September 1931 with Father Crescent Armanet, vicar provincial, who announced to the community 30 September the appointment of Fr. Léocade as master of novices. The following year, 15 August, he was named superior.

The team for animation of the novitiate was totally reconstituted. In fact, Father Tranquille left 2 October 1929 and Father Pierre Martel 21 September 1931; Father Marie-Alexis left 14 October of the same year and Father Réginald 5 September 1932; Father Marie-Clément remained but only took care of the Sisters of St. Joan of Arc. After Father Léocade, the following arrived: Fathers Hydulphe Mathiot in December 1931, Hermès Fuchs in July 1932, Maurice Gagnon in August 1934 and Wilfrid Dufault on September 18, 1937; the latter studied philosophy at Laval University, but helped the team as much as he could. In 1939, Father Germain Guénette arrived.

Fr. Léocade taught major and minor novitiate; Fr. Hydulphe took care of the chant and also during several years of courses on the Gospels and Psalms; Fr. Hermès gave with a lot of conviction the courses on hagiography and liturgy; Fr. Maurice taught good manners and the history of the Assumption; for these, he had long notes that were duplicated as handout notes; later he would teach the courses on Psalms and the Gospels. The Fathers also assumed other tasks: Father Hydulphe was a professor of patrology at the University. (Les Assomptionnistes au Canada, Yves Garon, a.a., Sillery, 1997, 46)

Gerulf (Eugène) (Hugo) Bervoets

1913-1980

Religious of the Province of North Belgium.

Formation in Belgium.

Eugène Victor was born August 11, 1913 at Lummen in the Belgian Limbourg where he went to grade school. He then came into contact with the alumnist life, first at Zepperen (1927-1931), then at Kapelle-op-den-Bos (1931-1933). He entered the Taintegnies novitiate in 1933 and took his first vows October 4, 1934 under the name of Gerulf. He was evaluated as being of an absolute sincerity, having good aptitudes and being devoted, well groomed, with a happy character, and easy to approach. At Saint-Gérard, he did two years of philosophy (1934-1936) and started his theology at Louvain (1937-1939). It was completed at Saint-Gérard (1939-1942), because the bombings had destroyed the Louvain convent in 1940. He took a year off to fulfill his military service obligation. It was at Louvain that he pronounced his perpetual vows October 13, 1938 and was ordained to the priesthood by Bishop Charue at Saint-Gérard February 22, 1942. At first, he was sent to the Zepperen aluminate to teach (1942-1949).



The years in far-away missions (Colombia, New York).

In 1949, he volunteered for the mission in Colombia at Cali and in 1954 was temporarily transferred, for three years, to the Province of North America. Fr. Henri Moquin wrote to his confrere, the provincial of Belgium, Stéphane Lowet December 16, 1954: *"It is with pleasure that I accept the loan of Fr. Eugène Bervoets to the American Province for three years that, I hope, will be renewed. He will not lack work at the 14th Street parish of Our Lady of Guadalupe (New York). Presently Fr. Zoppi has a serious heart condition. We are therefore waiting for Fr. Eugène with a certain impatience because, with the absence of two out of five religious, those who are left find themselves overloaded"*. Fr. Eugène-Gerulf lived in the United States until 1958. His passage in New York did not go unnoticed if we are to believe the chronicle of Fr. Ed. Melchior of 12-29-1955: *"Fr. Eugène Bervoets, who is at the parish of Our Lady of Guadalupe, has been so appreciated in our Hispanic milieus that on a solemn occasion presided by Msgr. Vivas, auxiliary bishop of Bogota and of Bishop Philip, auxiliary for the Hispanos of New York, he was solemnly decorated in the name of the Ibero-American Republics for his talent for organizing and his enthusiasm as spiritual director of the Guadalupino Center. It was there that he created a center for Hispanic and Catholic culture. I was there among the 2 to 3,000 persons at this celebration. Fr. Eugène spoke with a mike, in Spanish to be sure, and I can assure you that he does so very well"*.

In pastoral service (Belgium).

In 1958, Fr. Eugène-Gerulf returned to his country; he was part of the Stabroeck community in Belgium (1958-1973). Stabroeck was a Belgian village in a Flemish zone, in the province of Anvers, belonging to the archbishopric of Malines. The Assumption acquired in 1952 as a replacement for Hal, for the Flemish philosophers and theologians of the Belgian province, the Ravenhof castle of Count Charles Moretus as well as the estate of some 25 hectares (250 square meters). This foundation was to last till 1968 when the estate was sold. Fr. Eugène did ministry in the neighboring parishes. In 1973, he suffered from serious brain illness and had to be cared for in various institutions: from 1973-1976 at the Kapellen clinic in Antwerp, then at the rest home 'Emmaus' at Korbeek-Lo from 1976-1979, and Erps-Kwerps in 1979-1980. He died October 28, 1980 at Erps-Kwerps, having kept his hope and a smile right to the very end during this very difficult time of trial and never complaining. Fr. Eugène-Gerulf was buried in the cemetery of his native land, Lummen.

Addenda.

He arrived in Cali, Colombia, in March 1954 at Casa Cural de San Nicolás and worked in the parish church.

The Colombian Mission.

"In 1946 Fr. Rodrigue Moors, newly named provincial of Belgium, followed through on the decision of his predecessor, Fr. Dieudonné, by sending two volunteers to found at Cali, Frs. Lamberto Muermans and Renato Paulassen who arrived there 4 October 1946. Their adjustment took place on the spot thanks to the hospitality and kindness of the Little Sisters of the Assumption. The Assumptionist community was strengthened on 6 March 1947

by the arrival of Fr. Luis Puig (Argentinian religious) and 4 Belgian religious: André Dumon, Edouard Melchior, Niklaas Nicolaes, and Roger Besseling. This community accepts to care for the territory of Saint Nicolas, having some 1000,000 souls, in other words 1/3 of the city in 1947. The first project of the Assumptionists was to set up mission-chapels in the sections or barrios. On the west of the Santander and Las Delicias barrios, The Credit Institute set up a modern barrio to shelter the honest working families provided that they were married. It was this sector that fell under the care of Fr. Eugenio Bervoets in 1949, some 100,000 persons..." (*News from Cali, March 1953.*)

Letter by Fr. Eugène Bervoets to the Provincial in New York.

Lummen, 16 February 1955

I can well understand that you are starting to have doubts and that you are questioning whether I really want to come to New York. I received my Visa in the course of December and if I stayed more than 6 months in Belgium, it is because I needed several months of rest.

If I am going to New York, it is with a view to work there since I know that there is much work to be done. I worked in Colombia at Cali in a huge parish where there was also a lack of priests. I know that in similar cases there is a lot of work to be done. I myself asked to go to New York so as to continue working with Spanish-speaking people. Therefore, it is not a situation of my not wanting to go.

Yesterday I spoke with Rev. Fr. Stéphane and according to your last letter I was able to understand that I am to make the arrangements for the trip myself. That is what I did yesterday. I leave on the ship "LIBERTÉ" 4 March from Le Havre and plan to arrive on 10 March in New York.

Fr. Stéphane lent me the money to pay the trip. Therefore unless something unforeseen happens I hope to arrive in New York around 10 March.

Kindly receive, my Very Reverend Father my sincerest respect,

Fr. Eugène Bervoets

Henri (Anthelme) Blanc

1884-1972

French Religious of the Province of North America.

In the surroundings of the Assumption until 1927.

Henri was born November 12, 1884 at Cruet, Savoy, in the district of Saint-Pierre d'Albigny. After the years of the communal school, he entered the Notre-Dame des Châteaux aluminate (1897-1901) where he was one of the "solitaires de la montagne" and pursued his humanities at Brian in La Drôme (1901-1903). He asked to enter the Assumptionist family and took the religious habit October 18, 1903 at Louvain with the name of Brother Anthelme. He did his novitiate in Jerusalem where he made his first vows November 13, 1904 as well as his perpetual vows the following year, October 23, 1905. He then pursued his philosophy studies from 1906 to 1907 as well as his theological studies from 1907 to 1910. He was ordained to the priesthood July 10, 1910 by Msgr. Piccardo, the auxiliary to the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, Msgr. Camassei. During his studies, he learned English. This permitted him to go to the college in Worcester, U.S.A., where he taught (1910-1921). Rebellious during the war of 1914-1918, he escaped military service in Europe and became a naturalized American citizen April 9, 1917. From 1921 to 1927, he was named to the parish of Our Lady of Guadalupe in New York City at 14th Street. At that time, he asked for and obtained an indult of secularization November 23, 1927, giving as reasons for this decision family and moral issues and his desire of entering the Fathers of Mercy. His confreres denounced his *love of independence, good living, and money, which is so easy to set aside in New York*. This dialogue fell on deaf ears and his final break took place: the bishop of Raleigh (North Carolina) accepted the ex-Father Anthelme, who had become Reverend Henri, into his diocese by an official act of incardination for three years, renewable. Reverend Henri became chaplain in a hospice and then in a girls' school. We then lost trace of him.



Return to the bosom of the Assumption.

In September 1960, Reverend Henri wrote to Fr. Dufault, Superior General: "*I have just returned from Asheville, with which you are familiar, and on my desk I found the precious parchment [authorization to pronounce his vows as an Assumptionist religious in articulo mortis]. What a consolation to have it for my soul with what is included! A thousand thanks for this graciousness! It touches me greatly. I have just returned from a trip to Europe to visit France; I wanted to go to Savoy and revisit Notre -Dame des Châteaux and pray in the old chapel. I cried. I also stopped at Saint-Sigismond to visit the Fathers and leave an offering. The Assumption did so much for me. I also went to Ars where I slept in the rectory. In Paris, I visited Fr. Aurèle Odil at la Bonne Presse and Frs. Savinien and Cayré, former classmates of mine. My trip finished with a pilgrimage to Lisieux. In New York, I chatted with Fr. Provincial...*" A letter from Fr. Antoine-Marie Philippe dated February 15, 1967, and sent from New York to Fr. Wilfrid Dufault, mentioned the desire to renew more official contacts with the Assumption by Reverend Henri: "*Fr. Blanc has asked to be buried next to our Fathers in Worcester. He belongs to the Third Order and he has put us in his will. He himself told me that he would like to re-enter, but cannot accept the idea of having to redo a novitiate, if I remember well.*" Fr. Dufault facilitated the return of Reverend Henri into the bosom of the Assumption, accepting his desire and indicating on this occasion the flexibility of Canon Law for the good of persons: "*I have received your answer and am very pleased with the way you have received my suggestion. I am also glad to thank you immediately from the bottom of my heart for the generous gift that accompanied your letter. The Procurator General [Farne] is snowed under at this time and that is the reason for the delay in the steps to take [authorization for a dispensation to redo the novitiate]. You have the text for the indult for admission to vows in articulo mortis, with the delegation of any priest that will be near you at that time. I am sending you a number of 'l'Assomption et ses oeuvres' in its new presentation; it is an interprovincial magazine that has much improved in its presentation and content....*" From this moment on, Fr. Henri clearly manifested his belonging to the Province of North America. He died at Asheville May 6, 1972 and was the first religious buried in the new cemetery of Fiskdale.

Addenda.

As a boy, Henri watched the Swiss woodcarvers at work and took this craft up as a hobby. After being incardinated in the Raleigh, NC diocese, he was a chaplain at the Oteen VA hospital in Asheville, NC (1928-1952). In 1952, he was named chaplain at St. Joseph's Hospital and then in 1955, chaplain of St. Genevieve-of-the-Pines and retired in 1967. He was at first buried with the Assumptionists in the Greendale Cemetery of Assumption College. During

World War I, Father was chaplain at Assumption College for the Army Training Corps. He celebrated his Golden Jubilee Mass in July 1960 and his Diamond Jubilee Mass in 1970, marking his 60th year [as a priest].

“Fr. Blanc became a chaplain at Oteen VA Hospital in 1928. While there, he was working with patients in therapy, and decided to start carving to encourage the men. Using a pocketknife, he carved out an owl, and discovering the fascination of carving, began doing it as a hobby, carving many items while talking with patients.

He began doing other birds, then went to animals, and finally to people, with his craft culminating in depiction of religious scenes. For many years, Father Blanc brought carvings of events in the life of Jesus to The Citizen-Times on religious holidays, especially Christmas and Easter, which published photographs of them. He also carved some depictions of the late Pope Pius XII. He preferred orangewood, but carved cherry, dogwood and walnut. He also used woodcuts he carved to illustrate articles for religious publications through the years.” (North Carolina, Asheville Citizen-Times, Sun. May 7, 1972, 5D)



Wood carving of the Curé d'Ars.

Rev Jean-Marie Vianney

By Fr. Henri Blanc, A.A.

On May 6 Fr. Henri (Anthelme) Blanc died in Asheville, North Carolina at 87 years of age. A Savoyard, he had done his early studies at the aluminate of Notre-Dame des Châteaux. Ordained in Jerusalem on July 10, 1910, he celebrated his 60th anniversary of priesthood in 1970. For a number of years, he worked in Worcester and then at Our Lady of Guadalupe in New York. In 1927, he requested an indult of secularization and, in January 1928, he went to work in the diocese of Raleigh, North Carolina. For more than twenty years, he was chaplain of a veterans' hospital and then of a school for girls. According to one bishop, he was "one of the most venerated priests in the South." In 1967, he asked and received an indult that would allow him to pronounce his vows in articulo mortis. Already at that moment, he gave the bulk of his belongings to the Province and continued after that to generously share whatever he had. He remained in regular communication with the Provincial right up to the time of his death. He had asked to be buried with his brother Assumptionists and was given the assurance that he would. He is now the first to lie in our new cemetery site in Fiskdale.

Réginald (Louis Lucien) Bonnet

1881-1955

Religious of the Province of Paris.

A sensitive and affectionate nature.

Louis-Lucien was born November 18, 1881 at Le Lauzet (Alps of Haute Provence). He did his primary studies at Urtis and Le Lauzet; then he became familiar with alumnate life: three years at Notre-Dame des Châteaux (Savoie) 1894-1897 and two years at Brian (Drôme) 1897-1899. He took the religious habit under the name of Brother Réginald at Livry September 8, 1899 and finished his novitiate at Phanaraki in Turkey by his profession September 8, 1900. The following year, Fr. Antoine received his perpetual vows September 8, 1901: "A very sensitive youth who manifests a character dominated by affections. He has a very intense spirit of piety and is very thoughtful, even in his relations with his confreres. At times he can be scrupulous, but stays within the limits thanks to his absolute docility. He is noble and distinguished, discreet, conscientious, with an open heart." These are the words of a report written about him by Fr. Benjamin Laurès. Bro. Réginald then started his graduate studies: philosophy at Jerusalem (1902-1903), teacher at Eski-Chéir (1903-1905) and Varna (1905-1907), theology at Jerusalem (1907-1910) where he was ordained to the priesthood July 10, 1910 by Msgr. Picardo, auxiliary to the Latin patriarch.



In America.

Fr. Réginald who had practiced English was named to the college in Worcester (1910-1925) where his ministerial priority was preaching. He paid a heavy tax during the war of 1914-1918 since he was called up to serve during 5 years (1914-1919) in an infantry regiment that brought him back to the Orient where he also served as infirmarian. One of his letters to Fr. Joseph Maubon dated March 20, 1919 brings to light this period of his life: "*My return trip from the Orient took place the day before yesterday. I left Salonica so quickly that I was unable to send you the information that you asked for in your circular letter of December, sent from Rome. Here is the itinerary of the places where I was posted during my military life: Digne, Marseilles, the vicariate of Alexandria in Egypt, Athens and Salonica. I am now at La Crau d'Hyères with an aunt who brought me up; I still have to visit my old father at Gigors in the Lower Alps.*"

Once again a civilian, he returned to Worcester until 1925. He then went to Canada at Bergerville-Sillery near Quebec (1925-1932) where he was named superior 1929-1932. Then his teaching aptitudes were useful at the Louvain scholasticate in Belgium (1932-1934).

In the North of France and the region of Paris.

The third part of the pastoral life of Fr. Réginald is then started at Lille (1934-1948) where he again is named superior in 1935. The Paris provincial, Fr. Merry Susset, asked him to be in charge of the foundation of the alumnate of Lambersart (North) from 1948 to 1951 before going to that of Soisy-sur-Seine (1951-1953). He finished his life as chaplain of the Oblates of the Assumption at their residential school of La Ville-du-Bois in Essonne (1953-1955). He died January 25, 1955 at the age of 74 in Longjumeau. The brief notice concerning him in the official Bulletin of the Assumption was laconic, even very dull. It seems to even retreat from the hopes expressed by his master of novices about Réginald before the war: "*A model of regularity, likeable and open, Fr. Réginald manifested a lack of administrative sense and initiative when faced with certain responsibilities. Nevertheless, he was happy to consecrate his life to preaching, especially in communities of sisters, either in North America or France.*" Be that as it may, nothing justifies this clear ostracism concerning his memory by the reviews of that time. Was it that he was not well known because of the fact that after 1923, the Congregation having been divided into provinces, Fr. Réginald went from the orbit of Lyons to that of Paris?

Addenda.

Father Réginald spent what were probably his best years in our Province, as part of a mission band based in Worcester. In 1925, he was sent to Quebec, where he was to be for a few years Superior of the Novitiate-Shrine, though he was not the Master of Novices. Later, he returned to France, where he did more preaching. At one time, he filled in as a teacher of history of the Church and patrology – probably as bad a teacher as he was a good preacher. (Notes by Fr. Armand Desautels.)

A resigning superior who was maintained.

“Concerning my nomination as superior of the aluminate of Lambersart [1948], I presented to Fr. Merry Susset the objections that he has undoubtedly brought to your attention. I have already had that responsibility at the house in Lille. It was a long mandate that was extended beyond 6 years until 1944. This was my 9th year as superior in the same residence.

My objections have not changed. I state my age, 67, and my lack of experience in heading up an aluminate. At Lambersat, we are speaking of a foundation. This is more delicate. I have never lived in an aluminate since I left as a student in 1899, almost fifty years ago!

A younger man, knowing this type of work and how it is run would do a much better job. I felt that I had to write you this letter”. (*Fr. Réginald, 25 September 1948.*)

Fr. Merry Susset wrote to Rome: “I saw Fr. Réginald at Lille 4 days ago. I really have no one to put in that place. Insist.” (*27 September 1948, Paris.*)

While at Sillery, Fr. Réginald was a preacher and also taught catechism to the Lay Brothers. (*Les Assomptionnistes au Canada, Yves Garon, a.a. Sillery, 1997, 40.*)

Joachim (Francois-Marie) Bosseno

1878-1943

Religious of the Province of Paris.

A religious coming from the worker's sector.

François-Marie was born April 14, 1878 at La-Vraie-Croix (Morbihan), near Elven in the diocese of Vannes, Brittany. Before coming to the Assumption, François-Marie spent 5 years as a tertiary with the Franciscan Fathers in England, at Nantes, and Saint-Nazaire. He did 3 years of military service at Fontainebleau (1898-1901) and wanted to return with the Franciscans, but because of the law on Associations, they liquidated their Third Orders. François-Marie was hired by Plisson at Crécy-en-Brie (1902-1904). He was seeking another kind of life. A priest from the diocese of Versailles presented him to Fr. Hippolyte Saugrain who sent him to Louvain. He took the religious habit September 18, 1904 at Louvain and did his novitiate under the direction of Fr. Benjamin Laurès. He made his first vows under the name of Brother Joachim September 18, 1907. His novitiate time was taken up by very practical jobs: cook helper and head cook. In 1908, he left Louvain for London (1908-1909) and then joined Bro. Armand Goffart in Worcester, USA (1909-1943) where he was also assigned to the kitchen. He made his perpetual profession October 23, 1913 in the hands of Fr. Omer Rochain. During World War I, he did not answer the draft call and was considered a draft dodger.



Jack of all trades in Worcester for 36 years.

A good worker, Bro. Joachim was totally committed to this Franco-American college founded in 1904. There were almost no jobs that he did not fulfill, and at times several at once, for the paid lay personnel was quite reduced. He stoked the furnaces and swept the hallways and classrooms. He was in charge of the laundry for the 85 resident students who at that time, as interns, sent all of their clothes to be washed at a public laundry. As sacristan of the public chapel, he greeted the local population for the Sunday and feast day offices since the Greendale parish had not yet been founded. Each year, he liked to organize raffles to decorate the chapel and involved a group of city women in making liturgical vestments. For a time, he even became once again the cook, a trade in which he excelled. Had he not taken cooking lessons at Louvain from an ex-chef of Napoleon III? In 1910, Bro. Joachim had scarlet fever. To be sure, he got better, but throbbing pains were to occasionally appear and affect his joints to such a point that his movements became painful. In Worcester, everything was done to remedy this painful throbbing. He consulted specialists in Boston. They put a plaster cast on his leg for months at a time; they even tried parallel medicines that claimed to be able to eliminate suffering that the official medicine could not heal. Bro. Joachim underwent everything without the least complaint. As soon as he felt a bit better, he got back to work without complaining. On the personal level, Brother Joachim, through his example and regularity, by his openness and kind words, had a great influence on the college students. As years went by, he became impotent. He even had to leave, with great sacrifice, his job as porter and went to live in 1941 at the end of the south wing of the building, close to the door that opened on Assumption Avenue. He was still able to be useful by keeping the jobs of office supplier and typist. For two years, he confined himself to that nook, happy to share in a visit from a friend. Sometimes he went, leaning on his cane, in faithfulness to the religious exercises of the community. On September 15, 1943, the anniversary date of his 34 years of arrival on American soil in Worcester, he became bed-ridden. Shortly after, he was hospitalized at Saint Vincent's hospital during three weeks. He died there December 1, 1943. His body was transferred to the college chapel. He was buried December 4 in the presence of all of the religious of the community in the Assumption cemetery in Greendale.

Addenda.

Joachim entered the Franciscan novitiate at the age of 16. He served in the Dragoon regiment and then in a supply train of the French army. Bro. Joachim was the cook at the scholasticate in Louvain from 1904 to 1908. He became crippled with a locked hip following an attack of scarlet fever in 1910. In gratitude for his many services, Rev. Anatole Desmarais, an alumnus of Assumption College, donated a stained glass window for the chapel of the religious in his memory. In 1937, he had a first heart attack that weakened him.

When I began as a freshman at Assumption High School in the fall of 1937, Brother Joachim Bosseno was the porter. That meant that he lived in a room off the main entrance where he took care of the single telephone the school had. His switchboard was just behind a sort of counter, and near the board a curtain separated his "office" from the alcove where he had his bed. When I left for the novitiate in 1942, Brother Joachim still worked at the

switchboard and slept in the same alcove. He wasn't going anywhere fast, and that was mainly because he was a cripple; he had a locked hip, which caused him great pain and made him walk with great difficulty.

Brother Joachim was a real old-timer at Assumption in Greendale. He arrived there in 1909. Fr. Engelbert Devincq knew him in Europe before then, and much of the information I give here is from an article Fr. Engelbert wrote at the time of Brother Joachim's death. He explained that Brother's main characteristic was strength. His physical strength caused him to do his military service in the dragoons, the heavily armed cavalry...

Most of us will remember the Brother as the doorkeeper who acted as banker for most of the younger students, who daily swept and dusted the study halls and class rooms of the first floor, who varnished all the study hall desks during the summers, who was sacristan for many years, who mailed the monthly reports to the folks at home, who in one word was generally useful in hundreds of small ways. (Assumption at War News Bulletin, Dec. 15th, 1943 p. 2, Henri Moquin.)

Brother Joachim was a man of strong soul, continually energetic and firm against obstacles. He was strong in his humble service, never thinking he had done enough for his community. Of course, Brother was not yet a saint. He had quite a temper and could be quite sharp in some remarks. But the tempest passed rapidly and he never carried a grudge. Sometimes even the strong have moments of weakness.

Brother Joachim was strong in piety, not a showy piety, but a solid piety grounded in love. He was always faithful in reciting the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin, which the lay brothers recited in those days. At peaceful times we could see him reciting the rosary. He made special efforts to rise early enough so that he could laboriously and painfully make his way to the freight elevator that would take him to the second floor. Dragging his feet, leaning on his cane, he managed to get into a pew. His Eucharist was most important for him. In many ways Brother Joachim can be for us a model of strength, despite infirmities...

Brother was a strong community man. He loved being with people and conversing. He was pleased when religious and students stopped to chat with him as he sat at his desk in his porter's room. He had a prodigious memory. He was a real dictionary of the facts and events of the house, the religious and the students. If you needed a date or a name, or a fact, you could ask him and he promptly gave you the answer. Alumni fondly remembered his help, his encouragement. He was an "apostle" without leaving his invalid's chair.

Brother Joachim died at St. Vincent Hospital, Worcester, around 7:30 p.m. December 1, 1943. He had received the Sacrament of the Sick in late September. He had been in the hospital a couple of weeks, because he could no longer take care of himself. He was heavy and couldn't turn in bed, because of his hip deformation. Brother had been unconscious since noon of November 30. Fathers Armand Desautels and Wilfrid Dufault watched him during the night, and Father Rodolphe Martel had been there during the day. Brother was buried in the community cemetery in Greendale. His funeral so impressed Cuthbert Wright that he begged the Assumptionists to bury him in the same way.

(ANA April-May 1999, ASITWAS 1878-1943 Brother Joachim Bosseno, 3-4 by Fr. Richard Richards, A.A.)

He came to Worcester in 1909 with Brother Armand Goffart. He became progressively infirm and could hardly walk. Still, he worked at the front office, was sacristan, and did various jobs. His work in the sacristy was increased in the early years because the Holy Rosary Parish started in our buildings. Brother Joachim encouraged many vocations to the priesthood and religious life.

Gérard (Louis-François) Boudou

1889-1918

French religious.

A mobile and very lively personality.

Louis was born at Marseillan (Hérault) October 12, 1889. At the age of 12, his dad died. On April 12, 1901, he entered the alumnate of Notre-Dame des Châteaux (Savoie) where the superior, Fr. Eugène Monsterlet, received him. He was part of the group that left, being chased away, for Mongreno in the Piémont (1903) and from there to Calahorra in Spain (1904-1905). Being from the South, he was not at all used to the rigorous climate of Castille; he was an assiduous client of iodine and glycerin to deal with chilblain and cracked skin. A born comedian, he was full of exuberance at the evening gatherings and the family celebrations that were the favorite distraction of the residents. Even though he was an excellent swimmer, he was unable to save one of his unfortunate companions who was carried away by the swift current of the Ebro River and drowned. He took the religious habit under the name of Bro. Gérard at Louvain September 13, 1905 and it was there that he made his perpetual vows September 13, 1907. His philosophy studies took place right there with no interruption. He tended to be enthusiastic and took off to conquer truth, a bit like Don Quixote with his enemies, with the tip of his spear. Excessive in all things, this disciple of Saint Thomas Aquinas and Saint Augustine dreamed of oratorical jousts with Cajetan and helped brilliantly by his intellectual collaboration to the *Revue Augustinienne* for which he made an analytical table of the articles, after it ceased to exist in 1910. From 1910 to 1912, he became a History of philosophy and Introduction to the Bible teacher. In 1912, he left Louvain for the college in Worcester, U.S.A. where he taught classical literature and in 1913, he went to Jerusalem to do his theology. When the world war started, he had just been ordained sub-deacon (July 2, 1914).



Campaign time. Wounds followed by death.

On September 15, 1914, he went to the recruiting office in Albi. From there, he was sent to Perpignan in the infirmaries section. He was to experience the front lines, since from the Lamartine Hospital to Dunkirk (January 1915), he was sent to the fighting units. During the first 5 months of 1916, he was in the 'Verdun hell' and in May found himself in the Flanders sector where he took part in the bloody battles of Bailleul and Mount Kemmel. The battle was furious and at daybreak of May 24th (1918), he was in the trench of an observation post, pinned down by bombarding. The fragment of an exploding bomb struck him in the head; his helmet was pierced and a large, deep wound tore open his skull. He was transported very quickly by ambulance to Arnèke and decorated with the military medal and the distinguished service cross with palms for his courage: "*I did not deserve it, but it will be for the honor of the clergy.*" He died June 1st, 1918, amid a concert of praises and regrets, for this religious showed himself to be at the front what he was in the convent, a leader. In his honor, one of his confreres wrote the following poem in his memory:

“He constantly dominated us by his superb height.
We always trembled that the winds of battle
Would suddenly cut down this righteous soldier,
For whom even heroism was too narrow,
So great was his unsatisfied thirst
To spread forth for all his light and life.
His soul was bright and wide; his candor
Was for his spirit a deep spring.
None more than he loved the Angelic Doctor,
And his first thrusts of apostolic zeal
Proclaimed that his doctrine was, in truth,
That of Saint Thomas with integrity.
All those who knew him shed tears for a brother
And will wear the mourning of his strong light.

Addenda.

Brother Gérard was both an intellectually minded religious and a person of action. Even as a scholastic, he taught theology. But he was killed in action in northern France during World War I. (Notes by Fr. Armand Desautels.)

Portrait.

“Gérard Boudou, besides his two years of novitiate at Louvain, spent five more years at the house of studies: three years in philosophy, and two as a philosophy tutor, professor of History of Philosophy, and Introduction to the Bible. He was very tall, quite noisy, with well-filled lively eyes, a very hard worker, and an uncontrollable exuberance. He would sleep like a rock, but his days were: Life, more life, and still more life: this is certainly what kept him young in character and soul. This is what also gave him great success in all the comedies he acted in and even more so in pantomimes: his facial expressions, so varied, let him imitate even the most illustrious people... Whoever went to Louvain, whoever had been seen or heard by him, was photographed and reproduced, and even at times developed by this unbelievable recording machine. A deaf and dumb person could even understand the meaning of a book or a sermon just by looking at him....”

(from Polyeucte Guissard by Fr. Merklen.)

Portraits Assomptionnistes 371-383.

Louis Boudou was born at Marseillan (Herauld) 12 October 1889. His first years were those of all children marked right from the crib to serve the altars. Pious, applied, ardor, carefree, success in primary studies. Then, suddenly, there was a trial that marked this life with a sad note: he was barely eleven when his dad died. From this early life as an orphan he would carry during his whole life, unknown to others, moments of sadness. How often did he not show me the photo of his dad that he had barely known! He would try to find in his traits what he had inherited from his deceased father. He knocked at the door of the Notre-Dame des Chateaux aluminate on 12 April 1901. Fr. Eugene Monsterlet met him. He remained devoted to this priest and a few days before his death he asked for his prayers and advice. He was forced to leave with all of the students and went to Mongreno (Italy) in 1903. He was very tall, quite active, with a lively look, he was a hard worker and very exuberant. He was very involved in comedies and pantomimes. His big dark eyes flashed. When he recited the office in choir, he reproduced on his face all of the thoughts and sentiments expressed by the psalms, hymns, and lessons. Likewise in the refectory, he would live the events of the books being read. This caused his neighbors to explode in laughter and be lectured severely.

He would bring to life all those that he knew to the amusement of his fellow religious. He was a very serious student of philosophy. At times he was excessive. But he received corrections with docility. He was a disciple of Saint Augustine and Saint Thomas.

He was always willing to help others with their writings and corrections. His room was a mess. He would encourage those who needed to be encouraged. He made an analytical table of the *Revue Augustinienne* that stopped being published in 1910. The war saw to it that it was not continued at a later date. From 1910 to 1912 he was a professor of History of Philosophy and Introduction to the Bible. He was a man of novenas and always had one going on. In 1912 he was off to Worcester. He was involved as secretary in a study group that would eventually launch *Vers l'idéal*, a review of the college. In 1913, he went to Notre-Dame de France in Jerusalem for theology studies. On 15 September 1914, World War I having been declared, he went to Albi to enter the army and then to Perpignan to join the 16th section of infirmarians. In 1915 he was at Dunkerque at the Lamartine Hospital. In the first five months of 1916 he is in the hell of Verdun. In May it is in Flanders where he takes part in the bloody battles of Bailleul and Mount Kemmel. On 24 May he was hit in the head by shrapnel. He was brought by ambulance to Arneke in a serious state. He received the last sacraments. He received the military medal and the Croix de Guerre with palms. He died 1 June 1918 after offering his sufferings to Our Lord and was buried at the cemetery of Arneke.

Henri (Jean Pierre Henri) Brun

1821-1895

French religious, Assistant General.

One of the first five Assumptionists.

Jean-Pierre Henri was born October 1, 1821, in Langogne (Lozère). He did all his studies in his diocese of Mende. Ordained a priest December 1845, he received permission from his bishop to teach at *Collège de l'Assomption* in Nîmes. A man of common sense and devotedness, he committed himself to the new congregation in September 1847 under the spiritual direction of Fr. d'Alzon who received him as a novice and appointed him as prefect of discipline, then as assistant director. He held a master's degree and, in the absence of Fr. d'Alzon, knew how to remain calm, patient, and firm.



On December 25, 1850, he pronounced his temporary annual vows in Nîmes immediately after the Founder and before Brothers Victor Cardenne, Hippolyte Saugrain, and Etienne Pernet, in the community's Chapter Room [not in the college chapel as is often stated erroneously].

In all simplicity, he accepted the direction of a small orphanage -- which was also an agricultural school and the novitiate for lay brothers -- in Mireman, some 3 km from Nîmes (1852-57). A permanent member of the general chapters, he was elected in August 1852 as first and only General Assistant, a position he held until 1862. He pronounced his perpetual vows December 25, 1851. In 1857, he was sent to the *Collège de Clichy-la-Garenne*, in the northern suburbs of Paris (Hauts-de-Seine), to teach high school juniors and assume the position of treasurer. His first years in the apostolate were therefore spent in the field of Christian education, a distinctive characteristic of the first Assumption.

Missionary in Australia (1862-73).

In 1859, Fr. d'Alzon began holding discussions with Bishop James Quinn, the first bishop of Brisbane (Australia), who went to France seeking personnel for his distant mission. Fr. Brun volunteered to go, requesting that he be allowed to give himself to the evangelization of the aborigines and not just of Irish immigrants. After a period of initiation to English culture, he embarked with Fr. Tissot for Australia in December 1862. He tried in vain to create on Australian soil a real religious community, which the bishop authorized without ever making it concretely possible. This methodical religious, who was both an explorer and architect, founded the parish of Ipswich: "Fr. Brun, as a priest, you are an indefatigable worker. No one has a greater zeal than you in building churches and in exercising your holy ministry. There is one thing I have never seen you do, and that is to sit down to take an hour's rest." The parishioners of Ipswich who, long after the departure of the missionary, remembered the eminent qualities of a sensitive and energetic pastor, often repeated this compliment in the mouth of an interested bishop. Fr. Brun left Australia definitively in May 1873.

A servant always available.

Fr. d'Alzon put him in charge of organizing the various alumnates that were being founded in order to relieve *Notre-Dame des Châteaux*: superior of the aluminate of Saint Clément at Le Vigan (1874-81) after the departure of the novitiate; superior in Alès from 1881 to 1885 (Gard), then teacher at both alumnates of Nîmes (1885-1887) and Mauville, the latter founded in 1879 in the Pas-de-Calais (1887-91). "What we admire about Fr. Brun is that he is willing to do anything that is asked of him."

In 1891, the Little Sisters of the Assumption established themselves in New York City. The old missionary who had gone to Australia accepted once more to expatriate himself to become their chaplain. He did not live to celebrate his golden jubilee as a priest but died January 15, 1895, at age 74. His funeral was celebrated by Fr. Edwards January 17, in the parish church of the Immaculate Conception in New York City and in the presence of Archbishop Corrigan who gave the absolution. He was buried in the Calvary cemetery plot of the Little Sisters of the Assumption in Woodside (New York), then transferred to the Assumptionist plot in the same cemetery. In May 1987, his remains were transferred to Saint Anne's cemetery in Fiskdale, Massachusetts, in the plot belonging to the Assumptionists.

Addenda.

Father Henri pronounced his vows together with Fr. D'Alzon on that Christmas of 1850. He was assistant to Fr. d'Alzon at the College of Nîmes where we were founded. Then he spent sixteen years in Australia – a mission that was discontinued. Later, he was Superior and a teacher in various alumnates of France. Finally in 1892, he came to New York, the first of our Fathers in the United States. He came as chaplain to the Little Sisters of the Assumption. He is buried in Mount Calvary cemetery in New York, (Notes from Fr. Armand Desautels.)

On the eve of a trip.

“I have just arrived at Cork; I'll say mass tomorrow at 8, at 10 I'll leave for Queenstown, and in the evening the ship will leave. I went to confession yesterday and again today. I am glad to leave and I thank God that my desire as a young priest finally becomes a reality. I had always desired the missions. You have graciously permitted me, Father, to follow this call; I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart. I realized that it was best not to bring up the question of my future in Australia with Dr. Mat. [??]. Once, I had tried to say something about this and I realized that it was useless to bring up any subject whatever. With Dr. Mat, just as with the bishop, one needs to have patience and wait for a favorable moment to act. I put myself in the hands of Divine Providence. I'll keep you up to date on everything and I'll go in the sense that you have already indicated to me and that you will give me later on.

The captain's name is Brown; he is Protestant, but he will be very pleasant and will tend, so he told me, to be nice to me”. (*Henri Brun to Fr. d'Alzon. Cork, 10-12-1862.*)

Fr. Brun joined the first group of Assumptionists as a priest and made vows immediately after the Founder on Christmas Eve, 1850. He made his perpetual vows a year later in 1851... Pious, prudent, gifted with great common sense, he studied the situation for two years before deciding that his vocation was to be an Assumptionist... In 1862, Bishop Quinn of Brisbane sought from Fr. d'Alzon some missionaries for Australia. Fr. Brun volunteered. According to his diary, the trip to Australia aboard the “Golden City” took 84 days. For eleven years, amid countless hardships, he ministered to an immense parish. It was at the age of 70 that he left for the USA to be the chaplain for the Little Sisters of the Assumption in New York City... On April 20, 1894, he wrote: “I understand fully the new difficulty created by recent deaths and by the state of health of many Fathers. Still, if you could send just one Father, it would be a first step toward establishing ourselves here in New York. Then, if a year later, another could come, we could form a small community.” His thoughts were turned toward the future and he was preoccupied with the expansion of the Assumptionists in the United States. Proof is found in a letter written on January 3, 1895 (less than two weeks before his death): “You can get an idea of the good we could do in New York only by coming to study the situation on the spot. But I assure you that my ministry here is a real mission. Convent chaplancies do not appeal to me a great deal. Yet there is much good to be done there. These modest functions guarantee food and shelter, and leave spare time for good works and for preparing the future. Some day, we will have a house in the countryside, where we can have a seminary, Brothers, etc. But before that we will need a nucleus of well-Americanized priests. This is not Utopian. Let us pray, dear Father; you will see all that. But your poor solitary will long before that have sung his “Nunc dimittis.” Father's words were not Utopian; they were prophecies.

Fr. Henri Brun, from Langogne, came to us from Mende. Timid, awkward, he was wrapped in a cloak edged with astrakhan. His blond hair fell very straight. His voice quavered. His exterior didn't reveal the treasure hidden in the heart of this priest who later became a really holy religious. He was named prefect of discipline to replace Fr. Henri. [Sketches, H.D. Galeran 187-188]

Letters from the Little Sisters giving details of the death and funeral.

New York, Convent of Our Lady of the Assumption, 15 January 1895.

“My dear Mother,

You were notified by telegram of Fr. Brun 's death. At the start of the month, he had the flu. He was able to celebrate mass at the Dames Servantes without any other problem but loss of voice. Three days after this, on the insistence of Little Mother, he promised not to come and celebrate mass at 6:30. However feeling much stronger, he was able to celebrate mass at 7 a.m. at Ms. Lambert's orphanage, which is very close by.

The doctor that we consulted assured us that there was nothing serious in his condition; the only problem was his asthma that he had since a long time was bothering him more. However, he forbade Father to celebrate mass, the 11th and 12th, Friday and Saturday. On Sunday, the sick Father felt much better and the doctor lifted his restriction.

We had mass at 7 a.m. Father was driven back home, even though his convent was not more than 200 yards away. One of our converts accompanied him during the trip and stayed with him the whole day of Sunday. He even slept in his room so as to be able to serve him in any way possible.

Yesterday morning, Monday, Fr. Brun sent his night nurse to Little-Mother to tell her that he felt better, even though the night had not been too good.

During the whole time that Father's illness lasted and right from the start, two Little Sisters visited him three or four times a day. They brought him his meals and all that he needed.

It was 11:30 when, after a last blessing Fr. Edwards ordered that the casket be closed. Six Little Sisters accompanied the body to the cemetery, about 4 miles from New York, and Fr. Edwards did not leave the tomb until all was finished.

Father rests next to our dear Little Sister Marie-Euphrasie, right at the foot of the cross: he had chosen this place.

We trust that he is now in God's presence and that he will be one more protector for our dear mission in America. Sr. M. St-Vincent." [Souvenirs. 31 January 1895 # 202, 35-36]

Letter by Fr. Ernest to Very Rev. Fr. Picard.

...We were all surprised and touched by Fr. Brun's death. This religious was loved by all. For my part, I esteemed him greatly and loved him. He had been our first superior at Le Vigan and he initiated me to the Assumptionist life. We loved him even though he scolded us terribly.

Later, I had him at Mauville under me; he edified me strongly because of his humility and his devotedness. I had great difficulty to be the superior next to his white beard; but his humility and religious spirit gave him so many instances to stay hidden and remain an inferior. He was still very ardent, lively and very jovial. He was always ready to take on the most difficult services and he would have been very remorseful to undertake anything without permission.

He will certainly be regretted in our family. The elders are starting to leave us. If only the young ones were worth half as much as the elders! We need to pray a lot. Ernest.

Fr. Ildefonse from the community of Rome sent us these last words of Fr. Brun: "I suffer greatly. Since three days I can no longer celebrate mass. I am sending you the money for announced masses for the 11th. Pray for me. H. Brun. [Souvenirs, 31 January 1895 #202, 36-37]

Alphonse-Marie (Gabriel) Bugnard

1918-1985

Religious of the Province of France.

Priestly brothers at the Assumption.

Gabriel Francis Jean was born September 28, 1918 at Fontainebleau (Seine-et-Marne) where his father, François Théophile, worked in the Post Office. A short time later, the family returned to Savoy and settled in Chambéry at Jacob-Bellecombette. The four boys, Lucien, Gabriel, Noël, and André, all entered the Assumptionist family. After his primary studies at Cognin, Aix-les-Bains, and Chambéry, Gabriel started his secondary studies at the college of Rumilly; he then entered Saint-Sigismond (Savoy) with his older brother, the future Fr. Anthelme, from 1928 to 1932 and after that went to the aluminate of Miribel-les-Echelles (Isère) from 1932 to 1935. Gabriel received the religious habit at the Nozeroy novitiate (Jura) in September 1935 and pronounced his first vows under the name of Brother Alphonse-Marie: “Artistic, sensitive and good, impulsive, with a lively intelligence, good singer and good reader” were some of the remarks concerning him made by his master of novices, Fr. Gausbert Broha. He then went to Saint-Jean house at Scy-Chazelles (1936-1939) for philosophy when war exploded. At the time of the armistice in June 1940, he was in Alsace and was able to cross over to Switzerland. The ‘interns’ had quite a liberal schedule since they were able to follow theology courses at Fribourg! In January 1941, Fr. Alphonse-Marie was at Layrac, a free zone, where as much as possible an intensive theology program was organized for the survivors of the South zone. It was there that he made his final profession March 19, 1942. With his brother, Noël, he received the minor orders in the chapel of Msgr. Rodié, bishop of Agen (June 1942). Lucien, alias Fr. Anthelme, came from Lormoy, joined them, and the three brothers were ordained to the priesthood June 19, 1943 in the chapel of the Saint-Sigismond aluminate. The fourth one, Fr. André, would join them a bit later. The famous author, Henri Bordeaux, wrote up this event.

A teacher in spite of himself.

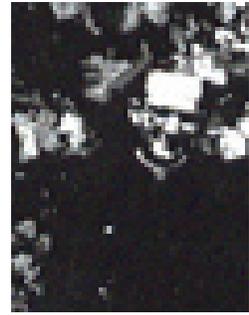
Fr. Gabriel – he dropped the first names of Alphonse-Marie – started teaching at Briey (1944-1945) in very primitive conditions of that time, then two years at Scy-Chazelles (1946-1947). He was then chosen to go to the college in Worcester in the U.S.A. (1947-1952). But having a missionary soul, he thought mostly of Manchuria: to get ready he let his beard grow and collected some animal skins. He liked to do parish ministry in Hartford (Connecticut) and go to the camp at Baker Lake where he spent the summer clearing the land. From 1952 to 1957, he taught English at the college of Mongré (Rhône). Everywhere he went, he was an excellent confrere in the community, willingly a joker, with a bit of exaggeration to surprise others and provoke discussion. During a period when news was rare and censored, he built a make shift radio so that he could be the first to announce the news to his confreres with his own personal comments. New things did not scare him and he strove to renovate the library collections that had become obsolete and of the period of Théophile Gauthier! He gladly practiced the virtue that Aristotle in his time and tongue called ‘eutrapelia’.

In Ivory Coast, teacher and missionary.

Fr. Gabriel was part of the first team to open Our Lady of Africa College, in Ivory Coast at Abidjan. He adapted readily to a missionary and adventurous life that he liked: clearing land, building on the edge of a lagoon, and driving the school bus (1957-1964). In 1964, the college was passed on to the Marianists. Fr. Gabriel finally could realize his dream to leave for the bush. During 12 years (1964-1972), he animated several mission stations: Aboisso, Adiaké, Port-Bouet. A man easily distracted who was simple and full of goodness, he was loved by his faithful. But in 1976, because of health reasons, he had to return to France. He spent some time resting and under medical care at Lyon-Debrousse. In 1977, he was asked to animate groups of pilgrims in Jerusalem. It was with joy that he joined the community of Saint Peter of Cock-Crow (March 1977).

Jerusalem.

Fr. Gabriel spent two years in Jerusalem, esteemed for his even temper, his practical sense, his capacity to render services, and his competence by Anglophone and Francophone groups. In November 1978, a cancer of the mouth was discovered and he was treated energetically at the Hassadah Hospital, but the rays caused all of his teeth to fall out and he no longer had any saliva. This time spent in Jerusalem prepared him to live a real way of the cross.



At rest.

In May 1979, he was forced to go back to Lyons where he was treated and declared healed at the Bérard Center. Now handicapped, he was named to Saint-Sigismond in September 1979. Always serviceable and fraternal, he was happy to be able to work in the garden and search the woods for mushrooms. In 1984, an unfortunate scooter accident caused him great suffering: broken ribs, decalcification of the spine. He was hospitalized at Chambéry where they discovered bone cancer. Upon his return to Saint-Sigismond, four difficult months awaited him: he could barely walk even with crutches. His sisters relayed themselves at his bedside. He was finally accepted in an intensive care facility at Albertville, the Léger house. He died there peacefully September 21, 1985. His funeral took place September 23, presided by Msgr. Feidt. The prayer of Teilhard de Chardin was read: 'Lord, it is not enough that I die receiving communion: teach me to communicate while dying.'

Addenda.**The Assumption in Ivory Coast.**

In 1957 Msgr. Boivin, archbishop of Abidjan, suggested to Fr. Bruno Linder, provincial of Lyons, that the Assumptionists take charge of a formation High School, Notre-Dame d'Afrique, in Abidjan as well as several missionary posts.

Four religious were assigned to this for the beginning of classes in October 1957. This High School was turned over to the Marianists in 1964, with the consent of Msgr. Yago, the new archbishop. The Assumption was lacking in trained personnel and several religious were volunteers for another kind of missionary work. In order to answer the request for a missionary life, several mission outposts were taken over: Aboisso, Adiaké, Abyt, Etiouché, Assomlan, Tiampoum, Frambo, Kadiakro...

Aboisso is a small city on the banks of the Abia where the White Fathers had established themselves in 1905. To this center, there were 22 secondary stations that Frs. Jean Robert and Louis Durget take over in 1958, and then Fr. N. Chardon. Fr. Gabriel was responsible for the Adiaké group starting in 1970. The last posts served were Port-Bouet and Grand Bassam (1988).

Greek and Latin Literature professor.

Thanks to his clear explanations, this young professor with a soft and musical voice was able to captivate the students by his Greek and Latin literature classes. His perpetual smile, his joyful personality made his subjects easier to take since they were, alas, quite dry subjects. When we were tired after studying Xenophon or Cicero, Father knew how to relax us by reading excerpts from the Odyssey. We wish to express our cordial thanks to him.
[Memini Yearbook, 1950]

Adrien Buisson

1863 – 1954

French religious of the Province of North America.

A singer and cantor.

Adrien was born February 13, 1863, in Cendras, near Alès (Gard). He attended primary school with the Brothers of Christian Schools in Tamaris (Gard). He first went to the alumnate in Alès (1879-80), then to Clairmarais (Pas-de-Calais) for his humanities (1881-82). He received the religious habit May 5, 1882, at the novitiate in Osma, Spain, pronouncing his final vows there July 20, 1884, in the hands of Fr. Emmanuel Bailly, who wrote in his report: “At age 21, Brother Adrien is a good boy, a little slow and thick, but docile and generous. Out of timidity, he is easily frightened and embarrassed, once again exhibiting great naïveté. Though he is behind in his studies, he has made considerable progress. Very humble, he sought to be admitted to the Congregation only as a lay brother, but he is capable of becoming a choir brother if he continues his studies. He has a lot of talent for singing and a good voice. Since he prefers to work with poor and humble people, he would happily leave for the missions.” He was among the novices who made the exciting pilgrimage to Saint James of Compostela on foot and without money.



After the novitiate, he continued his intellectual and spiritual formation in Osma where he was ordained a priest on March 5, 1887, and remained in that community until 1889: “Very young, I was left to be the superior in Osma, with the obligation to found a college, something I tried my best to do, even though Fr. Picard was not too keen on keeping this house.” Barely ordained, he mastered the Spanish language so well that he was invited to preach in the cathedral of Osma before very distinguished people. With fond memories of his stay in Spain, he dedicated his future ministry to the service of Spanish-speaking people.

Chile and the United States.

Fr. Adrien was sent to Chile the very year the mission was founded (1890). There until 1903, he considered these years as the best of his apostolic life. He worked with his good friend, Fr. Darbois, also a young missionary, traveling over mountains and valleys on horseback, with only their ponchos to protect them.

In 1903, Fr. Adrien was sent to New York City where the Assumptionists, at the request of Archbishop Corrigan, had accepted responsibility for the church of Our Lady of Guadalupe on West 14th Street, which served the Spanish-speaking faithful. Amiable, skillful, and fond of tall stories like a Frenchman from the Midi, he quickly became very popular in this milieu. When it became clear that this church could not adequately serve the needs of all the Spanish-speaking people in the city, the Assumptionists built a second church, Our Lady of Esperanza on West 156th Street. It was opened in 1912. Appointed pastor, Fr. Adrien gave life to this parish for more than 36 years!

Bishop McIntyre, then auxiliary bishop of New York before becoming cardinal archbishop of Los Angeles, gave this beautiful tribute: “Of all the priests of the archdiocese of New York, you are the one who impressed me most by your deeply priestly character, your piety, and your respect for the hierarchy.” Fr. Adrien did not shine by his eloquence, but his simple, direct, and well-prepared talks had the knack of convincing and touching people. He himself was often moved because, being of a very sensitive and with an emotional nature, he could be stirred by small memories that brought tears to his eyes. A man of good counsel and sound judgment, he was frequently asked to solve difficult or complicated cases of conscience. His warm and beautiful voice often entertained his confreres with French and Spanish songs from his repertoire. He also knew how to embellish his stories with picturesque and humorous anecdotes.

In 1953, at the age of 91, Fr. Adrien sadly left New York for Lorgues (Var) where Fr. Thomas received him with great fraternal charity. He died July 10, 1954, well into his 92nd year, and as the dean of the Congregation by religious profession.

Addenda.

Father Crescent Armanet, in his necrology of Father Adrien Buisson, said that Fr. Adrien was one of the rare Assumptionists to have known Father d’Alzon. It is very plausible that Fr. Adrien would have told Fr. Crescent that during the many years that they were colleagues at Our Lady of Esperanza Church... He was 17 years old when Fr. d’Alzon died and could very well have known him, as Fr. Crescent said.

...Because Adrien spoke Provençal, his mother tongue so well, it was very easy for him to learn Spanish... Since a cab hit him in 1948, he got around with less agility. His eyesight began to fail, and in November 1848, he received a papal indult authorizing him to say either the Mass for the dead or the Mass of the Blessed Virgin. Also he could recite the rosary rather than read the breviary. In a letter to Fr. Wilfrid Dufault in May 1947, he wrote: "I have had the joy of reciting the breviary every day since 1879. But there is an end to everything in this world."

... In a letter to Fr. Henri Moquin, Provincial, in August 1952, Fr. Adrien wrote: "I think I am the oldest member of our religious family, and it is as such that I can write these lines. I knew the Very Reverend Father d'Alzon, Fr. Picard, and Fr. Emmanuel Bailly and all our older Fathers... their virtues and their burning zeal for the extension of the Kingdom of Our Lord. In my long life as a religious, I only was stationed at three houses: Osma in Spain, then Chile, and finally New York where I arrived 50 years ago next May 10th."

Despite his age and infirmity, Fr. Adrien went to Europe in 1953. While he was there, Fr. Henri Moquin and Fr. Wilfrid Dufault offered him some choices when he returned: especially at the Greendale campus rebuilt after the tornado, at Saugerties, or even at Lorgues, the home for retired religious in France. Adrien chose Lorgues where Father Jean de Matha Thomas, a Moscow veteran, was the superior.

[ANA December-January-February, 2000 by Fr. Richard Richards, 15-17.]

Father Adrien was a novice when Father d'Alzon died, and continued his novitiate in Spain, at Osma. Before coming to New York, he did some ministry in Spain and in Chile. He arrived at Our Lady of Guadalupe in New York at the very beginning of the parish in 1903 and saw the actual church built. He is also the founder and first pastor of Our Lady of Esperanza at 156th Street, at the request of the Archdiocese. All his active years were spent in New York where many people appreciated him. He returned to France at Lorgues shortly before his death. (Notes by Fr. Armand Desautels.)

Letter by Fr. Adrien Buisson (written in French).

I believe that I am the eldest of our religious family and it is in that capacity that I write the following. I knew the Very Reverend Father d'Alzon, Fr. Picard, Fr. Emmanuel Bailly, and all of our old Fathers... their virtues and their burning zeal for the extension of the Kingdom of Our Lord. In my lengthy religious life, I only went to three houses: Osma in Spain, then Chile and finally New York where I arrived 50 years ago, on next 10 May. [ANA, December-January-February 2000, 17]

The first pastor was Father Adrian Buisson, who had been pastor of Our Lady of Guadalupe, and he remained at the new church for 40 years. A Frenchman by birth, he was ordained in Spain in 1887 and three years later, he was sent to Chile as a missionary. During his service in South America, he came to feel a deep affection for his flock and it was natural that he should be chosen, in 1903, as pastor of Our Lady of Guadalupe in a great northern Metropolis to which Spanish Catholics were coming in increasing numbers.

During his pastorate, Father Adrian offered some 24,000 Masses, performed 8,000 baptisms and officiated at nearly 4,000 marriages. His labors among the Spanish-speaking people of New York constitute a bright chapter in the story of their history.

A dozen years after the church was opened for public worship, the increasing number of parishioners began to seriously crowd it and it was decided that although the small building was quaintly beautiful, it must give way to the needs of the parish, at least in part, and be enlarged. There was no adjacent rectory and the priests found it increasingly difficult to minister to their parishioners.

Therefore, an extension was planned. It was added to the old church, bringing its recessed front up to the sidewalk. The work was started in February 1925 under the supervision of Lawrence G. White, son of the noted architect Stanford White.

The new face of Our Lady of Esperanza is a completely different one from the old. Instead of the neo-classic temple, with its pillars of Indiana limestone and tier of steps from the sidewalk, the church is now faced in authentic Spanish style. Father Buisson's years of service to this new church with an old history were broken only by the three-year period from 1930 to 1933 when he again served his old church, Our Lady of Guadalupe. During those three years Father Paul Journet, A.A. was the pastor of Our Lady of Esperanza. In 1952, when he was 90 years old, Father Adrian retired and was given the title of pastor emeritus. The following year the people of his parish gave him a 40th anniversary banquet. Some of them saw him off as he departed soon afterward for his native France. He died there on July 10th, 1954. [Our Lady of Esperanza, New York Fiftieth Anniversary, Custombook Inc. 1963]

Renaud (Jean-Baptiste) Burdin

1881-1964

Religious of the province of Lyons, provincial treasurer (1938-1951).

A Savoyard from Maurienne.

Born April 11, 1881 in Lanslebourg at the foot of Mount Cenis, after going to the parish school, Jean-Baptiste went to the aluminate of Notre-Dame des Châteaux (Savoy) from 1892 to 1895, then to the humanities aluminate at Brian (Drôme) from 1895 to 1897. He was vested with the religious habit September 8, 1897 at Livry with the name of Brother Renaud. He made his first vows on the same date of 1898 and his perpetual vows, again on September 8, 1899 at Jerusalem: “*Brother Renaud, a good novice who is a bit timid, has an excellent spirit, is serious, intelligent, and assiduous. He can be given positions of trust; he does them faithfully and devotedly,*” remarked Fr. Ernest Baudouy. Then came the years of philosophy at Jerusalem (1899-1901). Bro. Renaud first taught at Eski-Chéir in Turkey (1901-1904). He returned for his theology to Kadi-Keuī (1904-1905), Phanaraki (1905-1906), and Jerusalem (1906-1907) where he was ordained to the priesthood May 8, 1907 by Msgr. Camassei. He was then sent to teach at the college at Worcester in the U.S.A. (1907-1912), then to Locarno in Switzerland (1912-1914) where the war caught him by surprise.



The heavy price of the war years.

Mobilized in August 1914 at Modane, Fr. Renaud, after short stays at Chambéry and Donzère (Drôme), went to the front lines of Artois (1914-1915). Ill and wounded, he was hospitalized away from the front in Orne and Mayenne (1915-1916), then was sent once again to the warehousing barracks: Chambéry, and Donzère before being sent to the front (1917-1918) in the Vosges, Champagne, and Aisne. He served more than four years of active duty.

Once again at the Orient mission and the return to France.

Back as a civilian, he was once again affected to the mission of the Orient to the Karagatch aluminate (Turkey) as a teacher from 1919 to 1923 and then as superior from 1923 to 1924. He next went to Haïdar-Pacha on the Asian side of Istanbul (1924-1935). Then he returned to France to take the reins of the community at Menton-Carnolès (Alpes-Maritimes) from 1935 to 1938. Fr. Maximilien Malvy, newly named provincial of Lyons in 1938, entrusted him with the treasury (1938-1951). From 1951 to 1964, he was chaplain for the community of the Little Sisters of the Assumption at Firminy (Loire).

Celebration of diamond jubilee of religious life.

In October 1969, Fr. Renaud celebrated 60 years of religious life. He wrote: “*Let us leave to God the care of realizing your wish ‘ad multos annos’, if He wants to. When someone arrives at my age, one cannot forget that the hour for answering the call of the Divine Master is near and one must think of preparing himself more seriously than ever for this divine meeting. One is glad to be able to count on the help of the fervent prayers of one’s confreres. May the days that it may yet please God to give me in this world be better employed in His service! Thank you for the picture of Pope John XXIII. I am specially attached to the present pope because I often had the occasion to approach him when he was in Turkey and to appreciate his goodness and kindness.*”

On Sunday, May 10, 1964, no longer able to assure his service as chaplain, Fr. Renaud was driven to Lorgues (Var) where he was happy to be reunited with some of the ‘veterans’ of the Orient mission. But the time of reunion was short lived: on Wednesday, May 13, he had a stroke that left him paralyzed and without speech. Fr. Renaud had to be hospitalized and on Sunday, May 25, feast of the Holy Trinity, he died at age 83 and was buried at Lorgues.

Addenda.

Father Renaud was stationed in Worcester immediately following his ordination, in 1907, and stayed there until 1912. After World War I, in which he served in the army, he was in the Near East until 1935. During his last 13 years, he was chaplain of the Little Sisters of the Assumption. (Notes by Fr. Armand Desautels.)

Personal witness.

“Fr. Renaud is our chaplain since 13 years now. He is a real and saintly religious, of a regularity that is perfect and exemplary, always up at 5 a. m., punctual, discreet, open to all that is asked of him and to all changes in scheduling. He prepares his mass very well as well as the divine office and prays them piously.

If he has to sing the mass, he always requests the music for the intonations and practices them the evening before in his room. He is remarkably tidy, even meticulous, and his office is always neat. He doesn't leave things hanging around and sees to it that his clothes are repaired when needed. Until the age of 80, he memorized his Sunday sermons, which is demanding on his poor memory. These last years he has agreed to read them. The few persons and families that he frequents keep a memorable souvenir of his visits and kindness. He enjoys speaking often of his stay in the Oriental missions. He never complains and in the course of time, I was never able to know what foods he preferred in our modest meals."

(Sr. M. Saint-Claude. Little Sister of the Assumption, 1964.)

Evariste (Jean-Charles) Buytaers

1885-1955

Religious originally from the Province of Paris, affiliated to the Province of England.

A lad from the North.

Jean-Charles was born October 16, 1885 at Arras (Pas-de-Calais) of a Belgian father, Charles, and a French mother, Jeanne Jagu. He kept his double nationality and as a result had to do his military service in Belgium. His brother, Lucien, was well known since he was the director of the regional newspaper, *l'Echo du Nord*. Two of his sisters became nuns: Marie-Evariste, Oblate of the Assumption and Jeanne-Marie, religious of Saint-Francis de Sales. Jean-Charles' curriculum, the future Father Evariste, was quite varied: alumnist at Arras from 1897 to 1900, Clairmarais from 1900 to 1901, Taintegnies from 1901 to 1902, investiture with the Assumptionist habit October 4, 1902 at Louvain by Fr. Roger des Fourniels, and first profession at Louvain October 4, 1903. Brother Evariste had two masters of novices: he started with Fr. Félicien Vandenkoornhuysse and finished with Fr. Benjamin Laurès. Philosophy and theology at Louvain from 1904 to 1909; priest December 18, 1908 at Louvain by Msgr. De Wachter. He began his priestly ministry as a teacher at Louvain (1909-1911), next at Ascona in Switzerland (1911-1912), and finally at Gempe (1912-1913) in Belgium.



British citizen and religious.

Already in 1913, Fr. Evariste was curate at Brockley until 1922. During this period, he wrote a short book on 'Brockley before the Reformation period'. Fr. Wilfrid Manser printed it on his 'machine gun press'. He then went to the U.S.A. to Worcester from 1922 to 1924. He returned to settle in England for the rest of his life: curate at Rickmansworth (1924-1926), pastor at Hitchin (1926-1932), superior of the Hitchin College (1932-1938), superior and pastor at Rickmansworth (1938-1952), superior and pastor at Newhaven (1952-1955). It was at Newhaven (Brighton) that he died on Friday, September 9, 1955 of pneumonia with cardiac complications. He was buried in the vault of the Immaculate Conception of Mary with Fr. Cécilius Bruet, also deceased at Brighton in 1929. Fr. Evariste had the joy of celebrating beforehand his golden jubilee of religious profession October 4, 1954.

Appreciations.

Those who only knew him indirectly may have found Father Evariste a bit aloof, reserved, and not very communicative. These traits of his character had already been noted during his novitiate. After his death, some notes were found that had been saved on the occasion of his transfer from Rickmansworth to Newhaven in 1952; they reveal things concerning his spiritual intimacy and the efforts that he made in his spiritual life. This transfer from one place to the other was very difficult for him since he had to take in hand a parish impoverished by war and reduced by the bombardments. He was once again in charge of rebuilding and restoring, a task that was habitual throughout his life. It was thanks to him that the church at Hitchin was built after having been for a long time only plans. At Hitchin College, he enlarged the actual building to provide a theater hall, an infirmary, dressing rooms, and classrooms. At Rickmansworth, it was thanks to him that a hall for various ministries was built (Croxley Green) and a vast property at Mill End was purchased for the future schools. At Newhaven, facing the port, he finished the restoration of the rectory damaged by bombing and the explosion of a barge carrying munitions. He also had a project for the reconstruction of a hall for ministries that Fr. Delphin had built during the war of 1914-1918 and that was destroyed during World War II. A man with a brilliant intelligence, a born musician who liked to play the organ, he was remarked for his natural distinction and an air of a successful gentleman. Of England, he knew how to perfectly adopt the language, culture, history, customs, and mentality. That is why he was able to assume for a lengthy period the role of correspondent of *La Croix*.

Addenda.

Rickmansworth, 1946.

"The community is pleased to wish Fr. General [Gervais Quenard] the many joys and blessings of Christmas and to rejoice with you on this our anniversary. It thanks God for your prompt recovery and renews its expression of filial and obedient affection in the Assumption.

Let me add this personal note. Fr. Provincial of England [Fr. James Whitworth] tells me that I have to make a request to be detached from the Paris province. I wish to indicate that it is my desire to be attached to the Province of England. I am a British citizen by naturalization already since 10 years now and my obediences have maintained me in the English houses since 33 years.

Let me express my respectful and filial obedience in Our Lord, most Reverend Father.”

(Fr. Evariste Buytaers)

Octave (Eugène-Louis-Joseph) Caron

1868-1931

Religious of the Province of Paris.

The fruit of a retreat at Clairmarais.

Eugène-Louis, brother of Abbé Auguste, the eldest brother of the future Fr. Benoît-Labre, was also born to Eugène Caron and Charlotte Gruson July 26, 1868 at Maisnil, near Haubourdin in the North. He did his secondary studies at the Institute of the Sacred Heart at Tourcoing from 1878 to 1885. Hesitating on his choice of life, on the advice of his brother priest, Auguste, he went on a discernment retreat at Clairmarais (Pas-de-Calais), under the direction of Fr. Géry Delalleau. Instead of being bored as he had thought he would be, he returned home transformed and enthusiastic for religious life. A few months later, he left for the Osma novitiate in Spain. He received the habit on November 21, 1885 under the name of Brother Octave, went on the famous pilgrimage to Avila with the community, and in October 1886 went to Livry to finish his novitiate where he pronounced his first vows March 25, 1887. “*Bro. Octave is a totally satisfactory novice from the viewpoint of piety, obedience, openness, and distinction of heart, spirit, and energy. He is still young and lacks experience; he needs to develop through studies*”. The following year, he was sent to Rome for philosophy and theology. He made his perpetual profession November 21, 1887 in Saint Brigid’s church near Farnese Place. Msgr. Duboin ordained him a priest August 15, 1891 at Livry. His theological studies were done at the Minerva as well as the Roman College: he obtained a double doctorate in philosophy and theology. Gifted for languages, he spoke Spanish, English, and Italian. Gregorian chant held no secrets for him. In 1893, he left Rome.

Apostolic and Assumptionist horizons.

Fr. Octave was first sent to teach at the Livry novitiate (1893-1898) where he was also in charge of two *Bonne Presse* publications: *La Vie des Saints (The Life of the Saints)* and *La Franc-Maçonnerie démasquée (Freemasonry unmasked)*. He was very diligent concerning these. From 1898 to 1902, he was sent as superior to Menton (Alpes-Maritimes). He then requested to be sent to the far away missions. He left for Chile where he was stationed from 1902 to 1909, first at Mendoza near Rengo, then at Santiago. He then returned to Europe and taught at the Elorrio aluminate in Spain during two years (1909-1911). A new obedience gave him the occasion to get to know North America. From 1911 to 1930, he stayed at the parish of Our Lady of Guadalupe where he was pastor from 1918 to 1921. Fluent in Spanish, English, and Italian, he had a solid and extensive intellectual culture. During twenty years, he worked to ease the misery of the poor of the area, *with a childlike spirit and the heart of an apostle*, according to the expression of a confrere. He even was good for those who deceived him. Without making any noise, he knew how to reach everyone’s heart, rich or poor: the rich, to extend his hand for help and the poor, to help them.

Return to France.

In the fall of 1930, Fr. Octave showed signs of fatigue and returned to his native land. After a month at the house at Javel in Paris, the reason for his fatigue was discovered: cancer of the pancreas. The doctors were not in favor of an operation; in fact, they felt that it was impossible. The medical staff gave him a few weeks to live. Fr. Octave was transported to Notre-Dame du Bon-Secours Hospital where he battled with great patience and without complaining faced with an illness that would not forgive. One of his religious brothers gave him the sacrament of the sick. Fr. Octave died March 11, 1931 at the age of 63. His body rests in the vault of the Assumptionists in the Parisian cemetery of Montparnasse.

Addenda.

Father Octave came to New York from the South American mission. He spent thirty years at Our Lady of Guadalupe in New York. He returned to Paris shortly before his death. Father Octave had an excellent knowledge of several languages and was a man of real culture. He was one of four brothers in the Congregation. (Notes by Fr. Armand Desautels.)

A choice vocation.

“At the age of 17 and three months, Eugène Caron, whose parents were both dead, decided to become a religious after a retreat at Clairmarais given by his brother, a diocesan priest of the diocese of Cambrai.

He comes from a good family. Eugène is a good student and shows dispositions for prayer, work, obedience, and simplicity that, linked to the good education and solid instruction he received, make of him, it would seem, one of the best recruits for the novitiate. I present him willingly for investiture in the religious habit.

He passed the first part of the written baccalaureate exam, but failed the Greek oral test.”

(E. Boilly, Osma, 26 October 1885.)

The 75th Jubilee Edition of the Parish says that he was pastor from 1918 to 1920.

Albert (Albéric) Catoire

1869-1945

Belgian religious of the Province of Paris.

A simple announcement in *La Croix*.

Fr. Albert Catoire, the brother of Fr. Anselme, died March 14, 1945 in New York according to the Tuesday, March 29 newspaper *La Croix*. This is almost the only officially printed document of his existence of which we can barely retrace the facts, except for the few chronological elements written in the Register for Religious. It is good to note, however, that the year of the death of this religious (1945) was not very favorable to gathering information. There are other similar cases for this same period. On the other hand, by simply reading the few letters of this religious that have been preserved, it is easy to detect on his part a continuous instability attested by the many and repeated requests for exlaustration and incardination to which the Roman Congregation for Religious did not want to answer, if we are to believe the documents that were consulted.



Chronological elements for a biography.

Fr. Albert was born in Belgium August 4, 1869 at Taintegnies (Hainaut) in the diocese of Tournai, Belgium, to Albéric Catoire and his wife Fideline, née Bonnet. After his birth, he was named Albéric at baptism after his father. His schooling took place at the orphanage of Arras (Pas-de-Calais) from 1883 to 1885 and the Clairmarais aluminate 1885 to 1887. He took the religious habit under the name of Brother Albert September 8, 1887 at Livry (Seine-Saint-Denis) and pronounced his first vows September 8, 1888. His master of novices, Fr. Emmanuel Bailly noted simply on the report for admission: *“Brother Albert, as a Belgian, is not held to military service. He is a young 20-year old, a bit stubborn, but virtuous enough to not remain stubborn for a long time. He is able, active, and generous in manual work and exterior works”*. The perpetual profession of Brother Albert was held at Livry September 8, 1889. Following the custom of that time, Brother Albert was sent to teach on the aluminate level in the lower classes: Arras (1890-1891) and Notre-Dame des Châteaux in Savoy (1891-1892). He returned to his studies at Livry (1893-1895), at the end of which he was ordained to the priesthood August 11, 1895. He wrote that he studied two living languages, English and Spanish.

An apostolic life in many directions.

The personal form that each religious filled out in the year 1923 mentioned the long list of affectations that Fr. Albert would know as a teacher after his ordination: Miribel-les-Echelles aluminate in Isère (1896-1898), Notre-Dame des Châteaux (1899), Paris at rue François 1er (1899), Los Andes, Mendoza, and the Rengo parish in Chile from the end of December 1899 to 1905, a stay in England at Newhaven and Charlton between 1905 and 1909, teacher at Philippopoli in Bulgaria (1909-1910), Bure in Belgium (1911), and finally New York at the 14th Street parish in the United States starting in 1911. His letters of that time echoed the difficulties that he was living: In 1910, he asked to enter the diocesan clergy; then came a request with the motive of seeing to the material needs of his mother, a widow and without money. When he was dean of discipline, he also had a run in with Fr. Herman, music teacher at the college of Philippopoli. After 1911, his trace was lost. The documents are silent on his nominations that we presume to have been numerous. According to the register, Fr. Albert, deceased in New York, would be buried at Bergerville, Canada?

Addenda.

In 1911, he was assigned to Our Lady of Guadalupe in New York. In 1929, Fr. Albert was named counselor and also treasurer. He lived at 14th Street for almost 30 years. September 5, 1940, he went to the motherhouse of the Sisters of St. Joan of Arc after an accident to rest since he was handicapped. During this time, he was an extraordinary confessor for the novitiate and took part in the meals for feast days. In 1942, he was moved to the Bergerville novitiate where he usually stayed in his room. He died of cardio-renal uremia March 14, 1945, at the age of 75 after having spent 4 years and 6 months at Sillery and was buried March 16 in the cemetery of the community in Bergerville-Sillery, Quebec. He also had a brother, Fr. Anselme Catoire (1865-1944), who was an Assumptionist.

Father Albert spent many years doing parish work at Our Lady of Guadalupe in New York. Because of his last illness, he was transferred to Quebec where he died and was buried. (Notes by Fr. Armand Desautels.)

A suffering religious.

Letter of 14 May 1928...

“Maybe you have already been informed by the Congregation for Religious of the serious request that I addressed to the Holy Father asking to be released from my religious vows for three years and permitting me to obey Bishop Cornelius Van den Ven, bishop of Alexandria (Louisiana) who is willing to accept me among the priests of his diocese. I presented the serious reasons that pushed me to take this step and explained the sentiments that decided me to make this important decision in my life. I never felt very attached to the Congregation or its works. In fact I was never happy or satisfied in any of our works, not in Chile, nor England, nor even here in New York. I had hoped that with time I would become more hopeful. The troubles through which the Congregation has passed these last years concerning its Constitutions did not help me. Because of this and the poor state in which my reputation stands in the mentality of many religious, I think that it is beneficial to change my situation.”

Ildefonse (Pierre Alphonse) Causse

1867-1951

Religious of the Province of Paris.

A recruit of Fr. Henri Brun.

Pierre Alphonse saw daylight April 20, 1867 on the heights of the plateau of Espérou at Camprieu (Gard) where the Assumption made a fleeting trial of an aluminate in 1874. Young Pierre was a student with the Christian School Brothers from 1877 to 1879 at Meyrueis (Lozère) when Fr. Henri Brun, as recruiter, noticed him. In September 1879, Pierre entered the aluminate of Le Vigan (1879-1880). He then went to Alès, Notre-Dame des Châteaux, and Clairmarais from 1880 to 1885; in these places his studies were solid. On September 29, 1885, he was held up at Nîmes by the cholera that closed the Spanish border, just at the time when he was ready to enter the Osma novitiate. He received the habit from Fr. Alexis Dumazer and took the name of Brother Ildefonse. He was then able to go to Osma, did his pilgrimage to Avila as a novice, and returned to France at Livry to pronounce his first [as well as his perpetual] vows, September 29, 1887. He was then sent, as was the custom, to serve in ministry: teacher at Mauville (Pas-de-Calais) from 1887 to 1890. On his 22d birthday, he was ordained sub-deacon at Lille. From 1890 to 1895, he studied at Rome where he passed a double doctorate in philosophy and theology. Msgr. Duboin had ordained him a priest on August 15, 1891. His talent as an administrator had already been remarked: at Rome, as treasurer, he had bought and installed the house of Ara Coeli. Being desirous of a missionary life, he learned Italian and English.



From East to West.

Fr. Brun would have liked to attract him to New York as a helper. After a stay at Istanbul (1895), Fr. Ildefonse took a ship to North America. He installed himself at Klotzville to evangelize the blacks and then went to New Orleans, the capital of Louisiana, for five years of missionary work (1895-1899) for which he kept an excellent souvenir for the rest of his life. When school started in 1899, Fr. Ildefonse was at Nîmes as treasurer for the college, teacher, and assistant principal during a quarter of a century (1899 to 1925). He got involved in everything: languages, sciences, ministry, and innumerable services that should not be ignored for their excellence as well as at times the precarious character of the conditions in which they were exercised. At Nîmes, Fr. Ildefonse experienced secularization, trials, expropriation, as well as appearances before tribunals, but he was greatly helped by superiors and school directors who were courageous: Frs. Timothée Falgueyrette, Matthieu Lombard, and Arthur Déprez. After 1930, a new college was reborn on the route of Arles. In 1925, Fr. Ildefonse was sent as superior to Sens for the recovery of a Saint-Edme college. Some parents wanted to return to the former system: first cycle on the spot, second cycle at the lyceum of the city. Fr. Ildefonse who was finishing his mandate was opposed to this choice and went to the residential school of Saint-Louis de Gonzague in Perpignan (Pyrénées-Orientales). He remained there two years (1931-1933) before going to Chanac (Lozère) whose first superior he became (1933-1942). In November 1942, after some time at Vêrargues (Hérault), he became chaplain for the Little Sisters of the Assumption for 8 years (1942-1950).

Illness and death.

Fr. Ildefonse suffered from inflammation of the arteries and a wound on the left foot. Medicines were of no avail to heal him. A move to Lorgues (Var) was contemplated for him. For a long time, he kept up his hopes of returning to his chaplaincy, but once a successor was named, he understood that this was finished for him. His nephew and his nurse, Sister Saint-Claude, took him by car from Firminy to Lorgues where he was placed under the good care of the community. He died very suddenly March 13, 1951 in the evening. His funeral was celebrated where he was and Fr. Ildefonse was buried at Lorgues. He had just finished his 84th year, the preceding month.

Addenda.

Fr. Ildefonse took part in our Louisiana adventure with Father Marcellin Guyot, and generally seems to have liked the work among the Negroes at Klotzville and at New Orleans. When the mission was closed in 1899, because of difficulties with the Archbishop and the clergy, he became for many years the treasurer of the College of Nîmes. Later, he was to be the first Assumptionist Superior in two colleges that we inherited from others, first at Sens (which is no longer ours), then at Perpignan, near the Spanish border, which we still conduct. (Notes by Fr. Armand Desautels.)

Letter from Klotzville (Louisiana, 1896).

“October was a fruitful month: two elderly persons, one older than 100 years, came for the first time to communion, on the day of the Rosary. Many blacks came to Klotzville and were astonished by this feast and the procession, since we are able to set up arcs of triumph to the Blessed Virgin, display our banners, and standards without worrying about an order to cease from the mayor. The freemasons have processions, so why not us? We profit from the neutrality of the State that protects all religions. The Catholic faith is penetrating bit by bit in the ranks of the Protestants. Two weeks ago, I baptized two who were about to die. A woman left four children that I shall baptize on All Saints.

When Fr. Barnabé [Gigand] arrives, we can go to visit the families together and do some good to these people of color who are full of good will but need to be encouraged to return to God. Since we have established two pious societies, I haven't heard of any black dances in Klotzville....”

(Fr. Ildefonse, October 1896.)

Lazare (Pierre-Théophile) Chabant

1842-1909

Religious of the Province of Paris.

A diocesan priest at the Assumption.

Pierre Théophile was born at Niort (Deux-Sèvres) June 3, 1842. Like his older brother, he entered the minor seminary of Montmorillon and then went to the Paris seminary of Saint-Sulpice for philosophy and theology. He was ordained to the priesthood May 6, 1866 and returned to his diocese of origin for pastoral ministry, first as a curate at Poitiers, then pastor and senior pastor of La Villedieu-du-Clain. He was also chaplain for the Carmelites at Niort. Fr. Emmanuel Bailly met him on the occasion of a retreat preached at the Carmel of Niort. He presented Reverend Chabant who requested to take the Assumptionist religious habit September 2, 1885: *“Reverend Chabant, about 44 years old, chaplain of the Carmel of Niort, distinguished priest of the diocese of Poitiers, esteemed by Bishop Gay, has been pastor and archpriest during a few years. Possessed of a great gift of speech, enjoying excellent relationships, and regretted by the Carmelites whose chaplain and confessor he has been for several years, came with us on a Jerusalem pilgrimage. His easy and delicate lifestyle, a capricious health, a certain tendency to self-sufficiency, and tendencies to being inconstant have caused us at his age to have doubts concerning the difficulties of the religious life that he wants to follow regardless of the objections that we oppose to him. But he has shown firmness and a spirit of sacrifice. In order to arrive at Osmâ, he confronted a difficult voyage and went through a cruel quarantine where it was extraordinary that he did not in turn fall sick. I believe that he can be admitted to the novitiate”*. Reverend Chabant found familiar faces there in a trio of religious from Poitevin: Frs. Jean-Emmanuel Drochon, Marie-Jules Chicard, and Maximin Vion. In 1887, having become Father Lazare, Reverend Chabant pronounced his perpetual vows September 18 at Livry.

In the forceful winds of ministry and preaching.

From 1887 to 1890, Fr. Lazare was sent to the college at Nîmes (Gard) that he already knew having spent his second year of novitiate (1886) as a teacher at the humanities aluminate. But it was mostly to the ministry of preaching that Fr. Chabant was to give himself in his various resident communities: (alumnate of Nîmes: 1887-1890, Bordeaux: 1892, Nîmes college: 1892-1896, Paris: 1886-1900, Toulouse: 1900). He was part of the Parisian community of rue François Ier when the searches and trials took place (1899-1900). He was part of the Trial of the Twelve. Interrogated, he answered the president of the tribunal: *“I am a missionary and a preacher, and because of this, in Paris they ask themselves to what house I belong because, when I am not preaching, I am in the train. I certainly care for souls before I preach and after I do so, but only in actions that are absolutely Catholic, supernatural, and always for the glory of God”*. This declaration did not stop him from being condemned! Forced to leave French soil, Fr. Lazare, after a short stay in Belgium, crossed the Atlantic Ocean to become a missionary in North America. At Baltimore, he cared especially for the French colony and was chaplain for the Dominican sisters. In January 1906, because of his health, Fr. Lazare went to the San Remo house on the Italian coast. He was chaplain to the Ursulines of Saint-Cyr-au-Mont-d’Or, also withdrawn to this city after the expulsion from France of all teaching religious congregations. He also served as preacher and confessor to the Sacré-Coeur sisters, the Carmelites, the Religious of Nancy, the Religious of the Assumption who were all present in this diocese of Ventimille. In October 1907, his health became problematic. In March 1909, for a change of air, he visited his brother, a diocesan priest at Civray (Vienne). It was there that death awaited him May 6, 1909, the very day of his 43d anniversary of ordination to the priesthood. He was buried there on the following Saturday, May 8.

Addenda.

He entered the Assumption at the age of 43. At the end of March 1909, thinking that changing place would be good for him, he asked Father General for permission to spend some time with his brother, the archpriest and pastor of Civray. Permission was granted and the sick religious left at once. He arrived at his brother’s on March 29, a very tired man. He went to bed from which he would never get up. During a month, his weakness augmented. He had no appetite and could not retain food, even liquids. On the advice of his doctor, on Friday, 30 April, his brother gave him Extreme Unction and a plenary indulgence. He received them with great piety and edification. After the prayers, he thanked all those present.

Since that day, his brother wrote on 3 May, Father Lazare’s health grew constantly worse. He could only take a glass of sugared water in 24 hours. He could keep nothing else down. He could no longer read and barely listen to what was being said to him. He prayed, was patient, and did not seem to worry. Everywhere, especially in the

communities where he was known, novenas were prayed to the Blessed Joan of Arc. A third novena was finished and the fourth was about to start when a telegram announced his death at 6 a.m. on 6 May. This was a remarkable coincidence since it was the 43d anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood.

Father Lazare had been a priest 19 years when he entered the Congregation and made his novitiate at Osma. He was one of those involved in the “Procès des douze,” which brought about the legal dissolution of the Congregation in France, then went to Belgium and the United States, where he worked in our New York community, and alone in Baltimore. He then returned to France. (Notes by Fr. Armand Desautels.)

A threatening sign.

“Please respect the corridors, the vestibules, the stairways of this d’Alzon House because of its souvenirs and its works.”

“This house requires a great calm and a perfect conduct because of its dignity. Whistling, singing, shouting, running down the stairs and making noise here! No! Because of the future. Father Lazare!”

This printed sign that is posted is to be found at Le Vigan, in the room consecrated to Fr. d’Alzon and his family, named the d’Alzon museum. It is not dated, but must be of the time when Fr. d’Alzon’s birth home, having served at first for the novitiate between 1864 and 1874, then the Saint-Clement aluminate from 1874 to 1881, was purchased by the Countess de Clermont-Tonnerre in order to preserve it from being certainly expropriated, with a view that at a more favorable time it could be bought by the heirs or those who had a right to it. Between 1881 and 1933, the house, rented to numerous tenants, went through very careless hands.

Stéphane (Jacques Marie) Chaboud

1857-1921

French religious, assistant general (1918-1921)

Formation years.

Jacques Marie Chaboud was born in Lyons August 10, 1857. He himself has explained the genesis of his vocation: his education in two schools of Lyons, the death of his parents, and his being put in touch with Fr. Picard through an aunt. At the age of 20 he presented himself to the aluminate of Clairmarais (Pas-de-Calais) where Fr. Joseph Maubon received him (1877-1878). A bit lost among this youth, he quite quickly went to rue François Ier where he took the habit under the name of Brother Stéphane and the direction of Fr. Picard (December 9, 1878). On December 10, 1880, Brother Stéphane pronounced his perpetual vows. He was marked with the stamp of his master of novices who had become the superior general, successor to Fr. d'Alzon. Fr. Géry Delalleau initiated the second year novice to the study of philosophy, but the expulsions of December 1880 sent both teacher and student to Osma in Spain (1881-1882). On December 23, 1882, Bishop Richard ordained Brother Stéphane a priest in Paris. In order to complete his theology studies, Fr. Stéphane went to Rome (1883-1885) where he got a doctorate. He was part of the student community directed and animated by Fr. Michel Romanet. He then was able to go back to Paris for a year in animation of the General Works under the guidance of Frs. Alfred Mariage and Etienne Pernet (1885-1886).



From the foundation of alumnates to a missionary adventure: Chile, New York.

Fr. Picard had plans for this young religious that he esteemed. He sent him to be in charge of the aluminate of Saint-Joseph of Roussas (Drôme) that had been improvised after the expropriation of that of Alès. Fr. Stéphane devoted himself to it during 3 years (1886-1889) and ensured the transfer of Roussas to Brian (1889). A remarkable educator, ardent and enterprising, he showed that he was prudent, knowing how to conciliate 'kindness and strength'. In 1889, the superiors asked him to leave the direction of Brian in the hands of Fr. Henry Couillaux to found a college in Osma, Spain in the place of the reintegrated novitiate at Livry in France since 1886. But this experience was short-lived (September 1889 - July 1890). However, this permitted Fr. Stéphane to strengthen his knowledge of Spanish. He gladly embarked on a missionary adventure to Chile that Fr. Picard presented to him at the request of Msgr. Casanova, archbishop of Santiago, whom he had met at Lourdes. In November 1890, Fr. Stéphane left with a few companions by ship. Their first stop was Mendoza-Rengo, the second, Santiago. After the time of closed retreats came a life in the open air with missionary trips through the country by horse (1890-1897). Fr. Stéphane returned to Paris for a few months, from January to November 1897 and then returned to Santiago, Chile, from November 1897 to March 1898. At that time, Fr. Picard asked him to take over the direction of the college at Nîmes (1898-1909). He handled this task with vigor gaining the trust of the families and crossing the storm of the beginning of the century until it became necessary to shut the doors of the 'cradle' (1909). Always tireless, Fr. Stéphane volunteered for the North American mission in the two parishes of New York (1910-1918), 14th Street and 156th Street. Highly esteemed and very capable, as Regional Superior, Fr. Stéphane was the inspirer, counselor, and organizer of the Assumptionist works in the New World.

Final years: Paris-Rome.

In 1918, on the occasion of the General Chapter of which he was a permanent member, he became assistant general and was put in charge of the relationships with the Little Sisters of the Assumption. He had a first serious warning of health problems November 2, 1920, as he was going to rue Violet. In December 1921, he returned to the house in Rome where he died in the evening of December 31 at 64 years old. He was buried in Rome at Campo Verano in the vault of the Great Augustinians while waiting for the Assumptionists to purchase their own burial site, where the remains of the religious who died in Rome would be transferred.

Addenda.

Letter to the Provincial.

"I have the honor of sending you these few words; I was recommended to you by my aunt, Marguerite Chaboud, a housemaid in Paris. I had the misfortune of losing my father last 28 August. My only thought and hope is to become a priest. I was born at Lyons in 1857. My father, born at Tour-du-Pin in Dauphiné, was a crystal cutter.

My mother, a weaver, died in 1860. Thanks to my uncle who is my godfather, I studied at Saint-Louis de la Guillotière and La Martinère. My father remarried in 1870. Since 1872, I work as a clerk in a Lyons office. I am taking Latin courses with a Jesuit priest, Fr. Brézard. I became emancipated. My tutor is my godfather and I live with one of my uncles. I haven't forgotten my desire to become a priest even though in my present situation it will be difficult for me to get back into studies. I'll have to draw lots in 1878. After my military service is finished, I'll go back to my work place. However, if I can be successful in my desire to become a priest, I'll thank God my whole life long.

Portraits Assomptionnistes 74-86.

At the start of the school year 1876-1877, Fr. Joseph Maubon, the superior of the Clairmarais aluminate received a tall young man with an opera hat who was a bit solemn. This was Jacques-Marie Chaboud. He was born in Lyons 10 August 1857. From 1864 to 1867 he was a serious student at the clerical school of Saint-Louis de la Guillotière. Because of the war he had to give up for a time the desire to be a priest and became a notary's clerk. He was 19 when he came to the aluminate. He was at first quite taken aback by the site and the students. He was homesick and wanted to leave. He went for a boat-ride with some companions and they tipped over. From then on, he was no longer lonesome. He finished his classical studies in two years. It was 9 December 1878 when he took the religious habit at rue Francois Ier with the first alumnists of Clairmarais. It was Fr. Picard who formed him and he took the name of Bro. Stephane. On 10 December 1880 he made his profession in the hands of Fr. Picard, just named Superior General after Fr. d'Alzon's death.

He started philosophy during his second year of novitiate and it was in Paris that Bishop Richard ordained him a priest 23 December 1882. It was off to Rome to finish his theology until 1885 where he got his doctorate. He then helped with the Lourdes and Jerusalem pilgrimages. In 1886 he was named in charge of the aluminate of Saint-Joseph of Roussas for 4 years when the aluminate was moved to Brian, near Valence. Once Brian was set up, he let Fr. Henry take over and went to Osma to set up a college that was not long lived. Later the aluminate of Calahorra was founded and transferred to Elorrio. In 1890 Fr. Stephane was to lead 9 other religious to Chile at Rengo. In 14 years, 5 houses were opened and established. For the Chileans, the Assumptionists have become especially the "Fathers of Lourdes", since they have established in Santiago a grotto that attracts many pilgrims. The Echo of Lourdes with 30 000 copies reaches many people.

In our photo, we can see Fr. Stephane on horseback with a Chilean poncho ready to leave on another trip through the pampas to gather in souls. In 1898, Fr. Picard recalled him to Paris to rest for several months. He then took over the direction of the Nimes college for the 1898-1899-school entrance. He remained there till 1909. In 1910 he left for North America and learned English as easily as he had learned Spanish. He was in New York City and worked toward developing two parishes at 14th St. and 156th St. There is also Assumption College for the Franco-Americans living in the larger cities. This college becomes a great source of vocations to the priesthood and religious life. Fr. d'Alzon's statue dominates the entrance yard. In 1917, the Quebec diocese opened up to the Assumptionists. The chapel was copied on that of Paray-le-Monial and was the center for the archconfraternity of the Sacred Heart of Montmartre. The Assumptionists were in charge of this for Canada and the USA. The Sisters of St-Joan of Arc have their motherhouse next to that of the Fathers. Fr. Stephane was the regional superior. He became an assistant general once he had returned to France to rest and had health problems. The Little Sisters of the Assumption were now under his care. He died on New Year's Eve 1921 late in the evening, at the age of 64. He had confessed himself a few hours before. ~

Dominique (Auguste) Chaurand

1861-1935

French religious.

A trajectory interrupted and resumed.

Auguste Chaurand was born in Fr. d'Alzon's village, Le Vigan (Gard), November 4, 1861. From 1874 to 1881, young Auguste lived the errant life of the alummates: Notre-Dame des Châteaux, Arras, Alès, and Clairmarais. He entered the Osma novitiate in Spain under the name of Brother Dominique October 2, 1881 and pronounced perpetual vows October 2, 1883. At the end of the month, Brother Dominique was already in Smyrna for his tonsure. The superiors sent him to the Orient for his ecclesiastical formation, to Kadikoy where he was also community treasurer from 1883 to 1887. He was ordained a priest in Rome December 17, 1887. He got his doctorate in Canon Law. Two years later, he was again in the Orient as treasurer for the entire Oriental mission (1889-1891). He was then sent to the foundation of Izmit in Turkey (1891-1899) before becoming a missionary in the New World at Santiago, Chile in 1900. What happened after that? Letters from Fr. Picard mentioning this religious are both full of praise and reproach: "*Fr. Dominique is good, active, but not always well mannered by the way he acts and at times by a certain manner of being headstrong. He is full of ardor. He is deficient in theology and too indiscreet.*" Fr. Picard met on several occasions with the religious of the Orient during his regular canonical visitations. He stressed to Fr. Dominique the necessity of pursuing studies. "*Study and see to it that the books don't get mildew in the house.*" Fr. Merklen said of Fr. Chaurand that he was 'one of Fr. Picard's victims', but, according to the documents that we have, we cannot affirm or confirm such a judgment. Regardless of the true motives concerning disagreements between these two religious, around 1900, Fr. Dominique Chaurand left the Congregation to become a missionary in Mexico (Oaxaca) taking back his identity as Rev. Auguste Chaurand. It was clear that he always tried to stay in contact with a few religious and that his being far from his religious family did not lessen his deep attachment to it. In Mexico, Reverend Chaurand lived and acted as a missionary priest and chaplain. In 1905, he wrote to Fr. Thomas Darbois that it was no longer possible for him "*to live any longer among these drunkards and wretches. I confess myself to a blind German priest who cannot even say two words to me. The situation in which I live is painful: an icy chapel where the holy water in the founts is frozen since 15 days, no mass servant, a missal dating to 1842, vestments falling apart. I am living my purgatory and am disgusted with the uncaring attitude of the Trappist Fathers for a work so badly served. I have already seen more than 50 priests go through here, and they start drinking and smoking. It is not just a purgatory, but a hell!*" Even though we can say that there was exaggeration in this testimony, it is not difficult to imagine that living conditions and pastoral ministry were very painful for this apostolic missionary. His feelings toward the Assumption did not vary and in 1914 he wrote to Fr. Hilaire Canouel: "*It is with the greatest pleasure that I read the Assomption magazine and follow from afar the wonderful projects of our dear religious family to which I am always attached by all the fibers of my being. I would like to do much more for our dear novices; the present difficult situation of Mexico impedes me from doing so at the present time. Kindly tell me how many francs it would take to set up a foundation to subsidize a novice perpetually. Thank you for the mortuary picture of Fr. Vincent de Paul. I had already placed it on my wall since I had cut it out of la Croix (newspaper). This one will go in my breviary with that of Fr. Picard*". In 1923, Reverend Chaurand was chaplain of the Sisters of the Cenacle in New York. Two years before his death, on the occasion of a uremia crisis, Reverend Chaurand obtained an indult readmitting him into the Congregation. Frs. Adrien Buisson and Cassien Dubost were present at his bedside June 27, 1935 and were the only witnesses of the fact that even at his last moments, Fr. Dominique renewed his vows as a religious of the Assumption. In 1987, his remains were transferred to the cemetery of St. Anne's parish in Sturbridge (Massachusetts).

Addenda.

While at Izmit, Fr. Dominique was superior. In 1901, he was sent to Chile and in 1903 asked to be secularized and was incardinated in the diocese of Antequeras, Mexico. In 1908-1909, Fr. Thomas Darbois visited him in Mexico after the death of Fr. Brun to collect funds for the Latino-American community of New York. Fr. Chaurand was buried at first in Calvary cemetery, NY on July 1st, 1935. "Fr. Chaurand is in the pre-history of our presence in Mexico." (Fr. Pierre Touveneraud, A.A. in a letter to Fr. Bernard Guillet August 30, 1979.)

Concerning Fr. Chaurand, it seems that they offered him a bishopric in Haiti with the blacks, but he refused because of his age. So much the better! [Letter from Fr. Crescent Armanet to Fr. Eutrope, October 19, 1926.]



Souvenirs in links.

“I remember that in 1948, old Fr. Adrien Buisson (1863-1954), the founding pastor of Our Lady of Esperanza in New York, explained to me why we had postcards from Mexico. In 1935, an ex-Assumptionist, Auguste Dominique Chaurand (1861-1935) was chaplain for the Sisters of the Cenacle. Seeing his end coming, he asked Fr. Adrien to obtain from Fr. Gervais Quenard permission for him to pronounce his religious vows. He wanted to die as a religious of the Assumption. That is what happened. Fr. Chaurand made his vows in the hands of Fr. Adrien and died 29 June 1935. He left all of his possessions to the community of Esperanza, including postcards from Mexico. He was buried in ‘Old Calvary Cemetery’ in New York next to Fr. Henri Brun, the first Assumptionist to come to the United States. I don’t know in what year Fr. Chaurand left the Assumption. According to photos, his appearance was very dignified with a grayish beard, a cassock of secular priests and a missionary crucifix.”

(Bernard Guillet, 1979.)

Father Auguste Dominique Chaurand: notes from Fr. Pierre Touveneraud 13 May 1987.

Born: Le Vigan (Gard) 4 November 1861. Took habit 2 October 1881. Perpetual vows: 2 October 1883.

Fr. Romuald Souarn’s secularization request for Chaurand mentions perpetual vows in 1881. Studies: 1883-1887 Philosophy studies in Constantinople. 1877-1879 Theological studies in Rome. Ordination: 17 December 1887. 1889 Left Rome for Koum Kapou and Ismidt where he was Superior. 1901 Sent to Santiago, Chile. 1903 Requests secularization, which he obtained and was incardinated in the diocese of Antequeras (Mexico) according to the Souarn document. 1906-1923 In Mexico where in 1908-1909 Fr. Thomas Darbois visited him. 1923 Came to New York, where in 1933 he requested reintegration into the Congregation. The Congregation for Religious granted the request. In a document dated 5 April 1933 allowing profession in articulo mortis.

A handwritten formula of perpetual vows was dated 27 June 1935. Witnesses were Adrien Buisson and Cassian Dubost. A printed formula of testimonial, signed only by Adrien Buisson is dated 28 June 1935. Death: 29 June 1935. Burial in Calvary Cemetery, Woodside, NY 5 July 1935. At the time of making his will, he resided at 628 West 140 Street. In a codicil of 2 January 1934, he is at the same address.

Angelome (Clovis-Jean) Cleux

1888-1953

Religious of the Province of Paris.

A childhood in Ardèche, a youth in foreign lands, and wounded for life.

Born August 28, 1888 at Saint Etienne de Valoux, in the district of Serrières (Ardèche) where he went to grade school, Clovis entered the college of Sainte-Barbe at Annonay (1900-1903) before living the life of the aluminate: Miribel-les-Echelles (Isère) from 1903 to 1906. He received the habit from Fr. Emmanuel Bailly September 21, 1906 at the Louvain novitiate (Belgium) where he made his first vows September 21, 1907 under the name of Brother Angelome. (He insisted that there was no 'ô' accent on the 'o'.) He stayed there to do his philosophy (1908-1911). He pronounced his perpetual vows September 21, 1908. It was the custom that scholastics would spend a few years in apostolic houses. Angelome was sent to Worcester (U.S.A) from 1911 to 1913, then to Locarno in Switzerland (1913-1914). Without any military preparation, at the start of hostilities, he was drafted: asleep in a beet field and wearing the red pants of the infantry, his two thighs were struck by a machine gun burst fired low on the ground. At night, he was captured by the Germans and cared for beyond the Rhine. This wound left him limping for life. A prisoner for three years, he was exchanged and then able to begin theology at Fribourg (Switzerland). In 1918, he returned to Louvain to finish his theological formation. He was ordained to the priesthood August 7, 1921. A long career in teaching lay in wait for him after he spent some time at the *Documentation Catholique* of the *Bonne Presse* (1921-1922).



Teaching, press work, and preaching.

Having been a teacher of literature at the college of Nîmes, Fr. Angelome returned to Worcester from 1924 to 1929. Serious minded, desirous of perfection, with a solid culture, he was an excellent teacher, humanist, and pedagogue, a stimulator of theatrical talent, a happy and distinguished confrere, the lover of cultural distractions, but too scrupulous. He launched the magazine *Vers l'idéal*. His religious first name caused him to battle without pity a written 'ô' that he saw as faulty in his name and got him the nickname of *Two in one*. As a man of great culture, he loved to castigate his vocabulary, watch over his readings, but had an exaggerated attitude of 'preserving' the youth. He readily censured the library shelves and the repertory of the theater. For health reasons, he once more crossed the Atlantic and worked again in the alumnates of Davézieux (1929-1935) and Vêrargues (1935-1938). The *Bonne Presse* tapped him to be the director of *La Croix des Jeunes* and *La Croix du Dimanche*. His chronicles, written with a lively pen that treated the current hot issues of the day with competence, won for him notoriety and faithful readers. But his friends were worried by the fragility of his health and his tiredness; even his vacation time seemed to give him no rest. He complained of suffering from enteritis, but in 1951 a cancer was diagnosed for which he was operated. He was sent to Lorgues (Var) in convalescence. Fr. Gabel decided to inscribe him for the national pilgrimage to Lourdes from which he returned with the certitude of having been cured. In 1952, he was able to leave the rest house and go to Lormoy (Essonne), which became the base for his apostolate. He wrote reports for the *Bonne Presse*, put the finishing touches to his work on Fr. d'Alzon, wrote small books, and preached. In January 1953, a kidney X-ray forced his transfer to the Juvisy-sur-Orge hospital. He just got out at the end of the 1963 summer and went to La Ville-du-Bois (Essonne) where the chaplaincy of the boarding school run by the Oblates was just right for him. But illness reasserted itself. He was again hospitalized, this time to Saint-Michel in Paris. He died there October 24, 1953 after having received the sacrament of the sick from Fr. Balme and having shaved his beard according to the custom. The funeral was presided by Fr. Fulbert Cayré in the chapel of the Parisian Provincial House at Denfert-Rochereau. He was buried in the Montparnasse vault near the elders of the Assumption that he venerated.

Addenda.

He was twice stationed at Assumption in Worcester: first as a scholastic in 1912-1913, then as a priest from 1923 to 1929. He was a good, solid teacher. He was also twice stationed at *La Bonne Presse* in Paris: first as a young priest when he worked at *La Documentation Catholique*, then as Director of *La Croix des Jeunes*, and finally as Director of *La Croix du Dimanche*.

A writer and a speaker.

“Many religious were taken up with Lenten ministry and especially for Holy Week. The record for sermons must be held by Fr. Angelome who gave 52 at Nantes in the church of Notre-Dame de Bon-Port where he followed in the shoes of illustrious preachers”.

(News of the occupied family, 15 April 1942, p.1.)

“We call upon Fr. Angelome Cleux to replace Fr. Ernest [Baudouy], a fine chronicler who enjoyed writing all of our goings on in the *Lettre à la Dispersion* [*Letter to those Dispersed*]. Now is the time to start again a publication that his death and the war interrupted, regardless of the actual restrictions of printing and paper. Fr. Angelome can get help under the patronage of Fr. Rémi Kokel, general secretary of the Congregation. A new *Dispersion* could start with the New Year and you are asked to send directly to him at the Bonne Presse all communications”.

(Fr. Gervais Quenard, 17 December 1944.) [In fact, the new Dispersion became the “Lettre à la Famille” (Letter to the Family)].

Aubain (Armand) Colette

1888 – 1970

Religious of the Province of South Belgium,

Assistant General from 1946 to 1964.

An engaging and cultured person.

Armand Colette was born in Leignon, Belgium, in the diocese of Namur, on August 7, 1888. Introduced by Fr. Mottet, pastor and dean of Ciney, as a pious and very intelligent young man, Armand entered the alumnates in Bure (1901-04) and Taintegnies (1904-06) where he was well liked by his companions and noticed for his seriousness: he was more interested in conversation than in sports! Distinguished-looking and dedicated to his work, he entered the novitiate in Louvain September 11, 1906, received the religious habit under the name of Brother Aubain, and pronounced his first vows September 1, 1907. Frs. Benjamin Laurès and Antoine de Padoue Vidal appreciated his intellectual capacities and his precocious maturity, but reproached him his talkativeness. Perpetually professed September 11, 1908, Brother Aubain studied philosophy in Louvain (1908-11) and theology in Rome (1914-18) where he was ordained a priest May 14, 1916.



A dialectician gifted with words, he liked to discuss and argue. He was at home in the realm of abstract reasoning. Fr. Pierre Fourier Merklen asked him to teach philosophy in Louvain for two years (1911-13). Brother Aubain also taught the young alumnists in Ascona, Switzerland, from 1913 to 1914. Finally, he moved to a higher level by teaching Moral Theology and Canon Law in Rome (1918-19) before going to Assumption College in Worcester, U.S.A., where he taught from 1919 to 1922. Gifted with a clear and precise mind, he liked to transmit his knowledge and stimulate his students. Again a teacher from 1922 to 1927, this time in Sart-les-Moines, he knew how to pass from the world of science to that of spirituality and became a much-appreciated spiritual director.

Formation and animation of the Congregation.

Enjoying the confidence of his superiors, he was appointed master of novices and superior of various scholasticates over a period of 25 years: Taintegnies (1927-29), Saint Gérard¹ (1929-34), Louvain (1934-37), Sart-les-Moines (1937-40), and again Saint Gérard (1941-46). He helped these young religious develop a deep spirit of faith and a great love for their religious family. He had a true veneration for Father d'Alzon, which he liked to share with others.

In 1946, he was chosen by the General Curia to replace Fr. Dieudonné Dautrebande who resigned his post as Assistant General. Very pleased with his nomination, he nevertheless associated all the communities of the Province of Belgium-Holland with this honor, considering it theirs as well as his own. "As happy as a child who has just received gifts from Saint Nicholas," Fr. Aubain left for Rome where he lived the next 24 years of his life, exhibiting good judgment and level-headedness.

He also became Secretary General and Postulator for the causes of Fr. d'Alzon (1952-70) and Fr. Marie-Clément Staub. The writings he collected -- beginning in 1930 -- and deposited in the Roman archives represent 52

¹ Saint Gérard de Brogne has his feast on October 3. This Belgian monk first received military training as a page for the Count of Namur. He was even sent on a special mission to the court of France in 918. He entered the Benedictine abbey of Saint Denis, was ordained a priest, and returned to Belgium to found a new abbey in the Brogne area. He died in 959. The Abbey of Saint Gérard de Brogne passed to the Assumptionists in 1919. It first became a novitiate, then a scholasticate for approximately 50 years. The Assumptionists gave up the abbey in 1974, but returned to Saint Gérard two years later, to the Priory of Our Lady of Grace which was being given up by the Bernardine Sisters. The Priory was given a twofold purpose: to be a house of hospitality (retreats and various meetings) as well as a retirement home for senior or handicapped religious.

typewritten volumes for the Founder, 53 for Fr. Vincent de Paul Bailly, 25 for Fr. Picard, 13 for Fr. Galabert, to say nothing of the 16 volumes of letters of Mother Marie-Eugénie de Jésus collected by the Religious of the Assumption. It was an enormous undertaking.

Energetic despite his proverbial corpulence, impassioned, and sometimes tenacious, but not overly preoccupied with minutiae and precision, he gave free rein to his natural impetuosity. Nevertheless, it was kept in check by his loyalty, his sincerity, his devotedness, and a cordiality that disarmed even his detractors. Good humored and a good companion in times of relaxation, he argued every day as he played *belote*, a card game similar to pinochle, which for him was like a “liturgy,” and for which he constantly devised a few Roman rules that surprised his adversaries.

In 1970, he went to Belgium to retire. He was plagued with health problems: prostate, phlebitis, and intestinal blockages. Back from the hospital on August 17, 1970, Fr. Aubain died at Saint Gérard on December 7, 1970, at the age of 82. His funeral was presided by Fr. Istace on December 10. He was buried at Saint Gérard.

Addenda.

He is a legendary figure in the Congregation, well known to many generations of scholastics. In spite of a number of strange mannerisms and a sometimes-exasperating importance given to minute rules and regulations, he was all heart and truly admired.

After his ordination to the priesthood in 1916, he taught successively at Rome, Worcester, and Sart-les-Moines in Belgium. In 1927, he became novice master at Taintegnies and then Superior of the scholasticates at St. Gérard and Louvain.

In 1946, he was co-opted Assistant-General, and 3 years later he also took on the charge of Secretary General. Re-elected at the Chapters of 1952 and 1958, he remained Assistant General until 1964. He then stayed on in Rome to work full time as Postulator for the causes of beatification for which he had borne responsibility since 1954. His devotion to Father d’Alzon knew no bounds. He conducted the preparation of all pertinent documents for the cause of beatification of our founder with utmost care and exactness, keeping in touch with a member of the Sacred Congregation of Rites to be sure that every detail was attended to properly.

In July 1970, once this task had been completed, he retired to Belgium. Father Aubin always took a lively interest in everything concerning the Congregation, and his great love for the Assumption was an inspiration to all.

Evocations.

“How many tricks the students of Louvain and Saint-Gérard played on Fr. Aubain! There was no malice intended but their insistence and the inventive spirit manifested itself! They got great joy out of creating comical situations, by asking preposterous or extreme questions. This would provoke on his part indignant or scandalized answers, and placed him in embarrassing situations. Father didn’t know what to do. He wanted to be firm but his goodness of heart took over and he couldn’t refuse a favor. Later on, confreres teased the postulator by putting into doubt the possibility of having Fr. d’Alzon canonized. Fr. Aubain would get irritated and carried away by holy indignation... We knew him and loved him the way he was: not at all athletic, with the corpulence of a Canon or a Cardinal, a thinking head under the hood of black serge, an exuberant heart with little control from a viril modesty that was always displayed, loving to play cards, fervent and assiduous at prayer, always meticulous and hard working, optimist and open to changes in the Church, in short, a man synonymous with sunshine and health.” (From witnesses.)

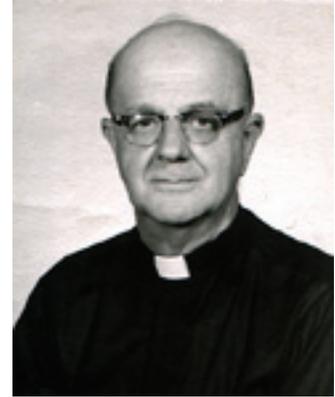
Dionysius (Arnold Henri) Cornelisse

1913-1980

Dutch religious missionary to America.

Curriculum vitae.

Born at Beverwijk (Holland) July 26, 1913, Arnold Henri began his primary studies at the Catholic school of 'Hobbenstraat in his village. He became an alumnist at Boxtel (1926-1932) and then entered the Taintegnies novitiate (Belgium) August 6, 1932. It was there that Fr. Norbert Claes presented him and gave him the religious habit under the name of Brother Dionysius, which would become 'Dennis' or more simply 'Deni'. His master of novices, Fr. Romanus Declercq, noted as his qualities *goodness, affability, meekness that was even a bit feminine, and devotedness, even when at times he seemed to dream.* Accepted for the first profession October 3, 1922 at Taintegnies, he was sent to Saint-Gérard for philosophy (1933-1934), taught a year at Sart-les Moines (1935), and did his theology at Louvain (1936-1940). He made his perpetual vows at Louvain October 3, 1936 and was ordained a priest in the same city February 11, 1940. From 1940 to 1945, he went to Nimeguen. Having entered the Assumption with the desire to be a missionary, he had to wait for the war to end before realizing his project. He took the ship to Brazil at Lutte in 1945. Fr. Dennis, a polyglot, wrote on his personal file that he spoke Dutch, French, and German. Undoubtedly he perfected his linguistic knowledge by learning Portuguese, English, and Spanish if we judge from his itinerary. But what transpired clearly from his apostolic life was his special love for the disadvantaged milieus and his constant battle to better the living conditions of the poor. A pastoral man, he was at ease in human contacts as well as in concrete actions in favor of his parishioners.



A missionary giant to the two Americas.

Fr. Dennis did not stay very long in Brazil (1945-1949). In 1949, he was named to the U.S.A. After teaching a year at the college in Worcester, he went to New York to work with the Hispanic population of this megapolis where the poor, especially the immigrants, were often the prey of exploiters and prejudices. Named curate of the parish of Our Lady of Guadalupe, he remained there until his death some thirty years later. A man having a strong natural authority, he expressed his thoughts strongly and knew how to manifest his very cut and dry ideas. He manifested a great charity in his parish and social ministries in favor of the poor, the sick, and those in difficulty. If he was reputed in community to be brusque, punctual, and quick, he knew how to trim down this sharpness in the Latin milieu of his flock, even when he sought to have his preferences for order and regularity adopted by them. A man of action and personal contact, he rarely liked recreation or meetings. His health was robust and his energy overflowed as he strove to accomplish the thousand and one activities of a priest desirous of concretely bettering the lot of the Hispanic population: housing, scolarity, social programs, and English courses. On the religious level, he was a prudent counselor, an experienced and assiduous confessor who received people in his office during long hours. His sudden death May 12, 1980, at the age of 67, surprised everyone. An impressive number of poor people came to kneel before his body as soon as they heard the news of his death. Many men hid their tears, betraying their emotions and deep love for this priest who had given his life for them. His funeral was celebrated May 15, the feast of the Ascension, presided by Msgr. Garmendia, Episcopal vicar for Hispanics. A ceremony was held for his burial at Fiskdale the next day, May 16, with Fr. Edgar Bourque, the provincial, in the company of some forty Assumptionist confreres.

Addenda.

In his honor, the Dannelisse Corporation was set up to provide Homemaker Services to families with children in Manhattan, the Bronx, and Queens.

Father Denis died suddenly in the early morning hours of May 12 (1980). Although a member of the Dutch Province, he had been active in our Province since 1950, almost exclusively at Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish. The wake was held at the Parish Hall on May 13 and 14, with the funeral mass on May 15, presided by Bishop Garmendia, with Father Edgar (Bourque) giving the homily. The church was filled to overflow. ... A special service was held in Father's home parish, in Holland, on May 24, for his family and fellow Dutch Assumptionists.

Saint John and Saint Luke both speak to us, in their Gospels, of the death and resurrection of Jesus; of His departure from this world, and of the sending of the Holy Spirit. They do so in different ways, according to the needs of their communities, of their theology, and of their purpose.

...Each year the Church invites us to celebrate the death and resurrection of Jesus. During the past few days, the readings at mass are already preparing us for Pentecost. And yesterday we celebrated the Lord's Ascension. This helps us along our journey from slavery to freedom. This commemoration cleanses us from sin to live more fully from the life of God's grace... And in the midst of this: Father Dennis!

The Assumptionists meet today for the second time in one week. We admit that we are stunned. We admit that our arms are heavy from having empty hands. We admit that we don't know how to replace Father Dennis. We are as lost as the Apostles who awaited the Holy Spirit. We too experience loss along with expectation. We don't know where to turn. But our faith keeps our eyes fixed on the Lord who will show us the way He would have us go.

The Lord will be with us in that search as He is with us this morning to help us learn the lesson He gives us through Dennis' life and death. Our Gospel reading shows us the Apostle Thomas confronted by the Risen Lord. Our imagination tells us that there is some resemblance between Thomas and Dennis. But our admiration for Dennis and our faith in Jesus tell us that the meeting between them that we celebrate this morning is marked with the same kind of love for Jesus and the same brilliant confession of faith as that of the Apostle Thomas: "My Lord and my God!" In this context, let us reflect together on the two great loves that certainly filled the heart and life of Father Dennis: his love of Jesus and his love for the Spanish-speaking peoples of New York City.

Dennis loved God! And because he was Dennis, there were no two ways about his love. It was total. It was single-minded. Ever since I received the news of his death, I have tried to fathom the mystery of what the love of God has done in this man's life. What stays with me most strongly is that the timelessness of God gave him balance. We all know that here was a man who was nervous, jumpy and impatient. A man who was always in a hurry, always running. He could listen and he was kind. But, he could say "No" as quickly as he could say "Yes." Yet, as volatile as this man was, we all agree that he was a man of balance. Of course, this made him a man of good counsel for himself and for others.

God resides in each one of us. All of His attributes are at work in us, especially when we allow God to be important in our lives, the way Father Dennis has done. This mystery of God's presence, the action of His indwelling leaves a different reflection in each person. For Father Dennis, it was the eternity of God that showed through, His timelessness. Day after day, in the most difficult situations, in the most harried circumstances, maybe when Father Dennis ran around the most, God was at work, giving a different meaning to time in the life of this priest-religious. God's eternity had broken through in his life. The people he served, the brothers of his community, profited from this. Is this not "the spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him" that Saint Paul writes about in our reading from Ephesians?

With Dennis gone, we have lost the man in the province who hated meetings more than anyone else. He had absolutely no patience with meetings. His resistance to them was total. He must have understood very well that Thomas would be absent when the other Apostles were meeting. As often as I have heard that Dennis was a man of balance, I have heard that he was not a team man. It doesn't mean that he didn't cooperate or that he didn't do his share of the work; it only means that no one had ever convinced him of the utility of meetings. His big question was always: "What difference do they make?"

We, who are left behind, and who will undoubtedly continue spending countless hours at endless meetings, must allow ourselves to be confronted by this question: "What difference do they make?" Our continual meetings must strengthen our decentralization, our participation, our shared responsibility, in the work that we do for the Kingdom. If we fail at this, then meetings do not make a difference and we are foolish men indeed. How empty we remain if all our talking doesn't lead us to a deeper recognition of the Risen Christ: "My Lord and my God!"

Father Dennis loved the Spanish-speaking peoples of New York City. Our reading from Ezekiel speaks of another people transplanted by God as a "tender shoot of a cedar tree." Father Dennis had a great sensitivity to all the hardships of taking root in a new country. His Hispanics knew this and returned his love. He expressed their mutual devotion best in Holy Desiring: "Their sincere friendship is the most valuable gift I have ever received." This is a Dennis statement. It is an absolute statement. But we can be sure that it was a true statement. Another Dennis statement that became famous in its way was: "Happiness for me is 14th Street!" That pronouncement didn't need much of an interpretation. It meant: "Nowhere else but 14th Street!" He wasn't saying: "I'm unbudgeable and I won't move." It was more that if we wanted to know where he stood, there it was. I suspect that Father Dennis was just about as impatient with spiritual talk as he was with meetings. He very obviously was not against spirituality; he merely preferred action to words. One area that made him particularly uncomfortable was too easy a talk about prayer and contemplation. It was simply not something to talk about too much and certainly not something you tried to achieve before getting down to hard work. He understood that this is not the Assumptionist way. Father Dennis' work was his asceticism. His position was that action leads to contemplation. I don't know if Dennis knew that this was Augustine's position too. I suspect he did. Of course, this links us to Father d'Alzon's surprising and original statement at the beginning of the Constitutions of 1855, that as Assumptionists we will sanctify ourselves through our apostolate.

I have obviously applied several labels to Father Dennis this morning. But, the most appropriate label of all is that he was an apostolic priest.... Today we regretfully bury a brother who gave us a great prayer of apostolic devotion. The loss to the province is great. The loss to the Spanish-speaking peoples of New York City is great.

Many years ago, maybe as many as fifty-five, there was a small boy in Holland who had a dream about going to the missions. This boy became a young man and was ordained a priest in 1940. Because of the war, he had to wait five years before going to Brazil. There he experienced the missions as he had dreamed of them. He spoke about having to travel twelve miles on dusty coal trains before reaching the first mission outpost that his community was responsible for. He spoke about it with a twinkle in his eye and with joy. For him, that was working in the missions.

In 1950, Father Dennis arrived in New York City. This too was mission land for him. He saw his apostolate in the inner city as an honest response to his call for missionary work. And rightfully so! In how many other concentrated places in the world can you find a group of three million people, suffering from dislocation, wrestling to learn a second language while holding on to their own, trying to assimilate another culture without losing their own, threatened in their faith, treated unjustly, finding it difficult to find work and suitable housing? Dennis reached out to them as he reached out to the poor in the brush-lands of Brazil. He did so in all ways. He preached to them the word of God. He administered the sacraments and he counseled them. But he also addressed their social needs long before the City tackled this problem seriously. He helped people find jobs. He helped them find homes. He helped them hold on to what is most important to them... the faith that had been theirs and the right to practice it in a way that fits them culturally.

Father Dennis was the priest of these people. To see them surrounding him on the sidewalk outside Our Lady of Guadalupe Church made it clear that they had found in him a priest who had been sent to them by God... a man who was doing that for which God sends His angels. Father Dennis was a true angel of God time and time again in the lives of countless people.

I'm sure that these people remained countless for him also, but not unnamed. He left an address book in his room. Not an ordinary address book, but a huge one – an 18-inch long ledger, an inch thick. In it, He had the names and addresses of his family. One page! After that, it is page after page of the names and addresses of the Spanish people he had baptized, married, and for whom he had baptized their children. All people he had reached out to... the names of people "whose sincere friendship was the most valuable gift he had ever received in all his life."

Timothy (Patrick) Croghan

1919-1977

English religious of the Province of North America.

A winding path.

Patrick Aloysius Croghan was born August 25, 1919 at Ashton-in-Makefield in the diocese of Liverpool, England, of an Irish family. He studied at Ashton Catholic Elementary School (1924-1928), then at Mansfield (1928-1932), and finally at Nottingham for high school at 'The Becket School' from 1932 to 1937. He then chose the life of a diocesan priest and was sent by his bishop to 'Hallow's College' in Dublin for his classical studies (1937-1939), followed by two years of theology at 'All Hallow's' (1939-1941). After a severe nervous fatigue, he interrupted his studies and left the seminary. Ever pursued by the ideal of a priestly life, he asked to enter the Assumptionists. He was accepted in August 1944. He took the habit under the name of Brother Timothy at Bindon House and pronounced his first vows there October 22, 1946. Fr. Gabriel Brayton-Slater, his novice master, noted: "*In spite of the health crisis he underwent at the seminary before entering the novitiate, Brother Timothy spent two years in a very active life as a journalist and felt no effects from his former nervous problem. Although he is inconstant by nature, he needs to be prodded from time to time on an intellectual as well as spiritual level so as to be guided and not let him center himself on his health. He is quite evasive on incisive matters but has satisfactorily fulfilled his task as socius*". Brother Timothy did a complementary year of theology in France, at Lormoy (Essonne) and another at Capenor, England, in order to complete his theology. His perpetual profession at Hitchin, October 22, 1949, was followed by his ordination to the priesthood in the same place December 18, 1949. His ministry began as a teacher at Saint Michael's College in Hitchin (1949-1952), but since he had great difficulty dealing with community life, after two years as curate at Rickmansworth (1952-1954), Fr. Timothy asked to join the secular clergy. The Provincial asked him to go slowly with his decision and first restore his health. Because of his persistent desire and the choice of being a military chaplain, he was exclaustated to the Brooklyn diocese (U.S.A.), being transferred temporarily under the obedience of the Provincial of North America. But six months after he had obtained his visa, the American administration told him that he could not apply for a post as military chaplain since he was not an American citizen. Faced with this refusal, Fr. Timothy had to search for a bishop who accepted to incardinate him *ad tempus*. He was named curate for Saint James Church at Seaford (New York, Long Island), in the diocese of Rockville. But this situation was only temporary. After the 6-year time span that was foreseen, he was refused incardination in the diocese of Rockville, a part of Brooklyn. He then spent several months at Fiskdale upon the acceptance by Fr. Moquin. He once again asked for an indult of secularization *ad experimentum* in the diocese of Bridgeport, Connecticut (1962). It was thanks to Fr. Timothy that we have an English translation of the Directory (1965) and a biography of Bishop Pie Neveu, started in 1969. He found work as chaplain to the Religious of the Assumption at their Ravenhill boarding school in Germantown (Philadelphia), where he gave courses in Sacred Scripture to the young professed sisters. During all this time, he kept a lively link with the Assumption, being attached to the New York parish at 14th Street. He died at Waterbury Hospital in Connecticut November 8, 1977, having lived many very trying years thanks to a dialysis machine. One of his friends who was familiar with all the difficult problems in the life of Fr. Timothy could not help making the following remark: "He seemed to be born to suffer."



Addenda.

He gave up a good position at the Irish Press to become an Assumptionist. Bishop George Andrew Beck, A.A. ordained him to the priesthood in 1949. He was chaplain at Regina Laudis monastery in Waterbury, CT. For the last four years of his life, Father Patrick required the use of a renal dialysis machine two or three times a week. During these years the Rapp family of Woodbury, CT took care of him with great kindness, affection, and generosity. On November 8, Father Patrick went to the Hospital in Waterbury, CT for his customary treatment and the doctors discovered the existence of a blood clot in his leg. They decided on immediate, emergency surgery. Father Patrick didn't survive the operation.

We come together this morning to say goodbye to a man, a friend, a priest, a fellow Assumptionist to whom we've scarcely said hello.

As most of you know, I was in England when Father Patrick passed away. You also know that he was of the English Province and that he had been stationed in the North American Province for the past twenty-two years. I regretted deeply being out of the country when Father Patrick died. However, being in his home province allowed me to share in the after-death conversations of his English brothers as well as that of his brothers in the United States. In both countries I was struck by the fact that Father Patrick remained unknown and mysterious. On both sides of the ocean, most of us were saying; "We haven't seen him for a long time." "He was always mysterious, always quiet, always retiring, always warm, always friendly." One of the fathers from Bethnal Green, who had known him during all his religious life, although he too had not seen him for a long time, said what I thought was most significant: "Pat seemed to be born to suffer."

As I reflected on that statement in the many hours I spent alone, I began to see how it applied to Father Pat's life. We are not talking here about the suffering of the past three or four years when his kidney ailment condemned him to what he called being married to a dialysis machine. There was so much more to his suffering. There was the suffering of searching during an entire lifetime for what it was God expected of him. The suffering of thinking that he had an answer and then discovering that it had disappeared! The agony of trying to find his place and when he thought he had found it realizing that it was probably somewhere else! From his very youth it was clear to Father Patrick that he should be a priest. At first he thought of the secular priesthood, then of religious life, again of the secular priesthood, and back to religious life. His was the suffering of a man who hungers for peace and who would love to be at home somewhere, but for whom the search for the place where that peace and that home could be never ends.

I had the opportunity during the past two years of speaking with Father Pat often. Oh, it isn't that he ever said it, but it seemed so easy to be attuned to what he was feeling. Always, there were signs of yearning for something else. We all know of people who suffer in this way and we sometimes have moments when it is true of all of us. This funeral mass can be for us the occasion to try to deepen the meaning of the vocation of a man who is born to suffer. When it became clear to me that this is what we should do together this morning, I soon felt drawn toward the Book of Job...

But if we ask ourselves what the author of Job tells us, the answer he gives is that you're not going to find any other explanation except that this is what God wants. We suffer because God wants it... But as we reflect on it, I don't want to settle for that answer and I don't think anybody here does either. And I don't think Father Patrick settled for it. It's not the really complete teaching of the Book of Job. That's a cold, depersonalized answer.

The answer comes in Job of what we do with this. God wants me to suffer, but where is God in His wanting this, in His permitting this? Job becomes very beautiful if we hold on to the most inspiring verses in that Book: "I know that my Redeemer lives. I know that one day I will see Him, one day I and no other will look up and see Him standing beside me." A God who can be there, a God who can be so close to me! Yes, if He wants me to suffer, all my life, in all things, I don't need any other explanation. And I don't have to be searching for an answer to the mystery. I have the answer, "I know that my Redeemer lives. One day I'll see Him, standing by my side." Father Patrick knows that today.

It looks as though all of his life he was wrestling with the tent that Saint Paul speaks about in his Letter to the Corinthians. This tent, you can almost sense it crumbling to pieces as we have been able for years to see the body of Father Patrick getting weaker and weaker. And yet Father Patrick held on and did things with a courage that was astounding to all of us. Long after the prediction of his death should have made it a reality, he traveled with Ann to Ireland, not once but twice. When he was fed up with the cold, as we are every winter, he dared with Ann to go to Florida to warm up his bones. And do you think his traveling was over? No later than a week ago he was calling New York and wondering if it wouldn't be possible to go to Lourdes in the spring. And they were going...

We know that God is beside us all the time. He's beside us in faith as we reach out to His saving power. But we also know that He stands beside us in people. If only we could be smart enough to know that in every one of our sufferings we can look around to the people who are reaching out to us and say that this is a gift of God. For all of Father Pat's suffering and for all of his solitude and aloneness and for all of his mysteriousness throughout his life, he had someone standing beside him. This was true, for example, of Father Brendan Fox, in England, whom Father Patrick considered a lifelong friend.

[Funeral homily by Fr. Edgar Bourque, A.A., Provincial on November 12, 1977]

Father Patrick was buried in St. Anne's cemetery in Fiskdale. He was a naturalized citizen of the United States. Before entering the Assumptionists, he worked in the Irish Press.

Thomas (Edouard-Jules) Darbois

1863 – 1939

French religious, Assistant General (1923-29), affiliated to the Province of Paris.

Youth.

Edouard-Jules was born in Champignelles (Yonne) on August 28, 1863, the feast of Saint Augustine. He and his twin brother, Gunfrid, attended the alumnate of Clairmarais (Pas-de-Calais) from 1877 to 1881, chose to become Assumptionists, and received the religious habit in Osma, Spain, October 2, 1881. Taking the name of Thomas, Edouard-Jules made his first profession – which, according to custom, was also his final profession -- with his brother in Osma October 2, 1883. The very evening of his profession, he embarked for Constantinople, Turkey, where he became a teacher at the seminary-school in Kum Kapu. With his brother, he went to Rome for theology (1885-89). Bishop Duboin ordained Brother Thomas a priest in Livry September 24, 1887. Inseparable until 1889, the two brothers then received different assignments and, from then on, hardly saw each other. Fr. Thomas earned two doctorates, one in philosophy, the other in theology. He mastered Spanish, English, and Italian.



Founder in Chile, the United States, and Mexico.

In 1889, Fr. Thomas taught theology at Le Breuil (Deux-Sèvres). In September 1890, he left with a team of founders for Chile where he remained from 1890 to 1891. He was then sent to New York as the first pastor of the Spanish-speaking parish of Our Lady of Guadalupe on West 14th Street. In 1904, he founded the beginnings of an alumnate in Worcester, which later became Assumption College. In 1907, he left for Mexico, but the planned foundation in Monterrey did not take place (1907-08). After returning to France, he went to rest in San Remo, Italy (1908-09).

In 1912, he was asked to take charge of the new residence in Montpellier, on *rue Bonnard*. During the First World War, he offered his services to Bishop de Cabrières to care for the parishes deprived of priests due to the general mobilization and was placed in charge of the parish of Saint Jean-de-Fos (Hérault). In 1918, Fr. Joseph Maubon asked him to join the novitiate community at Notre-Dame de Lumières (Vaucluse) and serve the neighboring parish of Goult (1918-19). He was then appointed chaplain to the boarding school of the Oblates of the Assumption in Jalesnes (1920-23). While there, he was surprised one day to receive a decree from the Holy See appointing him as First Assistant General of the Congregation during the troubled period of its existence (January 1923).

A strong-minded Assistant.

From 1923 to 1929, Fr. Thomas generally resided in Rome because of his responsibilities. He showed himself to be concerned about the traditions of the Congregation and even to be over-protective of its past. His relations with Fr. Merklen and the Franck Mothers, and his energetic personality did not always facilitate the “new direction” inaugurated by Fr. Gervais Quenard, also appointed by the Holy See, who wanted to lead the Congregation along new paths that respected both its present and its future. In 1929, Fr. Thomas’ mandate was not renewed. For two years, he was chaplain to a community of Sisters of Saint Joan of Arc in Beaulieu-les-Fontaines, Oise, (1930-32), then spiritual director of the scholasticate in Louvain, Belgium (1932-34). He was also stationed for a short time in 1934 at the college in Pontlevoy (Loire-et-Cher), before going to the rest home in Lorgues (Var) on February 22, 1934. Worn-out, he suffered from varicose veins in his legs.

Active retirement.

The “old missionary,” now 71 years old and still nostalgic about his former apostolic life, thought he could render service by preaching from time to time. He also wrote biographies of the founders and foundresses of new religious congregations. Meanwhile, he underwent several operations that temporarily alleviated his pain. Nevertheless, he became an invalid in 1937 and died of uremia July 11, 1939, in Lorgues, at the age of 76. His funeral was celebrated two days later by Fr. Broussaleux and his body was buried in the cemetery of Lorgues.

Addenda.

Father Thomas entered the Congregation with his twin brother, Father Gunfrid. He seemed destined to “firsts”. He was part of the first team sent to South America and remained in Chile from 1890 to 1901. He was almost among the first to come to New York and was at Our Lady of Guadalupe when the parish was organized. He was the common

superior of the houses of the United States, and as such, presided over the founding of the unsuccessful agricultural school to which he would have liked to join an alumnae at Granby, Massachusetts. He then presided over the founding of Assumption College in 1904. His later years were more “standard”. When the Sisters of Saint Joan of Arc attempted a foundation in France (1930-32), he was their chaplain. (Notes by Fr. Armand Desautels.)

A rebuke.

“You acted cruelly toward me; I suffer day and night; I had counted on a relief through Dr. Savignac: you refused me permission to see him and I return with all my miseries. I am complaining about the harshness in the way you proceeded. Others noticed your injustice: it was to stop me from seeing Fr. Merklen in Paris that you were inflexible. I thought this was finished. I thought that for a peaceful resolution, no favors were being given and that no severe measures were to be taken against him. The measures of not letting him see those who care for him and only encouraged him to be patient, energetic, and fervent in his religious life are odious. I want to add a word on the way the Congregation is going: it has a doctrine, Frs. d’Alzon, Picard, and Bailly told us this so often. I protest against your having called the Dominicans and the Jesuits to La Croix. You are still young and should act in agreement with your assistants of whom three are older than you are”.

(Fr. Thomas to Fr. Gervais, 14 November 1923.)

His brother Gunfrid died March 14, 1924... In September 1890, when Fr. François Picard decided to open a mission in Chile, Fr. Thomas was sent there with the founders of the mission. They were ten. Five priests; Stéphane Chaboud (Superior), Géry Delalleau, Marius Peyson, Adrien Buisson, and Thomas Darbois. There were also five lay brothers.

Fr. Adrien Buisson, writing about Fr. Thomas, had this to say: “In 1895, I preached a series of retreats with Fr. Thomas, in the north of Chile... at two seaports. In his instructions, Fr. Thomas scourged vices so vehemently that the doctors, lawyers, and notaries, feeling targeted, complained about it in the newspapers, attacking Fr. Thomas very harshly.

“Fr. Thomas answered in the same way, regretting only that the dead sent to the cemetery by the doctors could not be there to accuse those who attacked him, the missionary. To the lawyers, he answered that the widows and orphans they had despoiled formed an army which could do nothing because they were too poor and too ignorant to defend themselves.” This severity, this harshness with people would surface again in New York, as we will see...

Fr. Thomas was called “*le Père commun*” (the common Father) i.e. superior of both Guadalupe and Worcester... he purchased the first college building on Fales Street.

Fr. Adrien Buisson tells us that in 1908 he sent Fr. Thomas to Mexico, to beg for money to build Our Lady of Esperanza Church. One day, at Ciudad Juarez, Fr. Thomas preached against the great revolutionary Caudillo, who had been born there. The Mexicans revered Juarez and threatened Fr. Thomas, who had to flee incognito to avoid the Mexicans’ wrath. Fr. Adrien said: “All this just proved to us that he lacked proper balance. But nothing could stop his indomitable zeal.” Fr. Thomas stayed in Mexico about a year and a half, trying to found a house in Monterrey, but without success.

While I am mentioning Fr. Thomas’ character, I must say that I was told that Fr. Thomas’ severity and harshness were again obvious when he would not allow the religious of Our Lady of Guadalupe to take their recreation in the yard in the back of the church. They might communicate with the ‘magdalens,’ unwed mothers, in a building in back, on 15th Street. Lack of balance, lack of trust in his fellow religious.

The General Chapter of 1923 was indeed a strange one, where a cardinal took the votes of the capitulants and brought them to the Vatican, saying that the Holy See would announce the winner. Thus in January 1923, Fr. Thomas was named First Assistant to the new Superior General, Fr. Gervais Quenard, and stayed in Rome until 1929...

The veteran missionary, despite his faults, admirably served his Congregation in Chile, the United States, and in Rome. But he never sought any special consideration because of that. He was always humble and patient in his suffering. [ANA, ASITWAS, October-November-December 1999, Richard Richards, a.a., 23-24]

Father Thomas was a practical man who believed that the greatest dreams are realized one-step at a time. He was busy taking several steps. He insisted that all the Assumptionists who might be called upon to assist him in his ministry should study Spanish. Next Father Thomas started publishing the *Calendario Mensual*. The first issue of this monthly calendar appeared in May 1902 with two thousand copies rolling off the press. The calendar was published for many decades, apprising parishioners of religious services and important church events.

Father launched a busy schedule of activities in the hope of making services so convenient that many would attend. There were six Sunday masses, daily Masses, and devotions every evening. A priest was on duty every day as confessor, adviser, or consultant to anyone in need.

Of course there were problems. At some masses there were more English-speaking persons present than Hispanics, and this soon irritated pastors of nearby churches who felt that their programs were being threatened.

Within a few months Father Thomas established a parochial school and had it staffed by nuns who taught grades one, two, and three. From the beginning the school attracted both Spanish-speaking and English-speaking students. Though Father launched his small school with high hopes, many problems beset the enterprise. Finally, the Archdiocese summoned the nuns to a more urgent need, and the school closed within a year.

Yet the number of parishioners was growing, and more and more people stopped in for Mass or a few minutes of prayer. Father Thomas knew that someday the church would have to be enlarged so he kept an eye out for opportunities. The Spanish-speaking population was surging: some five thousand came to the city every year between 1903 and 1919 from a dozen countries with a Spanish heritage.

Father Thomas and his assistants lived anything but an easy life. From their quarters above the church they served the people wherever they could; at liturgical services, in their homes, at hospitals, at family celebrations, in neighborhood social events... wherever their presence could be helpful. Theirs was a simple life, even one of poverty, like that of so many of their parishioners.

Father Thomas found the time to accomplish other great tasks including the founding of the Chapel of Our Lady of Esperanza on West 156th Street. He was also a guiding force in the establishment of Assumption College in Worcester, Massachusetts. A liberal arts institution, the college had difficult beginnings like Our Lady of Guadalupe, but it has grown and expanded and continues to look to the future with visions of even greater service.

In 1906, Father Thomas redecorated and expanded the church, and visited Mexico to find funds. As the years passed, his unceasing efforts bore much fruit. Soon afterward his health began to fail, and in 1909 he returned to France. He had the consolation of knowing, however, that his beloved Our Lady of Guadalupe was finally firmly established. [75th Jubilee Our Lady of Guadalupe, 1979, Custombook Inc., 16-17]

The aluminate in Granby.

As the number of Assumptionists in New York City increased, they began seeking additional ministry. In 1902, an interesting proposal was made to Fr. Darbois by Rev. Charles Crevier, pastor of Precious Blood parish in Holyoke. Fr. Crevier owned a 500 acre farm in Granby, MA., and offered to give the farm, the livestock, and all the equipment to the Assumptionists for an aluminate and agricultural school (French-speaking). At first, Bishop Beaven of Springfield was not greatly in favor of such a school and tried to impose upon the Fathers a number of conditions. Eventually he insisted only that the Assumptionists contract no indebtedness for the school, without the written authorization of the ordinary. In May 1903, three priests and three brothers left New York with Fr. Darbois, bound for Granby. When they arrived they discovered that there could be a great difference between promise and reality: the living quarters were inadequate, the farm itself was in poor condition, the animals were old and lame. Moreover, Fr. Crevier became difficult and refused to cede the property as he had promised. It soon became evident that what he had been seeking was someone to cultivate his miserable farm. He tried to add all kinds of obligations upon the Assumptionists. In July 1903, they decided that they would not "take it" any more and they left Granby. They hoped however to be able to work somewhere in the area, and many found work preaching missions or helping as temporary curates in many of the Franco-American parishes in New England and upper New York state.

During the summer of 1903, Fr. Thomas Darbois submitted a request to be allowed to open a residence for missionaries in Worcester and start an aluminate and trade school. He was told that written permission from the bishop was unnecessary. The Holy See had approved the Assumptionists' coming into the diocese and they were free to make arrangements for a settlement in Worcester, with the bishop adding that he himself would notify Rome of the change from Granby to Worcester.

Fr. Darbois soon purchased a house at 27 Fales St., in the Greendale section of Worcester on November 5, 1903. The original community comprised: Fathers Georges Demiautte, Marie-Joseph Laity, Isidore Gayraud, Marie-Emile Ladret, Antoine Silberman and Brothers Felipe Uceda, François Bourtembourg, and Jean Despas. One of the first apostolates that the Assumptionists undertook in Worcester was the chaplaincy of the Notre Dame Institute (The Lake) of the Sisters of Notre-Dame de Namur. They began on December 10, 1903 a ministry that has continued to the present day. At first Fr. Darbois was the common superior of both the 14th St. Community in New York and the

Worcester community. That meant an inordinate amount of commuting, and therefore in April 1904, Fr. Isidore Gayraud began what was to be a one-year term as superior, during which time he purchased a second house on Fales St. and connected it to the first by a 50-foot passageway. [*The Assumptionists in North America* by Rev. Richard Richards, A.A., 115-116]

Georges (Louis-Joseph) Demiautte

1868-1941

Religious of the province of Paris.

Curriculum vitae.

Louis Joseph Demiautte was born August 2, 1868 at Ligny-Thilloy in the district of Bapaume (Pas-de-Calais). After his primary studies at the village school, he went to the alumnate of Arras where he did his grammar classes from 1881 to 1883, and then passed on to Clairmarais for humanities (1883-1885). He chose the Assumptionist religious life and left for Osma, the novitiate that had been transferred to Spain at the end of 1880. He took the religious habit August 15, 1885 with the name of Brother Georges. The following year, the novitiate returned to France at Livry-Gargan in a former abbey dear to Mrs. De Sévigné. It was there that Brother Georges pronounced his perpetual vows August 15, 1887 in the hands of Father Emmanuel Bailly. *“ Brother Georges had problems to solve in order to become a religious, since, having lost his parents, he depended on an uncle, his tutor, who was not favorable to this choice. This young religious has a timid and lively character; he is serious and leans toward studies where he is more successful than in exterior works. However, at times he works in a capricious manner. He is still a child, yet good and virtuous”.* Brother Georges was then sent to Rome for a year of philosophy (1887-1888). He was chosen to teach at the Clairmarais alumnate (1888-1889) and the Brian alumnate (Drôme) for two years (1889-1891). He next returned to Rome to study theology for two years (1891-1893). In just a few years, he did obtain his licentiate and doctorate in theology. Bishop Livinhac, the Superior General of the White Fathers, ordained him a priest at Livry August 15, 1893.



Teaching in Europe and America.

Father Georges continued teaching in the houses of formation of the Assumption: Taintegnies (1893-1895), Arras (1895-1896), Clairmarais (1896-1897), Brian (1897-1898) and again at Arras (1898-1902). It was then that the decision was made to involve him in the new foundations in the U.S.A., notably at Worcester where an alumnate was projected but quickly changed to a college. He remained there 6 years (1902-1908), adding to his task of teaching in the college, several chaplaincies in the neighboring religious communities. Returning to France in 1908, he resumed his involvement in teaching and formation in the alumnates: Le Bizet on the Franco-Belgian border (1908-1910) and Ascona-Locarno in Switzerland (1910-1918). After the World War in which he was not a participant, we have no specific details on his postings: Bourville (Pas-de-Calais) from 1918 to 1920 where he taught literature, Les Essarts (Seine-Maritime) from 1920 to 1925 where he took care of late vocations, Clairmarais once again (1925-1926), Bourville for ministry (1926-1927), Les Essarts (1927-1928), Newhaven in England (1928-1930), Bethnal Green in London (1930-1938), and Lorgues, his last residence from 1938 to 1941 where he died March 18, 1941 at the age of 73. It was by a simple family letter, the only way that was possible to communicate in France at that time between the occupied and the so-called free zone, that Fr. Gervais Quenard who had been advised of the fact by Father Clément Laugé announced on March 24 the death of this religious. Father Georges was buried at Lorgues (Var). He was known to be quite original. That was most likely linked to his great mobility. His memory would deserve more than a dry listing of the places and dates where he was, but his various life companions in France, America, and England never wrote about him...

Addenda.

Inculturation.

“I didn’t stop serving at the two chapels of the Brothers at Millbury and the Sisters of Notre-Dame until last September. Since I wasn’t certain that I would remain at Greendale [Worcester], I contented myself with celebrating mass alternatively at these two places and confessing the Brothers and children of Millbury. Upon seeing that my return to New York seemed more and more unlikely, I took to heart these two chaplainries. Therefore I added to my first program that was not very heavy, two sermons in English that I preached after having composed them myself and learned them by heart, one to the Sisters on Thursday and the other to the children at Millbury on Sunday. I can assure you that the preparation of these doesn’t leave me too much free time.

Nevertheless, showing good will, I could insert in my schedule a few tutored lessons given to youth from the exterior, if, knowing my repugnance for classes with many children, you approved my idea and were to convince Fr. Thomas [Darbois] that it was fine....”

(Fr. Georges, 8,11,1904.)

Engelbert (Eugène) Devincq

1889-1953

French religious of the Province of North America.

First part of a journey.

Eugène Devincq was born September 25, 1889 at Tilques near Saint-Omer (Pas-de-Calais). His scolarity was done in the alumnates of Sainghin-en-Weppes (Nord) and Courtrai (Belgium) from 1900 to 1903, then Taintegnies from 1903 to 1905. He entered the Louvain novitiate September 13, 1905 under the name of Brother Engelbert. His first vows were taken September 7, 1906, and perpetual vows on the same date the following year. He stayed there for his philosophy from 1907 to 1910.

Then following the traditional custom of the Assumption, he spent two years at Zepperen (Belgium) from 1910 to 1912. His superiors sent him to Notre-Dame de France in Jerusalem, at that time a Turkish territory, to study theology (1912-1914). He was delayed for orders but handled this with faith and submission. He went on to Rome to pursue theology, since the Turkish army had requisitioned the house of studies in Jerusalem. He followed courses at the Angelicum during two years (1915-1916). Brother Engelbert was ordained to the priesthood May 3, 1915 by Bishop Cepetelli. Twice declared unfit for military service, he escaped the draft for war and participated in the foundation of the alumnate of Saint-Maur (Maine-et-Loire) where he taught from 1916 to 1921. A year was then spent at Sart-les-Moines (Belgium) from 1921 to 1922. Then a new page started for him with his transfer to the college in Worcester (U.S.A.).



At the service of the college in Worcester.

It was as a teacher of French literature that Fr. Engelbert began his 31 years in America. A concentrated interest in this field gave him the advantages and inconveniences of a culture in one field, an undisputed competence in his field, and at times a too radical severance from other disciplines. Nevertheless, he also cultivated with a passion history and music. His very pure, crystal-clear voice would reserve for him the musical parts in the cultural performances of the college. He learned to conduct successfully many concerts in Worcester, but also in the parish sector of Woonsocket as choirmaster. Preaching opened up his horizons to a less rigid field than teaching. He evangelized almost every parish of New England and preached many retreats to religious communities. His direct style, very meticulous however and even at times affected, attracted to him an audience of quality and connoisseur. On the human level, he was lively, even mischievous, and appreciated as a spiritual director because of his great prudence and devotedness. He was a trustworthy and discreet friend, sensitive to signs of thoughtfulness and good-upbringing. To be sure, with the years, at times, he felt a generation gap concerning the students. But for 32 years, he represented the incarnation of the typical professor whose authority imposed itself because of competence and an intuitive comprehension of youth in which his whole life bathed.

A tragic death.

In 1953, only two days after the official graduation ceremony at the college held on June 7, a terrible tornado was unleashed on the campus in Worcester. The cyclone, preceded by torrential rains, large hailstones, and extremely violent winds, tore off roofs, pulled up trees by their roots as if dealing with straw, and lifted up the wooden houses as if they were made of cards. This lasted only some 90 seconds and then a great calm set in. It was then that the wounded were being looked for. Fr. Engelbert was one of the victims. He had been happy that in a few days he would leave for Europe to visit with his family members. His funeral was celebrated at the Holy Name of Jesus church in the presence of Bishop Beck who had come from England for the graduation. The real cause of his death could not be ascertained: hemorrhage, choking, being crushed, or heart attack. He was buried in the cemetery of the religious in Worcester. Later on, all of the deceased religious were transferred to the cemetery of Fiskdale.

Addenda.

He was director of dramatics at Assumption College for many years and took on the most difficult roles in the plays that were presented by him. During the tornado of 1953, much of the main tower fell upon him as he sat in his room.

The 16th Congress of l'Union Saint-Jean-Baptiste d'Amérique.

This congress was held in Worcester from May 12 to 15. It was for the Franco-Americans an important event that had a long preparation and was a great success... On Tuesday night, it was our turn to entertain the delegates who were numerous. We were worried that we could not place all of our guests in the gymnasium; we were able to do so by getting more chairs from the rec halls. There was a superb and unforgettable presentation of Henri Ghéon's *Les Trois Sages du Vieux Wong*. Before I leave, I cannot help but express my thanks to Fr. Engelbert who not only prepared this play, but also held the main role. During 25 years at the college, he has prepared so many celebrations. He has spent so much time when we were young and were not afraid to take on difficult tasks. But age has come and slowed us down.

[L'Assomption, May-June 1946 by Fr. Rodolphe Martel, A.A.]

The last couple of years of his life were not very good. He began to have very sharp pain in the back of his head. They became so severe that his doctor recommended that he no longer go on weekend ministry. But Engelbert kept going, saying it was for him a kind of distraction.

He suffered psychologically. He felt that he was being bypassed by events, and was being shoved aside by some of the younger men, many from abroad, who were now members of the Greendale community.

On June 9, 1953, when a powerful tornado hit the College, it sent a large portion of the tower crashing through his room. Father Engelbert's body was found under tons of debris in the main parlor. He was still semi-conscious and responded by squeezing the hand of people trying to free him. He was placed on a flatbed truck and brought to St. Vincent's hospital. He died en route. His funeral was held in the Holy Name of Jesus church. Bishops John Wright and Andrew Beck were in the sanctuary, and the assembly was very numerous, including many representatives of religious communities.

[ASITWAS by Fr. Richard Richards, A.A.]

Father Engelbert was killed in the tornado that destroyed Assumption College in Worcester in 1953. He had been there since 1922 a brilliant teacher of French literature, a well-known preacher, and a knowledgeable musician. He never had the occasion to go to a graduate school, but had the equivalent of an excellent graduate education through personal study. He spent every summer at Baker Lake, reading and criticizing all the works of one author per year. Before coming to Worcester, he had taught literature in some of the alumnae of France. He was buried in our cemetery in Worcester. (Notes by Fr. Armand Desautels.)

Noël: Sermon by Fr. Engelbert Devincq.

Evangelizo vobis gaudium magnus natus est vobis hodie Salvator.

It is to you, my dear brothers, that the Lord says on this night this great news. May joy flood your Christian souls, as it did the shepherds of Bethlehem! Go to the manger as they did to see this marvel and to facilitate the gift of your adoration ask yourself: Who is this Child in the crib? How is He born? Why is He born?

Who is this child? The eyes of your body tell you that he is a child like all others, as weak, as poor; smaller than all others, since the fact that he made a trip and the indifference of men force him to be born in the natural shelter of

animals; more obscure than those whose arrival is expected, celebrated because of the fortune of the parents and their nobility. Do not make a mistake; it is with the eyes of faith that you must look at him. They will tell you: "This child is the only begotten Son of God, virginally born of a virgin Father, God just like him; it is the almighty God who made from nothing all the beauties that the world contains; it is goodness itself that shares with all beings through love its riches without ever growing poorer; it is wisdom that governs all on earth and only seeks the greater good of men – it is knowledge that penetrates all; it is holiness that even the shade of a spot does not even touch. They will also tell you: It is the Messiah promised to Adam, announced by the prophets, desired during more than 4000 years, as the hymn sings. Lift up the veil of his so fragile humanity and you will see in him all the splendors of his divinity.

2/ How is he born? Through a contradiction that stupefies us. He is born as a miracle child and a rejected child.

- A) *As a miracle child. The prophecy states that he is to be born at Bethlehem; a miraculous intervention on the part of God makes use of the human calculations of an emperor to realize this prophecy. He inspires Augustus who has become the sole master of the Roman world through his victory over his enemy, Anthony, the idea to have a census made of his subjects. Palestine, part of the Roman province of Syria is held to his edict. The governor Quirinius, the executor for the region of the wishes of his master, takes into account the Jewish customs wishing that each inhabitant return to the place of origin of his family to be inscribed. At this time, Joseph and Mary live in the humble town of Galilee named Nazareth, but they descend from the royal family of David who lived in Bethlehem of Judea. So they must leave for a long and dangerous trip, since the countryside is very mountainous and the means of travel are very primitive, but the prophecy is fulfilled.*

Like a miraculous child: Mary conceived Jesus without losing her innocence; the angel had promised this to calm her fears and all took place as he had announced. Today she gives birth without pain, with an ineffable joy, and her marvelous maternity making her even more glorious in the eyes of the faithful did not touch her virginity – Jesus comes out, says Bossuet, like a ray of the sun going through crystal not only by not harming it but even making it more brilliant and more magnificent.

Like a miraculous child – Jesus has just been born, and God sends his angels to the shepherds of Bethlehem to announce the good news – an apparition envelops them with brilliant light, so much so, that they are seized with great fear, like Moses at the burning bush. Joy follows fear and hurriedly off they go to offer the newly arrived Messiah not their fortune but their adoration and their love.

Like a miraculous child – Jesus is born; at once all of the celestial hierarchies are in admiration in seeing the divine majesty in such a lowly condition. They present him their homage and sing their harmonious chants. What a fine doxology is found in their chants! It proclaims the Incarnation, God's masterpiece; worthy of unceasing celebration in the highest heavens because of the glory that it procures him – it also holds for men the promise of peace, a peace offered because of the merits of the one who appears, a peace offered to all, but is enjoyed only by those who have good will, that is, whose will is in conformity with that of God.

- B) *He is also born as a rejected child. Where do the shepherds find him? Where they are used to lead their sheep to save them from nature's bad weather – when Joseph and Mary arrive there is no longer any place at the inn: the strangers coming from everywhere have already filled it – there is no place either for them with the inhabitants; they are poor descendants of David – they retire to one of the numerous grottoes that nature has carved in the rocky hills of Judea and it is there that the day's mystery takes place. The season is not too difficult; yet it is quite humid in this cave; it must also be quite cold because of the great difference in the temperature of the day and the night in this country. Jesus should have been born in a palace – the sons of Herod are quite close; that live in nice houses on the sides of Mount Zion in Jerusalem. Jesus comes into the world as he will leave it; a grotto is a mighty fine manger for the one who is to die on a cross.*

He is born as a rejected child. All around him is to be found indifference – in your families the birth of a child is a source of joy for you and your friends – Jesus is alone with his parents who adore him, the shepherds have gone to the square to tell what they saw. Can a reasonable man trust what they are saying? It is with the power of a conqueror, the majesty of a monarch that the Messiah will come. The hope for a liberator who is to come is strengthened by the tyranny of the stranger. This predisposes the simple folk to

hallucinations; they didn't see angels that they claim to have seen – besides we have other things to think of. With this reasoning, Jesus is the object of a general indifference.

- C) *Why is he born? Who can describe the sad state in which the human race was found before the coming of Jesus. Since a few centuries, Adam's sin had closed the doors to heaven and the anger of God was not appeased. Men were plunged in darkness; the idea of a real God was wiped out from peoples' minds. There was no more restraint in the moral order. The Romans, just to mention them, had consolidated their power through their other virtues... ~*

Worcester 9 June 1953.

What worries us first is the situation of our poor Antonian Sisters whose convent we saw crushed. With slipshod means, since all is disrupted, we hurry to pull out the unfortunate sisters who have been buried. The youngest is dead; we free the others. One of them, regardless of transfusions, died soon after her arrival at Memorial Hospital. Three others are seriously wounded; they return to their Mother House in Chicoutimi. We run to the rooms of Frs. Englebert and Louis-Robert Brassard that nobody has yet seen. The stones of the tower crush their rooms. It is a chaos of beams, planks, plaster, furniture, books and clothes that we must clear in order to proceed to save them. Fr. Brassard has a broken leg, his face slashed by a long wound. He is unconscious but breathes visibly. Fr. Engelbert, lying down on his stomach after having weakly called for help, can only moan. We give them the last rites because of their critical position. Once Father has been taken out, he finishes dying...

Marie-Louis (Louis) Deydier

1872 – 1953

Religious of the Province of Paris.



Formative years.

Louis Deydier was born April 13, 1872, at Uffernets, in the city of Saint Paul de Tartas, near Pradelles (Haute-Loire). He was the eldest of a family of 11 children. After attending public primary school, he was sent, because of his piety, to the minor seminary of the Carthusians in Puy (Haute-Loire) from 1885 to 1887, then to the aluminate of Notre-Dame des Châteaux (Savoie) from 1887 to 1889. He finished his secondary education in Nîmes (Gard) from 1889 to 1891. However, during his last year, he came down with typhoid fever. Coming close to dying, he made anticipated religious vows *in articulo mortis*. After recovering, he entered the novitiate August 15, 1891, in Livry-Gargan (Seine-Saint-Denis), taking the name of Brother Marie-Louis. Very soon thereafter, he left for the other novitiate in Phanaraki, on the shores of the Sea of Marmara, where he pronounced his first vows September 8, 1892, and his final vows August 15, 1893. According to custom, he interrupted his personal formation to teach at Kum Kapu (1893-94) and Kadikeui (1894-96). He was the factotum of Fr. Alfred Mariage, superior of the Eastern Mission. From 1896 to 1901, Brother Marie-Louis studied in Jerusalem where he was ordained a priest August 19, 1900. From there, he was sent to Phanaraki to teach at the novitiate (1901-03). “Fr. Marie-Louis understands religious life very well. He will be a good religious and will do whatever he is asked.” This statement of Fr. Baudouy was like a prophecy that eventually proved to be true.

Ministry and foundation in the English-speaking world.

Because Fr. Marie-Louis Deydier spoke excellent English, he was immediately asked to develop the Congregation in England. From 1903 to 1905, he was chaplain to the Sisters at Bethnal Green. Tired and in need of rest, he spent a few months in San Remo, on the Italian Riviera. In May 1906, he was well enough to return to England as pastor in Brockley where he devoted a good part of his apostolic life.

During the First World War, he was called to serve in the armed forces from 1914 to 1917 as a chaplain. He returned to Brockley from 1917 to 1919, at which time he was asked to take charge of Assumption College in Worcester (USA), succeeding Fr. Omer Rochain, a former co-worker in England. His stay in Worcester was marked by a significant expansion of the college as well as by a catastrophic fire on March 23-4, 1923 that destroyed the center section of the main building. Without giving in to discouragement, he started its reconstruction. In 1923, he was able to leave with a light heart, confident that the institution was both prosperous and debt-free.

From 1923 to 1925, he was back in Brockley, helping in 1925 with the Assumptionist take-over of Saint Michael’s College in Hitchin, which had formerly belonged to the Fathers of St. Edmund. In 1932, the parish in Brockley once again opened its arms to him. He stayed there until 1946. It may be said that the parish owed him its organization and numerous priestly and religious vocations. During the Second World War, he sadly experienced the V1 and V2 bombers that destroyed the church of which he was in charge. He immediately set about making it rise from the rubble.

He was then appointed superior in Jerusalem (1947-48) and, after that, at Les Essarts (Seine-Maritime) from 1949 to 1952. His last community was in Perpignan (1952-53), at the college of Saint Louis de Gonzague. All his life, Fr. Marie-Louis showed himself to be a hard worker, indefectibly attached to the Church and to its teaching, as if energized by the difficulties he encountered.

A short retirement.

Fr. Marie-Louis Deydier arrived in Perpignan at the age of 80, suffering from the infirmities of old age, but also from diabetes. However, he did not follow the advice of his doctors. On January 25, 1953, after a very ordinary day, he remained a long time that evening in his room, awake and singing loudly. His neighbor, Fr. Deleporte, intrigued and disturbed by the noise, advised the superior, Fr. Rodolphe Martel, around 3 a.m. that Fr. Marie-Louis was “out of his mind.” Fr. Marie-Louis died during the forenoon of the following day. His funeral was held on January 27. His body was temporarily buried in the city’s Northern Cemetery until the Perpignan community was able to obtain a plot big enough to receive his remains along with those of two other Assumptionists, Brother Aloys Rossi and Fr. Hippolyte Lamberigts.

Addenda.

Father Marie-Louis was Superior of Assumption College in Worcester from 1919 to 1923. Otherwise, most of his priestly life was spent at the parish of Brockley, in London, both before and after his stay in the United States. He was the organizer of the parish, encouraged the extraordinary large number of vocations that it has given to the priesthood and to religious life, saw it partially destroyed by a bomb during World War II, and rebuilt it. (Notes from Fr. Armand Desautels.)

Union with the Augustinians?

“Concerning the question of a union with the Augustinians, I can only repeat what I said at the Chapter at Louvain: my opposition to any union. I don’t have the time to develop the reasons for my opposition. This union would bring about some spiritual advantages but also many inconveniences in the continuation of the very modern works started by the Assumption that give a very distinctive character to our religious family. Privileges could be easily obtained from Rome once we will have become more numerous. Frs. Aidan [Kenny] and Omer [Rochain] are of the same opinion and I don’t think there is even one A.A. in England who wants this union... It would even be preferable to have a foreign Assumptionist [not French] as Superior General, if that were to happen, rather than have an Augustinian who would not be open to modern works. If Fr. Gervais is not reelected Superior, I would like to see Fr. Ernest [Baudouy] replace him. He is one of those who are the most filled with the spirit of Fr. d’Alzon”. (*Fr. Deydier to Fr. Vailhé, Hitchin, 31-12-1928.*)

Jean-Damascène (Jean-Baptiste) Dhers

1874-1953

Religious of the Province of Paris.



A time of preparation.

Jean-Baptiste Dhers was born March 26, 1874 in Orus, a small village near Viedessos in Ariège. His formation took place in the milieu of the alummates: Roussas (Drôme) in 1886, Brian (Drôme) in 1889, Nîmes (Gard) in 1889-1891 from where he had to leave fleeing a cholera epidemic. August 13, 1891, Jean-Baptiste was vested with the religious habit at the abbey of Livry-Gargan (Seine-Saint-Denis) under the name of Brother Jean-Damascène. It was there that he made his first profession August 13, 1892 and his final vows on the same date a year later. He left Livry for Rome (1893-1897) where he got his doctorate in theology. Cardinal Parocelli ordained him to the priesthood at Saint John Lateran April 17, 1897. Father Jean-Damascène was very gifted for studies, and without showing it, had an amazing culture.

From alummate to alummate.

A great part of the apostolic life of Fr. Jean-Damascène was spent in formation at the alummates. He began first of all at the cradle, Notre-Dame des Châteaux (1897-1899). Then he was asked to go to the Livry novitiate to present courses on the Gospels and the Psalms for the novices (1899-1900). In 1900, he had to leave French soil and found refuge at Bure (Belgium) from 1900 to 1902. From 1902 to 1906, he was named superior at Saint-Trond, then from 1906 to 1910 at Le Bizet. Between 1910 and 1918, he was at Ascona and Locarno in Switzerland, two temporary foundations having the advantage during this time of war to be situated in a country at peace. At the end of the war, he left Ascona for America: he became dean of discipline at the college in Worcester (U.S.A.) until 1926. Upon his return to France, he was named superior at Poussan (Hérault) from 1926 to 1928, and in 1929, became dean of discipline at the Saint-Louis de Gonzague College in Perpignan. He was once again a pilgrim as he made his way in 1930 to the college of Pontlevoy. In 1932, Davézieux (Ardèche) received him and Bishop Durieux did not hesitate very long to also name him pastor of the parish (1934).

Pastor of Davézieux during 20 years.

During the winter of 1936-1937, a severe pneumonia forced him to take a long rest. During the vacations in 1937, he was named superior of Vêrargues (Hérault), but a delegation of parishioners went to see Bishop Durieux to retain him as their pastor. This convinced Fr. Gervais Quenard to let him stay at Davézieux. This double task was difficult for him, but he had to wait for the end of World War II to be relieved as superior (1945). He was then more free to give himself totally to his parish, although nearly 80 years old. In 1947, the parish, his former students, and numerous friends gathered to celebrate his golden jubilee as a priest. Fr. Jean-Damascène remained alert, happy, and youthful regardless of his advanced age. However, in January 1953, a bad bout of flu kept him bedridden in his room. In spite of his desire to continue serving, he had to leave the care of his beloved parish to his confreres until Easter. From July on, he kept running out of breath and his doctor openly expressed worries concerning his heart. From October (1953), the cold forced him to keep to the house and even to his room. The religious of the Davézieux house took turns to watch over him at night. He died in the morning of October 22, 1953 around 1:30, well accompanied by his religious brothers. The whole parish was present for the ceremony of his funeral. Father Jean-Damascène was buried in the Davézieux cemetery, in the vault reserved to the parish priests, next to his immediate predecessor, Reverend Vergier.

Addenda.

Before coming to Worcester, he had worked in the alummates of France. He was severe but understanding, well liked and perfectly fair. He was named Dean of Men from 1920 to 1929 at Assumption Prep and College. He preached a daily meditation at mass at the Prep School and will be remembered for this.

He returned to France and continued working in the alummates as Superior of Davézieux, then Vêrargues.

With emotion on the occasion of a death.

“When I wrote to you yesterday, I had no idea that I would have to announce to you the death of Fr. Damascène today. Father got weaker from one moment to the other. It was very noticeable. But he still had the strength to get up. His speech was difficult, but he still made himself understood and he even joked. I went to see him at 1 a. m. today. Fr. Rudolphe [Van Asten] who was watching over him at the time told me that he was quite agitated. At 1:30 a. m. Fr. Jean-Régis Pharisier came to tell me that Fr. Damascène was dying. Fr. Jean-Régis prayed an Ave. Fr. Damascène murmured it in part but never finished it. A few seconds after, he was dead. His last illness and death were in the image or a fit conclusion to his life, I mean to say, holy and exemplary. Only God knows all the Aves he prayed. You could often see him walking in the hallways, even when it was dark, praying piously his rosary. It is while praying a last Ave that he died. It is with a maternal smile that the Virgin must have received him and presented him to God.”

(Fr. Marcel Ployon to Fr. Henri Bélard, Davézieux, 22-10-1953.)

Jérémie (Alfred Joseph) Douziech

1888-1974

Religious of the Province of Paris.



Forty years as a teacher.

Born March 12, 1888 at Sabès, a hamlet of Miquels in the commune of Rieupeyroux and district of Villefranche (Aveyron), Alfred Joseph Douziech was admitted to the aluminate of Miribel-les-Echelles (Isère) from 1901 to 1906. He received the religious habit at Louvain September 21, 1906 from the hands of Fr. Emmanuel Bailly and started his novitiate under Fr. Benjamin Laurès under the name of Brother Jérémie. He was professed September 21, 1907 under the direction of Fr. Antoine de Padoue Vidal. Fr. Emmanuel Bailly received his perpetual vows September 21, 1908. He followed the scholastic philosophy courses at Louvain (1908-1911) and did apostolic works for two years at San Carlo, Locarno (Switzerland) from 1911 to 1913. In 1913, he went to Jerusalem for theology. The Turks expelled the students and occupied the buildings in December 1914. Brother Jérémie finished his theology in Rome from 1915 to 1917 and was ordained a priest May 14, 1916 by Bishop Cepetelli. At this point in life, he began a long teaching career. We can follow the various stages: Miribel-les Echelles (1917-1921), Saint Guilhelm-du-Désert (Hérault) from 1921 to 1923, Poussan (Hérault) from 1923 to 1926, Assumption College in Worcester (U.S.A.) from 1926 to 1933 where his presence left some souvenirs. Desirous of being useful and using his strength in manual labor, he also took care of a chicken coop in one of the buildings. This earned him the name of 'Pull-mann'. He situated and built a road suitable for autos linking with the main road. The students appreciated with humor his 'American' with a rouergat accent! In October 1933, he inaugurated the aluminate of Christ-Roi at Chanac (Lozère) where he found stability for 25 years. He was an exacting and tough teacher and led the promenades with legendary performances. Very particular concerning the schedule, he was cut out to be the bell-ringer after having very early stoked the central heating coal furnace and fed the pump that furnished water to the reservoirs of the dormitory. He didn't neglect the care of the gardens or the farmyard animals. This proved very useful during the war. In December 1957, Fr. Jérémie had a cataract operation. The loss of his right eye put an end to his teaching career (1958).

Caretaker of Vérargues.

In September 1954, the Vérargues aluminate (Hérault) led its contingent of youths to Soisy-sur-Seine (Essonne). While waiting for the complicated sale of the buildings and park, Fr. Donat Teissier kept a small community there to maintain the property and help out in the neighboring parishes. In September 1958, Fr. Jérémie replaced him for the same reason. This work was terminated December 27, 1963 by the sale of the property. He went to Chanac for 8 months in 1964, and then spent a short time as chaplain for the Oblates of Mesnil-Saint-Denis (Yvelines) during the summer while waiting for the arrival of Fr. Rémy Kokel, and at that time went on to Lorgues November 9, 1964.

Last years at Lorgues.

Right away, Fr. Jérémie enjoyed Lorgues. He took long walks through the countryside, busied himself with the work that needed to be done at the house, and held on to his old job of bell-ringer, a job that he had been doing since 1906! His rigorous exactitude was maintained, even if he had to interrupt a retreat preacher. But his health got worse. His eyesight diminished; he could barely see the hands of his watch and rang for the meals too early. The thought of death haunted his days to the point that he asked at what time his funeral would be. He died on Saturday, July 13, 1974. His funeral was celebrated at Lorgues on Monday, July 15, presided by Fr. Aubert Danset.

Addenda.

Portrait.

Father Jérémie owes a lot as far as his character goes to his origins from Rouergue. He gets his sense of hard work and duty from there, as well as his ardor for physical labor and his endurance as a long distance hiker who goes it alone. He is faithful to his religious duties and devoted to the positions of service in which he has been named in the various houses. He doesn't measure the cost for himself and never complains about the difficulties or tediousness of his obligations. He is rigorous and exacting, even to the point of caricature. He certainly loves his brothers and live-in companions, but he is not one of outpourings or gossiping. He hides easily behind a shell of quite unkind retorts that do not facilitate meeting others or dialogue. His robust faith is not open to liturgical novelties or ecumenical perspectives that abound after Vatican II. Almost to the end of his life, he celebrates mass alone and in Latin, assisting at that of the community once concelebrating has been reestablished. Feelings of anguish obsessed him when his good health left him. Patience and gentleness became his as ways of conversion.

Odilon (Claudius) Dubois

1886-1954

French religious of the Province of North America.



First years.

Claudius Dubois was born May 15, 1886 at Chilly, near Frangy in Haute-Savoie that is located in the region of Chablais proudly under the patronage of Saint Francis de Sales. At the age of 12, he entered the alumnate of Notre-Dame des Châteaux (Savoy) where he did his studies from 1898 to 1902. Having gone to Brian (Drôme) in 1901 to 1902, he returned to Châteaux to take care of his eyes (1902-1903). The house was closed following the expulsion, so he finished his humanities at Mongreno (Italy) from 1903 to 1904. He entered the Louvain novitiate September 18, 1904 under the name of Brother Odilon. He was chosen to be part of a small experimental group that would do their novitiate in Jerusalem under the direction of Fr. Léonide Guyo. He pronounced his first vows at Gethsemane October 24, 1905. In 1906, the Jerusalem novitiate was closed and he returned to Louvain. For a time he was a teacher at Vinovo where the Mongreno alumnate was relocated and went to Gempe (Belgium) where he pronounced his perpetual vows July 25, 1907 in the hands of Fr. Benjamin Laurès. The Elorrio alumnate needed him from 1907 to 1909. From 1909 to 1912, he did his philosophy at Louvain and from 1912 to 1914, his theology at Jerusalem followed by Rome in 1915 where he was ordained to the priesthood by Bishop Cepetelli May 3, 1915. Fr. Odilon, because of his bad eyesight, was dispensed from going to the front lines during the war but was instead affected to the postal control until July 1918. It was at Louvain that he finally finished his theology (1918-1919). After this vagabond existence, he would find a more sedentary life.

At Worcester during 35 years.

At the age of 33, Fr. Odilon was sent to teach in Worcester, U.S.A., where he stayed for good. He specialized in the teaching of Latin, history of liturgy, and religion. Dean of studies and discipline, sub-prior (1935-1945), and in charge of the Apostolic School, he realized that he represented more the past than the future of this institution, at times with an idealized and nostalgic representation of an imaginary time of the Golden Age. His dominant qualities were, however, recognized by all in his various assignments: precision, clarity, and rigor. He was demanding for himself since he redid his courses every year and willingly would change manuals to renew himself. He did not seek popularity with the students but rather perfection in tasks that were constantly redone. The American Assumption owes him the formation of many religious vocations to whom he inculcated a love of tradition. Early to rise, meticulous, and orderly, he liked to exchange with his confreres, sharing willingly in conversation and sharp anecdotes. He formed himself intellectually by solid reading and cultivated his passion for history. A champion for the ideas of *l'Action française* before its condemnation by Rome and not at all interested in sports, he remained quite a stranger in his surrounding milieu and spoke English with great difficulty. He was aware of being surpassed by the inevitable and necessary evolutions of life. When he finally agreed to consult a doctor, a high level of diabetes was discovered; this obliged him to a severe diet. In 1952, his right leg had to be amputated. With the help of an artificial leg, he was able to get back to his former activities. The tornado that struck the college found him in the chapel. He was only wounded a bit, thanks to the presence of mind of a brother who covered him. But the death of his life companion of 45 years, Fr. Engelbert Devincq, shook him up deeply, even though the Franciscan Sisters who received him during all the time that the college was being rebuilt were very attentive to him. He reintegrated the community only in March 1954 and was hospitalized in May. He died May 30, 1954 at the age of 68, alone, without a word or complaint. His funeral was celebrated June 2. He was buried in the small cemetery of the religious in Worcester next to Fr. Engelbert.

Addenda.

The Turks in Jerusalem and Damascus held Brother Odilon prisoner. He was released through papal intervention. He was nicknamed ‘woody Odillon’ and ‘the Old Buck’ by the students.

In 1937, when I went with my parents to enroll at Assumption, it was with Father Odilon Dubois that we met. He was Prefect of Studies of the High School. Because he realized that the Depression was still making it hard for people, he granted us a special price: \$300 per year for board, room, and tuition. And he allowed my parents to pay monthly, because they could not pay in a lump sum. The Assumptionists were more interested in teaching boys rather than making money. So I am grateful to Fr. Odilon for this. Of course he was a tough man, for himself and others, not very lovable, and we students used to call him “the Old Buck.”... When he went to the hospital a couple of days before his death, the only book he took along was ‘L’Esprit de St. François de Sales.’... So in September 1898, he entered the first aluminate, Notre-Dame des Châteaux, which had been founded by Fr. d’Alzon on August 28, 1876. Even for a tough mountain lad like Claudius, the atmosphere was austere and hard, the food not of gourmet quality, the isolation great, the snow deep, and the alumnists were not pampered in any way. This may, in part, explain why Fr. Odilon was so tough later on. He taught for two years (1907-1909) at the aluminate of Elorrio, diocese of Bilbao, in Spain.. But in December 1914, the Turks captured Jerusalem. They placed guards at all the doors of Notre Dame de France, so that the 35 Frenchmen there, including Odilon Dubois and Engelbert Devincq, were kept as hostages lest the Allied gunboats shell coastal ports. And in December the Turks expelled all of them as well as the 82-year old Canon Galeran (author of ‘The Sketches’, about Fr. d’Alzon) and brought them to Damascus. According to Fr. Polyeucte Guissard, the Assumptionists were released only after the intervention of the Pope. The religious then found their way as well as possible through Bulgaria, Greece, or Russia... For many years Fr. Odilon kept the written archives of the school, without which it would be impossible today to have any idea of the day-to-day life and development of the school. And as Dean and sub-prior, he was very well placed to know what was going on better than most of the men in the community. [Fr. Richard Richards, A.A., ASITWAS]

Fr. Odilon composed a chart for Latin conjugations to help the students learn better.

Father Odilon was a novice in Jerusalem, a scholastic in Louvain, and served in World War I as an infirmarian. Then, he spent all his life in Worcester, as a teacher of languages and history, serving also as dean of studies and dean of men in the Prep. He was an excellent teacher of languages, especially Latin, severe and feared by students. In his last years, he suffered terribly, having a leg cut off because of diabetes, going through the tornado, and seeing the school take a new direction of which he did not approve. (Notes by Fr. Armand Desautels.)

The Assumption Years.

The Old Buck: 1951 by William Dupuis

It is an almost impossible task to single out one of the many teachers I had at Assumption as being the most outstanding. However, there was one who made an indelible impression on me – Father Odilon Dubois.

Father Odilon was French-born and had labored at Assumption since 1919. He had held a number of important posts at the school, but his forte was the teaching of Latin. No biography would really do justice to this monk whose very name evoked shudders and spasms of fear among even the most stouthearted students. So I undertake this task in the hope that some of my recollections may serve to show him as he was seen by one of his students and perchance by many others.

I was at Assumption for only a few weeks when I began to hear about Father Odilon, the “Old Buck”, from the upperclassmen. The tales they told made me happy to be a freshman. I began to fashion a mental picture of this tyrant who lorded it over his Latin classes with the eye of an eagle and the iron fist of an Attila the Hun! My illusions were shattered when for the first time I beheld the “scourge of Senior Latin”.

He was a small man, at the most, five feet in height, slight of build, whose somewhat oversized head resembled a smooth honey dew melon ringed with a border of white hair. The good Father was evidently afflicted with poor eyesight for he sported a pair of spectacles whose lenses were the thickest I had ever seen. And behind those lenses were deep blue eyes, the real secret of his ability to strike fear into husky football players three times his size. Those eyes could twinkle, giving him the appearance of a cherubic elf, or they could project flashes of fire, paralyzing anyone within his gaze. His voice was rather deep and his exterior manner gruff and stern. He was accustomed to telling his students one humorous anecdote during the school year. It concerned an unnamed resident of Southbridge – a French-Canadian – who during the Prohibition had decided to concoct his own “home brew”. Unsure of the results of his efforts, he sent the sample of the brew to a Boston laboratory for analysis. When the report came back it assured the hapless fellow that his horse did not have diabetes!

When he recounted this tale to my class, we were so struck by the unaccustomed laughter of our teacher that we broke into an uncontrollable fit of laughter for which we were reprimanded. Apparently only a measured amount of levity was permissible even when he told a joke. Oh, he smiled occasionally, particularly when he indulged in what the French call “jeux de mots”, or a play on words. He often took students’ names and created puns with them. Once when I had answered a rather simple question in Latin grammar in a stupid fashion, he quipped, “Mr. Dupuis, ah, yes, the ‘well’ is really not very deep” – an allusion to the meaning of my name, “Puits” which can be translated as “well”.

For three years I dreaded being assigned to his senior Latin class. The fates that apparently enjoy tormenting men, ordained otherwise.... That first meeting with him in his class was unforgettable. We were all frightened - so frightened that when he asked me my name I stammered like a nervous suitor and felt like crawling into the nearest crack in the floor. I was never at ease in that class, and not a day went by that I did not dread walking into that room.

In the middle of that year, however, an event occurred that began a process of change within me – a change in my opinion of that man who caused so much grief to so many.

One day, as the end of the Latin period drew to a close, Father Odilon stopped the usual procedure and made a stern announcement. An unspecified number of students had apparently found the Eglogues of Virgil too difficult and had procured published literal translations which they were palming off as their own. A shudder raced from my head to my toes! I was one of those students! The use of “trots” was strictly forbidden, he continued, and he demanded that students who had them turn them in to him personally within three days.

I walked around for the rest of that day in a semi-conscious state. Dare I refuse to turn in the contraband material? Dare I face him? There was never any doubt that he knew that I had one of the forbidden translations – in fact, that never even entered my head. I could not determine which line of action would be the most difficult. Perhaps the French Foreign Legion?... No, I was still too young! I slept little and ate even less. Finally, on a Saturday afternoon, after a lengthy visit to the Chapel, I decided to take my courage in both hands, and face the lion in his den!

I must have walked to his room ten times before I could muster the fortitude to knock at his door. Maybe he wasn’t in... Oh, no... his voice came forth loud and clear: “*entrez*” – enter! My knees shaking, my heart pounding, my palms slippery with perspiration, I entered that room like a condemned man walking into the gas chamber!

There he sat, a sheaf of papers held in one hand, a pencil in the other. He merely nodded to acknowledge my presence, and then silence... deadly silence! It took me what seemed at the time like an eternity to find my voice. In staccato fashion I explained my visit and quickly handed over the criminal volume. He took it from me and placed it on a small table. His expression had not changed one whit! He gazed at me for a few moments and then in a tone that at once was forgiving and understanding, he complimented me on my honesty (he could have added courage) and explained the advantages of personal translations even though they might be inferior and often incorrect, I mumbled something and he indicated that the interview was over. I leaned on that door for a good three or four minutes trying to regain my composure. It was over with and it had not been nearly as disastrous as I had anticipated. What a relief!

The incident was forgotten until late May of my senior year. Customarily faculty members gathered at that time to discuss every student and to collectively fill out a character rating scale. Each pupil was scored on his piety, obedience, honesty, docility, etc. A member of the faculty happened to mention to me that I must have a great deal of influence with Father Odilon. I looked at him aghast. Me, have a “drag” with the “Old Buck”? Ridiculous! He persisted.

Apparently, when my name came up for discussion, it was Father Odilon who rose and proceeded to extol my virtues, insisting that I be given exceptionally high ratings in several categories, especially honesty. I couldn't believe my ears! Why should he do this for me? Could it be connected in some way to the episode of the Latin translation?

Subsequently, I began to question my opinion of this man. I realized slowly that he was not a cold block of granite. He was, after all, a feeling human being like the rest of us. Perhaps he understood boys better than we had given him credit for.

My next encounter with him came in my freshman year of college. I was an assistant sacristan and one of my duties was to accompany the priest who took Holy Communion to sick members of the religious community. Father Odilon had just returned from the hospital where he had lost a leg as a result of diabetic complications. I remember entering his room. I was struck by how small he appeared lying in that bed. So small and so pathetic. I prayed for him and again realized the presence of his humanity... his suffering humanity.

He would later master his affliction and learn to walk again, a proof of his persistence and courage.

My last visit with him came on the day I was to leave for the Assumptionist novitiate in Canada. A death-dealing tornado had leveled my Alma Mater the previous month, and some of the older religious had taken refuge in a nursing home run by the Grey Sisters in Worcester. As the prospective novices entered his room, he greeted us warmly. For a few moments he gave us counsel on the religious life. Then we knelt for his blessing. I gazed at that face, scarred with age and dedication and I realized fully what he was and that what he had done had all been part of his personality, his response to what he was. Perhaps the stern appearance and the rigid behavior were his ways of dealing with his own frailties and weaknesses.

Almost a year later, on the last day of May 1954, I learned of his death. It was a time of mourning for me. In my own mind I recognized his courage in overcoming his physical handicap; his dedication to his religious life; his self-discipline and his genuine understanding. He was not a perfect man but I believe he tried to achieve what the founder of his order had wanted: he tried to be a good religious!

This was an important incident for me. It taught a vital lesson in human behavior and sensitivity. We can never judge a man by what is immediately apparent. Every man, every person, has many dimensions and unless we can penetrate into his or her very essence, we cannot truly know them. In reality, who but God can see into man and completely understand him?

Resquiescat in pace!

Cassien (Antoine) Dubost

1891 – 1954

Religious of the Province of Paris.



An energetic religious.

Antoine Dubost was born March 2, 1891, in Pulvérières, near Pontgibaud (Puy-de-Dôme). He received his secondary education in the alumnates of Le Breuil (Deux-Sèvres) from 1903 to 1905, Calahorra, Spain, from 1905 to 1907, and Elorrio in Spanish Basque country, from 1907 to 1908. He never lost his love for the Spanish language. Holding his own against his parents who wanted him to go to the diocesan seminary, he entered the novitiate in Louvain, Belgium, September 8, 1908, under the name of Brother Cassien. He took his first vows in Gempe the following year on September 8, 1909: *“He is very intelligent and has an excellent memory; he is uncouth, rude, impatient, and in excellent health.”* His final profession took place September 8, 1910, in Gempe. He then studied philosophy (1910-14) and theology (1914-17) in Louvain where he was ordained a priest, May 20, 1917, by Cardinal Mercier. At first, he was given teaching assignments in Bure (1917-18), Zepperen (1918-20), Vinovo, Italy (1920-21), Elorrio (1921-23), and Le Bizet (1925-31). But this was not the calling of someone who, in his youth, had already been corresponding with missionaries in foreign countries, dreaming to follow in their footsteps.

New York.

In 1931, Fr. Cassien disembarked in New York City where he was appointed assistant priest at the parish of Our Lady of Guadalupe on West 14th Street. He had no problems getting back to Spanish, which he spoke fluently after only a few weeks. Appointed superior of the community in 1933, he was extremely active. A talented organizer, just as comfortable celebrating solemn religious ceremonies as he was visiting his people or acting on stage, he motivated his people to follow his frenzied pace. Rather independent and non-conformist, he did not like traditions or customs that interfered with his zeal. His room looked like a campground that was open to anyone who wanted to enter. It was impossible to count the dollars and other objects that were stolen from it due to the fact that he neglected to lock his doors and drawers. In his bubbly zeal, the only thing that counted was inexhaustible and tireless activity.

Mexico.

After 15 years of good and loyal service, the Spanish parish in New York became too confining for his dynamism. He had been dreaming for a long time of a Mexican foundation, especially since his return from a pilgrimage he had led to the shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City. His superiors granted him permission to carry out a plan he had devised to found a work in the Mexican capital.

Welcomed by the Augustinians Friars, he settled in the new neighborhood that was developing in San José Insurgentes. Leaving no stone unturned in his search for money, he replaced the miserable chapel of Saint Joseph with a larger temporary chapel, while waiting for the moment when he could build a real sanctuary in honor of the Virgin of Guadalupe, Empress of the Americas. He also foresaw space for parish activities and a rectory big enough to accommodate a community. He built without having to borrow and without incurring any debts, thanks to the gifts he received. *“When we Mexicans, who are rather inclined to indolence, see a priest as active and as hard-working as Fr. Cassien, we cannot but admire and help him.”* The people’s admiration was surely considerable,

because the buildings rose quickly from the ground. A large crypt was built containing burial niches. Unjustly slandered and envied, like all enterprising persons, Fr. Cassien even received a recall order that was fortunately canceled. He did not live to see his work finished.

Overworked, he died January 22, 1954, at the age of 63, from cardiac arrest while on the construction site. His funeral was celebrated by Fr. Henri Moquin, the provincial, on January 25. His body, accompanied by more than 4,000 people, was temporarily buried in Pantheon Garden Cemetery until the crypt was finished. His remains were then transferred there in April 1954.

Addenda.

He received the religious habit from Fr. Vincent de Paul Bailly. He was superior at Le Bizet from August 1925 to 1931. He was superior in New York (1933-1942) and treasurer of the Vice-Province (1934-1942). Curate in New York from 1942 to 1946, in January 1947, Fr. Cassien was sent to Mexico. Fr. Maurice Gagnon anointed him the day before his death. On May 8, 1993, his remains were transferred from a temporary grave to a niche in the Emperatriz de America church.

In August 1931, Fr. Cassian was sent to the United States and was assigned to our Lady of Guadalupe by the Provincial, Fr. Clodoald Serieix. He became superior there on February 23, 1934 until 1942, with dispensation from the Holy See for a third term. Then he continued on as curate from 1942 until 1946. He was treasurer of the North American Vice Province from August 1934 until 1942...

In 1946, it was decided that the Assumptionists would try to found a Mexican mission. As indicated by Fr. Bernard Guillet, he and Father Cassian were supposed to go to Mexico together after Cassian returned from Europe in September 1946. But a liner strike delayed Cassian in Europe and Bernard went to Mexico alone. Cassian arrived only in January 1947. But Fr. Cassian got down to business right away.

In a first letter from Mexico, February 11, 1947, Cassian explains how construction companies would give free land on which to build a church, knowing that a whole neighborhood would be built around it. At the time, Cassian was already chaplain to some nuns, and right across the street was a small chapel. It had come about thus: a Monsignor de la Cueva had wanted to build a large church in honor of St. Joseph, and had obtained the tract of land. But he and the archbishop did not see eye to eye and the monsignor left. The project was taken over by a Mr. Rafael Yglesias, brother of a Jesuit, who built a small chapel, but with the name of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Queen of Mexico and Empress of America, a title given her by Pope Pius XII. An elderly retired priest said mass there on Sundays, but no one was satisfied with this situation.

Mr. Yglesias wanted the Assumptionists to take over the chapel. Father Romero, a Jesuit well known in the country, gave Cassian the idea of asking the Bishop for the chaplaincy of the Emperatriz chapel. He was to go to Father Garibay, Secretary General of the diocese. He was said to be a very hard man to get along with but was very influential with the bishop. Fr. Cassian presented his petition. On a second visit, Fr. Garibay told him: "Father, your case needed an advocate and I myself became your advocate. You have the charge of the sanctuary of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Queen of Mexico, Empress of America." The document of nomination was dated February 22, 1947, nine days after Cassian had presented his petition to the archbishop. The Assumptionist mission had really started. Bernard and Cassian took over the chapel on March 21. The pastor of the parish of Mixcoac remained very friendly.

Fr. Cassian had visited the construction company and they returned some of the land they had taken back. The diocese wanted Cassian to purchase additional land and he set about doing that. The Superior General, Fr. Gervais Quenard, named Cassian Superior in Mexico, July 4, 1949. Fr. Wilfrid Dufault renamed him for a second term, September 4, 1952.

Of course the Mexican mission had its problems. Fr. Cassian lacked the funds needed to buy land (at \$15. a square meter) and to build a rectory and a large church. But he managed to do so by calling upon benefactors he'd known

in New York and others he'd cultivated in Mexico. A Mexican doctor said, "We Mexicans are rather inclined to indolence, but when we see a priest as busy and hard-working as Fr. Cassian, we can't help admiring and helping him." So Fr. Cassian built a rectory, started the church crypt without going into debt.

Fr. Cassian's very success brought him problems from people who were jealous. Evil things were reported to the archbishop who asked that Cassian be recalled. But fellow religious and parishioners rallied around him and protested to the archbishop who countermanded his order. The whole incident caused Fr. Cassian great pain.

Fr. Cassian had problems with religious personnel. A brother who had been sent had to leave for reasons of health. Two young priests sent as curates never gave satisfaction. It was not until Fr. Maurice Gagnon arrived that Fr. Cassian had a real helper he could trust.

Father Cassien came to Our Lady of Guadalupe in 1931, and served there seventeen years both as curate and pastor. Then, at his own request, he became the founder of our parish in Mexico. He first built a small church and then a rectory, while he lived in a dilapidated house. Then he started to build the actual church of Our Lady Empress of America. Making it a point to build only as funds came in, without incurring a debt, he did not live to see it completed. The plans had been chosen through a contest among architects. (Notes by Fr. Armand Desautels.)

He taught at Le Bizet 1917-1918; was at Arras 1923-1924; taught at Le Bizet 1924-1925 and was Superior at Le Bizet from 1924 to 1931.

Report on the founding of "Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe" October 1947.

The chapel "Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, Reina de Mexico y Emperatriz de America" was given over to the Assumptinonists by the Archbishop of Mexico with the projection of a church and a residence to be built that would serve as a Sanctuary and parish church. This was only at the stage of a project.

This chapel is situated in a beautiful section in the South of the city of Mexico in the process of being developed.

Address: Santuario de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, Parque del Conde 37, San Jose Insurgentes (Mixcoac), Mexico, D.F.

Address: Telegraph: Santuario Guadalupe, San Jose Insurgentes, Mixcoac, Mexico, D.F.

History.

Two or three years ago a Monsignor wanted to build a church in honor of St. Joseph. He obtained a large property from an exploitation company and the foundations were installed. After difficulties, the Monsignor backed out. The company took back part of the land that had been granted.

A Mr. Iglesias, brother of a well-known Jesuit, conceived the project of building on this site a Shrine to Our Lady of Guadalupe, Queen of Mexico and Empress of America, a title mentioned in a talk by the Holy Father, Pius XII on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the old church of Our Lady of Guadalupe. A committee was organized and a modest chapel built. But then everything was stopped! The archbishopric, interested in the project put the chapel in the care of the pastor of a large parish of the area. This parish was in the process of being divided. The pastor sent an old priest there for Sunday worship and was accused of using the revenues for his church instead of reserving them for the project of a sanctuary.

Several religious congregations had asked to be given the chapel, but up to that point the Archbishop had refused. The Dames of the Sacred Heart having just opened a boarding school next to it asked for a chaplain.

Father Cassien had just arrived from Mexico after the young Father Bernard Guillet and was looking for a possible foundation. He met Fr. Romero, vs. and this priest persuaded Mr. Iglesias to place the shrine under the care of the Augustinians of the Assumption. Fr. Cassien prepared a report and brought it to the secretary of the Archbishop, a man who was usually hard to approach. This secretary, moved by Divine Providence, became the postulator for our cause and in a few days, on 23 February, he told Fr. Cassien that he had been named by the Archbishop as chaplain to the chapel in question. Frs. Cassien and Bernard were able to get to work at once.

Official granting.

June 24, 1947, the Archbishop signed the document conferring the Sanctuary to the Assumptionists. Here is the text from a photocopy: "Because of the present religious needs of the Archbishop of Mexico and the zeal of the Rev. Frs. Augustinians of the Assumption that we knew through references, and that we now confirm through experience, with our whole will we decide and do cede to that Congregation or Rev. Fathers actually represented here by Brother Cassian Dubost, A.A., the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Queen of Mexico and Empress of America, situated in the colony of San Jose Insurgentes of this city and we authorize them to acquire the necessary land for the same Sanctuary and the Congregation for the greater glory of the Lord and His Holy Mother and the good of the faithful. With great pleasure we bless them." Mexico, D.F. 24 June 1947, Luis Maria, Arch. of Mexico. The very same day, his excellency gave a written permission to Fr. Cassien to ask for gifts for the construction of the Shrine and encouraged the faithful to help this work.

Apostolate.

In his last letters Fr. Cassian speaks of a parish. The document of the Archbishop only speaks of a Sanctuary. I still have no explanation concerning this. The chapel is very frequented. The faithful of the area are very devoted. There are many confessions. The Fathers have to have long confession sessions in the neighboring boarding schools and communities. Fr. Cassian has already had to refuse a lot of ministry. One knows that Mexico lacks priests. Communion took place at the chapel this summer with 1000 to 1200 every 15 days. The Fathers organized a St. Vincent de Paul Society, Catholic Action, and the children's catechism, etc.

There are two priests and soon there will be a lay brother (in October) for this foundation. It is not enough. Fr. Cassian has to spend much time organizing the collections for the Sanctuary and has to leave a lot of ministry to his companion.

Material needs and resources.

One must know that any property or building affected to worship belongs to the government. Fr. Cassian feels that there is no great risk in that as long as the government remains "tolerant". There is the advantage of exemption from income taxes.

Father Cassien came to Our Lady of Guadalupe in 1931, and served there seventeen years both as curate and pastor. Then, at his own request, he became the founder of our parish in Mexico. He first built a small church and then a rectory, while he lived in a dilapidated house. Then he started to build the actual church of Our Lady Empress of America. Making it a point to build only as funds came in, without incurring a debt, he did not live to see it completed. The plans had been chosen through a contest among architects. (Notes by Fr. Armand Desautels.)

André (André-Gustave) Dumont

1907-1982

Religious of the Province of North Belgium.



A man of character.

André Gustave Dumont was born August 4, 1907 at Roulers (Roesselaere), Belgium. According to his personal notes, he did his primary studies in France at Angoulême (Charente) for one year, then Melun (Seine-et-Marne), four years, and Laeken (Belgian Brabant), two years. His secondary studies were done at the alummates of Zepperen (1922-1926) and Sart-les-Moines (1926-1928). He took the religious habit at the Taintegnies novitiate October 30, 1928 under the direction of Fr. Aubain Colette and with the name Brother André. He made his first profession November 1, 1929:

“ A very robust, stubborn, and personal Brother who presents himself as he is, willful and decided for the mission.” After his philosophy at Saint-Gérard (1929-1930), he went to Louvain for theology where he was accepted for perpetual profession November 1, 1932 and ordained a priest March 6, 1936. According to his personal file, Brother André spent a year in the apostolic house of Kapelle-op-den-Bos (1931-1932).

A missionary to the Congo.

After his priestly ordination, Father André volunteered for the mission of the Congo where he went to 5 posts from 1936 to 1946. Judged to be quite original, too personal, and not a community man, he seemed quite disappointed by this missionary experience that he had so strongly desired, and as soon as the war ended, he returned to Europe. Father André was not deficient in qualities, however. He was intelligent and cultured from much reading, but was handicapped in his apostolate by a difficulty on how to be in contact and dialogue with the natives. After several years, this was to become an obstacle involving his own temperament.

Round trips between Colombia, North America, and the Congo.

His desire for missionary life did not vanish. He asked to go to Colombia as soon as he got back from Africa. From 1946 to 1948, he was sent to the mission of Cali where he met confreres who, it was whispered, were ‘exiles’ there, because of their collaborationist feelings during the war. In 1948, a revolution took place in Colombia that was serious enough that three religious, among whom was Fr. André, who feared for their life. Since they were quite fluent in Spanish, they asked to go to North America. They were very qualified for the Spanish parishes in New York. In 1954, possibly because he was disappointed or tired, Fr. André returned to the Congo. He volunteered for the foundation of Luofu where a solitary life didn’t deter him. In fact, in that same year, the Assumption accepted to man small posts quite dispersed like Luofu, Lukanga, and Lubango. Fr. André went from Luofu to Lukanga where he painted his office blood red and finally went to teach Math at E.T.S.A.V. In 1960, the year of independence for the Congo, he returned to Colombia. Lacking in communication, he didn’t always communicate the reasons to his confreres concerning the deep reasons for his zigzag decisions. Be it as it may, from 1960 to 1967, Fr. André taught at the college in Bogota, Colombia. At the age of 60, he decided to definitely return to Belgium, after 35 years of missionary work on various continents. Since he had not reached the age to receive his pension from the Belgian government, he served as chaplain at the handicapped persons center in Vlerenbeek where he spent 4 years. In 1972, he lived with the Louvain community. He took advantage of this time to enrich his intellect, having kept a great love for reading. He died at Louvain of a heart attack in a very unexpected and sudden manner, March 14, 1982, at the age of 75. His funeral was celebrated March 18 followed by the burial in the cemetery of Park Abbey.

Addenda.

Fr. André was ordained a priest by Bishop Carlon de Wiart at Louvain 6 March 1936. After having been a professor at the novitiate for 3 months in 1948-1949 in Sillery, Quebec, he was a curate at the parish on 14th St. in New York 15 March 1949

after having been transferred to the Province of North America on 8 September 1948. He was elected 2d counselor in the summer of 1949 and affiliated to the North American Province in 1950. For a priest who was used to living in the Congo and Colombia, the wintry climate of the novitiate in Quebec was most difficult for him. He also had a missionary spirit and found himself in a house of formation. While in Canada, he did ministry in Coaticook, replacing the pastor of St. Jean Chrysostome parish.

Fr. André wrote from Coaticook 18-2-49.

It will be three weeks that I am here and I like it a lot. Last week, I visited, confessed, and brought communion to some thirty sick and old people. I'll do it again in two weeks. I also have to teach catechism to the girls of the grade school and boarding school. There are also confessions each week at the boarding school, and this week, since it is the First Friday of the month and the beginning of Lent, will be quite busy. I am glad of that. I am very pleased with the pastor who is a fine man. The curate is a former religious incardinated in the diocese since three years... He'll be named pastor in the middle of the year...

I gave a conference yesterday on our missions in the Congo to the parishioners and next week I'll do the same for the 250 boarders of the Sisters.

On the choice of a province.

“I have just learned that we have been integrated to the Provinces of our origin, but since Belgium has two, they made the mistake of placing me in that of the South, whereas I am Flemish. Here, they told us that nothing would be done for those who belonged to the Province of South America, but that we would be notified in time when something would be done later on. I protested to Fr. Raymond [Besseling], to Fr. Augustinus [Van Engeland] and Fr. Gerard Istace, as I respectfully do so to you [Fr. Wilfrid Dufault] so that I can be attached to the Province of North Belgium. Here all goes well. If you were to believe some people, Colombia is on the edge of a revolution, but I never knew it to be so. We have just started the school year with 679 students, although our new building has not yet been occupied. I never thought that I could enjoy teaching but in fact I have a passion for Math and my students easily pass their university entrance exam.” André Dumon

Marius (Marius-Louis) Dumoulin

1887-1972

French religious of the Province of North America.



A Savoyard on the roads of the Assumption.

Marie Louis Dumoulin was born July 11, 1887 in a small Savoy village of the massive of the Bauges, La Compôte, in the diocese of Chambéry where the altitude, climate, and ancestral traditions all contribute to the formation of robust bodies and healthy souls. At the age of 11, he was admitted to the alumnate of Notre-Dame des Châteaux (Savoy) where he spent 4 years (1897-1901) under the direction of Fr. Théodore Defrance, a former Carthusian who had become an Assumptionist. From there he went to Brian (Drôme) to finish his humanities (1901-1903). In the summer of 1903, at the age of 16, he entered the Louvain novitiate where he took the religious habit October 18 and the name of Brother Marius. At the end of his canonical year of novitiate, he pronounced his simple vows October 18, 1904. From 1905 to 1908, he studied philosophy, again at Louvain where he made his perpetual profession June 7, 1907. He was asked to teach in an apostolic house, Bure, from 1908 to 1910. He then returned to Louvain to study theology from 1910 to 1912. His third year of theology took place at Jerusalem where he was ordained to the priesthood July 13, 1913, and the last one in Rome (1913-1914). He was now ready for an apostolate. His first ministry was at Vinovo (Italy) as assistant master of novices of Fr. Léonide Guyo. In 1915, he taught literature at Ancona (Switzerland). The year 1916 saw him mobilized as a stretcher-bearer and his devotion on the battlefield earned him a citation in 1917. He was taken prisoner March 28, 1918 at the time that he was going to get some wounded men, when he stopped to give absolution to a comrade who had been mortally wounded and spent his time in Hanovre. He would only be freed January 6, 1919 after 9 months of difficult captivity.

A half-century in America, Latin teacher.

After a time of rest in his family, the superiors sent him to the college in Worcester, U.S.A. where he arrived January 6, 1919. He was named to the first year high to teach the young students basic Latin. A conscientious and remarkable teacher, he was able to get the students to like the subject matter that was a bit dry for youngsters who at times were tempted to only consider the more useful subjects. One of his merits was to inculcate in young minds a certain enthusiasm for these drills, at times austere, of declensions, exceptions, and vocabulary lists that were foreign to the spoken language of these students. He initiated them to the art of themes and versions. As an experienced teacher, he knew the value of repetition, drills, and corrections that, just like drops of water erode a stone, finish by conquering. He didn't get excited; he was very patient, and with his familiar smile he would start over year after year the difficult training for beginners, almost during 50 years. It was because he loved the youth that he was able to bring to his daily work the necessary desire, perseverance and application. He also knew that in education, all ages were important and that the beginners should not be neglected so as not to handicap the following years of the young students... On June 2, 1957, he was able to sing proudly the mass of Pentecost and celebrate in the midst of the students and the members of the college community his 50 years of religious life. For him, faithfulness was lived in his style of religious and priestly life as well as on the professional level of teaching. In 1963, there was a new celebration for his 50 years of priestly life.

It was at the college in Worcester that he died July 25, 1972 at the age of 85 and was buried there.

Addenda.

As a teacher, Fr. Marius did not fit the picture given in the above text. He was constantly impatient with the students as he went through his daily drills of declensions and conjugations and would use a loud tone of voice. Outside of the classroom, he was a totally different person. He would always be willing to help the student who asked for help and he willingly spent time tutoring the students. In the summer, he enjoyed going to Baker Lake, the summer villa of the Assumptionists. [editor]

While serving in the military, he received the Croix de Guerre for extreme bravery. In 1918, he was captured by the Germans and spent the rest of the war as a prisoner of war at Fuchsberg and Hemsted. During 22 years, he did weekend ministry in an Italian parish, St. Tarcisius church, in Framingham. In 1951, he was decorated by France with the Palmes Académiques for his efforts to spread the French culture.

When Thomas Aquinas died at the age of 49, he left behind him a theological monument, which has kept him famous for 8 centuries. Closer to us, John Kennedy died at 46 after having become the head of the most powerful nation the world has ever known and his name, immortalized the world over on monuments of all shapes and dimensions, has been inscribed in the history of the world. We could establish a long list of men who have died young and have left behind a reputation for greatness.

Father Marius was 85 on the 11th of July. That means that his active life was fully twice as long as that of the men I have just mentioned. Yet it is perhaps safe to predict that no significant monument will immortalize his name. He leaves behind him no recognized reputation for greatness and school children will never hear of him in their history courses. We can go still further: even those of us who knew, and, yes, loved him, will soon forget him... only to occasionally recall his memory in our nostalgic moments. And when we go, even that will disappear. And is it worth mentioning that the work to which he dedicated his fifty productive years has itself already preceded him out of existence. In the universal context of cosmic history, we would have to say realistically that he was an obscure Latin teacher in a small New England school. The only flamboyance in him was that of his temper and the fear he inspired in his students. And even that gave way to a mellowness, which made of him a pleasant man to be with. Yet, before concluding to the futility of these 85 years, I would like to confront them with the gospel message, which we have just heard.

Father Marius spent 50 years as a Latin teacher in a small school. His courses were minutely prepared and scrupulously delivered. He spent ever so much time in preparation and hours correcting the interminable papers of high school students. He wanted so badly for them to learn that he would add still more time coaching weaker and willing students. Somehow, even though he was no great Latin scholar, can't we hear the Lord say to him: "Well done, good and faithful servant; you have shown you can be faithful in small things, I will trust you with greater."

Father Marius leaves no children to continue his name and insure him that kind of continued existence. His was a life of celibacy... not just a sort of global and sloppy celibacy, but a celibacy, which he cultivated carefully and delicately. He seemed fearful – excessively so it seemed to us – even to demonstrate feeling or attachment to anyone. But the totality of his commitment was sparkling and clear. In fact, he seemed to have regained or retained a kind of original innocence, which would have made any truly colored conversation seem incongruous in his presence. Of course, he was French and the "sel gaulois" could never be totally alien to him: "You have shown you can be faithful in small things, I will trust you with greater."

Father Marius leaves no great fortune for his heirs. In fact, I slept in his room last night, and I would suspect that it will not take long to liquidate the few things that are left there. His poverty, too, was unbending. Saint Augustine says that it is preferable to need less than to have more. There is no doubt that, on that score, Father Marius would put me and, if you allow me to pass judgment on you, most of us to shame. There was a starkness to his poverty... but a starkness which freed him from undue preoccupation with material goods. "You have shown you can be faithful in small things, I will trust you with greater,"

Headstrong as he could be, Father Marius nonetheless did as he was told. He was obedient to the letter of the law; of that there is no doubt. We all recall how he asked permission of Father Rodolphe to see "The Song of Bernadette"... we perhaps recall also Father Rodolphe's answer. Father Marius lived also a spirit of obedience and, if you will permit me a personal memory, I would like to illustrate his spirit of obedience by a letter, which he sent me almost 3 years ago when I became Provincial. A man his age might well have resented that such a responsibility be entrusted to a young man half his age. His letter, which I carried around with me for a long time, was a moving witness to his

ready and enthusiastic spirit of obedience. And when it became clear that we would have to close the Prep School, I went to talk about it to him in his room. He accepted it with deep sadness but no rebellion, expressing only his regret that I would have to carry this heavy burden. "You have shown you can be faithful in small things, I will trust you with greater."

Father Marius was a man of prayer. Here again, he was neither a visionary nor, at least as much as the eyes can see, a great mystic. We never saw him lifted off the ground. His was the simple prayer of a man relating to his God. Yet we should not be fooled into thinking that his prayer was purely vocal. It was certainly personal too. When the little chapel in the Salisbury Street house was being organized, the Blessed Sacrament changed places a few times. On one occasion, Father Marius entered after a change had taken place. As he prepared to make his reverence, he discovered that the Blessed Sacrament had been moved, and, not knowing that he would be overheard, he muttered: "Where did they put Him now?"... For him, a humble man of prayer, Christ was someone. "You have shown you can be faithful in small things, I will trust you with greater."

I guess that what I am trying to say is that Father Marius is not nor will not be ever a famous man. He was a humble and a good teacher who worked arduously and scrupulously for his students. He was a dedicated and holy priest and religious who performed no spectacular deeds but was faithful to his calling in its every detail. Confronted with the gospel, we are compelled to think that herein lays real greatness, though it is not always perceived: in faithfulness to small things... a good lesson for all of us. Father Marius taught us this lesson by his very life, and that is great teaching. We cannot be too grateful for this lesson.

And so, there is no doubt in my mind that, in the peaceful and serene joy of his encounter with the Lord, Father Marius has already heard the eternally comforting words: "Well done, good and faithful servant; you have shown you can be faithful in small things, I will trust you with greater; come and join in your master's happiness." Amen.

[Funeral homily by Fr. Joseph Loisel, Provincial, July 28, 1972.]

The Germans aimed to separate the armies one from the other. In fact, after 3 days the British were in full retreat and the Germans had advanced 40 kilometers. To fill this gap, the French command sent some divisions, with orders to hold at all costs. We were among these troops, and after a bit of maneuvering around Lassigny (Oise), on March 27 at midnight, my regiment held a definitive position right opposite the Germans.

Early in the morning we were heavily shelled and soon had a wounded soldier to bring to the regimental-aid post. There we found the dressing station completely destroyed by another shelling. And all around were signs of recent fighting, with the bodies of French soldiers from several regiments lying here and there along the side of the road. For the moment there was a menacing calm.

It took us a bit of time to discover where our aid-post now was. We left our wounded man there and went back to where we had left our Company. Another shock. No soldiers anywhere around except a courier who told us the position had been deemed untenable and that the Company had taken position behind a railroad embankment not far away, right opposite the Germans where solid shelters could be built and machine guns set up.

So we went back single file along the trench that led to the aid-post we had just left. There, the first man in file turned and whispered: "The Germans are there." And he turned to flee. The second stretcher-bearer soon followed him, and the third. Realizing that there was still a chance to escape, I was the last to go, dragging the stretcher behind me. We took a road leading to the embankment that I mentioned, following the ruts between the roadway and the slope. We kept our heads down because bullets started to whistle around our ears. A few steps in front of me ran a comrade, father of a family, aged 33. We had not run 20 steps beyond the trench when I saw him fall on his face, without a word, without a cry... I thought he had tripped and I was about to run past him shouting, "Hurry, the Germans are very near." I noticed that his helmet had been pushed aside and I saw a wound in the back of his head, from which came blood and brain. Death had been instantaneous. In a flash my duty was clear; I had to stop and give this comrade a last absolution. When I got up to resume my flight, I noticed that the other stretcher-bearers, much younger than I, had reached the embankment and were jumping to safety on the other side. But I still had a half-mile to go, over flat land, with bullets whistling overhead. The Germans were coming down the trench we had just left. I had no way to escape except by counting on the possible mercy of the Germans. I just thought this when some German soldiers appeared at the end of the road. I raised my arms in surrender. They did not shoot, and one of them made me a sign to advance. Crouching, I ran up to them. I was their prisoner."

[*ANA June-July 1999 by Fr. Richard Richards, A.A., 25-26.*]

Jean (Jean-Joseph-Marie) Falhun

1932-1982

Religious of the Province of France.



Formation in the Province of Bordeaux.

Jean Joseph Marie Falhun was born December 27, 1932 at Tréglonou (Finistère). He did his secondary studies in the alummates of Saint-Maur (Maine-et-Loire) from 1944 to 1947 and Cavalerie (Dordogne) from 1947 to 1950. He entered the Pont-l'Abbé d'Arnoult novitiate (Charente-Maritime) where he took the religious habit September 28, 1950 and pronounced his first vows September 29, 1951. Fr. Tournellec described him as follows: *"Jean Falhun is superior to his novitiate companions by the extent of his knowledge. He is an intellectual, delicate, and a bit of timidity hinders his conversation in the first contacts. Of agreeable contact, he is also capable, because of nervousness, of making biting remarks. He spent some time in hospital with an intestinal flu, of an undetermined nature."* Brother Jean then did his philosophy studies at Layrac (Lot-et-Garonne) from 1951 to 1953. Military service kept him for two long years spending the greater part in Algeria (Bou-Hamama). He returned to Layrac for his theology, was admitted to perpetual profession (July 1, 1957), and ordained a priest May 23, 1959 by Bishop Johan. *"A religious who is a hard worker, gifted, pious, and sufficiently docile, he devoted himself to teaching catechism and shows a clear desire for an apostolic life"*. After a pastoral year at Lyons (1959-1960), Fr. Jean was named by his provincial to teach in the alummates and colleges of the Province of Bordeaux.

From Bordeaux to Jerusalem.

During 13 years, Fr. Jean was devoted to teaching: English teacher at Cavalerie in Dordogne (1960-1965), then Sainte-Barbe at Toulouse (1965-1967) in the Haute-Garonne. In 1967, armed with a double licentiate in English and history, he left for the college in Worcester, U.S.A. where he stayed three years (1967-1970). The Saint-Sauveur college of Redon (Ille-et-Vilaine) where the Assumptionists and Eudists worked together, after the closing of Saint-Maur, was the last stage in his teaching career (1970-1973). The Bible was always a passion for Fr. Jean. His next stop was Jerusalem where he received and guided pilgrims during three years (1973-1976). With the collaboration of Sami Awwad of Terra Santa, he produced an album, *"Cette terre de Dieu"* (This Land of God), and a slideshow in English, then in French. In September 1976, he returned to France. There was question of another period in Rome under Fr. Pierre Touveneraud, but finally pastoral ministry won out and he went to Angoulême (Charente).

La Rochelle.

In December 1977, he was named to the parish of Tasdon at La Rochelle (Charente) in the railroad sector. Frs. Marcel Lelièvre and Marcel Bizien, his companions there, retraced this short period of the life of Fr. Jean. *"While working in the Tasdon parish, Jean continued, with the Association of Our Lady of Salvation, to lead groups of pilgrims to Israel and other countries. He was part of the diocesan team for permanent formation, happy to share his experiences with other brother priests, and took part in Bible study groups at La Rochelle and the Poor Clares. All appreciated his conviction, his fire, and his desire to better know the One who gave meaning to his life"*. A regular of "Bretons de La Rochelle", the 'Escale' Association, and the military chaplaincy of which he became responsible in December 1981, he also accepted, on the eve of his hospitalization, to work in alphabetization at the Foyer des Cordeliers. On October 18, 1982, he returned exhausted from a pilgrimage to Spain and Portugal. On October 31, he was hospitalized in intensive care. He died on Saturday, November 6, 1982 at the age of 50, of a violent heart embolism. His funeral was celebrated on Tuesday, November 9 and on the 10th, his body was buried in the cemetery of his native country, Tréglonou, where his old mother of 84 years still lived.

Addenda.

Fr. Jean was visiting Assumption Prep School and decided to go as a tourist to New York City. The religious cautioned him to be careful and avoid certain sections, but this was to no avail. Off he went in civvies and camera slung on his shoulder. He was mugged and his camera was stolen. Fr. Jean had quite a learning experience from his visit to New York City. In Layrac, he would be called the ‘walking encyclopedia’ because of his vast knowledge.

His military service was served in Germany, Algeria, and Tunisia from November 1953 to December 1955. Jean’s graduate studies were done in Bordeaux and Toulouse. His published works were: “*La guerre navale aux XVIIIe et XIXe siècles*” and “*Trafalgar et la Marine anglaise aujourd’hui*”. Fr. Jean was Vicar Substitute at St. Mary Nativity Church in Raceland, Louisiana from 6 July 1970 till 27 July 1970.

Written in the rush of a departure.

“Here is a quick note and no doubt clumsy that I am writing in a bus bringing me to a solemn first communion that I am preaching in Lot-et-Garonne. This is to tell you how quickly I must write. Upon coming out from having passed a certificate in history at Bordeaux just a few hours ago, Fr. Jointer [Provincial of Bordeaux] is sending me to Greece for a cultural training period. Since I am going through Rome, I can’t help but stop. That is what I’d like to do, certain of your understanding permission and the hospitality of Tor di Nona [Rome]. I would like to arrive at Rome on Friday, 29 June [1962] around 12:50- but this is the schedule of last years’ trains- and stay with you till 3 July. Would you be willing to help me with this trip by contacting the Father Superior [Fr. Albertus Boeckhorst]? I most likely will need to change some money. Excuse me for writing so late”.

(Fr. Jean Falhun to Fr. Alphonse Picot 23 June 1962, Saint-Joseph (Cavalerie-Prigonrieux.)

Letter to Jean Falhun by the Provincial of North America dated 27 April 1967.

Dear Fr. Jean,

Welcome to the province, but I would like to explain the situation to you to the best of my ability so as to avoid useless deceptions.

I see three possibilities.

- 1- At Assumption Prep School in Worcester as French professor for youth aged 15 to 18. You could most likely take courses in Boston, but not in a concentrated manner – perhaps one day per week. Worcester is a city with some 2,000 inhabitants, where our relations with the Protestant clergy are excellent, but where occasion for ecumenical studies are non-existent more or less – Boston is about 70 km away.
- 2- At the Seminary of Cap-Rouge near Quebec where you would teach English to French Canadians. I have no knowledge of ecumenical study possibilities in the Province of Quebec, but I suppose that there is not much available. This in an intercommunity seminary where 15 Congregations form a Consortium on the level of humanities and philosophy.
- 3- If these two posts would give you too few occasions for personal studies that you would want to do, you would be welcome at the Provincial House in New York City, from where you could follow, courses at the Protestant Union Theological seminary, near our residence. I also think that Fr. Tavard could be of great help to you.

I would appreciate a rapid answer – quicker than mine! – in order to permit us to prepare the obediences for next year.. Fraternally in Our Lord., Provincial of North America.

Bernard Walstan (Harold-T.C.) Farrow

1889-1973

Scottish religious of the Province of England.



Before his life at the Assumption.

Harold Thomas Carter Farrow was born April 30, 1889 at Alby (Norfolk), England, to a Scottish family. He did his secondary and graduate studies before he knew the Assumption: York Place, Brighton (secondary schooling), Southampton University (1920-1921). He became a qualified and certified teacher. His personal information file notes several positions: a primary school in London and St. Brendan's secondary school in Bristol under the direction of the Irish Christian Brothers. As an officer of the British army during the First World War (1916-1919), he traveled the European continent from France to Russia. He knocked at several doors before meeting the road to the Assumption, since he was desirous in 1925, at the age of 36, to begin his road toward the priesthood and religious life. During 1925, he was received at Le Bizet as a postulant and teacher.

Formation years at the Assumption.

Under the name of Brother Bernard-Walstan, Harold took the religious habit at the Taintegnies novitiate April 29, 1925. Fr. Savinien Dewaele, master of novices, was quite disconcerted by this strange novice, a bit solitary, stubborn in his ideas but generous, who was admitted to his first profession (April 30, 1926). "*Brother Bernard is a person that must be taken as he is, although he is lacking on many points. His age, the fact that he is a convert, and his former life make a deep transformation quite difficult, but he will be able to be of some help in an apostolate adapted to his aptitudes,*" remarked Fr. Sidoine Hurtevent. His formation was continued at the scholasticate of Louvain where he was perpetually professed April 30, 1928 and ordained a priest April 20, 1930. He said that he had a lot of difficulty to adapt his intellect to scholastic formulations.

Missions limited to the province of France and then England.

Since he was part of the Province of Paris, Fr. Bernard was sent to the vicariate of North America to serve in the two parishes of New York staffed by the Assumptionists. In 1937 he returned to England where he continued to work in parish ministry, notably at Newhaven. From a note he wrote to Fr. Gervais Quenard in 1947, one can understand his difficulties of adaptation to the English Assumption: "*I send you my petition and request to obtain from you my integration into the Province of North America. I have already begun steps to become a naturalized American citizen. I have been in England since 1937, but I do not wish to be part of the new English Province. I know Spanish and I don't want to lose my French. Since 31 years now, I am a Catholic, baptized in France during the First World War at Montreuil-sur-Mer. I have been a religious for 22 years and a priest for 17. I spent 7 years in New York and 5 in Charlton. I present my request with trust in your judgment*". Because of his health, in 1956, it was suggested that he take a chaplaincy in a mental home for children. [The Directory of Religious indicates as a residence or community to which Fr. Farrow was attached during these years, the parish of Newhaven. We deduce that he did not leave England, regardless of his desire to transfer to America.] In December 1961, Father Bernard had to abandon all pastoral activity and was sent to the convalescent home at Lorgues (Var) in France. His artistic soul was happy in the old town of Lorgues. He enjoyed walking early in the morning through the old streets and the places yet asleep, and liked to sit on a boundary stone or a rustic bench with his pad and crayons in hand to sketch a façade, a fountain, or a picturesque scene. There was no lack of these. Several times, linking the useful to the enjoyable, he set up a stand with his paintings for the charity bazaar of the parish of Lorgues. The last years of his life were difficult. He

could barely walk, but he continued painting. He died on a Sunday morning, March 11, 1973 in his 84th year, and was buried the next day.

Addenda.

Presentation of Fr. Bernard.

“Fr. Bernard is a late vocation: he is a serious priest, devoted with a quite original character. He is now 65 years old. He has a good influence in Newhaven and Peacehaven. Last year he was very sick and has not totally recuperated. He started feeling tired in his ministry at Peacehaven because of the distance and variable weather. Fortunately Divine Providence gave us a chaplaincy at Stroud Gloucestershire where he will be fine. The understanding with the Directress of the Nursing Home and the Provincial has only begun to evolve. After Christmas, we shall make a definite contract so that Fr. Bernard may start his functions without waiting on 22 September 1956. I submit this case to you, Father General, to obtain the permission or a dispensation from common life for Fr. Bernard since, because of his ministry, he will live outside the community. Fr. Bernard will remain attached to Newhaven”.

(Fr. Austin Treamer, Provincial of England to Fr. Wilfrid Dufault, 5 September 1956, London.)

Aymard (Jean-Baptiste) Faugère

1881-1955

Religious of the Province of Paris, first Provincial of Paris (1923-1929).



From house to house.

Jean-Baptiste Faugère was born at Tulle (Corrèze), March 6, 1881. He did his grammar school at the Breuil aluminate (Deux Sèvres) from 1895 to 1898, then at Saujon (Charente-Maritime), a continuation of Laubat from 1899 to 1890. At the end of his humanities, he chose to enter the Assumption. As a result of the dissolution of the Congregation (1900), the Livry novitiate was transferred April 28, 1900 to Gemert (Holland) in a former house of the Jesuits. It was there that he took the habit under the name of Brother Aymard September 8, 1900. His novitiate, because of its transfer August 7, 1901, was finished at Louvain. He made his first profession there September 8, 1901. At that time, he was sent to Le Breuil as a teacher and treasurer (1901-1905), but with an interruption for his military service at Tulle (1902-1903). At Breuil, the prosecutor of Melle accused him as well as Fr. Alphonse Cadoux, the superior, of being part of a non-authorized Congregation. Two fines of 7 francs settled the condemnation. After his perpetual profession at Louvain July 9, 1906, Brother Aymard was sent to Rome where he did his philosophy and theology (1906-1911). He earned the degrees of doctor of philosophy (1909) and bachelor of theology (1910) and was ordained a priest June 10, 1911.

The apostolic life of a responsible and convinced religious.

Fr. Aymard began his apostolate at Montpellier (Hérault) where he was in charge of youth clubs (1911-1912). In 1912, he left for the U.S.A. to Worcester where he stayed two years as teacher and treasurer (1912-1914). When war was declared, he was called back to France and called up for military service from August 1914 to March 1919. From 1919 to 1923, he returned to Montpellier, this time as superior. This was the point of departure for his receiving responsibilities. As a result of the division of the Congregation into Provinces, he was chosen to be the first Provincial Superior of Paris. Everything had to be created. This was quite a task since, at the same time, he was named pastor of the Saint-Christophe de Javel parish in Paris. He finished his mandate as Provincial in 1929, but remained pastor of Javel until 1951 when he was laid low by illness. The Province of Paris took in Lille to Perpignan and included the vicariates of North America and England. In this hexagon, the Assumption was indebted to him for the construction of the new college of Nîmes, the resurrection of Clairmarais (Pas-de-Calais), the setting up of the alummates of Poussan (Hérault) and Davézieux (Ardèche), and the residence for late vocations at Saint-Denis. He did not forget the Anglophone mission that he visited regularly and to which he gave a remarkable stimulus. As a pastor, he was a remarkable administrator. He saw to the construction of the Saint-Christophe church that he oversaw energetically. This was realized without grants or official subsidy, but thanks to an extensive chain of contributions on the part of benefactors. He launched original subscriptions: that of the gas can, that of the stones, and that of the half stones... A man of intrepid faith and total disinterestedness, gifted with a facility for improvisation from simple outlines, Fr. Aymard spoke clearly and with a concrete sense of the realities of practical life. He liked to preside the major liturgical celebrations with an imposing bearing and surrounded the organizing of the worship with a whole series of social works: schools, youth center, dispensary, and a social secretariat for the Women's League... A fervent animator of the national pilgrimage to Lourdes, Fr. Aymard was esteemed as a confessor and preacher by numerous religious families. In 1951, diabetes and tuberculosis forced him to rest at Lorgues (Var). He died from an embolism January 21, 1955 at the age of 74. His funeral was celebrated the next day at Lorgues. A solemn religious service was also held in his memory at Paris, quay of Javel, January 26, in order to permit his former parishioners to associate themselves to the prayers and mourning of the Assumption.

Addenda.

Father Aymard spent two years in Worcester as treasurer, teacher, and sub-prior, from 1912 to 1914. After the First World War, he was stationed at Montpellier, in southern France, doing parish work, until the provinces were created in 1923. He became the first Provincial of Paris, of which both North America and England were a part (1923-1929). At the same time and until 1951, he was pastor of St-Christophe de Javel, a large parish in Paris, where he built the actual church. At that time, it was a parish for industrial workers in an automobile plant. With a shift in population, it has now become a parish of well-to-do people, and for some reason, we have given it up to take on more pastoral work among the poor in Pierrefitte, another section of Paris. (Notes by Fr. Armand Desautels.)

Rediscovery of Lavagnac (1920).

The Dean of Montagnac invited me to assist at the confirmation given by Cardinal de Cabrières on 5 July [1920]. I very readily accepted since this gave me the opportunity to visit the land on which is situated the Lavagnac chateau... The Countess of Puységur [niece of Fr. d'Alzon] and Mrs. de Rodez-Bénavent, her daughter, insisted on bringing me to the chateau. I spent a wonderful evening in this princely residence that remained just as Fr. d'Alzon had known it. These ladies were thoughtful in installing me in the Father d'Alzon's room, with the holy water fount that decorated the bedspread of Mr. Henri d'Alzon. On Tuesday, 5 July, I celebrated mass in the chapel of the chateau, in front of Mary Help of Christians, confidante of the young d'Alzon, the night preceding his escape to the Montpellier seminary. Then I prayed the rosary in 'the alley of the Fathers' or 'alley of the Breviary', so contemplative. You know that Mrs. de Puységur's brother, Dom Emmanuel [de Quinsonnas], became a Carthusian, having renewed the adventure of Fr. d'Alzon... Dom Emmanuel is at the Pise Charterhouse".

(Fr. Aymard to Fr. Maubon, 10 July 1920.)

Basile (Jean-Marie) Filaire

1886-1945

Religious of the Province of Paris, at the service of the Vicariate of England.

Recapitulative notice.

Jean-Marie Filaire was born at Sembadel, a small commune of the district of La Chaise-Dieu (Haute-Loire) March 29, 1886. He did his secondary studies at the Miribel-les-Echelles aluminate (Isère) from 1899 to 1904 and entered the Assumptionists September 18, 1914, the day that he took the habit at Louvain (Belgium). He received the religious name of Brother Basile. Professed for a year October 18, 1905 in Jerusalem, his first posting was to teach at Le Bizet (1906-1909) where he pronounced his perpetual vows August 15, 1907. His ecclesiastical studies were done at Louvain (1909-1912), Jerusalem (1912-1914), and Rome (1915-1916) where he was ordained a priest May 3, 1915. Exempted from military service, he was sent to teach at Miribel from 1916 to 1919, then to Worcester (U.S.A.) in 1919. Having chosen the Province of Paris set up in 1923, he was involved exclusively in the works of the Anglophone mission. His dates of service indicated his itinerary: teaching at Worcester (1919-1923), parish ministry in England: Charlton (1923-1925), Brockley (1925-1929), Newhaven (1929-1932), Brockley (1932-1935), and Charlton (1935-1945). He died January 15, 1945 and was buried in Charlton.

Chronicle of a death in a time of war.

The circumstances of the death of Fr. Basile Filaire in England give us an idea of the living conditions of that time: [According to the Directory of Religious 1945-1946, there were three members of the Assumptionist community of Charlton in 1945: Frs. Benoît-Labre Caron, Colmcille O'Pacanaïm, and Malachy Corbett. At that time, there were 8 communities in the vicariate of England: Hitchin (college), Nottingham (college), Lagford Budville (novitiate and house of studies), London: Bethnal Green (parish), Brockley (parish), Charlton (parish), Newhaven (parish), and Rickmansworth (parish)].

“Fr. Basile suffered for several years from low blood pressure. On Monday, January 15 [1945], he and Fr. Colmcille went for tea to friends in the neighboring parish of Lewisham. He was fine and seemed happy. After a game of cards and dinner, he and his companion took the road back to Charlton. That night, the cold was quite bitter and snow covered the earth. To top it all off, the Fathers missed the last bus. Faced with the perspective of an hour's walk on an upgrade hill, Fr. Basile, already chilled by the cold and fatigue, slowed down his pace and seemed stressed. He asked Fr. Colmcille who had to celebrate mass the following morning to go on ahead while he would follow at a slower pace. They separated at 22:45. Five minutes after, a passer-by found Fr. Basile lying unconscious and dying in the snow. He fetched an ambulance and Father was taken to the morgue of Deptford. During this time, Fr. Colmcille returned to the rectory, but, having the night watch, he went to the passive defense post. Besides, Fr. Benoît-Labre [Caron], instead of sleeping in his room, went to the church basement, next to the furnace, to be more sheltered from the V1s. That was why no one answered the phone calls of the police. They only found Fr. Benoît-Labre at 2 a.m. and announced the sad news. By a strange and happy coincidence, Fr. Colmcille found in his pocket, while looking for a piece of paper to write down the card game scores, an envelope addressed to him, but having a cherub in the name of Fr. Basile. He had passed it to him while playing cards and that was how they were able to identify Father when they picked him up in the snow. Fr. Basile was a sadly missed religious. During the nine years that he had spent as curate at Brockley and 10 years as superior at Charlton, he had shown a sustained devotedness and was of an equal and kind humor with a solid piety and good spirit of initiative. His quiet, peaceful, yet firm manner pleased the faithful enormously”.

Addenda.

Father Basile spent several years at Assumption in Worcester where he was truly appreciated. This was in the early 1920s and earlier. He then went to England, was curate at Newhaven and Brockley, and pastor in Charlton. He was a very kind man, always interested in promoting vocations, and many of them, in England, are due to his attention. (Notes by Fr. Armand Desautels.)

News from Worcester.

“The last ones to arrive at the college have only begun to get used to the climate and the countryside. Last November, it was almost already winter; no grass in the meadows, no leaves on the trees, but a cold wind and soon the snow came. Until April, there was only one color in the country: the whiteness of a deep snow covering. Now comes the month of May. The snow disappears and the beautiful days begin. Since about ten days now, there is a complete change of scenery: it is spring with its leaves and flowers. Nobody is angry because of this change; the students know how to appreciate it especially. From now on, they find college life bearable. The marvelous baseball games and tennis matches make them forget all the past miseries and give them the patience to get through the rest of the year. The studies are not the winner in this, but only the faculty complains about this. It is especially baseball, the national game, which is the favorite. It consists of only 18 players divided into two teams. However, several games can take place at the same time since the property is large enough for this...”

(Fr. Basile Filaire.)

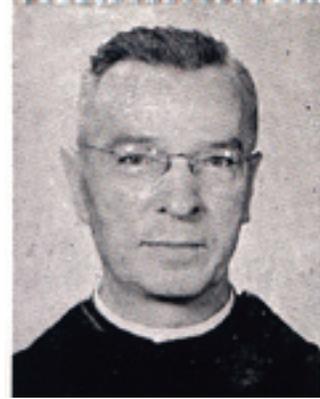
Hermès (André) Fuchs

1888-1960

Alsatian religious of the Province of North America.

Thanks to Fr. Césaire Kayser.

Born at Saint-Hippolyte (Haut-Rhin) November 26, 1888 under the German regime, André was the 9th of 13 children. One of his sisters became an Oblate of the Assumption. Fr. Césaire Kayser introduced him to the Assumption. André began his secondary studies at Saint-Trond, pursued them at Zeperren (Belgium) from 1902 to 1906, and finished them at Taintegnies from 1906 to 1908. *“Of an average intelligence and a bit slow, young André works with great application and gives such an attention to minor details that he always gets honorable grades in his classes”*. August 28, 1908, under the name of Brother Hermès, he took the religious habit at Louvain and spent one month in the solitude of Gempe. *“A novice who is very calm and avoids noise and publicity through timidity of character or modesty, he is open and trusting in spiritual direction. Of a bit of a melancholic nature, he shows excellent dispositions from a religious viewpoint. His family situation is very poor and divided. This incites him to prayer and trust in God”*. Serious, of an impeccable neatness, discreet, and meticulous, Brother Hermès made his first vows August 29, 1909 and his perpetual vows August 28, 1910 at Gempe. He went to Louvain for three years of philosophy (1910-1913). In September 1913, Brother Hermès arrived at the college in Worcester (U.S.A.) where, because of a shortage of personnel during the war, he remained 6 years as a monitor (1913-1919). In 1919, he returned to Louvain for his theology (1911-1922) and was ordained to the priesthood July 23, 1922 at the age of 34.



In the New World.

In 1922, he crossed the Atlantic once again to resume his functions as monitor at the college in Worcester. Strict, demanding, but never unjust, he willingly accepted this ungrateful ministry and filled his free time with some ministry in the nearby parishes. In 1932, Fr. Hermès was sent to the Bergerville novitiate (Quebec), next to the convent of the Sisters of St. Joan of Arc where he met Fr. Marie-Clément Staub, Alsatian like himself and ardent apostle of the Sacred Heart. As treasurer at the novitiate, he begged with the daring of a veteran, had the chapel and the façade of the house repainted, and developed the farm and the gardens. In 1939, he was sent back to Worcester as treasurer. In 1942, he returned to the banks of the Saint-Lawrence to become the chaplain of the Sisters of St. Joan of Arc. The Quebec bishop named him to the pastoral care of immigrants. His knowledge of English and German made this apostolic task much easier for him as he spent long hours on the quays of the river. A gifted preacher, he celebrated the liturgy with great dignity. In 1954, Fr. Hermès was named superior at the Beauvoir Sanctuary. A man of heart and great faith, he developed the fervor of a religious life that was more community oriented, while opening the shrine to collaboration with the priests of that sector. He gave himself over to the pastoral ministry of pilgrimages attached to the shrine, diffused the spirituality and the cult of the Sacred Heart, and left a deep imprint on the hill where he was known as ‘the saint of the mountain’. Under his guidance, the sanctuary witnessed a great growth. In June 1959, he asked to be relieved as superior. From the month of December on, he was confined to his room and celebrated mass seated in his wheelchair. In April 1960, many health problems declared themselves. His breathing became difficult and his tension too high. April 26, 1960, on the feast of Our Lady of Good Counsel, after having received communion, he died peacefully. His funeral was celebrated April 29 in the chapel of the Sisters of St. Joan of Arc. It was presided by Fr. Armand Desautels, superior of the college in Worcester. In the assembly were many representatives of the various religious communities where Fr. Hermès had preached retreats. He was buried in the small cemetery at Bergerville-Sillery.

Addenda.

He was also chaplain for Empress Zita of Austria.

Father Hermès, an Alsatian, came to Worcester as a scholastic to help fill the void created by French religious returning to serve in the armed forces. This was from 1913 to 1919. Finally, he was able to return to his theological studies and his ordination to the priesthood. Then, back to Worcester, where for many years he was a full time monitor, strict and just. Later, he was stationed in Quebec as chaplain to the Sisters of St. Joan of Arc, and preached a great deal during that period. From 1954 to 1959, he was Superior at Beauvoir. He was buried in our cemetery in Quebec. (Notes by Fr. Armand Desautels.)

Some memories.

“I remember the Sunday morning classes of Christian doctrine, the religion courses in High School, German classes in college that we named ‘Der Lehrer Fuchs’... With his real commitment in accepting positions that kept him in the lower ranks, his constant humor that never let us suspect the least interior turmoil on his part, he lent himself to being accused of willful indifference. But having known him, as much as his modesty permitted, I can say that a supernatural serenity tempered in him a German base of tender sensitivity...”

I remember his work as a monitor in the study hall and the dormitory. I remember the night when, Peter, slipped away from his bed and met Father who stopped him with his arm and, frightened, cried out with all his strength: ‘Help! They are killing me!’

I remember the art he had being able to supervise alone and with perfect mastery 125 youths. We studied. The atmosphere wasn’t tense; he was calm and temperate and steady, encouraging our intellectual efforts. He had barely finished the prayer when he would walk around the study hall...”

Bernard Mongeau, M.D. Sherbrooke, QC, 8 November 1958.

I presently have under my care at the Hotel-Dieu of Sherbrooke, Reverend Hermes Fuchs, the present superior of Beauvoir.

At the time of his hospitalization, he was having heart problems with a certain cardiac asthma. These pathological states are now under control. In the course of his hospitalization, the Reverend Father started throwing-up and we didn’t know why. A first set of X-Rays of the stomach showed a gastric ulcer for which he was treated and has now almost completely disappeared.

The throwing-up was not related to his gastric ulcer, and even though the ulcer has almost totally disappeared, the patient still throws-up. We cannot explain this by any organic state. We mention a possible psychological state whose origin is still unknown and that is difficult to justify. Notwithstanding all of the treatments given to date, we have not been able to control them. The special circumstances and the character of each episode of throwing-up make us strongly think that the psyche of the patient plays a role in this but we are unable to be more specific as to the cause or the prognostic (temporary or permanent state?).

We feel that this patient would gain from a rest period away from the hospital and away from his usual milieu. It is clear that his cardiac condition is still present and that is why I suggest that the patient be in convalescence where medical attention is readily available.

Letter from Fr. Hermes to Fr. Henri Moquin, Provincial, dated 1 June 1955.

Please excuse my tardiness in answering your letter of 23 May. We had a confirmation: 23 children. Msgr. Cabana, just as all of the visitors, liked the decorations of the sanctuary. ...Do not worry about my health. When one does one's work with love and not animosity, the health profits from it. I have problems finding a bishop for the feast of the Sacred Heart. Bishop Cabana had suggested Cardinal McGuigan already in January. He is busy as well as 6 others to whom we wrote. And yet we still have hope. ... I often think of the "Monument" that I would like to erect to the Sacred Heart. All of our friends think this is a grandiose and fine idea. Bishop Cabana told me not to get into debt. That is my firm intention. I'll speak to you about this when you visit here... The Sacred Heart will be like a spotlight on top of our hill, a spotlight of love...

Francisco (F.-Felipe) Garcia Gonzalez

1867-1955

Spanish religious of the Province of Paris.



One of the first Spanish A.A.

Born April 30, 1867 at Selga de Ordas in the province of Leon (Spain), Francisco-Felipe did his primary studies in his native village. He then went to various private schools for his secondary studies: Rioseco de Torpia (1880), Vega de Arienza (1881-1882), and the college of San José (1883-1884). He finished his humanities at the Saint-Augustine aluminate at Nîmes (Gard) in France from 1885 to 1887. He got to know the Assumption through the Osma novitiate set up in Castille from 1880 to 1886. He entered the Livry-Gargan novitiate where he took the religious habit September 29, 1887 under the name of Brother Francisco and pronounced his first vows September 29, 1888. His second year of novitiate took place at the Du Breuil house (Deux-Sèvres) where there was a group of philosophers and theologians. While there, he went rapidly through the advanced studies. He did a year of philosophy, pronounced his perpetual vows (November 11, 1889), and did two years of theology (1888-1889). His 3d and final year was spent at Livry where he was ordained a priest August 14, 1891. Right from his time of novitiate under the guidance of Fr. Emmanuel Bailly, he revealed himself to be exactly what he would remain until his death, a wholesome religious. His master of novices esteemed him the best of his year: regularity without fault, a meticulous exactitude, an absolute obedience, and mortifications inspired by the severe mysticism of his compatriots. For months he wore on his arm a chain with iron points that penetrated so deeply into his flesh that a doctor was needed to remove it! This was an exaggeration that was more admirable than imitable showing an extraordinary fervor, but an example that did not risk becoming contagious! Fr. Francisco received his first obedience to the Karagatch aluminate, founded in 1872 in a suburb of Adrianopolis (Bulgaria) where Fr. Galabert established himself in 1869. Fr. Francisco remained there only one year, from 1891 to 1892.

In the New World.

The Chilean mission founded in 1890 by Fr. Stéphane Chaboud was prosperous, but incessantly asked for reinforcements. Fr. Francisco was sent there in 1893, since he spoke Castillian. Having arrived in Chile, he was at first named to the first aluminate set up at Mendoza. It was abandoned after 4 years and would go through many resurrections thereafter. As part of the group of missionaries during 14 years, in the company of a confrere, Fr. Francisco toured the zones of Salitre preaching missions from March to June. He created much enthusiasm. The missionary on horseback, wearing a poncho, preached, confessed, and lectured with a zeal that many Chilean pages echoed: "*Fr. Francisco preaches a lot, confesses even more, and rests from his apostolate discussing politics*". He discussed with conviction and wanted to have the last word. When someone was certain to hold the truth, there was no reason not to be intransigent! In 1911, Fr. Francisco was sent to Los Andes and in 1912 to Rengo, as curate of Fr. Théophile Durafour. But the Spanish parishes of New York needed him. In 1913, Fr. Francisco was transferred to the Northern hemisphere where he joined, at the Our Lady of Esperanza parish, a former companion, Fr. Adrien Buisson, until 1948. It was with tears that he left Chile where he left his heart. He assured an assiduous ministry in the confessional and visited the sick. In 1948, at the age of 80, he went to rest at Assumption College in Worcester integrating himself very quietly into this community, taking advantage of the sermons and conferences that were given. He became the permanent man of prayer, rosary in hand the whole day long, as he walked in the park. Fr. Francisco was not a sullen old man. Playful, spiritual, understanding innocent jokes, he had something of the rock of Gibraltar. From his origins, he kept the integral Catholicism that weathered all changes or novelties. When he was no longer able to celebrate the Eucharist, because of his blindness, he said that he preferred to die! He celebrated his diamond jubilee as a priest! By a miracle, he was spared in June 1953, when a tornado devastated the college and which he barely noticed, thinking that it was 'a draft of strong wind'.

With Fr. Odilon Dubois, he was temporarily housed with the Franciscan Sisters. Bit by bit infirmities took over. As a diabetic, he followed a severe treatment. His legs could no longer carry him and he went from place to place in a wheel chair. In 1955, he went to hospital several times because of irregular heartbeats. He died on Sunday, July 23, 1955, at the age of 88, quietly, without any effort, and without bothering anyone. He was buried January 26 in Worcester next to Frs. Odilon and Engelbert in the small cemetery of the property. *'Open to an immense dawn from the other side of the tombs, the eyes that we close still see'.*

Addenda.

During the tornado, Fr. Francisco was in his wheelchair in the elevator and didn't realize what had happened.

Father Francisco left a saintly reputation in Worcester, where he died after going through the tornado. He came to the Congregation at Osma, in Spain, thinking that he was applying to the minor seminary of the Augustinians. Once he realized his mistake, he decided to stay at the small aluminate we had created near the novitiate. He was an enthusiastic missionary in Chile from 1892 to 1912 and then was curate at Our Lady of Esperanza from 1912 to 1948, particularly appreciated for the confessions he heard. He aged as graciously as a man can at Worcester from then until his death. He was a man of the strict rule, of continual prayer, and of a childlike obedience. (Notes by Fr. Armand Desautels.)

A vocation by contagion.

“On 14 August 1951, Fr. Francisco celebrated his diamond anniversary of ordination to the priesthood at Assumption College in Worcester. Born in 1867, he is therefore 84 years old. It was almost haphazardly that he got to know the Assumption. In 1883 the novices of Osma under the care of Fr. E. Bailly went on a long pilgrimage on foot to the shrine of St. James of Compostella. In all of the places where they passed, the local people admired them for the way they carried themselves and their piety. At Leon, the Assumptionist pilgrims attracted the attention of the young Francisco Garcia and captivated him. At the time, he was a Latin student in a high school of the city. It was love at first sight. A few weeks later, the father brought his son to the Osma novitiate. Adrien Buisson is his mentor: he liked to say how his student, a fanatic partisan of the *sed contra*, wanted to correct him on the meaning and the pronunciation of certain words... In the Orient he had problems with a Turkish policeman who tried to seize his cowl but the brave hidalgo was the winner. Fr. Francisco would rise each day at 4:30; he had already read the complete Bible 3 times”.

As a good religious, he accepted their decision and moved to the College campus in Greendale. Right away he meshed into that community. Knowing he was somewhat slow, he'd leave sooner so as not to be late for a community exercise. He insisted on taking his meals in the refectory with all the other religious, not wanting to require someone to bring him his meals.

His days were free but they were busy. He would make 20 or 30 visits to the chapel daily, and was rarely seen without his rosary beads in his hands. He once told his Superior: “I pray a lot, but I pray badly. I pray for the Congregation, for the Pope, for friends and benefactors.”

He suffered greatly when finally his Superiors forbade him to say the Mass. His eyesight had become so bad that he'd have to read the missal with a large magnifying glass. In the middle of the night, at midnight or three a.m., he'd wake up his neighbors and complain that no one had come to help him dress so he could go to mass. That's the only complaint anyone ever heard him make. Father Armand Desautels said of him that he was the great contemplative soul of the house, and certainly, by his prayers, brought many graces to the community. [ANA , ASITWAS, August-September 2000. Richard Richards,a.a., 17-18]

Marie-Alexis (Arthur) Gaudefroy

1881-1945

Religious of the Province of Paris.



Through mounts and vales.

Arthur-Henri Gaudefroy was born December 20, 1881 at Ligny-Thillois in the Pas-de-Calais. He was first a student of the Taintegnies aluminate (Belgium) from 1892 to 1896, then at Clairmarais (Pas-de-Calais) for humanities from 1896 to 1898 under the direction of Fr. Edouard Bachelier. He entered the Livry-Gargan novitiate September 4, 1898 and took the habit under the name of Brother Marie-Alexis. His first profession was held September 8, 1899 at Livry. His second year of novitiate took place at Notre-Dame of Jerusalem. He pronounced his perpetual vows September 8, 1900 at Mount Carmel, above Haifa, at that time a region situated in the Syrian province of the Turkish Empire. After two years at Jerusalem, Brother Marie-Alexis was sent as a teacher to Karagatch, on the steps of Adrianopolis in European Turkey (1902) and to Varna, a Bulgarian port on the Black Sea. In 1904, he went to Rome to study theology at the Minerva. He was ordained a priest December 21, 1907 by Cardinal Respighi. His qualities of seriousness, piety, and love of regularity and the liturgy marked him for a choice place at the novitiate of Louvain, which was the only one at that time for the whole Congregation (1908).

Director of formation at the novitiate.

Fr. Marie-Alexis followed the novitiate in all of its peregrinations: from Louvain to Gempe (1908-1912), Gempe to Limpertsberg to the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg (1912-1918), Louvain (1917-1918), Saint Gérard (1919-1921). The stay at Luxembourg especially marked him strongly, with all of the problems because of the war and the dispersion to the farms. But he found a practical way to escape the routine thanks to photography. His snapshots served especially to illustrate *L'Assomption* and make it a very distinguished magazine. During the food shortage, he became ingenious: making shoe polish and tooth paste and setting up a repair shop. However, he excelled even more in the teaching of liturgy and in its concrete application during the ceremonies. Meticulous, at times tending to excesses in observances by trial and error, he backed up with a lot of regularity the various Masters of novices in function, Frs. Antoine de Padoue Vidal, Léonide Guyo, and Rémy Kokel... Fr. Marie-Alexis only stayed two years at Saint Gérard. In 1921, he followed the young professed to the Taintegnies philosophy house of studies for a period of six years (1921-1927), but with an unfortunate year as superior at the Arras aluminate (1923-1924). Recourse was made to his help in setting up the Quebec novitiate (Bergerville) from 1927 to 1932. He had some difficulty in adapting himself to the New World where everything did not fit in exactly with his habits and the traditions of the old continent. He crossed the Atlantic to take back his position as 'socius' at the novitiate of Les Essarts (Seine-Maritime). In the solitude of the Normandy forest, he once again took up his secret fabrication of substitute products (1932-1945). It was during this period that he composed, more out of a sense of hagiography than historical precision, short biographical notices of the deceased religious of the Congregation. During World War II, Fr. Marie-Alexis withdrew to Arras. Threatened with a loss of eyesight, but always regular and edifying as a novice, before the liberation he came back to Les Essarts where the novitiate was able to install itself, coexisting with the alumnists of Soisy-sur-Seine. He died on Friday, July 20, 1945 at 64 years old after a few very difficult days of illness and several angina attacks. His body rests in the cemetery of Les Essarts, next to Fr. Jean-Antoine Garde who died in 1930 and Brother Auguste Durand deceased in 1944.

Addenda.

Father Marie-Alexis was the first Master of Novices in Quebec in the late 1920s. The rest of his life he spent as Assistant Master of Novices for the Province of Paris at Les Essarts, near Rouen, and Lisieux, in Normandy. He was less a man to impose a rule than to show by his example the observance of the rule. He was a man of prayer and kindness personified. (Notes by Fr. Armand Desautels.)

A man with a thousand resources.

“Fr. Marie-Alexis was formerly an outstanding photographer. But the war and his vision forced him to give up photography. As the infirmarian of the house, he could teach many things to specialists as far as knowledge of drugs and medicines are concerned. An industrious cobbler, he was able to repair shoes and slippers in the worst state. A do-it-yourselfer with a thousand resources, he repaired watches, patched up bicycles, replaced windows, got door locks in working order, took care of power failures, etc... In short, he was the jack-of-all-trades to whom one could ask anything and whose cell was an infirmary, a workshop, a rendezvous for all that was going wrong in the community. The radio took refuge in his cell and he was the talking newspaper during the war. It was in his cell, since there was no other place to do so, that one got a cup of coffee, herbal tea, or even a nip on special days. As you can see, his person as well as his cell had become common property at the service of everybody”.

(Fr. Louis de Gonzague Martin, Les Essarts, August 1945.)

He was assistant master of novices and sub-prior at Taintegnies before going to Canada after the expulsion of the religious from France in 1927. He arrived in Sillery 18 February 1927. This house had not been built to be a novitiate although it was quite new. In August of 1928, 8 new rooms were added above the chapel. Fr. Tranquille Pesse was the superior and treasurer (1873-1940). On 30 December 1926, Fr. Réginald Bonnet writes that there are 6 postulants, one being a choir brother and on 29 May 1927, Fr. Marie-Alexis states that there are 13 members in the community: 4 priests, 1 lay brother, 1 choir novice, and 7 lay brother postulants. In 1931, the last year that Fr. Marie-Alexis was in Sillery, there are 10 members in the community with 2 novices, one being a choir novice. (Les Assomptionnistes au Canada, Yves Garon, a.a. , Sillery, 1977 , 40-41)

Isidore (Hippolyte-Emile) Gayraud

1874-1958

Religious of the Province of Bordeaux.

Assumptionist family.

Hippolyte Emile Gayraud was born April 4, 1874 at Trémouilles (Aveyrin) in a family that gave three of their sons to the Assumption, the future Frs. Herménégilde, missionary in Turkey, Isidore (our Hippolyte), missionary to Chile, and Léandre, missionary in Rumania. Hippolyte did his secondary studies in the alumnates of Roussas (Drôme) from 1885 to 1886, Notre-Dame des Châteaux (Savoy) from 1886 to 1888, and Nîmes (Gard) from 1888 to 1890. He became a novice at Livry from 1890 to 1892 and had taken the habit August 6. He chose the religious name of Brother Isidore. Fr. Emmanuel Bailly presented him for profession as *one of the best novices, excellent child, intelligent, full of faith and desire, pious, and docile*. He made his perpetual profession August 6, 1892. He went to Rome for his ecclesiastical studies and obtained a double doctorate. For the defense of his thesis in theology, he first presented very ably the opposite thesis to that taught by his professor, Fr. Bucceroni, then declared to the dumbfounded jury: *"I gave you the opposite thesis to that which you expected. You were not able to stump me. Therefore it is not so bad after all. Now to pacify you, here is the thesis that was taught us!"* He was proclaimed unanimously a doctor with the highest distinction. He was ordained to the priesthood in Rome April 16, 1897.



Jerusalem, Worcester.

After a few months of teaching at the college of Nîmes (1897-1898), Fr. Isidore went to teach philosophy at the scholasticate of Toulouse (1898-1899) in Haute-Garonne. When this institution closed its doors because of the expulsions of 1900, he left for Jerusalem to teach the same subject. His clear and solid courses are well remembered. Too bad for the person who objected and was corrected firmly and judiciously! In 1902, Fr. Isidore received a new obedience for North America to serve in the parish of Our Lady of Guadalupe in New York. In 1904, he was chosen to organize with Fr. Thomas Darbois an aluminate that would quickly change to a college (Worcester). He was the one who built the first grotto of Lourdes: gifted with herculean strength, he carried in his arms huge stone blocks that no one else could even lift. Fr. Isidore remained 8 years at Worcester as a teacher and treasurer.

To Chile, Valparaiso, Talcahuano, and Santiago.

In 1911, Fr. Isidore received an obedience for South America. He arrived at Valparaiso October 9 where the Assumption had just taken over the parish of Los Placeres, situated regardless of its name in a disfavored slum, *cerros* where the poor installed their ranchos. Fr. Isidore became the first vice-pastor of the new Esperanza parish, and set up its first church in a store while waiting for the construction of a real church. In 1917, the aluminate of Rengo, near Rengo, was reorganized: Fr. Isidore was called upon to teach basic Latin to the young students. In 1919, he was asked to take over a parish of Talcahuano (1919-1924) at a critical moment when an epidemic of exanthemata typhus was rampant. It took the lives of two religious, Frs. Claudius Pavillet and Louis Deltour. Fr. Isidore built a church dedicated to All Saints in the Arenal quarter. He was also ill, although he had a strong constitution, and had to take a long period of recuperation. In 1924, Fr. Isidore was sent to Santiago where he would stay, except for a few interruptions, until his death in 1958. He was chaplain for the Little Sisters of the Poor. In 1931, he became treasurer, replacing Fr. Victor Duquesne. He proved to be an austere manager of the material interests of the community, concerned with living in poverty. In 1940, a community was established in the Gulf quarter serving as a novitiate and scholasticate. Fr. Isidore, with a double doctorate, was named superior, treasurer, and teacher (1941-1942). He spent a year as a replacement in Valparaiso (1943), came back to the Gulf (1944), did

another interim at Rengo (1945), and returned to take his place at Santiago. From 1945 to 1955, Fr. Isidore continued to help with many services but his health deteriorated: his legs, deformed because of phlebitis, could barely carry him; his hands could no longer serve him and his kidneys made him suffer greatly. At the start of 1958, his weakness only augmented. He died July 15, 1958, at 88 years old, without bothering anyone, just as he had lived, in Santiago. The funeral was celebrated July 16th, feast day of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. Fr. Isidore was buried at Santiago. Fr. Régis Escoubas could write that *with Fr. Isidore, the heroicity of virtues is not a replastering of the final hours, but the crowning point of a life that was a total gift of self.*

Addenda.

Father Isidore, after obtaining doctorates in philosophy and theology, taught philosophy in our scholasticates of Toulouse and Jerusalem. In 1902, he came to New York and was the first superior at Assumption in Worcester, much against his will. Relieved of that burden the following year, he remained in Worcester until 1911 and is a legendary figure among the alumni of that period. Transferred to Chile, he became pastor of the then new parish at Valparaiso, now one of our most interesting houses in that country. The priests were freed for the apostolate among the poor because the material aspects of the parish were taken care of by a committee of lay business and professional men. Later, he was Master of Novices at the novitiate of El Golf, a suburban area of Santiago. (Notes by Fr. Armand Desautels.)

Talcahuano, 1919.

My personal souvenirs of Fr. Isidore go back to the time when we were at Talcahuano, the main military port of Chile. The dirtiness of its streets and the vices of its inhabitants had earned it the reputation as ‘the sink of the country’. And yet, not all was rotten. On this dunghill one could still find good souls. In 1912, the religious found a church and a rectory in a sad state of abandonment and indescribable filth. Rubble accumulated in the back of the church covered the baptismal fonts that had become inaccessible. The spiritual dimension was in an even more sad state. The only priest in charge of the parish had a cloth business that he owned with his brothers. In 1919, the parish was decimated by an epidemic of typhus. Fr. Isidore was sick during 40 days, but he overcame the illness by shots of camphored alcohol [This is a genus of salt-worts of the Midi of France the leaves of which smell of camphor.] and ether to sustain the heart He had gone to preach a mission to the fishermen of Las Tumbes. Since he was robust, he didn’t get excited too easily. He was brought back to the community after two days of travel by boat. I put him in the room left by Fr. Pavillet after his death from typhus; the temperature oscillated between 35C and 42C...”

Eugène (Eugène Léon René) Giraud

1871-1939

Religious of the Province of Bordeaux, missionary to Chile.

Fraternal souvenirs.

In 1939, Fr. Julien Julien (1872-1958) wrote to Fr. Ernest Baudouy who was in charge of the composition of the 'Letter to the Dispersion': "Here is a bit of information concerning Brother Eugène Giraud, recently deceased in Chile. Brother Eugène came to the Assumption as a late vocation. Around 1896-1897, he entered at Montfort (Yonne). (*Mausoleum, Rengo, Chile*)



I think that it was because he was not doing too well in his studies that he asked to become a lay brother and did his postulancy in this house. When I arrived here in 1898, he was no longer here, but his memory remained very much alive with the religious brothers as well as the Catholic community of the surroundings. They said that he was a hard worker, devoted and very resourceful. He had kept good memories of Montfort and François Ier where he had been sacristan. He made efforts to find late vocations. He remained there after the religious had left during the dispersion of 1901. He even was able to save the whole cellar of François Ier and transported everything to the various houses of the religious that had stayed in Paris. I believe that he didn't get along too well with Rev. Schall who was in charge of the chapel of Our Lady of Salvation. In 1902 or maybe the spring of 1903, he spent 2 or 3 months at Louvain and left from there for New York where he was according to Fr. Charles Vermesch in 1904. He was sent to Chile at the end of 1904 or perhaps even 1905.

Biographical reconstituting together.

Eugène Giraud was born at Chauvigny (Vienne) 21 December 1871. We know nothing about his youth. He did his military service at Oran (Algeria) in a Zouave regiment (1892-1895). Then came a period of time as a monitor in an orphanage run by the Salesian Fathers. He hoped to learn enough Latin for priestly studies, but this did not materialize. He next went to the house for late vocations at Montfort (Yonne) where Fr. Rémy Commun received him. In September 1898, he entered the novitiate for lay brothers at Livry. In 1900, he was assigned to serve the community of François Ier Street and remembered having served mass for Fr. Picard. In January 1903, he was at Louvain (Belgium). On 31 March of the same year, Fr. Emmanuel Bailly brought him to New York. Brother Eugène pronounced his first vows 8 September 1904. It was on 18 December 1904 that he left from Marseilles, again with Fr. Bailly, for South America. At the beginning of 1905, he arrived in Chile and was named to the Rengo house. He made his perpetual profession there in 1908 in the hands of Fr. Théophile Durafour. In the course of his 34 years in Chile, he went to the various houses of the mission: everywhere he showed forth his devotedness and his resourcefulness. This underscored what was written in his military dossier: "*Eugène Giraud will be a great male nurse, submissive and very docile.*" In 1920-1921 Brother Eugène takes care of the religious with typhoid fever resulting in eruptions of the skin at Talcahuano. Fr. Marie-Alfred Goettelmann remembered that in 1935 Brother Eugène went each day and sometimes twice a day from Mendoza to Rengo by foot to the hospital where he visited Father in the hospital with anthrax. It was in 1936 that Brother Eugène was sent to Conception to the San Juan of Matha parish. In 1937 he became paraplegic. He wanted to be useful nevertheless, so he wrote up a general listing of the baptisms of the parish. A terrible earthquake ravaged the city of Conception on 24 January 1939 that destroyed the church and the convent. Brother was alone in his cell and thought that his end had come. On 12 April 1939, he was taken to Mendoza by ambulance. He suffered a lot from many open bedsores. He died in the early morning of 4 September 1939. He was buried in the mausoleum of the Rengo parish, next to Fr. Célestin Huff who died 10 July 1938.

Addenda.

From the archives in Chile, we learn that Brother Eugène Giraud was a student for late vocations at Montfort where he took the religious habit in 1897 and then spent three years at the novitiate in Paris. He pronounced his first vows in September 1904. His sister Ms. Marie Giraud lived at Chauvigny. His name in the world was Eugène Léon Giraud-Denis. He was baptized on December 29, 1871 and was born in the Canton of Montmorillon in the diocese of Poitiers. His parents were Xavier Giraud and Rose Armandine Denis.

He did three years of military service in Algeria at Oran. He was a Zouave for a year and then spent two years as a nurse and still had 13 days left to finish his two years. He took the religious habit from the hands of Fr. Théophile Durafour and also made his perpetual vows on 4 May 1908 in his hands at Rengo on the feast of St. Monica.

Bro. Eugène spent one year in New York (1903-1904) and then spent the rest of his life in Chile. He had many skills. One of the most appreciated was the care he gave to the sick.

Talcahuano, 1922.

“Since you left Chile I never wrote to you since I didn’t have the time to do so. There are the sick to care for: Frs. Claudius, Louis Deltour, Marie-Ange, and Isidore. I spent many nights without sleep! You can add to this the work of the house that had to be done, with 4 times as much work because of the to and fro that very ill religious need and that you cannot leave alone. I am in charge of the material things of the house: bedding, dispensary, kitchen, buying, and maintenance of the church as well as keeping the books of the parish. Here things are going as well as possible given the conditions in which we live. We don’t have too much work: people are buried without going through the church. But during the year we had 1,305 baptisms. On Sunday, mass was celebrated for all the sailors and the officers in formal dress. The anniversary of the battle of Iquique was celebrated. Lately I saw in the ‘Noël’ of April an ad for ‘*Notre Paroissien très complet*’ (a missal for the faithful) edited by *la Bonne Presse*. Would you be kind enough to pay a subscription for me? With all of the sick, we had large bills from doctors, medicines and burials. You can add to that the hole that Fr. Jeandel made in the funds: This will give you an idea of our financial state.”

(Bro. Eugène to Fr. Joseph Maubon, 30 May 1922.)

Armand (Jules, Joseph, Ghislain) Goffart

1887-1980

Belgian religious of the Province of North America.

A short biography.

Jules Joseph Ghislain Goffart, brother of Fr. Zénobe, was born at Leignon, in the Belgian province of Namur, June 4, 1887. He was the 7th of 12 children. Fr. Pierre Descamps received him at Bure as a postulant October 15, 1895 with the remark: “*Jules is a good youth: timid, scrupulous, who cries easily if he is scolded too strongly. He arrived at the alumnate in 1901*”. Under the name of Brother Armand, Jules took the religious habit at Bure, an alumnate that had been founded the preceding year, near Grupont. Fr. Marie-Clément Staub received him at the novitiate for lay brothers at Gempe (1906-1908) and sent a report full of praise for his first profession: “*I can only say good things about Brother Armand. During all of his stay at the novitiate, he has been the model of the brothers, as far as piety, work, docility, and good spirit are concerned. He did and will do a lot of good. It is truly a consolation to be able to present such lay brothers to the Congregation*”. Brother Armand pronounced his first vows October 15, 1908 at Louvain. Very quickly, he was sent to serve at the college in Worcester, U.S.A., where he would remain his whole life. He arrived September 4, 1909, and was placed under the guidance of Fr. Omer Rochain who presented him for perpetual profession in 1914, after 6 years of annual vows. He made his perpetual profession June 5, 1915 in Worcester. Brother Armand was named to the college (1909-1970), and then went to the community residence (1970-1980). He died there May 7, 1980 at the ripe age of 93. His funeral was celebrated May 10. He worked in almost all of the trades: assistant treasurer, infirmarian, printer, head of the kitchen, and storekeeper. He had some noteworthy character traits: teaser and grumbler, quick to answer and full of humor, nervous and hard worker, tendency to criticize, enjoyer of good cigars, but always available and fraternal.



Fraternal echoes after a half-century of service.

In 1959, Brother Armand celebrated his double golden jubilee of religious profession and presence at the college. Fr. Roland Leroy evoked in the following manner the long stay of his confrere: “*Brother exercised in our walls almost every trade, from the kitchen where he presided over the ovens in the heroic times to the wine cellar where he reigned alone or almost. In charge of the infirmary, he always gave a maternal care to the sick students or the aspirant sick, protecting them from the revenge of the deans or teachers in case they fell too often in the same situations. Concerning the religious, he preferred to be on the defensive and kept them in tow in order to avoid relapses on their part and/or convalescences that were too prolonged. ‘You have a cold? It will pass. Do as I do; blow your nose!’ But Brother, it is chronic! ‘Come on, get going! I’ll see you later’. And the patient would leave mumbling. He is not easy, this Sugar (In fact, he is called ‘Sugar’ or ‘Lil’ Boss’ by all). However, those who know him always finish by getting what they want. When he was younger, Brother Armand developed the infirmary, installed in the attic storeroom, on the 4th floor. With the help of Brother Arthur and two devoted volunteer students, Deshaies and Rancourt, Brother Armand printed up sheets with the monthly grades, programs for performances, menus for banquets, all artistically composed, etc. His banquets have always enjoyed a very deserved reputation for their quality and the timely order of the service. The religious sisters, under his direction, served menus worthy of the greatest occasions and for the reception of eminent members of the Church hierarchy, diplomats, and military personnel. During the spring, summer, and fall, he found the time to clean, water, and plant the flowerbeds and care for the property of the School. In community life, he is a live wire, always ready to answer those who tease him or have complaints that are more or less justified, often just to make him talk. His quick replies hit the nail on the head and put a lot of joy in the religious. His easy manner and know-how, his opportuneness, his thoughtfulness and good manners with visitors, alumni, and new students earned him great attachment, manifested not only in words, but in ribbons, diplomas, decorations, and souvenirs. In short, everyone admits and proclaims all that the community, the alumni, and the present students owe Brother Armand”.*

In fact, Brother Armand received several marks of esteem and appreciation: in 1934, he became a Knight of Leopold II. In 1959, the college-dining hall was named the 'Goffart Dining Hall'. In 1975, he was awarded the "Médaille Grand Prix" by La Société Historique Franco-Américaine in Boston.

Addenda.

He was in charge of summer maintenance: refurbishing and painting. Brother Armand was in charge of purchasing, especially for the kitchen. After his shopping sprees in Worcester, the summer workers would wait for him to come back with sweets. One of his great joys was to smoke cigars. Bro. Armand became an American citizen in 1922.

"I have built you a dwelling, a place to live forever."(1 Kings 8:13-21) This is the way King Solomon stood and prayed before the God of Israel, in the city of Jerusalem that his father, David, had built. The city was strong and beautiful. But there was no house for the Lord. It was Solomon who was to build the first temple, magnificent in beauty. On the day of Dedication, he prayed to Yahweh: "I have built you a dwelling, a place to live forever."

This year, Assumption College celebrates its 75th anniversary. In the year of that anniversary, Brother Armand died. This morning, it's easy for us to picture him standing before his Lord and saying in his humble and proud way: "I have built you a dwelling, a place to live forever." Ninety-two years, even seventy-five years, make a man old. Seventy-five years only mark the beginning of an institution. Brother Armand was already beginning his religious life in Belgium when Assumption College was founded. And Assumption College was only five years old when Brother Armand was told by the Superior General: "You will go to Greendale, Canada, my son." I've often wondered about the validity of such an appointment. But, Brother Armand came anyway.

Today, as we bid farewell, we all sense the importance of his role in the history of Assumption College. I would like for us to ponder a question together this morning: What is it that gives life to an institution? To do this, let us join Jesus and His disciples in the Temple and be with them and learn from what happened and from what was said. Jesus and His disciples are looking at the same things but seeing them differently...

We have to be impressed that, for over 60 years, Brother Armand did all kinds of work at the College and the Prep School. He proctored, he kept the house clean, he did the buying, he took care of the kitchen, he bossed people around. Of course, he did his very best to keep the Fathers humble. Today we compare him with the widow of the Gospel and we say with Jesus: "He did more than all the rest." We do this without denying the greatness of those who came before and after him.

Only 4 months ago we were in this chapel, admiring another man who had given his life for the College. We marveled at all he had done in the life of the students. It isn't because we look at the contribution of one man today that we forget that of another. It's the same coin with two sides that these two Assumptionists had in common. Each in his own way had taken hold as precious the wisdom of God. While the one taught in the classroom and the other ran up and down corridors, both were reaching out to the same students with the same wisdom. How could this be? It is because they both loved the same God, they both loved the same truth, and they both loved the same youth..

I suppose that when Jesus had finished His lesson He hoped that His disciples would understand. But we have to doubt that this was so. Their response is to jump to something else: "Did you notice the size of these stones? The size of these buildings?" Jesus' response is cold and realistic: "There is going to be a day when there won't be a stone left upon a stone. It will all crumble."

These words are real for us who have lived the history of Assumption College. We know how fast quick can be! We know how dusty proud towers can become. The disciples say nothing... After a while, they ask the question that weighs heavily upon them: "When? When is all this going to take place?"

... Brother Armand, in his long life, had many nicknames, and it is marvelous how his nicknames follow his life story. When he was very busy and took care of everything, he was called 'Ti-Boss.' When he slowed down, his final responsibility was the Candy Store. Then, the students called him "Sugar." ... Behind the nickname was a penetrating insight into the person. The students had understood what this man had always been, what it was he had remained, and how it was that he had grown. Of his sweetness we have all tasted.

... Brother Armand had little book knowledge, but he knew God. Brother Armand, who loved many people and had countless friends, loved God. And Brother Armand, in his example of this full life, gave us the picture of someone who served. [Funeral homily by Fr. Edgar Bourque, Provincial, May 10, 1980]

Worcester Telegram, Friday, May 9. 1980.

Brother Goffart, at Age 92, An Assumptionist for 75 years

Brother Armand Goffart, A.A., 92, known by alumni of Assumption Preparatory School and Assumption College as “petit boss” and “Brother Sugar” died Wednesday night in St. Vincent Hospital. He lived at the Assumptionist Home for Retired Religious Brothers, 246 Salisbury St. He joined the Augustinians of the Assumption in 1905. Brother Armand saw Assumption Preparatory School’s first class graduate in 1912 and the last class in June 1970.

A native of Laignon, Namur, Belgium, Brother Armand came here in 1909. He had served as assistant treasurer and steward at the school, and as a chef who ran the kitchen, was gardener, printer, and director of the student summer cleanup crew.

He took his first vows when he was 21, and took perpetual vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience in 1915. The dining hall at the school was named in his honor in 1959. In 1934, the Belgian government made him a Knight of Leopold...

Assumption Preparatory School Alumni Association.

Bro. Armand Goffart, a man of roguish temperament, is a religious who radiates love. Love, which generously beams forth as a friendliness toward whomever he has had to contact in the line of his many duties. Love, which for 60 full years has lived in the service of the young People of God at Assumption as an ardent disciple of Martha, without whom Jesus might have gone hungry.

Love, which as a true follower of d’Alzon, has been straightforward, generous, and self-effacing. Love, that has made Assumption the better for his having given it to us.

For Christian Love, Assumption is grateful and it is with fraternal affection that, on this 27th day of April, in the year of Our Lord 1969 and in the 65th year of this institution, we, the Alumni of Assumption Preparatory School do proclaim you

Bro. Armand Goffart, A.A., Honorary Alumnus and member of the Hall of Fame.

We already know the brilliant service of Bro. Armand Goffart as general steward, infirmarian, printer, major-domo, and servant of the servants of God. Our little Belgian deserved that his merits be pointed out to the ambassador of his country and that a request be made that he receive a decoration...

Bro. Armand Goffart is a religious of the Assumption. He was born at Leignon (Namur Province) 4 June 1887. Our Congregation, even though it was founded in France, is spread throughout the world and has many Belgians as members. Assumption College has almost always had Belgians among the faculty. Bro. Armand is one of them.

In September, it will make 25 years since his arrival in Worcester. In the house, which is the rendezvous for all those who speak French in New England, he is a most appreciated factotum. Many meetings, conferences, and banquets took place here and he took part in their organization.

He is nicknamed the “good little Belgian”. Little, he is so by his size, but he is big by his heart and the moral qualities that reflect on his country. He loves his country deeply and as Frenchmen, we love him in the same way...

Let me also add, even though this does not add anything to his personal merits, that his father, an old man of 86, served his country in 1870 as a border guard; one of his brothers, an invalid of the World War, died after being wounded and having been decorated 8 times; a second brother is assistant chief at the Secretariat of Queen Elisabeth of Belgium and has received 9 Belgian and foreign decorations; a third brother serves the Baron Carton of Wiart, former minister of Foreign Affairs who was also decorated 5 times. That is not all. A fourth brother is a missionary in Chile and Vicar-Provincial of our Order in South America; a fifth brother is a missionary in Algeria.

One of his cousins, a spy for Belgium during the World War, was arrested by the Germans and so brutalized that he died soon after.

[Fr. Crescent Armanet, A.A., Superior from L'Assomption, June 1934, 150-151.]

Here is a menu for the banquet served 19 October 1968.

Macédoine de fruits rafraîchis au vin de Samos

Hors d'oeuvres variés

Consommé velouté au tapioca

Bouchée St. Hubert

Omelette au Rhum

Filet mignon flanqué de Champignons

Sauce nature

Pommes mimosa

Jardinière

Pâtisserie

Glace en belle vue

Café

Cigare

Admirable and Holy Words Pronounced by Bro. Armand Goffart during the Last Days of his Life to Rev. E. Zender.

1. *I am indifferent to all: that they praise me or scorn me, I don't care.*
2. *My only happiness is to live in union with Jesus, rest on his heart, abandon myself to His holy and adorable will.*
3. *When I needed someone, I prayed my Guardian Angel and the person would come immediately.*
4. *All, yes all for God! Some tell me, you will be cured; others say, soon you will no longer be alive; it doesn't matter to me, as long as I do the will of my God.*
5. *I love God not because of the countless things Jesus Christ has done for me, but for Himself, for Him alone because He is infinitely loveable.*
6. *I willingly sacrificed all; I want to suffer greatly; I want to die to go and be united to Jesus in heaven.*
7. *I saw my dad, my good dad this afternoon; I am happy because he bravely offered his son in sacrifice to God. Oh! I am certain that God will console them, bless them, reward them. Oh! How happy I am now to die.*
8. *I had been here several days and not used to isolation; Finding myself in my chair, I felt very lonesome; I got up, took my crucifix and squeezed it tightly in my hands, then on my heart and immediately I felt strength, calm, peace, and happiness come back into my heart.*
9. *When I will no longer be able to receive communion, I'll place my dear crucifix on my heart.*
10. *It is holy Eucharist that always helped me suffer bravely, that always consoled me in my sufferings, Happy the souls that receive Communion well and often. It is Holy Communion that sustains our good sisters in their devotedness.*

11. *With the crucifix in one hand and the rosary in the other, I fear nothing.*
12. *Regardless of all my sufferings and the perspective of dying soon and so young, I explode with joy like St. Paul.*
13. *I am very sad not to be able to say my rosary any more; I recite it mentally and in part. This devotion to the Blessed Virgin by the rosary that obtained for me precious graces especially that of conforming myself in all things and everywhere to the Holy will of God.*
14. *I enjoyed music a lot; now, it is indifferent to me; I must detach myself of all and attach myself totally to God.*
15. *To suffer in God and for God is here below the most sublime happiness.*
16. *The Pastor of Leignon and the Curate came to see me; they spoke of the parish; I listened and that was all. Everything remains indifferent to me; I must only occupy my mind with God.*
17. *I would like to die tomorrow, the feast of St. Joseph or March 25. May the will of God be done!*
18. *While holding his crucifix firmly: The wounds of Our Lord were big and deep. He was not in a bed like me: Do I have the right to complain? Oh no, my God, may Your holy will be done in me!*
19. *Since my good dad and my beloved mother told me that they had made the sacrifice of their child to God, I am stronger, happier to die.*
20. *I can no longer pray or prepare myself for Holy Communion. I say: "My God, I give myself totally to You. I firmly believe and I love You with all my soul.*

The devil wants to tempt me, but I remain calm and strong because Jesus is in me and with Jesus, I fear nothing.

Speech by Bro. Armand on the Occasion of his 60th Anniversary of Profession Banquet.

Here is another day that the Lord has given for the last days of my pilgrimage here below. You have just thanked Our Lord with me for the many graces that have been given during my 60 years of profession. After my silver jubilee, my golden jubilee, I now arrive at my diamond jubilee. May God be praised! According to our custom, upon leaving the chapel we meet for a celebration and that is normal. Did Our Lord do otherwise at Cana where the excellence of His wine brought joy to the hearts beyond all expectations?

We have come together to rejoice. It is understood that all here present expect a speech from me. So as not to bore you, I wrote down on paper what I thought I should say to you. Do not worry, I'll read my little text loudly.

(He then went on to thank many people who had come to the celebration.)

Michel-Ange (Michel) Gomez

1901-1996

French religious of the Province of South Belgium.



A man, a century, four continents, a thousand ideas.

It is difficult to write the life of this religious, unless we only signal the major events in his life.

Michel Georges Gomez was born at Ascq (Nord) November 17, 1901. He entered Le Bizet (Belgium) in 1913 to start his humanities. But war forced him to pursue his studies at Marcq-en Baroeul, in Lille, at the Jesuit college of Saint-Joseph. In 1919, he returned to the Assumption at the alumnales of Zepperen and Vinovo (Italy). He took the habit September 24, 1920 at Saint-Gérard and made his first vows there September 25, 1921 under the name of Brother Michel-Ange. He taught two years at the Saint Augustine college at Philippopoli-Plovdiv (Bulgaria). He returned to Belgium at Taintegnies for his philosophy that he finished at Louvain (1924). At that time, he was sent to Rome (1925-1929) and obtained a licentiate and doctorate in theology. Perpetually professed November 1, 1926, he was ordained a priest July 7, 1929.

A brilliant and worried teacher (1929-1951).

After two years at Saint-Edme in Sens (1929-1931) and a year at Pontlevoy (1931-1932), he taught at the Nîmes College (1932). At that time, Fr. Michel-Ange belonged to the Paris province. Dynamic, a hard worker, and demanding, he prepared at the same time a licentiate in Letters at Montpellier. Haunted by a desire for eremitic life, he went for a trial period to the Carthusians (Beaulieu-les-Fontaines, 1932-1934). He then taught once more at the alumnales of Chanac (1935-1936) where his severity was a problem, then at the college of Saint-Louis in Perpignan (1936-1945). He elaborated a plan to reform the pedagogy. In 1946, he was taken up with the desire to be a missionary: quite unstable, he exhausted all of the houses of the province of Paris (Les Essarts, Clairmarais, Saint-Denis, Montéchor). Intelligent but unstable, Fr. Michel-Ange gave the impression of living several lives at once.

Under all latitudes, in a hotchpotch of initiatives.

In September 1948, he obtained his excommunication for the diocese of Lille. Two years later, he asked to be reintegrated and in 1951 he was transferred to the province of Bordeaux. He was then sent, according to his wish, to Latin America in mission country: Argentina (Santos Lugares), Chile (Valparaiso, 1952), and Eugenopolis in Brazil (1954-1962) with an indult to be detached to the interior missions. In 1962, he was in the northern hemisphere teaching at Bury in the province of Quebec (1962-1965), then again in Brazil where he taught English (1966-1968). He returned to France for pastoral services: Fumel, Chaville (Carmel). In 1971, he wanted to improve his English to go and make a foundation in Ireland. He went to Gosselies in Belgium, desirous of taking language courses at Mons, but never took these courses. The provincial of South Belgium, Fr. Pierre Charon, regularized his situation by obtaining his affiliation (1980). He remained 20 years at the college Saint-Michel, always pursued by many projects: pedagogical, agricultural, third world, linguistics. They were a reflection of his life: eclectic, at times esoteric, but always original. In 1978, he published a *'Living Way of the Cross'* in French with reproductions by René de Cramer. Vegetarian, tireless reader, self-taught for all, including his medicines, he thought that the climate at Lorgues would be better for his painful articulations. He asked for his transfer. He arrived there September 14, 1991. He started working once again on editing projects, while telling anyone who wanted to listen that he was well cared for in this 'five-star death house'. He ended up dying there on Sunday, September 15, 1996. He was buried 'next to his

Fathers' September 17, putting an end to an existence that had been quite original, always in motion on the geographical level as well as that of ideas, with an unchallenged generosity, but with a fecundity of projects that was at very least embarrassing.

Addenda.

Fr. Michel-Ange got his Licentiate in Letters from the University of Montpellier in France in June 1942 and also certificates in Latin, Greek, French, and the Philology of these three languages. His Doctorate in Theology was from the Angelicum in July 1929 with a written thesis on Saint Augustine. On Saturday, 31 March 1962, Fr. Michel-Ange Gomez arrived in New York. While at Bury, he went "twice to Lake Elgin where I lived as an Iroquois while paddling my canoe on the lake." (Letter dated 12 July 1963.) An option concerning our charism

"The preparation of the Holy Year [1975] is centered on the return to our sources, concretely for our General Chapter to try to define the 'Charism of Fr. d'Alzon'. This is a useless exercise. As a living form of the action of the Holy Spirit, the charism is basically indefinable. As all living things, it acts especially by contagion. The action of Fr. d'Alzon's charism is very perceptible in his immediate disciples: Picard, Bailly, Pernet. The best biographers have already delimited this. But after that, we have the fog. Our ideal is to be simple footsoldiers as working Assumptionists, like Fr. Jean de la Croix Laurent, who died in 1923. In my eyes, he lived this out the best. The stamp that Fr. d'Alzon printed in his spiritual sons made me feel this charism. At the time, I pressured Fr. Saint-Martin to publish his souvenirs concerning our old Master. At the request of Fr. Alype Pétrement, it would seem that he wrote a short memoir. What happened to it? The theme of the charism is the 'cream pie' of the 31st general congregation of the Jesuits (1965-1966). It was a disappointment according to Fr. Aucagne himself..."

(Fr. Michel-Ange.)

Letter from Fr. Michel-Ange Gomez to the North American Provincial dated 5 November 1982 from Bury, Quebec.

My very Reverend and dear Father,

From our meeting during your canonical visitation, the most encouraging impression that I retained is that you are preparing with the greatest disinterestedness the bases for a future Canadian Province and a Mexican Province. A great hope surged up in me: that of a key role in Brasilia. It was in your hands for some time concerning a Spanish foundation in Brazil in 1959. It was dropped. Since the creation of Brasilia, this has become the center of gravity for Brazil replacing Rio de Janeiro. A quick glance at a map shows that this would be a fine starting point for any mission. Brasilia is close to "Sertao Goiano", barely 800 km. from the regions that I used to travel in since 1957. Further on is the Amazonian region, almost untouched. The Amazon basin starts there since the site of the new capital was marvelously chosen as it sits on the high-plateau where 4 large rivers start... This high Plateau of Brasilia is the healthiest of Brazil being situated at 1100 and 1200 meters. Missionaries could rest and recuperate there. (Whereas, the coastal region, especially Rio de Janeiro, is hot and humid and quite depressing.) These few details are certainly sufficient for you, Reverend Father, since you have already dealt with analogous problems for the mission of Mexico. I am sure that you can appreciate the importance of having an Assumptionist parish right in Brasilia – [without even mentioning the financial benefits that the parish could eventually bring to the mission.]

Polyeucte (Firmin, H. - J.) Guissard

1891-1965

Religious of the Province of South Belgium, transferred to the Province of North America.



Curriculum vitae.

Firmin Henri Joseph Guissard was born September 27, 1891 at Mousny-Ortho, in the province of Luxemburg. He pursued his secondary studies at Bure (1902-1905) and at Taintegnies (1905-1907). September 11, 1907 was the day that he took the religious habit at Louvain under the name of Brother Polyeucte and then made his first vows September 12, 1908. Professed perpetually September 12, 1909 at Gempe where he did his second year of novitiate, he studied philosophy at Louvain (1909-1912) and while there, taught cosmology and psychology (1912-1913). Taintegnies kept him to teach rhetoric for a year (1913-1914) and during World War I, he did his military service in the Belgian army (1914-1919) in health services. He returned to Louvain to study theology (1919-1921) and went to Worcester (U.S.A.) from 1921-1929 where he taught philosophy, political economics, pedagogy, and jurisprudence. From 1929 to 1937, Fr. Polyeucte lived in Brussels where he preached, accompanied pilgrimages to Jerusalem, and collaborated with *La Croix*. From 1932 to 1937, he was second counselor and professor of moral theology at Louvain; from 1937 to 1940, he was superior, professor of moral theology and political economics at Louvain. From 1941 to 1946, he was a preacher at Manage. From 1946 to 1950, he was transferred to the Generalate Works in Paris. Finally, from 1950 to 1965, he was transferred to the North American Province where he devoted himself as a professor at the college in Worcester. He died in Worcester December 19, 1965 at the age of 74 after a trying period during the whole summer of 1965 when he had double pneumonia and a series of edemas from which he did not heal. So punctual all his life, he lost his memory of places and situations and could barely write legibly. His death was peaceful, without an agony, like that of a lamp that goes out, worn out after a long usage. Fr. Polyeucte was buried in Worcester.

A professor with talent.

Fr. Polyeucte left the souvenir of an admirable teacher, admired by his students, knowing how to encourage them. He was also a writer who loved his Congregation, a preacher, and a Christian humanist. Sensitive and thoughtful, with a humor that came into play when he moved his lips, he was an untiring worker in the service of the Kingdom.

The following text was pronounced in memory of Fr. Polyeucte in the church of Ortho, on Saturday, January 8, 1966. Its report is by Fr. Richard Maas. Fr. Polyeucte is the uncle of Fr. Lucien Guissard.

The tolling for the dead, played by the buglers during the consecration, the 'Brabançonne', after the absolution chant, reminded us of the special place that his tiny country had in Fr. Polyeucte's heart. After the religious ceremony, the priests in attendance were invited to the rectory, where Reverend Paulus received them. The choir of the church at Ortho is decorated with paintings. Behind the altar, above a wide series of crosses with the words 'Pax, Lux, Via, Vita', is found a scene that Fr. Polyeucte must have contemplated and meditated upon during his final days in Belgium, he who loved so dearly his native land, with all that it hides of tenacity and deep Christian faith. The Trinity is represented, and from the cross of the Son presented by the Virgin of the Assumption, the mediatrix, rays shoot out and one of them rests on the paten that a young priest shows us. 'Suscipe, sancta Trinitas, hanc oblationem': these words written next to the scene that dominates the whole altar, are they not the faithful summary of the whole life of Fr. Polyeucte? Undoubtedly he remembered all that he owed to the Virgin. He, whom we often met, rosary in hand, without any doubt, remembered his own ordination to the priesthood, but he also must have expressed his thanks for having kept during his whole life a freshness with a youthful heart and a spirit that was familiar to us. He abhorred mediocrity in all its forms, yet knew how to encourage the minutest good will. He had

the desire to see his religious family grow. May he help generosity to bloom in the heart of many youths and transmit to others the deep qualities that he had here below!

A remarkable figure because of his superior intelligence, his passion for work, an esteemed lecturer, a prolific writer, Fr. Polyeuete reaped abundant admiration, praises, and gratitude.

Addenda.

Fr. Vincent de Paul Bailly received Brother Polyeuete's vows in 1909. He was ordained August 7, 1921. During his military service, he was mustard gassed and received the Croix de Guerre. Fr. Polyeuete also taught French literature and sociology at Assumption College. He wrote a history of the Assumptionist alumnates and another book on the centenary of the Assumptionists.

Around 1964, as we went by the open door to his room in Alumni Hall, we could see Fr. Polyeuete puffing away on a big cigar. He had meticulously prepared all his classes (in philosophy or French literature) and was now relaxing by doing some light reading. He loved detective novels, especially those by Agatha Christie. Maybe he felt a special attraction for her famous Belgian sleuth, Hercule Poirot, because Father Polyeuete too was Belgian.

Trying to tell the story of Father Polyeuete briefly is impossible, simply because he did so many things for so many years. But let's try... Father Polyeuete came to the United States for the first time in 1921. At Assumption College, he was professor of philosophy, political economy, pedagogy, and jurisprudence, from 1921 to 1929. He was then called back to Europe. He was called upon to preach, to lead pilgrimages to Jerusalem, and to collaborate at La Croix. From 1932 to 1937, he taught moral theology at Louvain. From 1937 to 1940, he was superior at Louvain and added political economy to the courses he taught. He was a preacher, 1941-1946, and then worked at the Oeuvres Généralices, 1946 to 1950, as literary critic for La Croix. In August 1950, he was transferred to the United States again, where he taught philosophy and French literature until his death, December 19, 1965.

From the above dates and places, we can conclude that Father Polyeuete's life was busy and varied. To his war service in World War I he added the fact of having the house of which he was the Superior blown up in World War II. He was a teacher and a preacher. He wrote a number of books: 'Portraits Assumptionists' (short biographies of early Assumptionists); 'Histoire des Alumnats' (a large volume on the minor seminaries of the Assumptionists); 'Un siècle d'histoire Assumptioniste' (the centenary of our foundation in 1950; 'Life of Father d'Alzon'; and a 'History of the Antonian Sisters' (who were the College cooks in Greendale). Father Polyeuete's French was impeccable, even if it was somewhat florid and hyperbolic, and sometimes given to the puns that francophones seemed to love so much. With a smile on his face, he would assert that he had sung the Easter Vigil, 'Exultet', 'hundreds of times.' His command of the language was so great that he once told a college student that he would that evening speak for an hour and say nothing. And he did just that.

Father Polyeuete's memory was legendary. An alumnus, Paul Ducharme, once wrote how he and three seniors of Assumption College were talking to Father about the power of concentration and the faculty of memory. They dared him to prove it. They gave him a little known play by Corneille entitled, 'Rodrigue', about 2,000 verses long. "Give me two hours," said Father Polyeuete. Two hours later he started reciting the 2,000 verses as if he were reading from the text. The seniors were deeply impressed.

After the tornado of 1953, Father Polyeuete taught many of the graduate courses in French literature, at 1010 South Main and on the new Salisbury campus. For his many years of teaching French literature he was awarded the Chevalier des Palmes Académiques by the French government. He often lectured in the auditorium of the Maison Française, using slides, but especially calling upon his encyclopedic knowledge of French civilization.

Fr. Polyeuete loved punctuality, and consequently, walked very fast, for example, going from Alumni Hall to the Taylor dining hall. He walked with his twisted gait, which caused the students who saw him rush to nickname his "Sidestep." Fr. Polyeuete was above all else a model of piety and regularity. His preaching was effective because anyone could see that he lived what he preached. He was an exemplary religious and a zealous priest.

[ASITWAS, ANA, February-March 1999, 3-4, by Fr. Richard Richards, A.A.]

Letter from Fr. Armand Desautels, Provincial to Fr. Istage, 13 January 1966.

As you well know, Fr. Polyeucte came a first time to the United States in 1921. He started teaching 1st year high: French, Latin, history and religion. The following year, he taught philosophy until he left in 1929.

I was never his student during those years, but I was in the house from 1922 to 1928, and left for the novitiate after my 2nd year of college. However, among his students were Fr. General and Fr. Henri. He was – naturally, we had echoes -- the same teacher that we had later at Louvain, with the same spirit, the same verve, the same way of exaggerating. But his courses were solid, and I don't know any alumnus of Worcester who didn't keep a good souvenir of his classes.

He confessed a lot. He and Fr. Léocade Bauer divided up almost all of the students if I remember well. He also preached a lot, and had in this field the same reputation that he later had in Brussels. In fact, when I preached at his funeral, I had to start by saying that I would be extremely simple, and that this was necessary since the contrast would have been too great if I had tried to be eloquent. After 40 years, one remembers few sermons; and yet, I remember very well one of his, dealing with the star of the Magi. This had an influence on my vocation. He preached very often at the College, especially on the First Fridays of the month. He also went on parish ministry every weekend.

When he returned in 1950, he became professor of French literature for the juniors and seniors of the College, and in the evening, for the externs who came for the Master of Arts courses. He was always brilliant, clear, loved by the students, among whom were many sisters. If he had a fault in his teaching, it was to explain too much – and there are faults that are more serious than that one – and to be too fluent for the weaker students. He taught his classes as a priest, judging all of the authors presented according to his faith. One only has to read his articles in the Worcester magazine 'l'Assomption' to see that this is so. He really enjoyed the evening classes.

He never missed a class, even when he had to drag himself to it. Because of his infirmity, he was sometimes driven so that he would not fall on the ice or because of the snow. He read a lot, and wrote every day. In fact, in his next to last attack, when it looked like he would recuperate, he told me that he knew full well that he would not be able to teach again – and yet he did teach again – but that he could always read to help his successor.

Until 1963, he was a councilor for the community, always seeking peace. He was the spiritual director for many religious, and in this way helped us a lot. He was the confessor of the bishop of Worcester who wanted to preside at his funeral.

Like Fr. d'Alzon, he died used up. He went through two wars as you know, plus the tornado in 1953. Since a few years, we could see him getting weaker day by day. We had lightened his teaching load, but we never wanted to stop it – that would have broken his heart. He often spoke of death, especially on the occasion of religious that he had known. But it was always with a great serenity. I have rarely seen such serenity when faced with death. It came out when I administered him during his next to last stroke.

In his last days, he kept losing his memory and would stop in the midst of a class. He was very aware of this. A week before the end, he was brought to St. Vincent's Hospital in Worcester. We always thought that he had a heart condition, and he was treated for that, and it was the strength of his heart that prolonged his life by several days. He died in his sleep, very peacefully.

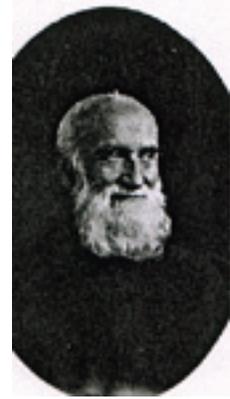
Marcellin (Charles Emile) Guyot

1840-1924

French religious.

A traveling apostolic missionary.

Born June 18, 1840 at Neuville (Meuse), Charles Emile Guyot, after his primary schooling at Comercy, went to the minor seminary of Verdun for his secondary studies. It was also in the diocese of Verdun that he studied philosophy and theology at the major seminary. He was ordained to the priesthood May 21, 1864. At first, he was named curate in a Verdun parish, then pastor at Auzéville-en-Argonne and Bonzée (1864-1876). Fr. Picard received him at the novitiate in Paris December 11, 1876. Fr. Charles Emile took the name of Father Marcellin, pronounced his first vows in December 1877, and his perpetual vows December 21, 1878. He spent a year at the orphanage of Fr. Halluin at Arras (Pas-de-Calais), then in 1878-1879, two years at Paris (1879-1881), before consecrating his dynamic apostolate to the Eastern mission. He was often on conference or collection tours in various places. He arrived at Adrianopolis in November 1881, accompanied by Mrs. Germer-Durand who had become Sister Marie-Cécile. His obediences were varied and itinerant: Adrianople (1881-1883), Constantinople (1883-1884), Paris (1884-1890), and Constantinople (1890-1892). Then Fr. Marcellin was part of the founding team for the mission in Louisiana in the U.S.A. (1892-1899), an experiment of evangelization in the black milieu. This was followed by a new stay in Paris (1897-1898). The police searches of 1899 found him at the Notre-Dame de Consolation aluminate at Laubat (Charente-Maritime) where his originality, never lacking, expressed itself in comical scenes: he showed his American citizenship papers to the police. Fr. Marcellin then went to Clairmarais (Pas-de-Calais) from 1900 to 1901 before being assigned to the nascent mission in England: London-Bethnal Green (1901-1903), and Charlton (1903-1914). At the start of World War I, he went back to the European continent and found that he was stranded at Louvain (1914-1919). After the conflict, he was off once again: San Remo in Italy (1919-1920), Gemenos, near Marseilles (Bouches-du-Rhône) where he served as chaplain of an agricultural orphanage (1920-1921), San Remo (1921), the novitiate at Notre-Dame de Lumières (Vaucluse) in 1921 and 1922, and finally Notre-Dame de France in Jerusalem, where he found a bit of stability: He received pilgrims and became a guide for the archeological digs of the future church of Saint Peter of Cock-Crow. He died there at the age of 84, February 22, 1924 and was buried in the vault of Saint Peter of Cock-Crow.



A first class originality.

Besides very real virtues, everything in the life of Fr. Marcellin is marked with a stamp of originality that borders on strangeness, and when it is pointed out to him, he is the first to laugh about it. I still see him, at the beginning of the war, arriving from Louvain with verbal instructions from Fr. Emmanuel Bailly for the Fathers of Taintegnies. Fr. Marcellin was dressed in a strange way, clergyman style: a long white beard, close-fitting garment too small for his size, a huge top hat. The travelers took him for a Prussian spy and, at their request, the stationmasters stopped the train three times between Brussels and Tournai to ask for his papers. Smiling and like a good Frenchman, he showed his honorary American citizenship papers obtained because of his devotedness as a missionary in America. And when he came face to face with the civic guards that blocked the road near the aluminate, but who, on my recommendation, let him pass, I said to him: "Truly, Father Marcellin, you are really dressed in a strange attire!" He answered me without blinking: "That's it, you are just jealous!" [According to Fr. Edouard Bachelier.]

Addenda.

In 1892, Fr. Marcellin Guyot (1840-1924) came to Canada, sent by Fr. Picard, to foster pilgrimages on the occasion of the Eucharistic Congress of 1893 in Jerusalem. He went back in the summer of 1896. [*Les Assomptionnistes au Canada, Yves Garon, A.A., 1997, 12.*]

The resistances of a bishop

“I saw Msgr. yesterday. At first, our meeting was gracious, then cold, then sharp. I was not surprised. I expected his pleasantness. Nevertheless, he did not sway me. After all kinds of nice things on those desiring to live in community, I heard things about your religious that he did not name but that I perfectly recognized by his transparent allusions; on your society that he treated as republican where there was no leader and in which everyone did whatever they wanted. He said that it was the rendezvous for men who were expelled from everywhere. Nevertheless, I had only named you as Augustinians, but that was sufficient for him to understand fully. He lifted his hand to indicate that I not insist. He then added that he would not permit me to go for a trial period with you and the day that I left his diocese, it would be the end. I would no longer belong to him and I would not be taken back. No doubt, he thought that he would scare me, but I told him very politely that having the occasion to definitely enter into religious life, I requested that he let me go and give me an *exeat*”. (*Fr. Marcellin to Fr. Picard.*)

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Yves (Yves-Marie-Pierre) Hamon

1864-1925

Religious of the Province of Bordeaux.

Founder of the Apostolate of the Sea.

Born in Pleumeur-Goutier (Côtes-du-Nord) March 21, 1864, Yves-Marie-Pierre Hamon first studied for the diocesan clergy. After receiving his primary education in Pleumeur-Goutier (1869-80), he went to Fr. Féron's apostolic school in Avranches (Manche) from 1884-87 and entered the major seminary in Poitiers (Vienne). He then asked to become an Assumptionist. Fr. Picard gave him the religious habit in Livry-Gargan (Seine-Saint-Denis) December 8, 1888, under the name of Brother Yves. Annually professed December 8, 1889, and perpetually professed December 8, 1890, he studied theology in Le Breuil (Deux-Sèvres) from 1890 to 1894, while teaching at the aluminate at the same time.



Ordained a priest in Luçon December 23, 1893, Fr. Yves was assigned directly by Fr. Picard in February 1895 to the chaplaincy of the Apostolate of the Sea that had just been created. [To support this special apostolate, the *Bonne Presse* in Paris created in 1894 *La Croix des Marins* (1894-1914) and in 1898 the short-lived *La Croix des Terres-Neuves* (1898-99).] Sent immediately to the Island of Saint Pierre and Miquelon with Fr. Belin from Saint Servan, Fr. Yves founded, organized and directed the "Family Home," which grew and developed little by little, and whose purpose was to offer seamen a spiritual center where they could rest, recover, correspond with their families and friends, and enjoy a social life on land.

As soon as he returned to France for a rest from this first maritime campaign, Fr. Yves was sent to Madagascar as a military chaplain aboard the *Notre-Dame-de-Salut*, which the French government had just chartered as a hospital ship. In March 1896, Fr. Yves left again for the North American shores on the *Saint-Pierre*. The boat was shipwrecked on May 30. Rescued with difficulty along with the crew, Fr. Yves managed to reach the "Family Home." He spent the following winter visiting sailors on the Breton coast. He left again for the fishing banks in March 1897 and later that year accompanied a pilgrimage to the Holy Land at Christmastime. He continued his ministry in Newfoundland throughout 1898-99, touring the French shore, visiting fishermen, improvising religious ceremonies, and bringing spiritual comfort to this mobile population.

In 1900, he was appointed military chaplain to the Red Cross in China, which won him the silver medal of the French Red Cross. In 1901, he once again took up his ministry to seamen, but this time in Iceland where he established and operated another "Family Home" in Fas-Krudjord until 1906.

Fr. Yves then spent the next five years in England (1906-11), exercising his ministry and perfecting his English. From 1912 to 1913, he returned to the "Family Home" on the Island of Saint Peter and Miquelon. The strain of this tiring life obliged him to return to a life on land: in England, at Bethnal Green (1913-20), and in Bourville (Seine-Maritime, 1920-24). Doctors were not able to stop the progression of his diabetes. After a pilgrimage to Lourdes in August 1924, Fr. Yves retired to Tréguier (Côtes-du-Nord), next to his native country. Despite the very devoted care he received, Fr. Yves died there January 5, 1925, and was buried in Tréguier.

Fr. Yves was one of the first religious to be assigned to this new specialized Apostolate of the Sea, which owes him its existence, operation, and development. His Breton background, his dedication to the humble, his dislike of all comfort, his fascination with adventurous and even dangerous situations, and his physical strength permitted him to carry out a difficult and often ungrateful task toward these sailors who had adopted him and who had great trust in

him. The annual bulletins of the Society for the Apostolate of the Sea, from 1896 to 1913, published the reports he drew up of his activities. On reading them, one senses the supernatural spirit that underpinned all his actions and the constancy of his apostolic zeal to bring spiritual help to the forgotten milieu of Breton fishermen on the shores of Newfoundland and Iceland.

Addenda.

There took place the very same year of 1896, but especially in 1899, other contacts of the Assumption with Canada, contacts of another type: Fr. Yves Hamon came to Newfoundland, first accidentally and then voluntarily; at the time, Newfoundland was a British colony and only became a Canadian province in 1949. We can at least mention these contacts. In March 1896, the schooner Saint-Pierre, a hospital ship belonging to the Overseas Works of the Assumptionists sank near Cap Sainte-Marie, in the south of Newfoundland. Fr. Yves Hamon was on board and was taken in at Placentia, in Pleasant Bay. Three years later, Fr. Hamon visited all the places where French fisherman stayed, on the west coast of Newfoundland and the nearby islands. [Les Assomptionnistes au Canada, Yves Garon, A.A., 1997, 13.]

Father Yves is identified with the Apostolate of the Sea. He first organized at least 2 “foyers” for seamen, one of them at Marseilles. In the 1890s we were the owners of two ships, used primarily for pilgrimages to Jerusalem. They became hospital ships for seamen. Thus, the “Notre-Dame de Salut” (later rebaptized the “Étoile”) undertook several voyages, and Father Yves accompanied them to Madagascar, to the isles of Saint Pierre et Miquelon, to Iceland, and Newfoundland. He was in the shipwreck when we lost the “Saint-Pierre,” and two more ships were purchased, named the “Saint Pierre” and the “Saint Paul.” He spent several years in England, continuing the Apostolate of the sea. We still have the foyer at Marseilles, and recently Fathers have become active in the seamen’s apostolate, in England and New York, where Father David Hennessy is doing some work. (Notes by Fr. Armand Desautels.)

Presentation.

“After having prayed God for a long time to enlighten me concerning my vocation and having consulted with my spiritual director, I believe that there would be dangers for me to be in the secular clergy. In order to protect myself and to work more efficiently for the glory of God and the salvation of souls, I wish to enter into an active religious Congregation. I had already thought of this, but my final decision came during the retreat at the beginning of the year. Not knowing any that could better answer my plans than the one that you are in charge of, I ask you to admit me to your novitiate as soon as possible: I am anxious to enter. I am 24 years old since 21 March. I am exempt from military service having a brother in the military. I did my humanities at *l’Oeuvre apostolique of Avanches*. From there I entered theology last 25 February at the Major Seminary of Poitiers. But having received neither dismissory letters nor *exea*, I still depend on the diocese of Saint-Brieuc where I was born and where my parents live. I also want to tell you that I have not yet had the joy of entering the clergy ranks”.

(Y. Hamon to Fr. Picard, 1888.)

Apostolate of the Sea.

Fr. Yves Hamon, a compatriot of the Breton fishermen to whom he would minister, was completely at home working with humble, hardy folk. His disdain for comfort, his adventurous spirit, and even his prodigious physical strength admirably equipped him for his task, which he began less than two years after his ordination. His first project was a sailor’s home on the island of St. Pierre (of St. Pierre and Miquelon). During the winter, an off-season for fishermen, he would visit them at home in France, preaching missions and even closed-retreats. To accommodate his fishermen, he added a chapel to his Sailor’s home, where they could worship without the constraints, which they felt in the local churches. But religious authorities resented what they considered an intrusion and competition. The Pope personally intervened to grant Fr. Yves whatever authorizations were needed. Still the clamor did not die down; even the French Chamber of Deputies became involved. To let the storm subside, if I may be permitted this

figure of speech, Fr. Yves was sent to China, of all places, as military chaplain with the Red Cross, for six months. When he was reassigned to the Apostolate of the Sea, it was in Iceland. He worked there from 1901 to 1906, and again founded a Sailor's home, in Faskrudsfjord. Fr. Yves certainly got around the world. From 1906 to 1920 he served in England, except for two seasons back in Newfoundland. In 1912 and 1913, his robust health ruined by many years of work in harsh climates, he became a semi-invalid in his last years. In his conversations he continued to recall his picturesque voyages to Newfoundland, Madagascar, and China. One day, years ago, a friend remarked to me, "Join the Assumptionists and see the world. " In Fr. Yves Hamon's case, this was all too true. (The Assumptionists by Richard Richards, A.A., 82-83)

David (George) Hennessy

1913-1982

English religious of the Province of North America.



English origins.

George Hennessy (this is the correct spelling and not ‘Hennessey’) was born October 20, 1913 at Gillingham in England (Kent), in the diocese of Southwark. After his primary studies at the boarding school of Saint Christian in Kent county and at St. Peter’s R.C. School at Shoreham-by-the-Sea, he got to know the Assumption at St. Michael’s College in Hitchin (1931-1934). He took the habit under the name of Brother David October 1, 1934 at Les Essarts novitiate (Seine-Maritime) and made his first vows there October 3, 1936. Fr. Marie-Albert Devynck, master of novices, presented him for profession as “ *a religious with a quite complicated nature, with a simple character, at times candid, but having a calculating temperament, afraid of being caught at fault. However, he redeems this by his willing service, his desire to be useful, and traits of a quite marked originality*”. It was at Scy-Chazelles (Moselle) that Brother David began his philosophy (1935-1937). Perpetually professed at Lormoy (Essonnes) November 1, 1938, he was ordained a priest December 21, 1940 at Hitchin (England). It was there that he exercised his first years of ministry serving at the college (1940-1944), then at Bethnal Green (London) from 1944 to 1947, and finally at Newhaven (1947-1951). At this point his problems started. In December 1951, he left religious life and the priesthood to live a married life. He put an end to this situation in March 1957. He was progressively integrated in all of his obligations and all of his rights like at the beginning of his religious life, after having spent a retreat and recovery period at the Trappist monastery of Coalville (Leicester, in the diocese of Nottingham). Fr. David was then sent with the agreement of his superiors to the province of North America in January 1958.

At the service of the Assumption in the U.S.A.

Well received and surrounded by other religious in the U.S.A., Fr. David was able to take up a regular ministry at the parish of Our Lady of Guadalupe (New York), while residing at the neighboring rectory of Guardian Angels. In 1967, a proof of the trust on the part of his confreres was given when he was chosen as second counselor of the Our Lady of Guadalupe parish community where he was especially appreciated as a curate and put in charge of the archdiocesan apostolate for mariners and the many poor of the quarters of the port. Fr. Armand Desautels, at the time Provincial Superior, expressed his satisfaction for the devoted ministry of Fr. David “ *who reveals treasures of charity and a conduct beyond all reproach*”. In 1978, when Fr. David reached the age of retiring, he was named chaplain for the Ringling Bros. and Barnum and Bailey Circus. He accompanied the circus personnel in their itinerant life and was very appreciated for his devotion and willingness to help. Msgr. Bevilacqua, president of the Committee for Migrants and Tourism, praised the zeal of this religious. Fr. David died suddenly during a tour of the circus at Charlotte, (North Carolina), March 22, 1982, at the age of 69. He was buried with his Assumptionist confreres at Fiskdale.

Addenda.

From 1969 to 1979, Fr. David worked at the Apostolate of the Sea.

Ministry in Motley: David Hennessy, A.A. 1913-1982 (ANA Oct.-Nov. 1999, 14-17, Richard Richards, a.a.).

Young David had one sister. His father was William John Hennessy and his mother was called Rosanna. William John Hennessy was in the Royal Navy for 27 years and then became a fisherman. David once said: "All my people were either in the Royal Navy or in the Coast Guard.

After 1927, for a few years he followed the family tradition and joined the British Merchant Navy as a galley boy. "The only thing lower than me was the ship's cat," he once said. But by the end of the hitch, he had become the ship's cook, a real 'sea-cook.' All the rest of his life he loved to cook and really was a gourmet cook...

In 1958, David came to the USA and would minister here until his death. He never became a member of this Province but in January 1964, he did become a naturalized American citizen. David was first assigned to St. Anne's parish in Fiskdale, MA, in charge of the Assumptionists since December 14, 1955. In Fiskdale David went to one of his hobbies, beekeeping. The quiet, somewhat rural parish was not enough to keep David busy, and in November 1961, he was assigned to Our Lady of Guadalupe parish in NYC. Later he was second councilor and treasurer there.

In 1969, he began another sort of apostolate, returning to his roots, so to speak. He was appointed as assistant to Msgr. Rafferty, Pastor of Guardian Angel parish, 10th Avenue at 21st Street, NYC. David was Assistant Pastor and Assistant Port Chaplain for the New York archdiocese. From 1969 to 1978, David ministered to stevedores, seamen, and ship's crews, often using the foreign languages he knew: French, Italian, Spanish, and some German. He soon became a well-known figure to Customs and Port officials as he worked with crews of freighters, great ocean liners, and cruise ships.

In 1978, David's life took another turn, in another fascinating direction. One evening, he went to the wake of a circus clown he admired, Otto Griebing. He mentioned to the widow and her two sons that undoubtedly a priest would come to recite the rosary. "Oh no," she responded, "We're circus people, you know." David realized that there was no one who would offer spiritual comfort. That upset him greatly, because David had been a circus fan since childhood. He once told a New York Times reporter: "I never missed a circus. Sometimes I'd go twice a day and get a good hiding into the bargain for being away from home. 'Circus mad,' they'd say." So David decided to do something to minister to the circus people.

... The Assumptionist Provincial then, Fr. Joseph Loiselle, wrote a memo about Father David's death..."On Wednesday evening, March 17, the circus arrived in Charlotte, NC and was greeted by the Bishop and Chancellor. They spoke with Fr. David who did not seem very "alert". David invited the Bishop to celebrate mass on Saturday morning, March 20, for the circus people. The bishop celebrated the mass... and some of the circus people told the bishop that they were worried about Father David's health and urged him to see a doctor. A priest who was with the bishop then saw Father David and urged him to see a doctor. Father David absolutely refused, saying there was nothing to worry about. On Sunday, a priest went to check on Father David but received no answer when he knocked on the door of Father David's camper. The priest asked some of the circus people if they knew where David was. They answered that he might be out having a bite to eat since he kept irregular hours. The circus people were leaving for Knoxville, TN that day, but Father David had said that he would only be leaving on the following day, Monday, March 22. Tuesday, a doctor who saw David's camper still there, went and knocked on the door. Having received no answer, he called the police who opened the camper door and found Father David who appeared to have been dead for some time." The autopsy report stated that the immediate cause of death was atherosclerotic cardio-renal disease.

Text from Fr. David Hennessy dated 3 October 1980. [This reveals different aspects of his life.]

I am a little late in getting this letter off to you. I have been rather busy. When we left New York in June we went to Philadelphia for a couple of weeks. Every day I went up to the Shrine to offer my mass in front of the body of my precious saint. I also participated in a special Novena Service, preached by a Redemptorist friend of mine who works with the migrant workers (Mexicans) and leads a similar life to my own. I always take advantage of being close to a church to charge up my spiritual batteries, (not that the Shrine was close; it took me the best part of an hour in the mornings to reach it. It is so necessary in this type of work (and in others too) to keep the spiritual thermometer at a high level. There is so much giving spiritually that one must let the larder become bare. After Philly I set out for Orlando, Florida, to pick up a new truck and trailer. This was given to me by relatives and

personal friends. My motor home was on its way out. One cannot do the thousands of miles along the roads of America and not expect some thing to wear out. I suppose that you are thinking that old Dave is wearing out too. Strangely enough the life agrees with me physically as no other has done since my youth. I am as fit as a fiddle except for a bout of flu a couple of towns ago that went through the circus like wild fire.

I rise every morning between four and five; offer my Mass; say my morning prayers; wash, shave, and have a good bowl of coffee and milk (as in the olden days of Lormoy etc.), perhaps some cottage cheese; then I begin to work. I'm always at the languages. I use Spanish, French, Italian, and German every day of my life; I keep them polished up. Then I read some theology or sacred scripture; prepare a sermon etc., and this includes spiritual reading. I then have a couple of catechism classes (am preparing four for Holy Communion in Rosemont, Illinois—this will be televised on Good Morning America. I think that it will be taped on October 24th next.) If there is a church nearby – four or five blocks away – I go there and spend an hour or so with Our Blessed lord; make myself known to the local clergy and come back to my trailer. A light lunch and a rest and then ready for the four o'clock show. (Two daily: 4 and 8). I'm always about when the show is going on because then the artists can see and talk to me. You see, they live for the most part on the train, which may be parked as far as 20 miles from the building where the show is playing. A light meal after the show, vespers, night prayers, and back to the 8 p.m. show. After the High Wire act, I generally retire for the night. The mornings are mine so to speak because no one rises in the Circus much before midday. I do a monthly retreat and also an annual one when I return to Venice. As I said before, a very high spiritual level is required here.

Whilst at Circus World I received an urgent message to return to the Show, this time in Tucson, Arizona. A brilliant boy, a trapeze artist fell and according to medical evidence, he was dead from the moment he hit the ground. However, he was kept on a respirator for nearly a week. I spent this time between the show, the hotel, and the hospital. He was operated on the Friday and they immediately closed him up. The doctor described his brain like – a pea in a drum – detached from the rest of his body. Five neurosurgeons gave their opinion and the doctor in charge (an excellent Catholic) told the parents and myself that to continue life support attachments was wrong. A decision had to be made and the parents, after consultation with me, decided to remove these “extraordinary means.” Four minutes later there were no vital signs and the boy was pronounced dead. This was the first time I had to give an opinion in matters such as these. I must say that in my 40 years as a priest (21st December of this year.) never have I witnessed such an outpouring of sympathy from the whole township. Radio, TV, newspapers – everybody was so concerned for the boy and his family. The nuns at the hospital, the Chaplain, the doctors and the nurses were praying that God's will be done. Masses were being offered. I offered one in the Circus ring and I had the biggest congregation I have ever had – nearly 400 -.

The body was flown to Los Angeles for burial. I went, naturally enough. The Franciscan Fathers were in charge of the church in downtown Los Angeles – an entirely Mexican-American quarter – and I stayed with them. At this point, I must say that clergy and religious up and down the country – and I include in that up and down, many thousands of miles and many different states – have been so good to me and I have appreciated their fraternal charity, their chapels, and their churches where I have been able to offer Mass, pray, and meditate. I must add that I have spoken of my particular apostolate in several Cathedrals throughout the land.

The funeral itself was beautiful – performers, past performers, bosses, the President and Vice President of the Mattel Toy Company who own the Circus were there. I offered the Mass in Spanish and preached in Spanish and in English. He was laid to rest on the hillside of a beautiful cemetery in Los Angeles. Julio was only 16 years of age, but he had the potential of a great Flyer. As a matter of fact, his obits classed him with the greatest. ...

I have had several baptisms this year and am preparing children for first communion as I said. One marriage in New York and another coming up in Venice. We had a nice baptism (Polish) in Philadelphia. The priest came to see my people and all was arranged. What a surprise! The church was packed. We had confessions, Mass, baptism during mass, and a reception afterwards in the church. The parishioners (Polish) really did their countrymen proud.

After the death of Julio, the family act was taken out of the show and sent back to Florida. We have a new one now from Mexico: three young men and a young lady. They have traveled extensively on the continent of Europe and spent some time in the Chipperfields in England. They speak French and Italian besides their own native Spanish and English. We have quite a time with French, English, Italian, and Spanish lessons... I haven't much to show for forty years, but I did try and try very hard “to do what He wanted done to the least of His brethren.” I am enjoying it more than ever now and all I ask Him, and I do this through my good friend Saint John Berchmans, to give me the grace and strength to carry on until such time as He calls me to Him to render an account of my stewardship.

Tanguy (Yves-Marie) Jointer

1912-1987

Religious of the Province of France, Provincial of Bordeaux (1958-1964).

Youth and formation.

Yves Marie Jointer was born in Paris April 8, 1912 of a family originating from Trégor (Brittany) to which he was and always remained attached. He followed courses at the communal school of Lanmeur until 1923 before entering the Saint-Maur aluminate (Maine-et-Loire) where he did his studies from 1923 to 1926. He did his humanities at Arras (1926-1927) and Clairmarais (Pas-de-Calais) from 1926 to 1927. October 28, 1928, he took the religious habit at the Scy-Chazelles novitiate (Moselle), under the name of Brother Tanguy. He made his first profession there January 29, 1930. He then spent two years at the Saint Gérard scholasticate in Belgium (1930-1932) and a year teaching at the Toulouse orphanage (Haute-Garonne). In 1933, he began theology at Lormoy (Essonne) and was admitted to perpetual profession November 21, 1934. He was ordained to the priesthood February 21, 1937.

Teaching and the Press (1937-1958).

Father Tanguy began his apostolic life teaching at the humanities aluminate in Cavalerie (Dordogne) during two years (1937-1939). From 1939 to 1949, he taught the second level at the college Saint-Caprais of Agen (Lot-et-Garonne). He was then named director of the *Editions de la Bonne Presse*, which, renamed *Editions du Centurion*, began a new expansion. Mr. Monnin, President-Director General of the *Bonne Presse*, gave witness to the good work of Fr. Tanguy: “*I remember him as a happy and distinguished person, a man of discretion, the perfect gentleman, with whom it was easy to work*”. In the fall of 1956, Fr. Tanguy was sent to Rome to create the French edition of the *Osservatore Romano*. Having returned to Paris a few months later, he was chaplain of Our Lady of Salvation at François Ier Street. During the summer of 1957, he was named superior of the Agen College. Saint-Caprais at that time was a dusty, old institute where Fr. Tugdual Tréhorel was not able to handle both the pedagogical battle and the renovation of the buildings. Fr. Jointer and his friend, Mr. Gauthier, decided to clean up and renovate the college.

Bordeaux Provincial (1958-1964).

In 1958, Fr. Tanguy was named provincial of Bordeaux. This province on the eve of the Council was made up of 373 religious of whom 240 were priests, 87 choir brothers, and 46 lay brothers. There was a common novitiate for the French provinces (Pont l'Abbé d'Arnoult), as well as a philosophy scholasticate (Layrac). Teaching held an important place in the works of the province with 3 colleges (Agen, Tarbes, Toulouse), 2 orphanages (Toulouse, Kerbernès), a house for apprentices in Madrid, a house for late vocations (Blou), and 6 alumnates (Cahuzac, Melle, Saint-Maur, Cavalerie, Elorrio in Spain, Eugenopolis in Brazil). The staffed parishes were urban: (Angoulême, Caudéran, Fumel, La Rochelle, Melle, Madrid, Barcelona, Suquets, Eugenopolis, and Neropolis). Some twenty religious of the West work at the French General Works. Fr. Jointer built a new provincial house at Bordeaux-Caudéran with a beautiful chapel (1962). These years at Bordeaux were for Fr. Tanguy those of a mature age, a time of decisions to take, and a certain solitude. He was faced with the necessity of making risky decisions and the discomfort of accepting unresolved situations.

New roots (1964-1987).

In 1964, Fr. Tanguy was named superior at Cahuzac (Gers). The aluminate closed down in 1967 and the community worked exclusively in parish ministry. Between 1969 and 1971, Fr. Tanguy took back his birth name of Fr. Yves and lived at Lormoy where the scholasticate had now become a house for spiritual retreats. He then spent two years in Canada at the Shrine of the Sacred Heart in Beauvoir that the Assumptionists animated. Upon his return during the summer of 1973, he was named chaplain for the Little Sisters of the Assumption at rue Violet in Paris. Fr. Yves died in January 1987 in a road accident. For a week, a cold front had ravaged Europe. Fr. Yves and his old friend, Mr. Prosper Gauthier, were undoubtedly surprised by black ice on Saturday, January 17, 1987, at Saint-Félix de Lauranguais (Haute Garonne). The funeral for these two old friends that life and death had reunited forever was celebrated in the church of Notre-Dame de Mazamet (Tarn). Fr. Yves' body was brought to Layrac January 21, the date of his burial in the vault of the Assumption in the Layrac cemetery.

Addenda.

A difficult state.

It is not customary that a religious present his resignation, but he can return his position to a Superior, if in the unanimous opinion of the religious it can only degenerate with him. In fact, Fr. Girard-Reydet did not hide from me, right from the start, that there were suspicions concerning the manuscripts having been read and the validity of our *nihil obstat*. He also told me that the edition had strongly deviated from the line of the Bonne Presse. My service is also in deficit of 110 million and my novelties are most likely in part responsible for that. Besides, the head director reproaches me with breaching his good faith by bringing from one to another the editorial problems that needed to be resolved. I hadn't protected the interests of the editorial house very much, and at the very least I compromised them by my imprudence. I feel that the direction has many other complaints but I have difficulty in expressing them. A statute for the edition was set up, a heavy administrative machine composed of two councils of 6 members... I believe that for a new spirit and new methods, a new man is needed. The Michel de Saint-Pierre affair crystallized this year of mutual incomprehension..."

A "Father from France" with his Quebec Cousins by Noël Le Bousse, a.a.

[ANA, April-May- June 2001 13-14]

Here I am since 1 March with the Canadian Montmartre community. I left Jerusalem at the season when the almonds were in flower, the tree that announces spring, and now I find myself in the snows of Quebec, after a short stay in Paris at the request of the Provincial to replace Father Xavier Triaire who is ill and had to return to France.

For those who have questions concerning this changing of countries, temperature, apostolate, I would like to state that this was an unexpected experience of my sabbatical year, but a happy one. This is so thanks to the hospitality of the community and the fraternal spirit that is found there. And there is also, the attraction of Canada, for me a childhood dream.

Two months of presence at the end of winter and already two months of spring-summer, it seems as if time would go by more quickly with the color of the flowers, but winter drags on in its layers of snow. The maple water harvest is finished – here it's a big event! – and with the feast of Easter that has been celebrated, I had the impression that nature and people were waiting for the end of winter. In a few days, the ice split on the St. Lawrence River, exploding in blocks that were washed downstream; nature exploded through a sun that was still quite pale; the trees are full of buds. Nature has come alive once again. People also. They hurried to repair the ravages of the winter, turn over the soil, seed, plant, and finally live outside...

What is striking from a Breton who lived on an island, 15 times smaller than the Isle of Orleans in front of Quebec, is the immensity of the country, long straight roads, extended forests, countless small lakes, the nice houses and the river, a real sea, on which cargo ships travel or sailboats amuse themselves. What more can an island dweller ask for? He seems to be at home on the Ouessant railroad... This Breton traveler in the old Quebec thinks for a few moments that's he is in his old Landerneau or St. Malo. But the French accent he hears reminds him that he is with his cousins of the New World.

I came here for the shrine and the community. It certainly is not the youth of a scholasticate and yet there is a youth of the heart, friendships, fraternity. Life is happy, following the rhythm of the community prayer, and attentive to the needs of one another. Good humor is sustained by the one who tells stories and the one who, with eyes that shine goodness, accepts to be at the center of the stories. It is also sustained by the brother who knows how to dose his wit so that no oil is poured on the fire. The one who tells the story speaks about the past and teaches traditions. Those are good times of community life that on certain occasions does not hide their worries about the future.

The Superior, Brother Pierre-Jean, has his hands full trying to keep harmony and peace on a keyboard with many stops. The Montmartre is a huge complex with a rich past of apostolate for the shrine and the center. Today, everything is still there, and it must be continued, animated, pursued and possibly, this is the most difficult, wait. Lay people work at the Center with hope for the future waiting for the Assumption to guide them. Faithful come to the shrine like others go to the shrines of St. Joseph. The Cape, and Ste. Anne. The sisters are precious by their presence and their activities near the community. The community animates as well as it can. It is there, present. It waits. It waits conscious of its strength and age.

For my part, I take my turn in the animation and preaching. I learned that this history of the Sacred Heart – for which, I must admit, I had no special devotion and was not prepared to speak about it – could hold a fertile spirituality for our time. I worked on Msgr. Delaporte's book: "*Coeur du Christ, icône de Dieu*" (*Heart of Christ, icon of God*). No doubt my passage at Lourdes has helped me to take people where they are in their devotions, seeing the risks that these hold. It is a question of starting from their realities to evangelize them so that they can advance further. This is my tiny collaboration with the apostolate of the shrine with the team of fathers that I admire for what they do and their faith in a ministry that they recognize as fragile. I also had some time to take in a few theology conferences and I started to learn English, sustained by the whole community, the sisters and the lay people of the monastery. Lots of encouragement and compassion for the "Father Christmas" but I understood very well that encouragements in the stadium do not impede the athletes from suffering in their disciplines.

And now? In a month I'll be thinking of going back, happy with this community experience and I'll keep a fine souvenir of all, the fraternity and example given in humility. I hope that I have not set a pattern for those who will come after me since I want them to have their own freedom. With their arrival it will be like when winter is ending. Here they know that spring always comes and they hope. Will summer be nice, long, sunny? I saw that in Quebec with a bit of sun, nature is only waiting to explode.

Quebec, 19 June 2001 --

Paul de la Croix (Paul) Journet

1872-1934

Religious of the Province of Paris.

A journey summarized.

We were not able to find a leaflet consecrated to the memory of Fr. Paul de la Croix Journet, but he briefly described his life until 1933. We transcribe faithfully the curriculum vitae that he left:



Born at Sumène (Gard) September 4, 1872, Paul Journet did his grammar studies at the Roussas aluminate (Drôme) from 1885 to 1888 and his humanities at Nîmes (Gard) from 1888 to 1890. He took the religious habit under the name of Brother Paul de la Croix at the Livry-Gargan Abbey (Seine-Saint-Denis) August 6, 1890 where he pronounced his first vows the following year. His second year of novitiate took place on the banks of the Sea of Marmara, at Phanaraki (Turkey) where he made his perpetual vows August 6, 1892. He went to Notre-Dame of Jerusalem for his philosophy and theology (1892-1897). Bishop Appodia ordained him a priest December 19, 1896. His first postings were for the Eastern mission: Zongouldak in Turkey, on the Black Sea, where he was a young superior from 1897 to 1901; then again as superior, he went to Varna in Bulgaria from 1901 to 1906 and Calahorra in Spain where he was a teacher for the second level and learned Spanish (1906-1907). In 1907, Fr. Paul de la Croix was named to New York at 14th Street. The World War mobilized him a first time from August 1914 to March 1915, at which time he was declared unfit for service. He returned to his post in New York serving the Hispanic parish (1915-1916). The army took him a second time (1916-1917). [His draft papers explained that Mr. Paul Journet was declared unfit for military service in virtue of the military law of 1889, but that in time of war, he could be placed in an auxiliary service. Fr. Paul de la Croix effectively was sent to the section of the military infirmary in Marseilles. His dispensation in 1915 was only conditional.] Finally demobilized for good in January 1919, he returned to New York where, having learned enough English, he gave himself to the works of parochial ministry: chaplaincy, preaching, and confessions from 1919 to 1925. A first signal of health problems made him return to Europe and the Mediterranean Midi. He spent the year 1925-1926 resting at Montpellier (Hérault). From 1926 to 1930, he returned for the third time to the U.S.A., again to New York at 14th Street where he was named superior. From 1930 on, he changed community (New York, 156th Street), but not his function since he was named superior there twice (1930 and 1933). In 1934, Fr. Paul de la Croix returned to Europe to take care of his health. After a first stop in England, at Charlton (May 1934), he went to the thermal spa of Bagnoles-de l'Orne (June 1934). Foreseen to strengthen the teaching staff at Lormoy (Essonne), he went to the college at Nîmes in September to teach Spanish and do a bit of ministry with the religious communities. Suffering from an obstruction of the bowel, he was partially paralyzed. He died suddenly the day school began, Wednesday, October 3, 1934, of a lung congestion according to the medical diagnostic. The funeral was celebrated the next day, Thursday, October 4, in the college chapel. The body was placed in the neighboring church of Sainte-Perpétue. The body of Fr. Paul de la Croix was buried in the Assumptionist tomb in the Saint-Baudile cemetery. He himself seemed to sense his future death at Nîmes, since the day that he arrived at the college, September 22, he told his traveling companion, Fr. Jude Verstaen, while in the train that went along the edge of the cemetery from the height of the viaduct: "*If I die this year, it is there that you are to bury me*". Fr. Paul did not find in his dear Midi the renewed health that he had hoped for, but he left to all his confreres the souvenir of a religious with a happy and radiant character, looking at things from the positive side and not worrying about the difficulties that a long illness could accentuate.

Addenda.

His ministry was mostly in New York with a few interruptions when he served in the French army during World War I and was twice a convalescent at Montpellier. Before coming to the USA, he was Superior at Zongouldak from

1897 to 1901 and served in Bulgaria and Elorrio before coming to the USA. He was at 14th Street for many years until 1930 and then pastor at Our Lady of Esperanza from 1930 to 1934. He died at Nîmes. The 75th Jubilee Edition of Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish says that he was pastor from 1920 to 1929 and again from 1933 to 1934.

Bagnoles-de-l'Orne, 1934.

“You must know that a heart condition obliged me, on the advice of my doctors, to leave New York. A few days after my arrival in England, ma health was again tried by a serious phlebitis that kept me in bed and forced me to follow a severe diet for more than a month. The religious of Charlton cared for me with the greatest fraternal devotion, even though they had a very active ministry. But after a noticeable amelioration, I had to leave London. The doctor prescribed a stage at Bagnoles-de-l'Orne where he himself was cured after a similar illness. Upon arriving here, Divine Providence guided me to the family boarding house of Villa Saint-François under the direction of Ms. Benque d'Agut, a long time friend and benefactress of the Assumption. She knew all of our old Fathers of rue François Ier: Picard, Bailly, Saugrain, Pernet, Jacquot, Baudouy... When I told her that I was an Assumptionist, she said: *'In Paris, I am a daughter of the Assumption; here, at Bagnoles, I am your mother'*. This boarding house is a former convent of nuns and it has a chapel where six masses are celebrated each day”.

Father Paul Journet was the pastor when the church marked its twenty-fifth anniversary on the feast day of Our Lady of Guadalupe, December 12, 1927. Patrick Cardinal Hayes celebrated the jubilee Mass at the magnificent new altar of Carrara marble, surmounted by a painting of Our Lady of Guadalupe. [75th Jubilee, Our Lady of Guadalupe, 1979, Custombook Inc., 20]

Marie Emile (Emile-Joseph) Ladret

1871-1936

Religious of the Province of Lyons.



A late vocation.

Emile Joseph Ladret was born January 16, 1871 at Lunéville (Meurthe-et-Moselle) in the diocese of Nancy. After his primary studies at Lunéville, he learned the trade of carpentry in his father's shop with a view to becoming a building contractor. His personal aspirations leaned toward religious life, but his father, François, decided that his son would pursue the family trade. That was why young Emile Joseph had to put off his desire, acquiring much know-how in the practical domain. Once he became an adult, he did six years of military service as a non-commissioned officer. After a few months with his family, he decided to enter the Assumption. Not having done his secondary studies, Emile Joseph was sent to Montfort House, next to Villecomtesse (Yonne) where he tried to complete his intellectual baggage (1894-1896) and where his manual skills were called upon to fix up the buildings. September 4, 1896, he took the habit at Livry (Seine-Saint-Denis) under the name of Brother Marie-Emile. He pronounced his first vows October 29, 1897 and his perpetual vows September 6, 1898. He then went to Toulouse (Haute-Garonne) for his ecclesiastical studies. In 1900, because of the movements of the expulsion, he went to Belgium (Bure and Louvain). He was ordained a priest February 22, 1902 at Malines.

Ministries.

Fr. Marie Emile was first named to teach a year at the Saint-Trond aluminate that received the youth of Saujon (Charente-Maritime). In April 1903, he left for the U.S.A. where he worked in the 14th Street parish (1903-1906). Having returned to Europe, he was named to teach at the Zeperen aluminate in Belgium, which had replaced that of Saint-Trond (1906-1907). The following year, he was asked to go to the Bizet aluminate on the Franco-Belgian lines where he taught until 1914. In August 1914, he was mobilized at Toul. According to Fr. Gustave Ranson, because of his age (44 years), his religious state, and his flat feet, he was sent back home (1915). Meanwhile, the Saint-Maur aluminate was founded in the summer of 1915. The Bizet aluminate was bombed and threatened by destruction. Fr. Gustave Ranson and Fr. Marie Emile were called upon to transfer the furnishings to Saint-Maur, using old transport wagons. Remembering his carpentry trade, Fr. Marie Emile took up plane and jointing plane to help put Saint-Maur in order, since everything had to be done. But in November 1915, he was called back to the army and had to go to the Toul base until Fr. Emmanuel Bailly was able to obtain a permanent discharge for him in November 1917. Once again at Saint-Maur (1917-1923) where he liked to share his military experience, summarized in a laconic expression "*do nothing and make reports*", he was called in 1923 to organize the new aluminate being founded at Scy-Chazelles (Moselle). Once more his aptitudes for carpentry were most useful to organize a foundation lacking everything. He called his brother, also a carpenter, to make furniture on the spot. Soon, next to the aluminate, in the property of Scy, the Saint-Jean novitiate was built. Later on, it was to become the philosophy scholasticate for the Province of Lyons. Fr. Marie-Emile, treasurer for the novitiate, continued at the scholasticate in that function. Until the end, regardless of a serious illness that was eating him up, cancer of the intestines, he served by taking care of the property. He died during the night of Thursday, October 29, 1936 at the age of 66, after a long period of suffering and painful treatments. The funeral was celebrated Saturday, October 31, in the presence of his 86-year-old mother, Célestine née Gérard and his brother. He was buried in the cemetery of Scy-Chazelles. Permit me to recall the Latin verses honoring the work with one's hands: *Scalpri salubris ictibus et tunsione plurima, fabri polita malleo.*

Addenda.

He was part of the American foundations of 1903-1904, the unsuccessful one at Granby, Massachusetts and the one at Worcester. However, he returned to Europe in 1904 and spent most of his life in the alummates: Zepperen in Belgium, le Bizet, Saint Maur and Scy in France.

A description without pleasantness.

“As far as information goes concerning Fr. Marie-Émile, I only have those that he gave on the sheet that is included. It is not necessary to send it back to us. You can keep it in your archives. In fact, all that is in it is to be found in the registers: *‘Brother Marie-Émile is totally lacking in his person and manners. He doesn’t seem to be aware of this. Nevertheless, he is a good religious, devoted, never hesitating when there is difficult work to do. He comes from Montfort. His vocation goes back to his infancy but his father blocked it. After his military service, since this young man was an adult, he came to Montfort. His uncultured intelligence can be developed with hard work’*. All of this remained true for the rest of his life. His lack of distinction was so great that one would tremble upon seeing him at the altar. We have recommended the soul of Fr. Marie-Émile to the prayers of the community. If his last moments were to be related in a few lines, this would seem sufficient to me. The youth should not think that we are presenting him to them as a model”. (Fr. Élie Bicquemard, 1936.)

Marie Joseph (Joseph-Marie) Laity

1867-1950

Religious of the Province of Paris.



From Morbihan, desirous of missionary life.

Joseph Marie Laity was born May 26, 1867 at Auray (Morbihan). He did his studies with the Brothers at the Institute Saint-Yves d'Auray (1880-1883) and his secondary studies at the minor seminary of Sainte-Anne d'Auray (1883-1887). He then began his philosophy and theology at the major seminary of Vannes. Desirous of a missionary life, at that time he entered the seminary of the Missionaries of Haiti at Pontchâteau (Loire-Atlantique). He was ordained a priest July 5, 1891. Through this society, he was sent to Port-au-Prince, capitol of Haiti, where he was a curate as well as in other localities of the island. Because of health reasons, he had to return to France and asked to be admitted to the Assumption. He took the religious habit at the Livry novitiate January 18, 1900. His baptismal first names were simply reversed and he became Fr. Marie-Joseph. His perpetual profession took place at Louvain January 18, 1901. He was very quickly sent to the foundation of the mission in England (August 14, 1901) where he just stayed six months. In January 1902, he left for North America (U.S.A.) and went to New York and Worcester, where he saw the difficult beginnings of the implantation of an Assumptionist community. A Bible Society, the Protestant Alliance, went to the court on Worship Street for a mandate for his expulsion, because they supposed that he was the 'head of the Assumptionist Order of the Jesuits' (sic). The Alliance saw its request refused; this consolidated the position of the Assumptionists. From 1902 to 1904, Fr. Marie-Joseph took part in the search that would end up in the choice of Worcester as the center for the mission. From 1904 to 1907, Fr. Marie-Joseph, having returned to Europe, taught at the Bizet aluminate (Belgium) that was just beginning. From 1907 to 1912, he returned to Worcester. This was followed by his final return to France. From 1912 to 1924, he was at Montpellier (Hérault). In 1924, he went as curate to the parish of Saint-Christophe de Javel (Paris), which had just been turned over to the Assumption. In September 1927, he returned to Montpellier where he stayed until 1947, with a few short interruptions. At the age of 80, he was sent to the rest home at Lorgues (Var) where he died a few years later September 18, 1950 and was buried there.

Personality.

Fr. François-Régis Sérine, his superior at Montpellier, described Fr. Marie-Joseph as “*an energetic religious on the apostolic level. His activity at Montpellier and in the region has been considerable by the number of sermons, retreats, and Lenten stations that he preached here and there. Everywhere he goes he has a missionary spirit. Bossuet and the Fathers of the Church were his preferred authors. He took many notes but did not classify them very much. He was a religious who was very pious, faithful to his exercises of piety and to all the readings required by the Rule*”. At Lorgues, Fr. Marie-Joseph at first had a difficult time adapting because of his long itinerant missionary life. Fr. Privat Bélard wrote about him: “*Fr. Laity came to Lorgues from Montpellier July 23, 1947. He got used to the house very slowly, finding a real time of rest in the company of his brothers. He enjoyed community life and even up to his final days, he underwent fatigue in order to be present for the common exercises at the chapel, refectory, or recreations. He liked to pray his rosary while taking a walk to the Lourdes grotto built on the property. He never went up the stairs without kissing the image of the Sacred Heart that is at the entrance of the floor, upon arriving at the top. Through his patience, his meekness, and his pleasantness, he edified us during these three years. He died peacefully, without any effort, apparently without suffering, just as he had lived and left us the memory of a good and holy religious*”.

Addenda.

He was one of the founders of Assumption College in 1904. He was there for the first year and returned in 1907 for another five years. However, much of his time was taken up with preaching retreats in the New England area. (Fr. Armand Desautels)

Montagnac, 1922

“A patriotic and religious feast was held at Montagnac (Hérault), organized by the Association of former students of the school of Fr. d’Alzon and preached by Fr. Laity. With the rousing sound of bugles and drums, the members of the Society went to mass as a body and then proceeded to this ceremony to which the musical Union lent its gracious services. Before the blessing of the standard, Fr. Laity went to the pulpit and using the three words inscribed on the standard: God, family, country, he spoke with a rare talent explaining how this inscription had great moral value for those who understood its meaning. After the mass, the flag was presented in front of the town hall and the Society then went to the school of Fr. d’Alzon followed by an immense crowd that the big yard could barely contain. It is there that a touching ceremony was held. The President, after having tied a black mourning crêpe the new flag, read the names of all the former students who had died or disappeared in the course of the last war. In the evening, around 3 p.m., the Society went to Vespers where, Fr. Laity, spoke from the pulpit on the need for this Association.”

Rev. Fr. Marie-Joseph Laity, a.a., former staff member of Worcester, died at the Assumptionist house of retirement of Lorgues in France. The alumni of the Franco-American clergy will no doubt remember this missionary with his black beard who preached retreats in the various centers of New England and during some six years, who was very well liked, He preached the annual retreat for the students in 1907 and was the special orator when the main building of the College was blessed by Bishop Beaven on 9 May 1912. He returned to France 12 August of the same year. [Assumptionist Fathers Archives: North American Province]

Yvon (Jean-Yves-Marie) Le Floc'h

1889-1975

French religious of the Province of North America.



A life between history and legend.

Jean Yves Marie Le Floc'h was born December 21, 1889 at Guengat (Finistère), of a Breton family of tailors that gave three of its sons to the Assumption. Jean Yves began his secondary studies at the Courtrai aluminate (1903-1904), continued them at Le Bizet (Belgium) from 1904 to 1906, and finished with humanities at Taintegnies (1906-1908). As a novice at Louvain, he took the habit August 28, 1908, after his postulancy at Gempe. This was where he returned to pronounce his first vows August 29, 1909 under the name of Brother Yvon. Improvised infirmarian, later he would narrate, upon the anniversary of the death of one of his confreres, how one could die young at the Assumption: “ *He cared for me, I cared for him, he died*”. Professed perpetually August 30, 1910, he went to Louvain for his philosophy (1910-1913), having only spent 5 months in military service. Student and disciple of Fr. Merklen, he was part of the generation of Assumptionists with a passion for learning and expressing openly their most personal ideas. An ardent Thomist, he kept a certain independence concerning books, teachers, and doctrines. Besides the questions of faith and an unyielding attachment to the Holy See, he permitted himself to evaluate by himself all the ideas that were presented. He accepted what agreed with his system and set aside without pity all that did not. From that point in time can be dated his idea to set up a file, classifying and filing all the knowledge that he culled according to the articles of the *Summa* of Saint Thomas. All through his life, he kept a lively intellectual curiosity and a great love of reading. According to the custom of that time, his studies were interrupted by two years of teaching at Bure (1913-1915). He did his theology at Louvain (1915-1919). Brother Yvon was ordained to the priesthood May 12, 1918 by Bishop Legraive.

In the New World.

During 21 years, Fr. Yvon, named to the college in Worcester, taught philosophy and science. With a perfect regularity, faithful as the Breton rock, he lived wound up as a clock, walking in the park with a fixed number of steps. An exemplary religious, he inspired or strengthened numerous priestly or religious vocations, admired for his encyclopedic knowledge and answering any question by taking a small card

from his repertory. The admiration that he enjoyed from his audience did not spare him from the tricks of the youth who, at fixed times, would cry out spontaneously before his ‘home runs’. This brought a distraction and joy to the untroubled course of his arguments. In 1940, he gave over his philosophy chair to Fr. Wilfrid Dufault. From the United States, he went to Canada, and from teaching to Master of novices in Quebec. He added to this, the load of superior for a house filled to capacity with the theology students who followed courses at the major seminary of the city. During nine years, lacking sufficient personnel and in difficult material conditions, he faced his obligations both on the spiritual front and on that of finding the daily bread. More place was needed. Without an architect, he improvised himself as builder and placed all of the religious under the direction of a builder by trade for this task. From the ground up, a chicken coup was built, a convent for the Sisters of St. Joan of Arc, and the Saint Joseph house for the student brothers. These constructions defied the weather and the direction of the novitiate did not suffer, strengthened by his famous principles and matched with the invariable ‘non licet’. A man of silence, at the same time he built a certain golden legend that, just as any legend, was fed by exaggerations and improbabilities taken from the real facts of life. In 1949, he received with joy the news of a new obedience that named him chaplain at the Little Sisters of the Assumption novitiate in Montreal until 1961. Part-time professor at the Bury aluminate (1961-1964), he once more accepted to be superior at Beauvoir for one year before obtaining a well-deserved and relative rest in Sillery in 1965. Another ministry was dear to his heart: the cause of the beatification of Fr. Marie-Clément Staub for which he became the promoter-postulator. This job was not unknown territory for him, since he had already exercised it with the cause of Sister Marie-Cécile of Rome, of the Congregation of Jesus-Mary. The

little booklet 'How the Church Makes Saints' (*Comment l'Église fait les saints*) showed his respect for Canon Law. He published a life of Fr. Marie-Clément and was able to bring this cause to the closure of the diocesan examination. Demanding for himself and others, a hard worker, and very meticulous, he accumulated an impressive documentation. Some of his favorite expressions made people laugh: '*The community does not exist, it is the religious that exist*', an expression that translated in fact his understanding of religious life more as a personal thing than a community or collective thing. Nevertheless, the community enjoyed getting him going and teased him on his manias: the opposite would have hurt his feelings. This was a sign of a good community spirit. With a will power and energy that were indomitable, plus having a good appetite, he manifested a desire to live and this permitted him to surmount the handicaps of old age and even several paralysis attacks. His life and his legend entered into eternity January 9, 1975, at the end of a long existence. With a character that was not ordinary and a very marked personality, Fr. Yvon Le Floc'h left to his confreres a d'Alzonian taste of a spirit that was strong and frank, solid in convictions, energetic in enterprises, and happy to have been able to share with all his joys and hopes for an Assumption that was very alive, on the banks of two continents. At the age of 85, Fr. Yvon died and was buried on Sunday, January 12 in the land he had accepted as his own during more than 50 years.

Addenda.

His two other brothers who were part of the Assumption were: Guillaume, a tailor, (1886-1945) and Jean Louis (1891-1916) who died as a novice and pronounced his vows *in articulo mortis*. Bro. Yvon received the habit from the hands of Fr. Vincent de Paul Bailly. Fr. Yvon was almost maniacal in taking his daily walks 'to keep the machine running'. He was an inveterate taker of notes that he classified according to the '*Summa*' of Saint Thomas Aquinas.

Golden Jubilee of Priesthood of Fr. Yvon Le Floc'h.

It's almost unbelievable! A half-century has passed since you became a priest for all eternity. Fifty years! It is little compared to eternity or the history of the world; but it is almost the whole life of an ordinary human being. And when someone has lived, as you have, those fifty years of priesthood with fidelity to God and as a consecrated religious, it is a grace from heaven that is both extraordinary and shared by few priests.

Fifty years have passed since that radiant morning of 12 May 1918 when you fulfilled, in the euphoria of a divine joy, the most beautiful dream of your childhood and with great calm your soul abandoned itself to the wonderful consolations of the One who shared His priesthood with you.

... You have always been a man of Truth, of Truth with a capital 'T' and in the deepest sense of this word... You have been a man of prayer...

May the example of your priestly and religious life be a lamp for all of us, your brothers in religious life! May it stimulate the parents who are here and let them be thankful with their children who are thinking of priestly or religious life!

[Fr. Maurice Gagnon, A.A., Canadian Montmartre, 7 December 1968.]

In Memoriam: Father Yvon Le Floc'h.

Having never visited Brittany, I imagine it like Father Yvon, a solid rock. In any case, Father built his life on rock, spiritually, intellectually, and physically.

During his final illness, a partial paralysis that stopped him from speaking distinctly. One day, I asked him his age and I thought that I heard: "89". "You are 89 years old?" He made a negative sign. "You were born in "89"? and he made a sign for yes with his head...

Since then, his life is made up of history and legend. Until 1919, the date of his arrival in North America, we only have pieces of his life – mostly dates and places – and the beginning of legends. He came from a family of tailors. His brother, Brother Guillaume (deceased in 1945) was a tailor at the Assumption, and another brother who died as an Assumptionist novice had the same talent. ...

In 1904, he entered the aluminate of Le Bizet. According to the current legend in our Province, it was 3 years before the creation of the world – since it was in 1907 that Fr. Yvon got the idea from one of his teachers to make files. He had some for everything, all filed according to the articles of the Summa of St. Thomas, as he himself explained in a booklet published for posterity...

He was a novice at Louvain and Gempe during the years that the Congregation lost so many young religious to TB. [ANA , April 11, 1975 , 3-7]

Funeral homily for Fr. Yvon Le Floc’h. January 12, 1975. by Fr. Joseph Loiselle, A.A., Provincial.

Father Yvon had a great appetite. I know what I am talking about. Let me explain. 6 or 7 years ago at table, Fr. Yvon (who accepted to be kidded quite well) had the misfortune to start a sentence saying: “If I die...” To be sure, things did not stay there. I said to him: “If you die and I must preach the homily at your funeral, I’ll start by saying: Fr. Yvon had a great appetite. And Fr. Yvon laughingly remarked: “You are very capable of doing just that.” And so, I just did it. However, I’ll stop there since it would be sad to fix our attention on anecdotes and thus reduce the meaning and example of a whole life to that. With the help of Scripture, my goal is not so much to praise Fr. Yvon, but rather to help us profit from the example that he gave us. He gave us many examples and I’ve chosen three things: he was a man of faith, a man with a living and active faith, and a man whose life gave witness to his faith and religious commitment.

In the first reading, the holy man Job expresses his staunch faith in God, his Protector. Crushed by many trials, abandoned by all, he believes – with hope – that all of this will pass and one day he will see God. This is an admirable faith with depth and firmness. Fr. Yvon had a faith like that. It was impossible to live with Fr. Yvon without noticing that he lived for the other world. Nothing worldly in him, nothing frivolous, no compromises with the values and satisfactions of the flesh (in the biblical sense). At times we were impatient with him. But we never doubted that he was a man of God. He governed his life with constancy, and I am tempted to say inexorably, in the light of divine truth and of faith. That is what made of him a man of prayer, a man who prayed regularly, who prayed a lot, who prayed unceasingly. Today, we can make a list of all the problems that people need to confront in their Christian life as well as their religious life. I dare say that the most serious problem that is at the root of all others is that we don’t pray enough. Prayer lets us enter into intimacy with the Lord; it lets us see things with the eyes of God and that is already a solution to our problems. Fr. Yvon’s life – a man of faith and prayer – challenges us and tells us that prayer is not a luxury for only those with nothing better to do, but rather the indispensable means to live and walk in faith. Fr. Yvon has now passed into the vision of God and perfect prayer.

In his epistle, St. James warns us that a faith without works is a faith that is dead. It is not enough to say: I believe. It is not enough to have feelings of faith. We must also do works of faith; we need to work. Fr. d’Alzon, our founder, said that an Assumptionist has to work like four... Fr. Yvon was a worker, disciplined and tireless, right up to his last illness. His work was always a work of faith... Fr. Yvon always worked in the name of the Lord: as a teacher at Worcester and Bury, as Superior and Master of Formation, as chaplain to the Little Sisters of the Assumption, as postulator for the cause of Fr. Marie-Clément, as a devoted confessor in this sanctuary during his last years. Without any doubt, all of his students, all of the sisters, this sanctuary, our Assumptionist Province, the Church all benefited greatly from the works of faith of Fr. Yvon. Let our gratitude translate itself in prayer. His life challenges us to work, and to do so with faith. Fr. Yvon has now gone to his eternal rest.

... Fr. Antoine-Phillippe who is of the same generation and also Breton said to me yesterday that Fr. Yvon was always and everywhere an example for his Assumptionist brothers. That confirms the impression that those of us who knew him for a short time also had. Let us admit that his was not an example that was pleasant or capable of being imitated, but he was authentic and admirable. His celibacy was austere, his poverty often strict, and his obedience rigorous. However, this did not stop him from being as stubborn as any good Breton who respects himself. No one ever doubted the authenticity and depth of his religious commitment...

Following the example of Fr. Yvon, let us be men of faith and prayer; may our faith be living and based on works!

The following conclusion to a letter from Fr. Yvon dated at Lasalle, 9 December 1958 to Rev. Wilson Ewin, pastor of the French Canadian Baptist Church of Coaticook, Province of Quebec. Fr. Yvon had written several letters to him previously. This shows the direct and uncompromising style of this fiery Assumptionist.

... Fortunately according to the basic principles of natural morality, ignorance and a lack of freedom excuse the fault. I see in you a certain good will. But the shell of your Protestant traditions (bit by bit) block you from full openness to the truth, and the love of your clan makes you rise up to their defense spontaneously with the risk of lacking loyalty at times.

The true God is not the tyrant of certain Lutheran or Calvinist theses. God is a Father, infinitely just and infinitely merciful.

And I am pleased to affirm it with the hope that you will not overreact; in the Catholic religion, as well in the Orthodox, besides filial trust in God, we have the consolation and the joy of having a Mother in heaven: a perfect woman, immaculate, "full of grace", Virgin, "Mother of Jesus" and His brothers and sisters, the Christians.

May her intercession with her divine Son help you!

P.S. Please excuse my directness if I add that you should:

- 1. Sincerely admit to yourself that you have believed and taught serious errors.*
- 2. Resign from a function that you exercise without a mandate (Acts 15:24) or a formation.*
- 3. Study at least the basic principles of rational morality and the essence of Christian doctrine.*
- 4. Go on a closed retreat. Retract yourself and become a Catholic.*
- 5. Like St. Paul, Newman, Vernon Johnson etc., place at the service of truth the zeal that you have shown thus far so as to spread dangerous errors.*

Father Yvon Le Floch arrived 21 August 1940 at the novitiate; he was to be the master of novices until September 1948 and superior until April 1949. On 11 October 1919 he took the ship at the Havre for Worcester where he taught philosophy and other connected courses until he left for Sillery.

Fr. Yvon Le Floch had a solid faith, a deep piety and a great supernatural spirit; he was also a man of regularity, silence, and a great enemy of noise; however, he was not morose and accepted willingly to be teased. He had a great intellectual curiosity, classifying his notes according to a plan set up based on the Summa Theologica of St. Thomas. Usually well set in his way of seeing and doing things, he had a good judgment. In short, he was an excellent religious, generous, brave, a bit original.

When Fr. Yvon arrived in Sillery in August 1940, World War II has been going on for a year; France has surrendered in June and the Germans occupy more than half of France, as well as Belgium and Holland. The choir Brothers could no longer go to Europe for philosophy and theology; these will take place in Quebec and this will demand special measures that were taken and well organized by Fr. Yvon.

... From 1940 to 1948, there will be usually 35 religious in the house... A great need that was felt was for more space to lodge more novices, more professed lay Brothers, and the student Brothers.

...Fr. Yvon left Sillery 29 April 1949: he was named chaplain for the Little Sisters of the Assumption at Ville La Salle, near Montreal; he stayed there 12 years. In July 1961, he was named to teach at d'Alzon College, in Bury. In September 1964, he went to Beauvoir as superior; he only stayed one year because of his health when he returned to Sillery; it was there that he died 9 July 1975. (Les Assumptionnistes au Canada, Yves Garon, a.a., Sillery, 1997, 49-55)

He did his theology at Louvain from 1915 to 1918.

Roland (Jules-César) Leroy

1885-1962

French religious of the Province of North America.



Formation time.

Jules César Leroy was born January 29, 1885 at Blandecques, a tiny village close to Saint-Omer (Pas-de-Calais). Alumnist at Sainghin (North) from 1898 to 1901 and at Taintegnies in Belgium from 1901 to 1903, he began his novitiate at Louvain October 18, 1903, the day that he took the religious habit under the name of Brother Roland. He made vows for a year November 13, 1904 at Jerusalem and studied philosophy in the Holy City (1905-1907). He was sent to the college in Worcester (U.S.A.) as a choir brother where he taught from 1907 to 1910 and made his final vows June 18, 1908. In 1910, Brother Roland returned to Jerusalem for theology under the direction of Frs. Gabriel Jacquemier and Léopold Dressaire (1910-1913) Like his companions, he served occasionally as a guide for the pilgrims who came from many countries to visit the Holy Land and lodge at the hotel of Notre-Dame de France. Having acquired quite a mastery of the English language, he accompanied the English groups from Jericho to Galilee. Brilliant talker and very knowledgeable of the biblical topography, he was appreciated for this service. Father Roland was ordained a priest at Jerusalem by Bishop Camassei 13 July 1913 and did his fourth year of theology in Rome at the Angelicum with the Dominicans. He was again sent to teach at the college in Worcester with no interruption from 1914 until his death in 1962.

A Frenchman in America.

Having been named professor and gifted with good pedagogical qualities, Fr. Roland taught the classic letters in the classes of 5th and 4th levels. In 1924, a throat operation touched his vocal chords and forced him to only give courses now and then. He was given Greek and general history to teach in the upper levels at this time. He quickly acquired a remarkable mastery of these two subjects that he continually improved by very extensive readings. On top of this, he became the general monitor for the older students. Because of this involvement with the life of the students, he got to know and accompany a good number of generations of students. Good natured and patient, he knew how to shut his eyes on the escapades of youth and never, or almost never, got angry. Loved and respected, he was nicknamed 'Daddy'. Of the father or the daddy, he had at the same time the concern, indulgence, and tenderness. He willingly took for his own the motto of Abbé Huvelin: *"I would like to be so good that you could say: if such is the servant, how much more is the master!"* Because of his voice, Fr. Roland was not able to do weekend parish ministry like the majority of his confreres. Instead, he did humble tasks. He was the devoted chaplain of the Sisters of Notre-Dame of Namur in their convent at Plantation Street and also went for Sunday mass to the hospital for the indigent sick on Lincoln Street. Many religious communities called upon him for confessions and spiritual direction. Until 1953, he collaborated faithfully to the college magazine, *'L'Assomption'*, especially by writing a chronicle of the alumni. In 1956, the college section moved from the Greendale hill to a new site, in the West of the city. Fr. Roland remained at the first site of the school and was part of the community of the Preparatory School. A pleasant companion with whom to live and a hard worker, he kept his good humor and smile, even in the painful days of illness and old age. He remained a voracious reader. This permitted him to deal with a forced isolation. He died April 26, 1962 at the age of 78 at Saint Vincent Hospital in Worcester, of a cerebral hemorrhage. Already threatened with paralysis and being diabetic, he had bravely handled the amputation of his right leg, because of gangrene. He was buried in Worcester.

Addenda.

In 1917, after philosophy, he began his military service in a camp in the North near the Belgian border. After a few weeks, he found the atmosphere so immoral that he had a crisis of conscience. As a result, he went AWOL. This move would prevent him from returning to France for many years [until the age of 54]. While still a brother, he was sent to Worcester. His second year of novitiate was in Jerusalem.

In 1907, at the end of his philosophy, he had been drafted for military service and he lived in an army barrack in the North of France near the Belgian lines. After a few weeks of this military life, he felt that this very corrupt milieu was not beneficial to his soul. At that moment he took a solution that would weigh down his future and become for him a burdensome trial of which he only rarely mentioned to his closest friends. He fled from the barracks and became AWOL feeling that otherwise he would lose his vocation and his soul. He had foreseen the consequences of this decision. He knew that in the eyes of men, he would be seen as a coward, a quitter, a traitor, a deserter, but he preferred listening to the voice of God and supernatural interests rather than the judgment of men. He knew that because of this very painful gesture, he would not be able to return to his country or visit his family until the age of 54. Nevertheless, he never regretted what he had done and knew that he would do the same thing again in the same circumstances. The judgment of men was unimportant for him. Before God, we can be sure that this was a truly heroic action on his part and worthy of praise before God. (Funeral sermon by Fr. Polyeucte Guissard, A.A., May 31, 1962).

Letter from P. Gélase (Uginet), Adrianople-Kara-gatch, 1st June 1908.

The Very Rev. Father Emmanuel (Bailly) asked me to let you know that he accepts Fr. Roland Leroy for perpetual vows and delegates you to receive them. We are at Adrianople since last night at 11:00 and even though I am setting foot in Bulgaria and Adrianople for the first time, I won't describe the country: the Turks haven't changed. I realize that you have known them first hand.

Notes by Fr. Marius Dumoulin.

God has just taken Fr. Roland Leroy. He died April 26 at St. Vincent's Hospital in Worcester, of a stroke that did him in within a few minutes, while the nurse had stepped out for just a few moments. A few days before, he had received Extreme Unction after a double attack of paralysis that had seemed under control with no after effects. Already since 15 years, Father had diabetes and an enlarged heart. These had forced him to gradually reduce all activity. Three years ago (1959), gangrene obliged an amputation of his right foot below the knee, and last February (1962), the same operation took his left foot. He had thus become severely handicapped.

... Always a pleasant companion, Fr. Roland's long illness never did away with his good humor and he always received his Brothers in his room with a ready smile. Right to the end, he was an avid reader of books and it was no doubt the secret that let him deal with his forced isolation without any complaint during his last years. When he was found unconscious in his chair at the hospital, he was still holding in his two hands the book that had been his last companion here below. He was transported in his bed and died a few minutes after without regaining consciousness.

Fr. Roland left the example of an excellent religious, a hard worker, and a pleasant companion. His goodness certainly opened up for him the arms of the Father whose name is Love and who enfolds His children in His merciful love.

Notes by Fr. Richard Richards from ASITWAS, January-February-March 2002.

In 1941, Father Roland Leroy was the proctor of the College dormitory where I slept. He taught me classical Greek for two years. And he taught European history. We admired him because he didn't reduce it to the history of France. And we liked the fact that he taught in English, with English textbook, unlike others who used only French books. We knew that Father Roland was interested in us, and we liked him so much that we nicknamed him "Daddy."

... A throat operation in 1924 affected his vocal chords, to the point where he was given only College Greek and history to teach. The classes were smaller and quieter. He read voraciously to prepare these courses and became a very good prof. I know; I had him for two years of Greek and European history. He was also the proctor of our college dorm. Now and then we would do something that made him angry. He'd storm out of his room grumbling,

mumbling, and gesticulating. But the anger would soon pass and he never held a grudge. He was always ready to make allowances for the over-exuberance of the youngsters with whom he lived. He loved them and they loved and respected him.

... Until 1953, Fr. Roland was the one who wrote the "Alumni Chronicles" for the Assumption College magazine. He kept in constant contact with the alumni, some of whom he had known for decades.

Father Roland is a veteran of Assumption in Worcester. He taught there as a scholastic from 1907 to 1910, then as a priest, he was stationed there all his life. A throat operation performed in 1924 obliged him to give up his teaching almost entirely, but he was an excellent monitor, understanding of students. He was surely one of those most appreciated by the alumni who knew him. He was buried at the Prep School cemetery. (Notes by Fr. Armand Desautels.)

Tarcisio (Gaspar) Lorente Madorran

1915-1999

Religious of the Province of Spain.



Formation on both sides of the Pyrenees.

Gaspar Lorente Madorran was born in Calahorra in Old Castille (Spain) January 6, 1915. Two days after his birth, he was baptized in the Santiago Apostol parish. In his early years, he went to the San Valentin School under the direction of the Christian School Brothers. In September 1927, recruited by, Fr. Julian Garcia, another calahorran, he visited the Elorrio aluminate in the Basque country. He studied there until 1931, under the devoted care of Fr. Fortuné Badaroux. The times were difficult for the clergy and religious during this period of the anticlerical Republic. With his fellow student, Pedro Antonanzas, he went to the French novitiate of Nozeroy (Jura) where, under the name of Brother Tarcisio, because of devotion to this young martyr of the Eucharist, he took the religious habit in October 1931 and pronounced his first vows October 5, 1932. This was followed by two years of philosophy at Scy-Chazelles (Moselle) from 1932 to 1934. He then studied theology at the Lormoy scholasticate (Essonne). His studies were interrupted by the civil war in Spain. He was ordained to the priesthood during his third year of theology, in Paris, December 17, 1938. Until the end of the civil war, his first priestly ministry was as a military chaplain for the soldiers.

A priest among people, in Europe and America.

Once peace was established in 1940, Fr. Tarcisio was able to start his pastoral ministry in Madrid. This ministry was at Puente de Vallecas, in the suburb of Doña Carlota, at the parish of Dulce Nombre de Maria where the pastor had been executed during the confrontations. The Assumptionist community was set up. He had for confreres: Frs. Luis Madina, Ignacio Garcia, Pedro Frias, and Eduardo Arroniz. Fr. Tarcisio kept a strong and pleasant memory of this first passage in Madrid: he worked with the underprivileged youth of the poor sectors and others, he improvised himself as teacher, director of a youth club, chaplain, and founder, with Fr. Luis Madina, of the *Ciudad de los muchachos*. In 1951-1952, he became superior of the Elorrio aluminate. He inculcated his young students with the Assumptionist spirit: a spirit of freedom, creativity, and responsibility in an educational climate centered on faith. In 1952, he was named superior and pastor of the San Francisco Javier de Horta parish (Barcelona), in the section of Casas Baratas, another sector for the poor. Like at Madrid, he gave himself totally to the apostolate in a world full of life: groups of men, of women caring for the sick and poor, the parish choir, a school for altar boys, battles with the diocesan Caritas agency so that help would reach the poor of the parish. Barcelona was his residence until 1954. After a brief passage in Madrid, he sailed for Argentina where he took part in the missionary work of greater Buenos Aires. He was part of the communities of Belgrano and Santos Lugares until 1963, the year of his return to Spain. He took over the spiritual direction of the boys of the *Ciudad de los muchachos*. From there, he went again to the parishes of Dulce Nombre de Maria, San Felipe Neri, and La Estrella. In 1979, he left for New York where he devoted himself to the *Hispanos* of both Assumptionist parishes: Guadalupe and Esperanza. In 1988, the year of his golden jubilee of ordination, he started an apostolate in Mexico in the San Barnabé parish where he gave himself over to the most needy as always, by forming lay collaborators for the priestly mission. It was there that illness visited him. This forced him to cease all activity and return to Spain. In 1991, he went to the Madrid community of Reina del Cielo, then to that of Leganès. During several years, he went to the regular medical consultations presenting himself as *a missionary who was only temporarily in Madrid because of illness and insisting on the fact that he had to return to the San Barnabé mission*. But the years had weakened him and he had to face reality. He perceived that he didn't have much time to wrap up the loose ends of his life. He asked to live at Elorrio: *Elorrio was the cradle of my vocation and it is there that I want to finish my life*. The Lord took him at his word on Thursday, April 22, 1999, the day that he crossed over into eternity, after three final weeks during which he was put to the test. He was only hospitalized for a day. Fr. Tarcisio reposed in the cemetery of Elorrio after his funeral was

celebrated in the college chapel Friday, April 23. The Priests' vault at Elorrio contains the remains of Frs. or Brothers Sebastian Fernandez (1914-1968), Tomas Marcaide (1910-1978), Luis Gortazar (1925-1981), and Miguel Langreo (1902-1995). Fr. Victor Blanco was able to evoke the figure of the 'lil' father with the flute' who, in the desire of a born catechist, knew how to assemble in Mary's love, already at Madrid, the children with nothing, those of the streets and the after-war, to give them a taste of the bread of faith, sharing, and friendship, the three other names of the immense love that he had for the one who is Life. The figure of Fr. Tarcisio brings to mind that of his friend and confrere, Fr. Luis Madina: he shared in the worries of Father Luis in Madrid and collected funds for the work of *Mi Casa*.

Addenda.

Barcelona, 1954.

"I have the honor of having received the last circular # 18 on the centenary of the decree of praise of our dear Congregation, and we read it immediately in the community. Our tiny community of Barcelona continues its work in this big and beautiful city that you visited already five years ago with a guide lacking experience. I think that I have made some progress since then. The San Francisco Javier parish is growing. A new parish has been set up where there was not even one house when you visited. In other sectors, they are building on a large scale. We are negotiating to obtain permission to enlarge our parish church, since it is not sufficient with the 5 or even 6 Sunday masses. The community, now reduced to 3 Fathers, is not brilliant as far as health is concerned. Fr. Miguel Berrueta, after being forced to leave South America for health reasons, does what he can here, even though his illness progresses. I have just had an operation for a double hernia. All went well and I am recuperating bit by bit".

(Fr. Tarcisio.)

Death of Fr. Tarcisio Lorente, A.A. [ANA, April-May 1999,12-13].

On his birthday, the feast of the Epiphany, Father Tarcisio was suffering from the flu, which kept him in bed for a few days. He perhaps left his bed prematurely, but we already knew that it was unlike Father to remain quiet. He regained his normal pace although considerably weaker. And the winter had not allowed Father to take his usual walks outdoors. He continued his regime of retiring early, rising at dawn to celebrate Mass and then to rest in accordance with his schedule.

His situation began to deteriorate noticeably during the last three weeks. For the Easter Vigil which was celebrated in the convent of the 'Madres Dominicás' at 10:00 in the evening, arrangements were made for us to travel by car – father Went on foot, arriving two hours early. The celebration lasted another two hours. As anticipated, he returned tired. The days following he was mumbling incoherently and it was thought that he probably had a cold and so, on Easter Sunday, we took Father to see the doctor. Father returned a week later for a consultation and the doctor said that he would continue with the treatment and that he should be kept informed of Father's condition. We noticed a physical as well as a mental deterioration. A decline in mental alertness and awareness became more and more evident – becoming disoriented, confused about the time of day and not always knowing where he was.

From day to day Father was losing ground and during the second week of Easter we began to maintain nightly vigils to prevent him from wandering off in the night or falling down the stairs (He had been walking with the aid of two canes). We would accompany him to the dining room and to the chapel (in spite of everything, Father kept asking what time was community prayer). Already on Monday and Tuesday of the third week of Easter, Father spent most of the time in his room and we were obliged to monitor him during the day. It became difficult for him to stand, even to speak.

On the morning of Wednesday, April 21, we brought the doctor to the house. He suspected something more than a general weakened condition, that there possibly be some cerebral complications and therefore, urged us to take him to the hospital immediately. We did just that. While we were helping Father dress for the trip, he was unable to stand and his speech was slurry. He was taken to the hospital emergency room where they conducted a battery of tests, x-rays, scans, lumbar punctures, etc. The hospital authorities told us that they would continue with various tests but did warn us that they had detected signs of pre-existent blood-clots on the brain and more recently, meningoencephalitis (inflammation of the brain) and one lung filled with fluid. Furthermore, given Father's age and

because his medical records indicated he had incurred previous heart damage, his condition was deemed critical. The doctors said he had but a few hours to live. The hospital was unable to state whether the meningitis was a viral infection (apparently it is not uncommon during the springtime) or if it was related to the pulmonary complications. They admitted Father and administered antibiotics and waited (without too much hope) for signs of improvement. Hooked up to oxygen and various intravenous bottles, Father did not last more than 24 hours and remained in a coma throughout that time. Fr. Tarcisio died at 6:00 p.m. of that same day, Wednesday, April 21.

On Friday, April 23, we celebrated his funeral service here in the community chapel with the coffin lying at the foot of the altar. At 7:00 p.m., religious of his and other communities as well as some laypersons sang the Vespers for the deceased. At 7:45 p.m. the Paschal Eucharist was celebrated in white. Concelebrants were: Provincial, Father Manuel Martinez, Carlos del Rio, Ramón Pamplona, José Antonio Echaniz, Victor González, Niceto Calle, Enrique Goiburu, Miguel Iriarte, and two priests from the parish. Also present were Assumptionist brothers Pedro Fuentes, José Alberto Dominguez and Francisco Camino. The chapel overflowed with students, professors and friends. Present were Father's nephews from Elda (with whom he had the closest ties) and friends from the neighborhood as well as from Plasencia-Soraluze. His brother Ezechiel, who lives in Calahorra, was unable to attend nor was his son who wanted to attend but had to care for his parents... And so, after the celebration of a family Eucharist in an atmosphere of thanksgiving and Easter joy, Father Tarcisio was laid to rest in the cemetery at Elorrio, in the pantheon of the priests, next to four other Assumptionists: Fathers Sebastian Fernández and Luís Gortázar and brothers Tomas Marcaide and Miguel Langro.

Luis Medina

1911-1984

Spanish religious belonging to the Region of Colombia (South Belgium).



Formation.

Born August 18, 1911 in San Sebastian (Spain), Luis Medina received his secondary education at the alumnate in Elorrio (1922-28). He entered the Assumptionist novitiate at Scy-Chazelles (Moselle) in 1928 and took his first vows November 1, 1929. Fr. Savinien Dewaele appreciated his generous devotedness and noted that the brother was working to overcome a strong susceptibility. Luis studied philosophy in Saint Gérard, Belgium, from 1929 to 1931 and theology in Louvain and Lormoy (Essonne), France, from 1931 to 1934. Perpetually professed November 1, 1932, he was greatly interested in music and psychology throughout his studies. Ordained a priest in Versailles (Yvelines) June 29, 1935, he began his apostolic life as a teacher at the alumnate of Cavalerie (Dordogne) from 1935 to 1937, then at the scholasticate in Layrac (Lot-et-Garonne) from 1937 to 1938, and in Basque country, at Elorrio, starting in 1938. He was treasurer of the community from 1939 to 1942.

A champion of the social apostolate for children on all continents.

It was in the social apostolate that Fr. Luis found his way in life and showed all what he was capable of doing. He began this work in Spain, which emerged scathed and isolated from the bloody confrontations of its civil war. From associate pastor in Madrid, he became pastor and superior at Puente de Vallecas in January 1944, founding his first “Ciudad de los Muchachos” in the underprivileged area of Vallecas, on the periphery of the Spanish capital. He modeled his project of integral child development on the experience of Father Flanagan (Boys’ Town, Nebraska) and Anton Makarenko, who both advocated self-education and self-reliance on the part of a child regarding his own future. Naturally gifted with a great sense of initiative, and well-thought of by ecclesiastical authorities, he gave his undertaking a very personal touch, which caused him a number of difficulties within the community.

In 1953, Fr. Luis was back in Elorrio, the social work in Madrid taken over by the other Spanish religious within the framework of the then-Province of Bordeaux. In 1954, Fr. Luis changed environment. He was sent to New York where he served in the Spanish-speaking Assumptionist parishes of Our Lady of Esperanza and Our Lady of Guadalupe. He had, among other things, a radio program called *Luz por las ondas* (Light on the airwaves) in which he tried to evangelize and promote the social welfare of Hispanics.

In 1958, he moved to Costa Rica in Central America where he organized a program of education for poor young boys, linking the efforts of the Church with those of the government. Little by little, he built a Boys’ Town in Cartago, the country’s most important program for children. The Augustinian Recollect Fathers took over the work in 1964 because globetrotting Father Luis left for Panama to found a similar work. However, he was not able to stay very long because the climate in Panama did not agree with him. He turned the work over to the Somascan Fathers.

Finally, in 1968, Fr. Luis opened his fourth Boys’ Town in Cali, Colombia. The Provincial of the Little Sisters in Colombia put him in contact with Bishop Uribe Urdaneto. The boys were taken from the street and rapidly filled the first house on Carrera Quinta Road. In 1970, the installation moved to Melendez, on a large ranch where, little by little, Fr. Luis organized a boarding school and developed a style of family living, with the help of a Belgian volunteer, Miss Froidmont, who was called “Mami,” while he was called “Papi.” In 1984, there were 120 boarders

and 700 day-students. A man of deep faith, Fr. Luis often relied on Divine Providence for the financial operation of the institution: “Until now, God has never abandoned me. He has rescued me from all my difficulties, which have been neither small nor few.”

Suffering from a brain tumor, and almost blind, Fr. Luis died of a coronary thrombosis November 16, 1984. His funeral was celebrated the following day in Cali. The local press gave extensive coverage to the work of Fr. Luis whose body lies in the chapel of *Mi Casa*. Today, the institution is called *El Centro Educativo Industrial Luis Madina* in honor of its founder. Fr. Victor Blanco is its chaplain.

Addenda.

Information about the “Ciudad de los Niños” (Boy’s Town) Cartago, Costa Rica.

The “Ciudad de los Niños”, situated in Aguacaliente of Cartago, Costa Rica, is a nationally sponsored project of general public interest that has been approved and ratified by a special law passed by the National General Assembly of Costa Rica (No. 2720, Feb. 16th, 1961, Gaceta). An official contract, signed by both governmental and ecclesiastical authorities on July 29th, 1960, insures its existence and development.

It offers a home, educational facilities, medical care and whatever a boy needs for the normally-balanced development of his personality. It is an orientation school and caters to boys who are totally or partially abandoned or destitute, whether physically (orphans, poverty) or morally (bad environment, broken homes). The all-englobing plan of this gigantic endeavor considers possibilities of housing some 2,000 boys within a relatively short space of time. Such a plan has duly been given the adequate propaganda for the past four years through conferences, lectures, newspaper releases and reports, personal contacts, campaigns, etc., but only in Costa Rica and Panama so far.

Actually, the building program was initiated in 1961. The Institution now enjoys the comfort of seven (7) modern-equipped buildings or pavilions; six of them are to be used solely as dormitories. For the time being, one of these future dormitories is being occupied for chapel, recreation-hall, dining-hall, kitchen, infirmary, bookstore, soda and administration purposes. It measures 63 meters in length. The seventh building is a complete Grammar School in three wings, with its eight (8) large classrooms, its Administration section, its Assembly Hall and its bath facilities.

These buildings cover but a fraction of the beautifully located 180-manzana (or 320 acres) property owned by the Institution through legacy. In due time, some sixty (60) edifices will dot the whole surface of this haven; varied playgrounds, swimming pools and gardens have been foreseen in the approved plans.

Of necessity, due to the naturally hard beginnings of such an enterprise, we must use buildings and fields for provisional purposes. For instance, the available land “ear-marked” for future construction is being exploited agriculturally and for dairy products. As this Boys Town develops, it can also count upon another large property that has been bequeathed to the institution; cattle-raising, chicken-farming, fruit-treeplanting, etc., will be possible, providing inversion-funds can be obtained, thus insuring the income of many basic food products later on.

At present, some 162 boys are being succored here. The Grammar School is being directed by the Ministry of Education like any other public school. We send some boys to a local Vocational School, others to an ordinary High School, and we run an Apprentice center, introducing still others in various arts & crafts, such as general mechanics, carpentry, shoe-repairing, bakery, etc. We intend to have full-fledged Vocational and High Schools in due time.

The age bracket of the “so to speak” pioneers can be divided as follows:

50 boys between 7 & 10 years old

50 boys between 10 & 12 years old

44 boys between 12 & 15 years old

18 boys between 15 & 20 years old.

Plans foresee the admission of some 200 boys (additional) each year

This Institution is being supported in part by the government but mostly by private organizations and by campaigns. As it is so often the case with Institutions of such scope and breadth, the budgets are always too tight; hence the economical problems remain acute and constantly actual.

The social apostolate of children's towns.

“ I was pastor at Madrid and the parish was called ‘little Russia’, 25,000 inhabitants, about ten at mass. In the streets, I saw the children move. No daddy: he had been shot or was in prison. I told myself: “Are you the pastor for 10 persons?” I opened a house, a children's town. When it works, I go elsewhere. Each person has his own disposition: mine, it is launching. My last one was in Panama. One day, going through Bogota, someone suggested that I meet the archbishop of Cali. At once, he spoke to me of the ‘gamines’ (Spanish pronunciation). ‘Gamin’, that's Colombian! The ‘gamin’. That's the child who lives in the streets. He sleeps in the street, he eats there. That's his house. The Colombian gamin has no longer any contact with his family; he has broken off all contact. They live in ‘gallada’, that's the group, the band. It is there that they find something that resembles a family. In Colombia, most women have no real husband. The first one takes off and leaves her with two or three children; this bothers her since it would force her to work hard and stop drinking; and then the woman is not as pretty any more. The abandoned one finds another man...”.

François Xavier (Félix) Marchet

1872-1933

Religious of the Province of Bordeaux.

A Burgundian on the roads of the world.



Félix Marchet was born at Dijon (Côte d'Or) April 25, 1872. He did his secondary studies at the Saint-Ignace College in his city (1880-1889) and spent a year in the minor seminary of Plombières (Vosges) from 1889 to 1900. He entered the Saint-Sulpice seminary at Issy-les-Moulineaux (Hauts-de-Seine) for two years of philosophy (1890-1892) and two years of theology (1892-1894). He then completed his theology in Rome at the French seminary (1894-1898). He was ordained a priest August 17, 1897. Fr. Emmanuel Bailly introduced him to the Assumptionist spirit during a preached retreat (1896). Félix presented himself as a postulant at the Assumptionist novitiate of Livry at the end of 1898 and took the religious habit, January 18, 1899 under the name of Father François-Xavier. In 1900, the expulsions sent the 36 novices and 6 postulants of that time onto the routes of Europe: Gemert, Louvain. He was perpetually professed January 18, 1901, and was already requisitioned to teach dogma and moral theology. He was asked to save Notre-Dame des Châteaux (Savoie) by being incorporated by Bishop Lacroix into the diocese of Tarentaise. He battled with the tribunal right to the end, but to no avail. December 20, 1903, he had to leave the old sanctuary for Mongreno, next to Turin, where he taught until 1906. He was named pastor of Clairmarais (Pas-de-Calais), living in the house of Sister 'Truche' (1906-1919) with an interruption of two years during which time he taught at the college in Worcester, U.S.A. (1908-1910). In 1910, he was detached for a time to work for the Apostolate of the Sea during the fishing season of the Newfoundlanders. He was mobilized in 1916 and sent to the auxiliary infirmary services at Bourges. In 1908, we find him at the Charolles hospital (Saône-et-Loire) where he was treated for the Spanish flu. Cared for by the Religious of Nevers, he wrote a life of St. Bernadette. After the Armistice, he was discharged and, during the retreat held at Athis-Mons, chosen by Fr. Joseph Maubon for the house in Argentina. He set sail in 1919 and returned in 1921. At that time, he was asked to go to Jerusalem where he was able to give himself to the study of Palestinian archeology. He published a very controversial study on the true site of Caiaphas' palace and the church of Saint Peter of Cock Crow. While there, he became a guide for pilgrims and travelers who lodged at the hotel of Notre-Dame de France. The French officers of the occupation army in Syria especially appreciated him. At Jerusalem, he lived with Fr. Joseph Maubon. His health seemed vigorous. Fr. François-Xavier lived in numerous latitudes, but his years of activity were stopped by an obstruction of the bowel that had at first been neglected and thought to be something that would pass. This health problem would soon reveal itself to be serious. He was not too worried, having been for a long time constipated, but the intestinal complications took a new turn in December 1932. A medical consultation having been put off for too long, followed by an X-ray with a merciless verdict, prescribed urgent surgery to free up the colon. Dr. Roux, on December 22, operated Father the first time. This was followed by two more operations in the month of January. It was clearly too late. Fr. François-Xavier died Sunday, January 29, 1933 at the age of 61, after a long period of suffering admirably endured. He was buried the following Tuesday, January 31, in the grottoes of Saint Peter of Cock Crow. He left a sister living in Haute-Savoie (Thonon) and a brother, a Jesuit, missionary in Madagascar (Fianarantsoa). *This learned religious with a very apostolic heart who was a pleasant companion had come to the Assumption once his formation was finished. He possessed a vast sociability. The numerous letters received expressing their sadness upon the announcement of his death reflected this.*

Addenda.

Father Xavier was in Worcester one year, 1909-1910. When the Congregation was legally banned from France in 1900, we tried to keep some houses opened. It did not succeed for the aluminate of Notre-Dame des Châteaux, the very first aluminate created by Father d'Alzon in 1871. That is where Father Xavier was stationed when all the religious of the house were condemned by the French tribunals, and forced to exile to Italy. He served in the armed

forces during World War I. Later, he went to Argentina and ended up in Jerusalem. (Notes by Fr. Armand Desautels.)

Buenos Aires, 7 June 1919.

“I received a cable from my oldest brother announcing the death of my mother, only a year after the death of my father. Now I am completely an orphan: God’s will be done! I am happy to be a son of the Assumption. I was received as a real brother at Buenos Aires by all of ours. There is a true family spirit here. I want to thank you for having placed me here. I hope that I won’t be an obstacle to the development and extension of the beautiful works that promise for the future to reap many souls. Beautiful projects are in the works. The innumerable population of Buenos Aires, very poor as far as religious instruction is concerned, is like the Samaritan woman who pleaded with the Lord. In the city, you need people; the field for souls is as vast as the neighboring pampas. One only has to throw out seeds by the handful. A vocation presented itself 8 days ago asking me to organize an Argentinean Christmas with numerous collaborators and sponsors. I started a course of instruction for young girls brought by the Little Sisters. I admire the work of our Fathers at Belgrano in the midst of underprivileged people...”

Rodolphe (Léon René) Martel

1886 – 1978

Religious of the Province of Paris.



Biography.

Born December 17, 1886, in Thiennes, in the canton of Hazebrouck (Nord), Léon René Martel studied at the alumnates of Arras (Pas-de-Calais) and Taintegnies, Belgium, from 1898 to 1903, before entering the novitiate in Louvain in October 1903. He received the Assumptionist habit October 18, 1903, from Fr. Roger des Fourniels under the name of Brother Rodolphe. He made his first vows July 13, 1904. His master of novices, Fr. Benjamin Laurès, wrote concerning him: “Brother Rodolphe had a good novitiate year, even if, by temperament, he is rather easy-going. He is intelligent, supernatural, and very open, though sometimes too familiar.” Again in Louvain, Brother Rodolphe studied philosophy (1905-08), made his final profession June 7, 1907, and studied theology for two years (1910-12), after teaching two years at the alumnate in Bure (1908-10). Though he started his theology in Louvain, he continued it in Jerusalem, where he was ordained a priest July 13, 1913, and finished it in Rome (1913-14).

Since Fr. Rodolphe had the makings of a teacher, he was assigned accordingly: professor of apologetics in Louvain (1914), professor of rhetoric² in Taintegnies (1915), professor at the novitiate in Louvain (1916-17), professor of philosophy in Louvain (1917-19), and professor of humanities³ in Vinovo, Italy (1919).

In 1920, leaving the old continent, he was first sent to Bergerville-Sillery in Quebec City, but was quickly assigned to Assumption College in Worcester, where he taught from 1920 to 1929. He returned to Bergerville in 1929, only to return to the community in Worcester as its superior from 1935 to 1946.

He crossed the Atlantic to take charge of the community in Arras (Pas-de-Calais) from 1946 to 1949. Then in 1949, Fr. Rodolphe was appointed superior of the college in Perpignan (Pyrénées-Orientales), a position he held for 6 years (1949-55), before becoming its spiritual advisor until 1961. From 1962 to 1978, still very active, he was chaplain to the Orants of the Assumption in Le Vigan (Gard).

An excellent teacher, a dynamic superior, a well-appreciated preacher, and a man concerned about spiritual formation and the discernment of vocations, which were numerous in Worcester at that time, Fr. Rodolphe accepted in faith his sometimes-difficult obediences and a true readaptation upon his return to Europe at age 60. Fr. Rodolphe died in the hospital of Mende (Lozère) July 26, 1978, at the age of 92. He was buried in the cemetery in Chanac (Lozère).

A full life.

² Equivalent to the second year of college in the American system.

³ Equivalent to the first two years of college in the American system.

“One day I asked Fr. Rodolphe to write his own *curriculum vitae*. He answered me, with all of his characteristic assertiveness, that it was God’s business because He knew his life. I remain impressed by his productive existence. I have always found it difficult to retrace in a few pages the broad outline of the life of a priest or of a religious because it hides so much misery, suffering, greatness, and grace! The first years of Fr. Rodolphe’s life in Louvain coincided with the beginning of the century. Particularly important were his 26 years at Assumption College in Worcester, first as a teacher, then as superior. Upon his return to France, he became the superior of the orphanage in Arras before going to the college in Perpignan. Finally, he ended his life in Fr. d’Alzon’s family residence as chaplain to the Orants of the Assumption, where he left a deep impression....

Assumption College in Worcester sent him a fraternal message on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood in 1963:

‘Fond of the liturgy and solidly pious, Fr. Rodolphe enhanced our ceremonies and choral office with his rich voice. His zeal for the beauty of the house of God led him to construct our magnificent chapel dedicated to Christ the King. It remains the best testimony to his activity. A conscientious spiritual director and a sought-after preacher, this venerable person remains engraved in the memory of those who benefited from his spiritual teaching. His strong personality left an indelible mark on our community, which, thanks to him and his former students, was able to adapt itself to the new demands without losing the treasure of our family traditions.’

Fr. Rodolphe was a man of spiritual action and formation. Up to the date of his departure in 1946, Assumption College in Worcester had produced some 157 priests! The members of his family have stated that, during his student years, he had asked to become a Carthusian...”

Addenda .

Letter to Fr. Robert Fortin, A.A. from a niece, Ms. C Dubrulle dated 23 August 1878.

You have learned of the death of Fr. Rodolphe Martel at the Mende Hospital (Lozère) on 26 July 1978 where he was being treated since two weeks after a terrible illness that had struck him in August 1977. He recuperated, but the illness took him away. He was retired at the Christ-Roi House in Chanac since about a year...

Let me tell you that the Superior of Chanac gave me a copy of the talk by Fr. Odilon Dubois at the time of his leaving the College in 1946. I also have e magazines of “Je maintiendrai” of May, June-July, August 18=938 with a report of his Silver Jubilee with 2 of his classmates.

He was very discreet concerning information on himself.

Another letter dated 15 October 1978 by his niece.

If I have written to ask you for details of his life, it is because he was very attached to the College in Worcester. He often spoke of this college, of how modern it was. How many times he told us that we were 50 years behind the United States.

Letter of Fr. Robert Fortin to Fr. Rodolphe Martel’s niece dated 3 October 1978.

Unfortunately, I was unable to find many details concerning Fr. Rodolphe Martel’s trip in 1963. The college alumni remember him with much affection for his numerous years as professor, then superior and had him come to the USA so that they could thank him. The dinner was held in the gymnasium decorated for the occasion. I was unable to find the program for the celebration and the speech given on this occasion. However, the article that I am sending speaks of it; Father Rodolphe handwrote it for our magazine ‘*l’Assomption*’ in the fall of the same year.

After the celebration, he visited several houses of the province. He went with Msgr. Vasile Cristea, a.a. Fr. Richard Richards, a.a. was their guide and interpreter with Fr. Alfred Berthiaume as chauffeur and assistant guide. They first went to the novitiate in Saugerties, New York where they took part in a religious profession. They then went to the aluminate in Cassadaga, also in New York, but about 450 km away. After this, they traveled to Canada to visit our three houses: the aluminate of Bury, Beauvoir (a shrine of the Sacred Heart near Sherbrooke) and Quebec (a shrine called the Canadian Montmartre). This last community was the only one that he had known before leaving in 1946. Fr. Wilfrid Dufault, who succeeded him as superior in Worcester and later Superior General of the Congregation, told me that Fr. Rodolphe had confided his great joy and satisfaction for the celebration that took place. He marked the vicariate of the time by his personality and more so our house in Worcester. We had to celebrate him because of this.

Hydulphe (Félix-E.-J.) Mathiot

1876-1962

French religious of the Province of North America.

In the New World.

Félix Edouard Joseph Mathiot was born March 7, 1876 at Docelles (Vosges). He did his secondary studies at the minor seminary of Autry (1889-1894). Then came his philosophy and theology at the major seminary of Saint-Dié where he was ordained to the priesthood December 19, 1900 by Bishop Foucault. After a few months as curate at Frizon, he came knocking on the door of the Assumption. He took the habit at Louvain October 18, 1901 under the name of Father Hydulphe, pronounced his first vows the following year at the same date and his perpetual vows in Rome October 18, 1903. He was sent to Rome where he got his licentiate in theology at the Minerva and, in 1904, left for Worcester (U.S.A.). Until 1927, he exercised a zealous apostolate, as a teacher at Assumption College and a well-appreciated preacher in various parishes of New England. In 1927, Fr. Hydulphe arrived at the Quebec novitiate in Bergerville. He taught Gregorian chant in various Quebec religious communities and especially to the Sisters of St. Joan of Arc, but also patrology at the major seminary of Quebec starting in 1934. In 1941, Father returned to the United States and was stationed at 14th Street. He devoted himself to preaching and teaching Gregorian chant at the provincial house of the Little Sisters of the Assumption in Walden (New York) in 1947. During more than twenty years, he lived there and was very effective in teaching, preaching, and spiritual guidance. Regardless of a long and painful illness, Fr. Hydulphe remained a student and an avid reader. His studies were geared to an intellectual apostolate in the field of history and patrology. December 19, 1960, he had the joy of celebrating his sixty years of priesthood, his diamond jubilee, surrounded by his religious confreres from various houses. On the occasion, his intellectual activities and his great erudition served by a good memory were underscored. He had many qualities: a penetrating intelligence and a very faithful memory that were fed by constant labor. He was open to all manifestations of Christian culture. He knew the Fathers of the Church very well, especially Saint Augustine and Saint John Chrysostomos. He was also a master of the art of spiritual and humorous remarks and repartees. September 16, 1962, in his 87th year, his battle with life ended. Until his last breath, he was accompanied with the prayers and care of the Little Sisters of the Assumption. At the end, he was neither able to read or write legibly nor follow a thought logically, and this situation made him suffer greatly. His funeral was held in the Christ the King chapel at Assumption Preparatory School in Worcester. Fr. Polyeucte Guissard gave the eulogy and Bishop Flanagan of the Worcester Diocese said the final commendation. Fr. Hydulphe was buried at the cemetery for the religious at the Prep School.



Memories concerning Fr. Hydulphe.

When Fr. Hydulphe arrived in the United States in 1904, he started to preach retreats to the Little Sisters of the Assumption at the age of 28. His retreats were unforgettable, since one felt that he lived what he preached. A profound theologian, he presented the doctrine and the faith of the Church through the life of the Fathers of the Church that he knew so well. He was a true orator who could not speak of the passion of Christ without emotion. He also had the talent of being concrete and adding amusing stories of community life to enliven his topic. Gifted with a great capacity for work, he recomposed the musical accompaniments from the manual for Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. He was demanding for himself, since he liked to have work well done; the Sisters were well aware of this when they had to recopy music. With an artistic temperament, he knew how to train organists. He furnished the Walden library with books and enjoyed the stillness of Nature and the atmosphere of a house that favored work. In spiritual direction, he knew how to comfort. A pleasant companion, he was an erudite who could present clearly the main points of a situation or tell a story with some unforgettable expressions. The one at whose expense they were directed or a person who had no sense of humor could apprehend his quips or puns. But nothing

will ever come to light since, before his death, Fr. Hydulphe destroyed all of his notes, feeling that no one else would be able to use them adequately.

Addenda.

He did one year of military service and was dispensed of his 2nd year since his mother was a widow. It was through Fr. Merklen that he came in contact with the Assumption. Fr. Hydulphe was one of the first religious sent to Worcester. He lived at Fales Street and taught Latin and chant. He was also in charge of drama. On 10 August 1914, Fr. Hydulphe left for France for military service in World War I and was stationed in Salonica. He returned in 1920 until 1931. He had the students perform a Cantata of Saint-Saens when the 2nd wing of the Assumption College was blessed 7 November, 1922..

Letters from Sr. M.-Francine-Marguerite, Little Sister of the Assumption, Walden, N.Y.

6 January 1961: "I don't know if you have heard that Rev. Fr. Hydulphe had a cerebral spasm on Tuesday morning at 10:45 on his way to Cassadaga. We can't even leave him alone for a moment since he is afraid of another attack. He said that his situation was critical and that we should have him anointed. We called Fr. Ulric who came at once. Since that time, he is somewhat better. His left hand is regaining strength. His speech is a bit better, but he has difficulty swallowing and there is no light in his eyes. He only can take liquids and purees. As of yesterday, he has permission to get up and spend some time in his lounging chair."

17 January 1961: "Fr. Hydulphe continues making progress, but very slowly. He now eats a bit and speaks better, but this tires him. His throat is always congested and his eyesight is not good. He works a bit. He translates the Ordo into French and dictates it to us. That occupies him 2 hours a day without tiring him. He reads a bit with glasses and a special lamp."

Citizen Herald, Wednesday, December 21, 1960, p. 3.

Celebrated Diamond Jubilee in Priesthood ----

Father Mathiot celebrated 60th anniversary as priest, Monday. One of the most distinguished anniversaries ever marked by a priest of the Roman Catholic Church in this area took place in Walden, Monday, when Father Hydulphe Mathiot, A.A., venerable chaplain of the Little Sisters of the Assumption on Gladstone Avenue celebrated his Diamond Jubilee – the 60th anniversary of his ordination.

The scholarly, kindly looking priest celebrated the anniversary Mass in his little private chapel at one end of his neatly ordered library in which he has more than 3,000 beloved books, some of them dating back to the Middle Ages. During the day he had a private reception with his Provincial Superior, Very Rev. Henri Moquin of New York City.

Notable visitors:

There were other distinguished visitors here for the memorable occasion... A highlight of the day was the receipt of a telegram by Father Mathiot from His Holiness Pope John XXIII, conveying the Papal benediction... The first Assumptionist Father came to America in 1891 to serve as chaplain to the Little Sisters of the Assumption in New York City.

Distinguished scholar:

Father Mathiot has a record of outstanding achievements in nearly all the branches of his congregation's works. He has distinguished himself as a professor and scholar, as an indefatigable preacher in nearly every parish of New England and Canada, and as a musician by promoting the study of sacred music and Gregorian Chant.

... Of the sixty years of priestly life, he has spent only one in the diocese of his origin. After his ordination, he wished to enter the religious life immediately but the Bishop who had ordained him, recognizing the unusual talents

of the young priest, and desirous of keeping him for his diocese, prevailed on him to wait a while before taking this decisive step. Father Mathiot therefore worked for one year as a secular priest before obtaining permission to enter the religious life.

Helped found a college:

His next three years were spent as an Assumptionist at Louvain in Belgium at Rome. After his studies, he came to America. His first field of apostolate in this country was the newly established College of the Assumption at Greendale, now located in Worcester, Mass. The college was scarcely a month old when he arrived there in mid-November of 1904 at the age of 28, to throw himself energetically into the tremendous task of building the new college. Like all beginnings, that of Assumption College encountered almost insurmountable difficulties.

The Assumptionist Fathers were new in the United States and completely unknown. Privations and obstacles of every type confronted them. But the Assumptionists were undismayed. Father Mathiot was equal to the task and as one of this small group of pioneers, he consecrated to his new work all his priestly ardor, his time, strength, and energy. So well did he accomplish his task that innumerable friends and benefactors were won for the struggling young college and it was enabled to take its rightful place among the leading educational institutions in America.

Chaplain in World War:

At the outbreak of the First World War, Father Mathiot devoted himself as a chaplain in the service of his country and ministered to the wounded in France and Salonica until 1920. He then returned to Assumption College where he remained until 1931. The next years of his apostolate were spent between Canada and the United States, preaching and teaching, introducing and stimulating interest in Gregorian Chant, and teaching at Laval University in Quebec. He is justly famed as a master of the Gregorian Chant and he composed original accompaniments for the benediction manual in use by the Little Sisters.

Converted garage:

His chapel occupies one end of a former garage that has been converted into his library. It has a small, plain altar where he celebrates mass. When he mentions his books of which there are over 3,000, his eyes light up and he describes them as his "Latin, French and English friends." Those are the predominant languages of his books. The library has some extremely rare and old – ancient is the better word – books. Some of them cannot be matched outside of the great church libraries of the world.

Rare volumes:

One of the gems of the collection is a complete, eleven-volume set of Cornelius Lapidus's Biblical Commentaries, in Latin, published in Antwerp, Belgium, beginning in 1571. There are other rare volumes, dearly prized by researchers. Although he is now 84 years old, Father Mathiot, devoted chaplain of the Little Sisters, retains all his keenness of mind and his youthful vigor -- only his physical strength has diminished.

He reads insatiably. His memory is keen. He keeps abreast of world happenings. And he is forever studying and working... now, on a Biblical commentary, which is well advanced. Monday was one of the most wonderful days of his life. It was a day he will never forget... his Diamond Jubilee Mass... the meeting with his Provincial Superior... the Papal Benediction.. the good wishes and blessings of so many friends who remembered the significance of this day in the life and priesthood of a dear and devoted servant of God.

Golden Jubilee in Priesthood of Fr. Hydulpe Mathiot: Walden, 19 December 1950.

Sermon by Fr. Engelbert Devincq

My soul glorifies the Lord! My very dear Father,

What was the most impressive attribute of Our Lord?

His power? To be sure, when he commands the elements and illnesses, when he brings back from the grip of death the bodies, he can instill terror. However, possibly there is something better.

His intelligence? Without doubt, he astounds by his teaching, which surpasses all others. His words were so simple and at the same time luminous that the people are amazed and qualify his words as 'sublime' since this best translated the impression they had. And yet, intelligence does not seem to be the main trait of Christ's psychology.

The most impressive is certainly his goodness, especially his pity. On the day that he inaugurated his public life, in the synagogue of Nazareth he read a passage from the prophet Isaiah. "The spirit of the Lord has been given to me, for he has anointed me. He has sent me to bring the good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives and to the blind new sight, to set the downtrodden free, to proclaim the lord's year of favor." He then rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the assistant and sat down.... Then he began to speak to them, "This text is being fulfilled today even as you listen." (Lk. 4:18-21) He spoke the truth. In him, there was nothing that was not inspired by pity. It is pity that makes him preach; that moves his power; that opens his lips in prayer; that pushes him toward suffering and the cross...

Priesthood is the instrument of his pity! In himself, he has all the riches necessary to exercise it. And yet he needs the means so that souls can profit by it. In order to do this, Christ infuses in the priesthood the strength needed to share this pity. Father, in your priesthood I want to underline 4 qualities that have made of it an instrument of pity: the strength of the word; the strength of light; the strength of beauty; the strength of blood. These are the things that explain the fruitfulness of a half-century of service to others.

Dear Father! Fifty years ago, you were ordained a priest. On this occasion so many remembrances come back to you. You see where you were born near the Moselle River, in the mountainous region of the Vosges; you relive the many good moments with your parents; you think of the years of formation at Autrey, Saint-Dié, and at Rome under the direction of pious and learned teachers. You can smell once again the holy chrism by which your hands were anointed in the cathedral of Saint-Dié. You think of the initiation to the ministry of souls, then your entry into the Assumption and your 2 years of novitiate under the guidance of the learned Fr. Félicien. Finally, your various ministries in America flash, before you like a slide show, your successes and your deceptions...

As I just explained, this day brings forth a victory by the 4 qualities of your priesthood. The Church never tires of singing a special song: the Magnificat of the Virgin. You sing it in your heart at this time and we, your brothers, your friends, your spiritual children, sing it to God for all the things that this, your Golden Jubilee, brings to mind. Yes, Glory to God for the eternal priesthood!

Glory to God for the one who during 50 years, by the qualities given to him by God, shared the graces with a whole people!

Father Hydulphe came to Worcester in 1904, with an order from Father Emmanuel Bailly to go to "Greendale, Canada." He was already a priest when he entered the Congregation, in 1901. In Worcester, he taught, but mostly, from Worcester, he left to preach retreats in parishes and convents. In 1927, he was stationed in the newly founded house of Quebec. A great lover of Gregorian chant, he taught it to our novices and to those of the Sisters of Saint Joan of Arc. A great lover of the Fathers of the Church and especially of Saint Augustine and Saint John Chrysostom, he taught patrology at the Seminary of Quebec. He worked for years on a possible publication of quotations from the Fathers of the Church on various subjects, but unfortunately he destroyed his notes before his death, thinking that no one could make use of them. He was a great preacher. In time, he overcame a harsh temper beautifully. His last 15 years were spent in Walden, N.Y. with the Little Sisters of the Assumption, whom he helped in many ways, and who took a maternal care of him. He was buried in the Prep School cemetery. (Notes by Fr. Armand Desautels.)

Edouard (Philippe) Melchior

1909-1981

Religious of the Province of South Belgium.



Curriculum vitae.

Born June 4, 1909 at Maaseyck, in the Belgian Limbourg, Philippe Désiré Melchior, after doing his primary studies in his native country with the Brothers (1915-1919), continued his schooling at Brussels from 1920 to 1923, then at the Saint-Georges Institute in Brussels (1923-1936). He entered the humanities alumnate of Sart-les-Moines (1926-1930). He went to the Taintegnies novitiate where he took the religious habit and the name of Brother Edouard September 28, 1930. He pronounced his first vows September 29, 1931. Fr. Romanus Declercq, his master of novices, evaluated him in the following manner: *“Brother Edouard is a fervent religious with many attributes. He has an open-minded intelligence and a well-balanced practical sense; his character is jovial and a bit timid although at times he can be cutting”*. Brother Edouard did two years of philosophy at Saint-Gérard (1931-1934) and took care of his military obligations at the Beverloo camp. September 29, 1934, he pronounced his perpetual vows at Louvain in the hands of Fr. Aubain Colette where he studied theology (1934-1938). He was ordained a priest at Louvain March 6, 1938. Fr. Edouard was named to teach French, Latin, and Greek at Bure (1938-1945). After the war, he was obliged to change residence because of his favoring ‘rexist’ ideas. [Rexism was an extreme right wing political movement developed in Belgium under the direction of Léon Degrelle, in the years preceding the Second World War. Rex was the name of his publication founded in 1932. At first it was monthly, then weekly. After 1940, Degrelle became the champion in Wallonia for collaboration with Germany and created the division S.S. Wallonia.] He went to Sart-les-Moines in 1945 to care for late vocations. In 1947, he was sent to Colombia as curate in Cali, then teacher in Bogota at the Brothers’ college. Then the 1948 revolution came: the college was burned and several religious almost lost their lives during those troubled times. Fr. Edouard was transferred to the U.S.A., first at the Our Lady of Guadalupe parish, then to the college in Worcester (1948-1957). At the end of 1957, the Bogota College reopened and received Fr. Edouard again, but this time as its director starting in 1969. He was at first superior of the community from 1959 to 1969. In 1973, Fr. Edouard returned to Belgium. He was named to Duquesnoy Street in Brussels and helped out at La Madeleine church. During the summer of 1980, it was discovered that he had lung cancer. He was hospitalized in the fall and died January 11, 1981. After the funeral celebrated at La Madeleine, his body was transferred and buried at Saint-Gérard on January 14.

Excerpts from the funeral homily.

“After the Second World War, the Belgian Province accepted a new field of apostolate in South America, in Colombia. A passionate and trying discovery awaited the first pioneers of this apostolic venture in these nations still unsettled by violence, misery, and disorder. Fr. Edouard tasted these painful beginnings for the Assumptionist foundation with its concern for the Christian education of the youth and the preparation of replacements from native vocations from the country. This was the foundation of the Emmanuel D’Alzon College in Bogota under the direction of Fr. Edouard. This college has just celebrated 25 years of foundation and the alumni were there to show all of their gratitude... Fr. Edouard presented a generous countenance, ardent up to the point of being rigorous, like that of a John the Baptist, and on the other hand, the presence of a meek and humble Christ who had come as Savior, sensitive to every misery for which he was merciful, was soon discovered. Being timid, and therefore a bit snappish, this religious had a big heart. Faithful in friendship, we already miss him, he who has entered into truth and the fullness of love”.

Addenda.

Letter from Fr. Melchior dated 28-4-1948 written at Instituto San Pablo, Bogota, Colombia.

You were appraised of the events that took place here, two weeks ago; they burned our house and we have absolutely nothing left: May the good Lord be blessed! My negotiations may be long and difficult since I no longer have a passport. In fact, it is an advantage. I have few possessions since I was able to flee with only my cassock. The other Fathers are equally safe. Nothing happened at Cali. We are going through tragic times, after the war in Belgium, Here we now have Communist riots. This being stripped of everything and seeing the ruins are an excellent means that God is using to show us that we are religious and that only by a submission to the His will are we to grow. We are happy regardless of all that we are going through.

Bogota, 1964.

“I have just finished my phone call and I write to you at once. I thank you for the confidence you have in me and I promise that I’ll be ready. All this is with the help of God, to be sure. No doubt I’ll receive your orders when it is time as well as those of Fr. Vargas. Could you mention to him this offer that you made me? What surprised me was that you made no allusion to Fr. Sylvère Piriou who had written to Fr. Jesus Fernandez to know what the situation was concerning the seminary. He is a good religious, intelligent, and very resourceful. He would do a better job than I as far as organizing and he had asked Fr. Jesus de la Esperanza to get information from you concerning this. Do not hesitate to write to him on this subject since two heads are better than one, isn’t that so? I know that he would want a rapid answer so that he could start with me in February. I hope that all this will move quickly so that I can be there a bit before the time. The Fathers can expect reinforcements coming from Europe. Concerning Fr. Théo Lowet, a sympathetic religious for all that, I don’t count on him.”

Amarin (René) Mertz

1907-1985

Religious of the Province of France.



Formation.

The fourth of six children, René Mertz was born in Riedwhir (Haut-Rhin) February 18, 1907. After studying at Scherwiller (Bas-Rhin) from 1920 to 1924, and at Miribel-les-Echeltes (Isère) from 1924 to 1926, he entered the novitiate at Taintegnies in Belgium where he received the religious habit under the name of Brother Amarin, November 5, 1926. After taking his annual vows November 6, 1927 at Scy-Chazelles (Moselle), he studied philosophy in Saint Gérard and began his theology in Louvain where he made his final profession November 1, 1932, finishing it in Lormoy (Essonne) where he was ordained a priest December 4, 1934.

First mission: Manchuria.

In October 1935, Fr. Amarin left with Fr. Cyrille Paratte for Manchuria (Chinese territory under Japanese administration) where he remained thirteen years (1935-48), without seeing his family, often without even the possibility of contacting it. He taught first at the minor seminary of Kirin with the priests of the Foreign Missions of Paris, then at the major seminary of Hsinking where several dioceses entrusted to the young team of Assumptionists the training of their Manchurian seminarians. The Assumptionists built the major seminary under trying conditions: controls by the Japanese occupying authorities, political troubles caused by the Soviet intervention, and the Chinese Communist revolution. Fr. Amarin's great consolation was to see the priestly ordination of their seminarians just before the liquidation of the seminary. Later, these priests worked in the diaspora, unwilling to accept the Patriotic Church, inspired by nationalism and isolationism.⁴

From Worcester to Douvaine: 1948-73.

After a few months in France, Fr. Amarin was once again ready for a distant mission, this time in North America. He was first sent to Assumption College in Worcester (USA) where he taught French, became Dean of Discipline at the high school level, and, for a few years, directed the Apostolic School. In 1955, he went to Canada to found an aluminate in Bury and was its first superior. In 1958, he returned to France to relieve Fr. Romain Durand as master of novices at Nozeroy (Jura). The novitiate closed its doors the following year (1959). Fr. Amarin was then appointed superior of the college in Bône, Algeria, remaining in that post until the religious withdrew in 1963 as a result of Algerian independence. In 1963, he was appointed superior of the aluminate in Velleuxon (Haute-Saône), which was experiencing difficulty recruiting students. Finally, from 1964 to 1973, Fr. Amarin was the superior of the orphanage in Douvaine (Haute-Savoie).

⁴ The religious anti-Catholic persecution began with the seizure of religious schools (March 1951), the expulsion of the Apostolic Nuncio (1951), the adoption of an ideological policy called the "triple autonomy": clerical, financial, and spiritual. The first consecrations of patriotic bishops, chosen without the approval of Rome, took place in April 1958.

Jerusalem: 1973-81.

Here, too, a difficult mission awaited Fr. Amarin in 1973. At age 66, he went to Jerusalem where the community at Saint Peter in Gallicantu had suffered from the political and military events of the Yom Kippur War. His stay was supposed to be of short duration, but in 1976 he was reappointed superior until 1981 when the state of his health obliged him to return to France. During this period, he knew how to create a peaceful atmosphere in this international community, often pulled apart by opposing views and torn by the tensions affecting the country. He exhausted himself as he guided (in several languages) the pilgrims who came to visit the shrine. He combined the qualities of a perfect guide, saying: one must be hospitable and even-tempered, with a bit of humor on occasion; apostolic, putting forward the Christian point of view; devoted and always willing to replace someone who couldn't be there; familiar with the Holy Scriptures; knowledgeable about history and the history of the holy sites; and not too long!

Souffelweyersheim: 1982-85.

After a short rest in Savoy, Fr. Amarin was named to the semi-active community of Strasbourg-Allée Spach. He left it the following spring when the new community of Souffelweyersheim (Bas-Rhin) was founded and where, after having held many responsible positions in difficult or transitional situations, he spent three happy years. He was a delightful companion for his brothers, witty, full of kindness and attention. He divided his time into short alternating periods, comprising prayer, reading, gardening, and different community services. He was extremely serviceable, never speaking about himself or his health. He took care of himself, but in the privacy of his room. On the feast of the Ascension in 1985, following a malaise, he was hospitalized in Strasbourg. He was treated for respiratory problems until the morning of July 24, the day on which he died. His funeral was celebrated July 29 at Souffelweyersheim in the presence of about thirty Assumptionists and numerous parents and friends. Fr. Amarin was the first to be buried in the cemetery of Souffelweyersheim where the community was granted a plot.

Addenda.

When Fr. Amarin first came to Assumption Prep, in his French class, he would bring in Chinese tea to share with his students. As Dean of Discipline, he was well liked and the students would enjoy his air raid drills when he would yell out: 'Raid-Air! Raid-Air!'

Fr. Amarin wrote College d'Alzon in Bone 14 April 1963.

It has been quite some time since I wrote you letters concerning the new installation. They are very kind to keep me informed of what is happening there.

Here I write to the Provincial in the opposite manner: i.e. concerning closing houses. We have just sounded the doomsday bell: an announcement by letter to the parents that the college is closing at the end of the school year since the Fathers are leaving. We don't know what will happen to the college; we are waiting to see where negotiations lead...

I won't have to brag about my realizations since I left America. In less than 4 years, I have closed two houses. Fr. Ract must now realize that he would have been better off to leave me in the USA. I don't know what he intends to do with me.

Would you still have a place for me at my age? I could still care for flowerbeds in some house. That is still what I do best.

Amarin Mertz writes to Fr. Henri Moquin, Provincial from Wickerachwih 4 September 1948.

You have been greatly interested these last years by the Manchurians and these are very thankful to you. Perhaps you still take care of them now that they had to leave their dear mission.

A question that must have troubled the missionaries on vacation, is that of their future activity. Concerning myself, I must admit that I haven't even thought about it. But my nomination for your dear country filled me with great joy. It will give me the chance to serve you, as little as my services can be. I know many of your confreres, and we'll find ourselves in one great family. Finally they let us hope to be able to return to China some day.

Those who wish to go to America have quite a few formalities to fulfill. Most likely, you are aware of them, since you already helped Fr. Clovis. Could you please help me in the same way by sending me in double two copies of the following certificates?

1-certificate as a teacher in Worcester

2-certificate of salary once I'll be in America.

This will enable me to see you more quickly. Please excuse me for being so late. It is only eight days since I received my nomination. If you have other interesting information to send me, please add it. Maybe I'll have to ask you for the money sent to you in my name. But we can speak about that later.

Very religiously yours in Our Lord and Our Lady of the Assumption. Amarin Mertz

Nozeroy, 1958.

“This is the third or fourth time that I am too late because of events for my wishes for the feast of St. Wilfrid. In past years, we were right in the midst of getting established and building in Bury. This year, it is a question of another installation for me [Nozeroy]. But be assured, dear Father, that we will be certain to make amends for being late by redoubling our fervor through our prayers on 12 October, a date that is dear to us. Since I move around a bit – it is the time of my vacations – I understand better your need for prayers to direct the Congregation. May the Holy Spirit and your holy patron help you in your task, which, I imagine, must at times be quite heavy to carry. Fr. Romain [Camille Durand] left us this morning. The good-byes were touching. Tears flowed. I was able to see how much Father was esteemed and loved at the novitiate where he did a lot of good. You have to fear for his successor! I was a bit surprised not to be able to return to Bury in Canada. On Sunday we had a few religious being vested. They are still not numerous.”

Alfred (Joseph Gérard Laurent) Moors

1883-1971

Belgian religious of the Province of England.



Outline of his life.

Joseph Gérard Laurent Moors was born August 10, 1883 at Aix-la-Chapelle in Germany, in the diocese of Cologne. Later, his Belgian parents resided at Cortessem, in Limbourg. September 8, 1898, young Joseph entered the Taintegnies aluminate for his studies (1897-1901). He just passed through that of Clairmarais (1901) during the expulsion. He returned to Taintegnies to finish his humanities (1901-1903). On March 11, 1904, under the name of Brother Alfred, he took the habit at the Louvain novitiate where he made his first vows the following year on the same date. His perpetual vows were held March 25, 1906. He was sent to the Zeperen aluminate to teach for a while (1906-1907). Then came his philosophy studies at Louvain (1907-1910). Brother Alfred began his theology at Louvain (1910-1912) and pursued them at Notre-Dame de France in Jerusalem (1912-1913). Bishop Piccardo ordained him a priest July 13 in Jerusalem. In 1914, Fr. Alfred was eligible to be drafted, but since he had, in his capacity as chaplain for refugees, a deferment certificate that expired at the end of the armistice, he spent 1914-1919 in England as a military chaplain for the English and Australian soldiers. Since he knew German perfectly, he was also asked to hold services for the German prisoners who were in detention camps. During this time, Fr. Alfred was attached to the Bethnal Green convent in London. This also permitted him to hold religious services for Belgian sisters in the British capital. He also spent some time helping as a curate in the Assumptionist parishes of Charlton (1915-1917) and Rickmansworth (1917-1919). From 1919 to 1925, Fr. Alfred was sent to teach at the college of Plovdiv in Bulgaria, then to the U.S.A. to the college in Worcester (1925-1927). His favorite subjects were: English, drawing, and stenography. In 1927, Fr. Alfred returned to England where he would spend the rest of his life: first, as curate at Bethnal Green during 25 years (1927-1952), then at Newhaven (Sussex). From 1955 to 1959, he was part of the formation team at the Hitchin aluminate (Herts) and then became chaplain for a convalescent home in Brighton (Sussex). In 1970, he was admitted to a rest home of the Little Sisters of the Assumption at Hove where he died November 3, 1971 at the age of 88. His funeral was held November 9 in the church of Bethnal Green where he had been curate during 25 years. Fr. Alfred's body was buried in the Leyton cemetery in the vault of the Assumptionist religious.

Jubilees and centenary.

"I absolutely don't want to miss the centenary pilgrimage to Lourdes (1958): it is the final lap in a progression of silver jubilees between Lourdes and myself. The very year of the apparitions (1858), my father had just been born. I was born in 1883, for the 25th anniversary of the apparitions. I went for the first time to Lourdes with Fr. Emmanuel Bailly in 1908 to celebrate my 25th birthday, which corresponded to the 50th anniversary of Lourdes. I remember the unforgettable procession of the 200 living cured during the 50 first years. Gargan and the heroine, very alive, from Zola's novel, 'Lourdes', that the author in his book has die, were there. A brother of Bernadette was also there. My second pilgrimage to Lourdes took place in 1933 to celebrate my 50th birthday, corresponding to the 75th year of the apparitions. For my own hundred years, I will most likely need a replacement, unless 60 years are enough for a platinum jubilee. Why not imitate Fr. Clodoald Serieix, my former superior in Worcester who granted me in 1968 my third pilgrimage? I would like to go there with my brother, Fr. Rodrigue". Letter dated December 16, 1957.

Addenda.

"How can I not be touched when the Father of the whole Assumptionist family is the first to send me congratulations for my jubilee.. I am now a 'presbyter' in the double sense of the Greek word, having become

octogenarian this year. I thought that I would write you before Easter to get permission to spend a month of vacations in my family. Since I left the USA, this took place only every five years. We are a patriarchal family on the model of the Canadian families: great grandfather, grandfather, and a father having at least ten children. As far as those living, I have more than 150 names among whom are my two sisters who are nuns, 3 nieces also nuns and each year the list gets longer. Concerning the 'home' where I serve, my work among the convalescents on the one hand, the elderly and infirm in bed or who keep to their room on the other hand, is not quite a sinecure. We had 8 deaths last year. I usually deal for the most part with Catholics in name that from father to son have not practiced their religion since their first communion. The only instruction of an old woman was to read the Life of Jesus by Renan. I succeeded in giving a passport to all those who died. Saint Peter will not be too severe at the lines!"

Letter to the Provincial by Fr. Alfred Moors dated 4 September 1927.

I have just received my travel notice, dated 4 July. Counting on the fact that you are cognizant of the 2- month delay not dependent on me, I hope that you excuse it. Fr. Superior has named me again for 13 September to Jefferson. He is presently in Canada with Frs. Philippe and Fernandez. Fr. Symphorien telegraphed him to ask if I was absolutely necessary that I go to Jefferson for those days.

I'll go to New York as soon as possible for my passport and will take the first ship where I find a place.

I thank you so much, dear Father, for having finally taken me away from teaching. I am even more thankful by the fact that you thought of this yourself. I had not dared to trouble you again this year on this topic and this is a trait of your goodness that I shall not forget.

I hope to see you in Paris and if you permit me to visit my old mother in Belgium for three or four days, this would please me greatly. She has a very weak heart and will not live many more years. I'll wait till later to visit with the other members of my family. It will be as you judge to be good and opportune.

Hoping to see you and to speak at greater length of things, I remain your obedient and thankful child in Our Lord.
Fr. Alfred Moors

Fulgence (Nicolas Auguste) Moris

1865-1921

French religious.



Fr. Brun's successor in New York.

Nicolas Auguste Moris was born June 5, 1865 at Val-d'Isère (Savoie). He did his grammar studies at Notre-Dame des Châteaux (1876-1879) and his humanities at Alès (Gard) from 1879 to 1881. He received the habit at the Osma novitiate from the hands of Fr. Picard, November 21, 1882 under the name of Brother Fulgence and pronounced his perpetual vows December 14, 1884. A few days later, he was tonsured and received the minor orders. He was sent to the Nice aluminate (Alpes-Maritimes) where he taught two years (1885-1887). In 1887, he returned to Osma for his theology and to prepare himself for his ordinations. He was noticed because of his serious application, his love of precision, and his interest in theology. He was ordained to the priesthood December 21, 1888 and the following year taught at Osma for two years (1889-1900), where the Assumption tried to organize a college, but this quickly proved to be unfruitful. In 1891, Fr. Fulgence was named to the Mauville aluminate (Pas-de-Calais), then to that of Taintegnies in Belgium (1892). In 1893, he became a teacher and curate at Villecomtesse (Yonne). In 1894, he held the same positions at Clairmarais. Finally in 1895, after the death of Fr. Henri Brun, Fr. Picard sent Fr. Fulgence to New York as chaplain of the Little Sisters of the Assumption. He stayed there 20 years. He was the co-founder of the parish of Our Lady of Guadalupe in New York in 1902 at 14th Street. From 1896 to 1902, in fact, the parish did not exist. The two or three religious of the community lived in apartments. They had to move from time to time because of an increase in rent or a rental that was not renewed. These changes were always disagreeable and bothered Fr. Fulgence who had a love of stability. He exerted much effort for the numerous parishioners of the poor milieu, Latinos and Irish, often recently immigrated. They became his friends because of his calm and affability, his very prudent advice, his assiduity in the confessional, his willingness to help, and his inalterable patience. He could be reproached for his slowness, his involuntary tardiness, his excessive aversion toward all that seemed to be new, or even his timidity when faced with an initiative to take. An enemy of noise, promenades, and excursions, he spent more than twenty years in New York without getting to know the city, except for the two roads that led to the communities of the Little Sisters! A secretary who moved around a bit, spending only a few weeks in the business capital of the U.S.A., knew more concerning the monuments and the transformations taking place in the city than he did. In 1919, his health forced him to take a total rest. Fr. Fulgence was recalled to France, and after a few months spent in his native Savoy village, he went to the San Remo house in November 1920. It was there that he died in the night of July 30, 1921, at the age of 57, of which 37 of religious profession and 33 as a priest. His body rests in the vault of the Assumption at San Remo.

From a letter by Fr. Ferréol, August 1921.

“We were all able to admire the patience with which Fr. Fulgence accepted his illness, his physical incapacity to move and all the consequences of this aboulia [mental illness leading to apathy], a normal result of his illness and against which we tried uselessly to get him to react, possibly, at times, with too much insistence. Father did not hold this against us, since he understood that we were doing this for his own good. Because he had trouble speaking and being understood, we were unable to appreciate all of the qualities of the dearly departed, but the little that we do know suffices for our belief that all those who lived with him had the joy of experiencing the company of a brother with a very sensitive heart, who was thoughtful and filled with a strong affection”.

Addenda.

Fr. Fulgence started his priestly ministry in the alummates of France. However, Father Henri Brun, the first Assumptionist in North America, asked that Father Fulgence come to join him. He came in 1895, after Father Brun's death, and remained 24 years, including the hectic years of the foundation of a New York alummate, which lasted three years at 109 East 83d Street. This disappeared in 1900. The Fathers in New York shifted as well as they could with chaplaincies until they were allowed and encouraged to work among the Spanish-speaking people. Thus they bought an apartment on 14th Street and made a small chapel out of it. Later, it was enlarged. Father Fulgence spent all his American years at Our Lady of Guadalupe from then on. He returned to France in 1919 because of ill health. (Notes by Fr. Armand Desautels.)

News, 1916.

"You may have learned from the Little Sisters that Fr. Stéphane [Chaboud] has been quite tired these last days. I want to tell you that he is almost better. An abscess in a tooth was the cause of all the problems. The tooth was extracted Saturday the 19th, and at once the inflammation spread and threatened to invade the face and the neck. I thought it was prudent, in order to avoid possible complications, to advise the Father to go to Saint Vincent's hospital where he would get all the care that he needed. He did this on Sunday afternoon. On Monday, the doctor, fearing a general infection cut open his cheek to permit the puss to drain out. I am happy to say that from that moment on, our sick man is feeling better and better. Possibly in two or three days, he will be back at 14th Street. The general health of the community is maintaining itself regardless of the heat wave that we just had. We continue praying for the intentions that you have indicated, hoping that God will answer our prayers some day".

Aurèle (Aimé-François-Ernest) Odil

1886-1984

Religious of the Province of France.

The major stages in a lengthy life.

Aimé François Ernest Odil was born October 4, 1886, at Paris-Auteuil of parents from Lorraine having migrated to Paris where they ran a pub. In 1895, after school, he delivered the newspaper *La Croix* to the houses of the subscribers of his district at Boileau Street or that of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart. In 1899, he entered Sainghin-en-Weppe (North) aluminate and then went to the one at Taintegnies in Belgium (1902-1904). He was vested with the religious habit at the Louvain novitiate September 18, 1904 under the name of Brother Aurèle. He made his first annual vows September 18, 1905 and his perpetual vows June 7, 1907. He did his philosophy at Louvain (1906-1909) and also his theology (1909-1912), which was finished at Rome from 1912 to 1913 to absorb a note of catholicity according to the desire of Fr. Bailly. Under the guidance of Fr. Merklen, he developed a taste for the study of positive theology and Canon Law. He was ordained a priest July 7, 1912 at Louvain by Bishop Legraive, being part of the last group under Fr. Merklen's guidance before the dispersion.



He discovered the New World by going to teach at the college in Worcester (U.S.A.) from 1913 to 1919. He opened the eyes of his young American students to the culture of old Europe and at the same time, his own world vision, to a more scientific and cosmopolitan worldview. From 1919 to 1920, he was a substitute teacher at Boxtel (Holland). Between 1920 and 1930, he taught at the Scy-Chazelles aluminate (Moselle) and was pastor at the parishes of Lessy and Roserieulles, near Metz. He started a fruitful confession ministry at the Metz cathedral. This was to spread to other sites until 1980. Around 1924, Fr. Merklen came back on the scene after a time of exile. He was named editor-in-chief of the *Documentation Catholique* and asked Fr. Aurèle to do translations of English articles. In 1927, Fr. Merklen became editor-in-chief of *La Croix* and it was not long before he called on his preferred disciple to become secretary general of the newspaper starting in 1930.

Journalism at Bayard-Press.

Thus, Fr. Aurèle became the right arm of Fr. Merklen in this work of Penelope that, from 1930 to 1940, consisted in giving to French Catholics a sense of the vigorous pontifical directives of Pius XI: Catholic action for the interior and a love of peace among the nations for the exterior. He served as go-between for the editor-in-chief and the nuncio, Msgr. Maglione. He communicated to the editorialists, Jean Caret, Robert d'Harcourt, and Thellier de Poncheville, the directives of the chief. During the invasion in 1940, with *La Croix*, Fr. Aurèle took off to Limoges (Haute-Vienne) where, in the absence of Fr. Merklen, hunted by the Gestapo, he was in charge of the newspaper with Alfred Michelin and Maurice Herr. This certainly was the most difficult period of his life, if we overlook the last four years.

After some time at the Perpignan College (Oriental Pyrenees), from 1941 to 1944, having been temporarily set aside, Fr. Aurèle returned to the general secretariat of *La Croix* and passed it on to his own disciple, Fr. Le Bartz. In 1945, Fr. Aurèle took over the direction of the *Documentation Catholique* that Frs. Miglietti, Merklen, and Boulesteix ran before him. Under his direction, this magazine, known throughout the world before the war, oriented itself more deeply toward the priority of publication of pontifical documents, gradually doing away with documents on actualities. Unsurpassed in this field, for the balanced choice of documents, the authenticity of the texts, the faithful translations, and the references given with the texts, this magazine finished by being quoted by the popes

themselves as being reliable as references and found its place in the regular documentary listing of the university libraries.

In 1968, Fr. Aurèle officially ceased being editor-in-chief and was replaced by Fr. Charles Musnier. Nevertheless, he continued collaborating with the magazine until 1980. He was also needed to print the various writings of the Congregation: the Necrology and the Ordo that demanded preciseness and multiple corrections in the printing trade.

In 1980, Fr. Aurèle was the victim of an accident during which the plaster bust of the founder, Fr. d'Alzon, struck him on the head. He then had to be brought to the rest house of Lorgues (Var). This ended a lengthy ministry at Saint-Pierre-de-Chaillet where he had celebrated the first daily morning mass since 1960. Among his faithful parishioners was the filmmaker, Henri-Georges Clouzot. During six years (1961-1967), Fr. Aurèle had been the superior at François Ier Street and was appreciated by his confreres for his human qualities of goodness and meekness. He preached all the virtues by his example, even punctuality which he mastered only late in life! The last four years of Fr. Aurèle's life at Lorgues were similar to those of the prophet Job. He was well cared for and surrounded by confreres, but he suffered greatly from being cut off from the work of his life, the daily contact with Bayard-Press. He went through detachment and the helplessness of old age. With the years came the infirmities. His carcass was melting away, according to his own expression. He was the last survivor of his family. He only had a niece, Miss Richou, who was already 86 in 1984. Fr. Aurèle died at Lorgues August 4, 1984, at 98 years old, the dean of the Congregation. He was the first religious of the Assumption to reach this longevity, 98 years and 10 months to be precise, since the beginning of the Congregation until the potential hundred-year-old Fr. Léon Carrère, born December 31, 1901. Fr. Aurèle was buried at Lorgues the following August 6th, having almost passed through a century with a gift for communication, totally in harmony with his life and work milieu. This made of him an actor and an exceptional witness, after 50 years of presence at Bayard Press.

Addenda.

Fr. Odil, through the various stages of his life, remains for us a witness of the Church and of the Assumptionist life during one century. As long as he kept his exceptional ability to communicate, he was a witness for us, and now that he has been silenced, he remains so even today.

He published articles in La Croix between 1907 and 1912 under the pseudonym of Ernest Maldidier. [François Bernard in La Croix August 7, 1984.]

... We can say that he was a witness. Just as the Letter to the Hebrews, we could say 'a cloud of witnesses', because of the many varied positions that he held, except that of a missionary. Here is a quick review: teacher in alumnates; teacher in a college; builder; confessor; pastor; chaplain, and finally, journalist during 50 years: 15 at La Croix, 35 at La Documentation Catholique. As pastor, let me remind you that, in 1960, he volunteered to celebrate the first morning mass at St-Pierre of Chaillet... I was forgetting that Fr. Odil was also our superior during 6 years. He had a certain rigor tempered by goodness...

[Funeral homily by Fr. Charles Monsch].

Letter by Fr. Aurèle Odil to Fr. Armand Desautels dated 13 June 1966.

I want to tell you how happy I was to rediscover with you the Worcester air of my youth when I spent such good moments at Assumption College. The buildings that enriched your province were not grandiose. We tried to get a start in order to realize a dream of Fr. d'Alzon: university studies 'ad majorem gloriam Dei! ... How happy we were when we were able to grant Bachelor of Arts degrees for the first time Also when we saw the Harvard University courses open to our students for the first time without having to take tests. Since that time, you have done more and it's a good thing.

Documentation .

“Thank you for sending the letter from Fr. Beaudet. I immediately verified with Fr. Claude [Musnier} our files for all that appeared in the *Documentation Catholique* since 1960: there are more than 28 items. Concerning the Pope’s interventions, we can’t put more than those that appear in the *Osservatore Romano* or the *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* and I don’t think that by searching for all that you can find in these two publications, from Paul VI on the parish, one can find more than we have printed. It is one of our principles. We never let any text from the Pope pass by without printing it. Some even feel that we print too much! But we cannot invent. All of the interventions of the Pope are not found in the publications of the Holy See. That is why we can only get to know those that appear there. What the Pope has told a bishop in an audience *ad limina*, only the bishop can speak of it and it is rare to see traces of these comments in the diocesan bulletins. Even words said in public are not reproduced in the *Osservatore*, but we refer to them in order to get the integral authorized text. If something is lacking, we put it in a footnote”.

Edmund O'Donnell

1796-1869

Irish religious.

A memory revisited.

It is thanks to Father Austin Treamer, when he was Provincial of England, that we are able to know with more certainty, thanks to his patient research, the person of Fr. Edmund O'Donnell, the first non-French religious to enter the Assumptionist religious life. Edmund O'Donnell was Irish, born at a time when the whole Island was English, undoubtedly the very day of his baptism, April 7, 1796. This is the only date inscribed and discovered in the parish registers of Cashel (county and diocese of Cork, district of Cashel and Emly). He was the son of John O'Donnell and Joan Caen who already had another son, Jeremy, born and baptized February 14, 1794. We have no other details on the youth of Edmund except that he became a seminarian and met a compatriot priest, John McEnroe who was attracted to South Carolina in 1822 by Msgr. John England, also from Cork and who became the bishop of Charleston (U.S.A.) in 1820. Msgr. England was very active in the emancipation movement for Irish Catholics launched by Daniel O'Connor and desirous of setting up a pastoral milieu for the numerous Irish immigrants to the U.S.A. Edmund left in the company of Fr. McEnroe, a diocesan priest, for the diocese of Charleston where Msgr. England received them. Young Edmund was ordained to the priesthood in Charleston, April 25, 1824 in the Saint Finbar Cathedral, reconstructed in 1842. According to local sources, it is certain that Father McEnroe returned to Ireland in 1832, but we cannot ascertain whether Father Edmund also returned to Europe with him, since he also worked in the diocese of New York.

Nothing else is known concerning Fr. Edmund for the years 1832-1834. It was in Paris that this latter met, at the Irish college, a certain Reverend Machale, professor at this national college in the French capital and the future executor of Fr. Edmund's will. The Assumptionist college of Clichy-la-Garenne (Hauts-de-Seine), under the direction of Fr. Charles Laurent, constantly seeking teachers, hired Fr. Edmund in 1854. He asked to enter religious life. A novice at the age of 58, he received the habit from the hands of Fr. Laurent October 2, 1854 in the college chapel. The novice remained an English teacher, according to the custom and the needs of the time. After his annual vows, of which nothing was inscribed in the archives, Father Edmund pronounced his perpetual vows August 10, 1856. Adapting himself to a community of much younger religious, a man with a meek and peaceful temperament, Fr. Edmund, besides his courses, spent his time at Clichy studying Scholasticism. He took on an English translation of the Summa of Saint-Thomas Aquinas. He loaned the community money from his inheritance so it could pay its most urgent debts. In 1859, closing the Clichy College and redistributing the staff was already being considered. The Religious of the Assumption would have liked to get Fr. O'Donnell as their chaplain. He leaned toward a foundation in Canada, but Fr. d'Alzon did not want to hear of this, no doubt because he was worried about furnishing helpers to Msgr. Quinn for Australia.

Fr. Edmund was sent to the Parisian community of Auteuil in 1861 where a novitiate under the direction of Fr. Picard had been set up at Eymès Street in an out-building of the Religious of the Assumption of La Thuilerie, while waiting for the construction of a residence at François Ier Street and the setting up of a community there. Although he knew English perfectly, he was not selected to go to Australia with the religious: Frs. Henri Brun, Paul-Elphège Tissot, Eugène Cusse, Brothers François de Sales Gavète, and Polycarpe Hudry. He served as a part-time chaplain to the Sisters at Auteuil until 1863. After that, he went to the community of François Ier Street that was now established, and he pursued his translations. Having a fragile health, it was suggested that he go to the Vichy (Puy-de-Dôme) spa annually, but he would have preferred to found an Assumptionist community in Ireland. He was a friend of Fr. Pernet whose company he enjoyed at Clichy and Paris, and since 1863, he followed with interest the foundation of the Little Sisters of the Assumption, while also interesting himself in the foundations in the missions of Australia and Bulgaria. In January 1869, already exhausted since several years, Fr. O'Donnell, although ill, had the joy of meeting Fr. d'Alzon for a last time in Paris. On January 27, he received the last sacraments and renewed his religious vows. He died January 31, 1869, at the age of 73 years, at François Ier Street. He was buried the following February 2 in the tomb of the Religious of the Assumption at Auteuil. (Not the Passy cemetery as is erroneously stated a bit everywhere.) He was the first deceased priest religious of the Congregation, the first Irishman, and the only one born in the 18th century.

[For more information, see "Father Edmund O'Donnell, AA, 1st edition (1982), 72 pages, by Fr. Austin Treamer.]



Addenda.

Letter of Fr. D'Alzon to Fr. Vincent de Paul Bailly: Paris 2 February 1869.

I let Fr. Picard and our Brothers accompany Fr. O'Donnell to his last resting place. I just finished singing mass for him and I gave in to the suggestion that I not go to the cemetery since, on Sunday, I had a strong bout of neuralgia and I would have the same thing happen tomorrow. This good Father died in the most admirable dispositions.

Note 1: Fr. O'Donnell was buried in the Passy cemetery in the vault of the Religious of the Assumption. According to the necrology of the Congregation, Fr. O'Donnell was born in 1799 and died at 70 years old. However, in a letter to Fr. Picard dated 14 June 1861, Fr. Tissot wrote from Australia: "Tell O'Donnell that I feel 20 years younger. He would only be 52 years old if he went through the same experience." If Fr. Tissot was well informed, Fr. O'Donnell would have been 72 in 1861. Thus, he would have been born in 1789 and died at the age of 80. Even if the date of birth of Fr. O'Donnell remains uncertain, Fr. A. Treamey discovered in 1989 that of his ordination to the priesthood, which had been unknown for a long time: 25 April 1824 in Charleston (South Carolina, USA).

Footnote # 3 to a Letter to Brother Etienne Pernet by Fr. D'Alzon.

This footnote concerns Fr. O'Donnell: Priest novice originally from Ireland who became a religious 2 October 1854. He died 31 January 1869 at rue François Ier, but his dates of birth and ordination are not known. It is only the necrology that mentions as the year of his birth 1799. This learned religious first published in 1854 a translation in English of the *Génie du christianisme*, then in 1859 at Dublin, a *Compendium of St. Thomas' Theology in 2 volumes*, and in 1863, two volumes of *Sermons on the Gospels of all the Sundays*. In 1959, Fr. A. Treamey honored Fr. O'Donnell with "a modest homage. He listed him among those of the last century who were the pioneers of the Thomistic Renewal in English-speaking countries."

Fr. Edmond O'Donnell was the first religious to die in a house of the Congregation in France.

From the chancery of the Charleston diocese in South Carolina.

"I ordained Mr. Edward O'Donnell whom I had received as a candidate for Holy Orders from the diocese of Cashel in Ireland giving him the Tonsure and the order of Porter..." (June 24, 1823 Diary of Msgr. John England)

November 25: "I celebrated High Mass in Pontificals and ordained the Reverend Patrick O'Sullivan, priest; the Reverend Edward O'Donnell whom I had within the preceding month given the Orders of Reader, Exorcist, Acolyth and Subdeacon..." (Idem)

June 24: Sometime in the month of September, I ordained Mr. Edward O'Donnell whom I had received as a candidate for Holy Orders from the diocese of Cashel in Ireland giving him the Tonsure and Order of Porter.

Father Edmund O'Donnell, A.A. (1799-1869) by Fr. Austin Treamey, A.A.

Unfortunately documents giving details of his early years have been mislaid owing to the turmoil caused in France by two persecutions against Religious Orders in 1880 and particularly against us in 1899; also by the upheaval brought about by the two World Wars. We have hopes that the Archives of the General House in Rome, and elsewhere, will bring to light these documents and thus help us to have an accurate knowledge of the first professed Augustinian of the Assumption priest to die since our foundation in 1845-50. We have to fall back for some information in volume IV of Fr. Siméon Vailhé's 'Life of Father d'Alzon, page 443, on research carried out in Paris, in various ecclesiastical and government offices. Research in Ireland has remained unsuccessful in spite of the courtesy and kindness of the ecclesiastical authorities I contacted.

Fr. Siméon Vailhé, A.A.... tells us that as a young priest [really as a seminarian] about the age of twenty-six he left for the U.S.A. to exercise his priestly ministry among the Irish immigrants... We know that in 1853 he was in Paris and had accepted to become English Master in the college at Clichy.

Clichy: Two years later, 1853, the school was transformed from the Faubourg St. Honoré where now stand the Dominican Church and Priory, to Clichy. Money had to be found to buy the more spacious and convenient house and grounds at Clichy and Fr. Laurent was trying to raise some for September 1. On August 24, 1853, he wrote to Fr. d'Alzon, "I answered the solicitor that I would be ready. My new English Master, Monsieur l'abbé O'Donnell, a most venerable priest, has offered to lend me 10,000 francs from Ireland." This is the first mention of Fr. O'Donnell's name, and he was then a diocesan priest...

After the usual preparation, Fr. O'Donnell received the religious habit at Clichy in the College chapel on October 2, 1854, Fr. Laurent being celebrant. The next day he wrote in French a charming letter to our Founder:

Letter from Fr. Edmund O'Donnell to Fr. d'Alzon..

"Clichy, October 3, 1854.

Dear and Venerable Father,

At last I am one of your sons. Since yesterday, feast of the Holy Guardian Angels, I am a member of the community of the Assumption. Yesterday evening, Fr. Laurent clothed me with the religious habit and gave us an excellent instruction on the obligations of religious life and the holiness it requires. I would have been delighted to receive the monastic habit from you and to embrace you on this occasion, which constitutes one of the happiest days of my life. For many years I had been thinking of it and with the help of God's grace and Our Lady's intercession, preparing myself to adopt this way of life and to consecrate myself more closely to the service of my Creator and my Saviour. I now recommend myself to your good prayers and those of the Nimes community so that Our Lord may deign to grant me the graces and blessings necessary for my sanctification in this world and life eternal in the next. The prayers of fervent souls are always very efficacious in drawing down upon us God's mercy and in strengthening us against the temptations of the world and the wiles of the Old Serpent who seeks by all possible means to deceive us and deprive us of eternal bliss... (He continues telling Fr. d'Alzon how he had been the victim of a theft and how this had upset him.) I shall follow the wise advice dictated by your fatherly love. I have the honour, dear and respected Father, to offer you the homage of my respect, of my utter devotedness and complete sincerity.

Maison de l'Assomption E. O'Donnell" [The thief was discovered and dismissed from the College staff.]

Fr. Edmund pleased Fr. d'Alzon when he entered the Congregation, because this vocation was to him the promise of vocations that would extend beyond France – though all of his ministry was, de facto, in France. (Notes by Fr. Armand Desautels.)

More notes by Fr. Austin Treamer, A.A. "The Life of Father E. O'Donnell, A.A. (1796-1869).

Edmund J. O'Donnell was born in Cashel, Co. Tipperary, Ireland. Brother Jules Boulet notified the Father's death to the authorities of the 8th Arrondissement (ward/borough) of Paris. At the time we had a residence and a small Chapel in that part... The residence had been approved by Cardinal Morlot, Archbishop of Paris in 1860, as a result of the closing of the College at Clichy. Father's Death Certificate is now in Rome.

Fr. O'Donnell was a boyhood friend of Fr. John McEnroe who was baptized 14 September 1795, the son of Peter McEnroe and Margaret McAuliffe in the parish/diocese of Cashel. He was born in Ardsallagh, Cashel and went to Flynn's Grammar School in Cashel, then to Maynooth and St. Finian's in Navan after ordination (Navan Academy). Fr. McEnroe was ordained a priest in Maynooth on Trinity Sunday 1819. He then taught at St. Finian's Seminary for three years. It was there that Edmund O'Donnell had him as a Professor. In 1822 at the request of Bishop John England in the new diocese of Charleston, SC, Fr. McEnroe left Ireland to help organize the vast diocese. Edmund O'Donnell left with him. They arrived in New York in 1822. In 1829, Fr. McEnroe left for health reasons in 1829 and lived in Clonmel. In 1832, after his health was restored, he was appointed salaried Chaplain for the Colony of Australia with the approval of the Archbishop of Dublin, for Irish soldiers and convicts in Australia. He was 37 years old. He went to N.S. Wales and died as Archdeacon McEnroe August 25, 1868. We don't know if Fr. O'Donnell accompanied Fr. McEnroe to Clonmel.

Fr. O'Donnell was ordained April 25, 1824 (Cathedral of St. Finbar in Charleston?). The diocese comprised the states of North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia, He could have been anywhere in these states. 24 June 1823: Edmund ordained by Bishop England: Tonsure and Porter. 25 November 1823, Edward O'Donnell ordained deacon, a month before, he received Reader, Exorcist, Acolyth, and Subdeacon. (Diary of Bishop John England). Edmund O'Donnell most likely attended Flynn's Grammar School since he and Fr. McEnroe were boyhood friends. Also he must have gone to "old" St. Finian's where his friend was a Professor from 1820 till he left in 1822 with Edmund. The old seminary was opened in 1803 and the new one went to Mullingar in 1908 since the diocesan seat was moved to Mullingar in the later half of the last century. No records were found because of the move.

Edmund O'Donnell was baptized in the parish of Cashel on 7 April 1796, son of John O'Donnell and Joan Caen. His brother Jeremy was baptized on 14 February 1794. (Error on Mother's name entered as Judith Keane.)

Bishop England already knew Fr. John McEnroe in Maynooth and asked for his help. St. Finbar's Cathedral no longer exists today. Built in 1821, it was torn down by Bishop England's successor, Bishop Ignatius Reynolds who

built St. Finbar and St. John the Baptist cathedral completed in 1854. It burned in 1861 and was rebuilt in 1907 as St. John the Baptist. The Bishop's Residence was destroyed by fire in 1861. Did Fr. O'Donnell go back with Fr. McEnroe? No mention of Fr. O'Donnell in Archbishop Corrigan's "Register of Clergy labouring in the Archdiocese of New York from early missions until 1899". An Abbé O'Donnell is listed in 1869 at the Irish College in Paris among the foundations for masses. Between 1824 and 1854 there is a blank on info.

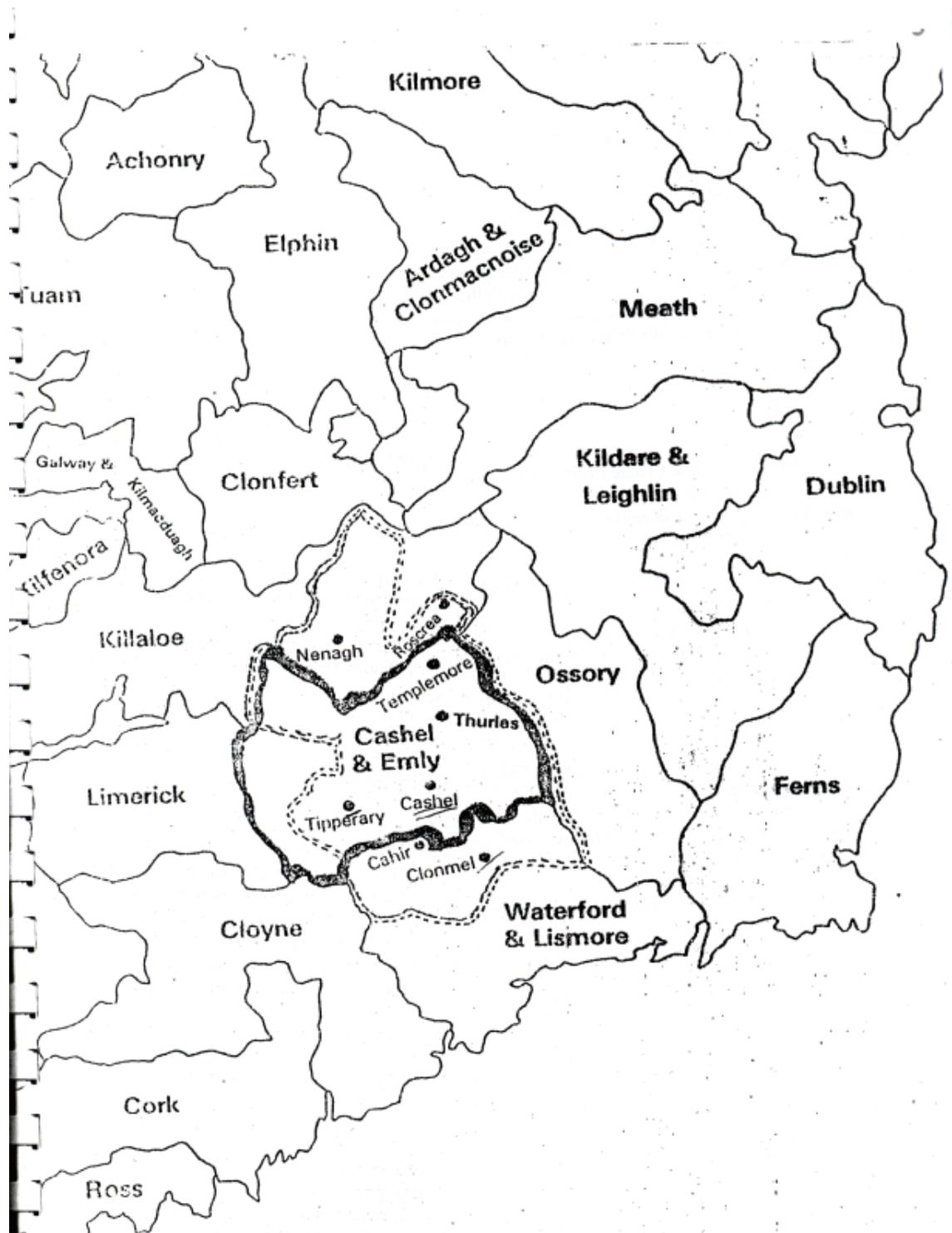
Fr. O'Donnell's final profession was advanced by a few months at Clichy on 10 August 1856. He had to take the waters at Pierrefonds 14 August – 11 September 1858. He had gone in 1857 also. In 1860, the Founder decided to close Clichy. Fr. O'Donnell stayed in touch with the religious in Australia by letters.

He spoke French and Italian. He translated from Italian into English the "Divina Comedia" of Dante Alighieri published in 1852. In 1854, while on the staff at Clichy, he translated from the French "Le Génie du Christianisme" of Chateaubriand. In 1857, he started translating the two volumes of the "Compendium of St. Thomas' Theology" and published them in 1859. He was a pioneer of the translators of the "Summa" into English. He was to publish the two volumes of "Sermons of the Gospels of all the Sundays and Principal Festivals of the year" in 1862. Fr. O'Donnell is at Auteuil as of 13 January 1861.

In 1864, Fr. O'Donnell's health goes downhill. In that year he went to Ireland for the last time. He had bladder trouble. In August 1865 Dr. Gouraud sent him to Vichy for a rest.

Fr. Picard wrote to Fr. d'Alzon at Le Mans 28 January 1869: "A telegram has already informed you of our anxiety. We were terribly worried, poor Fr. O'Donnell could have passed away during the crisis – a high temperature, the death rattle, weak pulse, the oppression, which foretells that death is imminent.... The Good Father edifies us all. He is patient, quiet, simple, allows himself to be cared for like a child, grateful for the least help and is waiting for death with the greatest calm."

Fr. O'Donnell died at 8:30 a.m. 31 January 1869. Fr. d'Alzon had just arrived that morning from Le Mans. Before saying his mass, he was able to visit the dying priest and religious, conscious to the very end. The Founder was able to give him his blessing. He was buried with the Nuns of the Assumption. The tombstone reads: "I await until my relief comes" (Job his blessing 14:14.)



Map of Ireland

Amédée (François-Albert) Ollier

1864 – 1913

French religious.

Between the Old and the New World.

François-Albert Ollier was born October 4, 1864, in Montpellier (Hérault). He pursued his secondary education at the minor seminary in Montpellier from 1875 to 1882, then at the major seminary in the same city (1882-87). On March 25, 1887, he asked to be admitted to the novitiate and received the religious habit at the novitiate in Livry-Gargan (Seine-Saint-Denis) under the name of Brother Amédée. He made final profession August 15, 1890, in Livry. After additional studies there, Brother Amédée was sent to the alumnate in Arras (Pas-de-Calais) from 1891 to 1894. Bishop Pierre-Charles-François Cotton, bishop of Valence and a friend of the Congregation, ordained him a priest in Livry August 10, 1894.

He began his ministry as a proctor and teacher at the *Collège de Nîmes* (1894-95). He then left for the New World to become chaplain to the Little Sisters of the Assumption in New York City, replacing Fr. Henri Brun who had died. He wrote in 1895: “The Dominicans of the Province of Lyons founded at some 28 miles from New York a scholasticate and a novitiate on *Rosary Hill*. It is a beautiful spot. Recently, we were invited to attend a celebration in honor of Saint Albert the Great. Among the Dominicans who were present, we met several priests who had been in Jerusalem as teachers or students: Frs. Florisoone, Barnabé, Jean-Marie Perrier, and Emile Princet. They asked us to present their best wishes to the Fathers and Brothers in Jerusalem.”

After two years, Fr. Amédée was asked to participate in an Assumptionist foundation in Louisiana to evangelize the Blacks. Based in Klotzville, this 19th century Assumptionist missionary undertaking ranks among its least known or most forgotten. Indeed, at the outset in 1895, Fr. Picard sent three religious to Louisiana: Fr. Marcellin Guyot, Fr. Ildephonse Causse, and a Brother Macaire [?] for the type of mission that would have gladdened the hearts of the Congregation’s Australian adventurers of the 1860s: to evangelize the native black population.

The religious lived in wooden houses that were built in the colonial style of the southern United States and rested on 20 brick columns. Approximately 1,600 feet away, they opened a chapel and served the surrounding population, traveling throughout the countryside in search of souls.

This evangelizing mission apparently did not meet with the approval of the white population, if we are to believe the account given by Fr. Amédée in February 1898: “Fr. Marcellin had barely set foot in New Orleans when he had to appear before the Committee for Public Order to defend our work against a petition of the local inhabitants, composed of about 50 members of the upper French-speaking aristocracy. They protested against the creation of a school and a church for colored people on Esplanade Avenue, convinced that such establishments are nuisances for the surrounding properties. These Creoles who boast being practicing Catholics and declare themselves to be against our sublime work are horrified by the black race. They become enraged at the very thought that we might establish works for Negroes in their neighborhood. After three hours of discussion, the Committee decided that our work was a public nuisance for the neighborhood.” Understandably, the mission was doomed.

Fr. Amédée returned to France in 1900. He became a chaplain and took care of the mariners on the Isle of Saint Denis. He was then sent to London (Bethnal Green) from 1903 to 1905, then Charlton (1905-06), Brockley (1906-08), and Newhaven (1908-13) for parish ministry.

After falling sick, he went to San Remo, Italy, and died there December 24, 1913. According to a circular letter written by Fr. Ferréol Poux-Berthe: "Fr. Amédée arrived from England a few days after the death of Fr. Burgard on October 22 [1913]. His precarious health quickly became worrisome. Around November 20, he presumed too much on his strength. After a walk that was too long, he had a serious heart attack, further complicated by an albumen problem. Within a month, it got the best of his robust constitution." He died at the age of 49 and was buried in San Remo.

Addenda.

He was among the very early Fathers to come to the United States. He was an alumnus of the College of Nîmes. He came to New York in 1895, called by Father Henri Brun and went to New Orleans in 1897, remaining there until the mission was closed in 1900. Then he returned to France for a while, but the last ten years of his life were spent in various parishes of England: Charlton, Brockley, and Newhaven.

1905, Charlton,.

"Last August you promised me that, if we decided to print the explanation of the Catechism in pictures of Rev. Fourrières that I had translated in English, you would write a short preface. The Bonne Presse has decided to print this work in English because of our insistence. I am now in the process of reviewing my manuscript with an English lady so that I don't leave too many serious mistakes and then I recopy it as we get it done bit by bit before sending it to the printer's. If you can find the time with your many occupations, I would greatly appreciate it if you could write a few lines for me and send them to me as soon as possible so that I can translate them and add them to the rest of the text.

It was impossible to publicize the Catechism in pictures without at least translating this explanation. Afterwards, it will be easy to act. In the religious instruction program, it is recommended to teach the Catechism with the use of religious pictures. Then I could say that I have a famous collection of pictures that would be most useful for the teachers. I shall succeed with the Bishop of Southwark.

Tranquille (M. -Tranquille) Pessoz [Pesse]

1873-1940

Religious of the Province of Paris.



From the East all the way to America.

MarieTranquille Pessoz [On his own, Fr. Tranquille changed his typical Savoyard name ending in America. He kept his baptismal name, Tranquille, which was fitting to his character and behavior as a youth. In 1923, when the time came to choose what province he wanted to belong to, Fr. Tranquille put forth his many years of service in North America and thus relieved the Province of France of his presence.] was born November 1, 1873 at Saint-Jean de Belleville (Savoy) in Tarentaise. After a complete primary schooling, he was admitted to the Notre-dame des Châteaux aluminate (Savoy) in 1888 and spent two years there (1888-1890), then went on to that of Villecomtesse (Yonne) from 1890 to 1891, and did a final year at Clairmarais (Pas-de-Calais) from 1891-1892. He took the religious habit at Livry (Seine-Saint-Denis) December 25, 1892 and took a ship for Phanaraki (Turkey) where he did his two years of novitiate. He pronounced his first vows December 25, 1893 and his perpetual vows September 28, 1895. He began his philosophy at Phanaraki while taking care of the small public school in that district in 1896. In September 1896, he became a student at the house of studies in Kadi-Keui until 1900. He was ordained to the priesthood September 2, 1900. Having been named superior of the house in Ismidt (Turkey), he stayed there five years (1900-1905). He was then sent to North America where, during four years, he worked toward the foundation of the college in Worcester since he was named superior (1905-1909). Then he was part of the New York community at 14th Street for 12 years (1910-1924), excluding the two years during the war when he was in Lyon (Rhône) first as infirmarian, then at the control post. He was sent in 1924 as superior to the Bergerville novitiate in Quebec, which was being founded.

An end of life diminished by illness.

In 1930, he left America to return to France. His health, formerly robust, was shaken by light cerebral hemorrhages that required a total rest. The 1931 Directory of Religious placed him at Les Essarts (Seine-Maritime), in 1932 at Lille (North), from 1933 to 1935 at Montpellier (Hérault), in 1936 at Davézieux (Ardèche) and in October 1936 at Lorgues (Var). In fact, Fr. Tranquille suffered from inactivity forced upon him because of his health. He tried to fight as long as he could against a slow decline of health that he knew was inevitable. In October 1936, he had to give up all active apostolate. A long four-year illness tested him at the school of daily suffering. And yet, for him, cheerfulness, even in the midst of his sufferings, never lost its place. A brilliant talker, he lost bit by bit his speech and could only mumble inarticulate words. At times, the expression of his gestures and face replaced the inability of his lips. His illness also obliged him to eat often, with little portions. His appetite was insatiable. That was why he had to make use of little stratagems to fool the vigilance of the dining-hall master who rationed the bread. Until the last months of his life, he was seen strolling about leaning on his cane. When he judged that the time and length of his promenade were insufficient, he needed at least two infirmarians to oblige him to turn back, since he knew how to give passive resistance and even threaten with his cane. Dragged to his bed, it was not long before he fell asleep, conquered by these efforts. His infirmarian, Fr. Ignace Ignadossian, prepared him slowly for the final day: *"When you arrive at the gate to Paradise, next to Saint Peter, remind him not to forget an old Armenian who would very much like to enter!"* During the last seven months of his existence, Fr. Tranquille was nothing more than a vegetable. After another cerebral attack, Thursday, May 30, 1940, at the age of 67, Fr. Tranquille died and was buried at Lorgues.

Addenda.

Father Tranquille was Superior at Assumption in Worcester from 1905 to 1909 and then resided at Our Lady of Guadalupe in New York until around 1925, except during the war when he served in the armed forces of France. During many years, he was common superior of North America, still a part of the Province of Paris. He became our first Superior in Canada, in the house founded by Father Marie-Clément Staub, at Quebec, a house that was both a novitiate and a shrine in honor of the Sacred Heart. He was a man of good humor, practical jokes, and plays on words. (Notes by Fr. Armand Desautels.)

Worcester, 1920.

“Here is the general report. I stayed in Worcester for three weeks; most of the religious spoke with me. All of them without exception speak of living in great discomfort that makes them tired and discouraged because of the Superior [Marie-Louis Deydier]. They do not dare speak with him, suggest thoughts concerning the program of studies, discipline, or any other subject. If they say something that does not agree with his own way of thinking, he rejects what they say peremptorily, he gets upset, and says that the professor who suggested such an idea is a bad religious. Each day there is a new major project that is forgotten the next day. The pedagogical meetings bring about no results, except arguments and heated discussions that are unfortunate because of this way of proceeding. As a result, the professors try to do the best they can by themselves; they either follow or do not follow the programs set up in their classes and nobody oversees them. Fr. Louis-Marie lacks understanding, tact, and diplomacy in the way he governs the house and the students avoid and detest him. Concerning the religious, untimely and unmotivated observations are made to them each day. He seems too jealous of his authority and it would seem that he wants to dominate everything”.

Vincent Ferrier (François-Louis) Petro

1885-1968

French religious of the Province of North America.

A life in America.

François Louis Petro was born March 31, 1885 at Saint-Caradec, a small village of the diocese of Vannes (Morbihan), Brittany. His parents, rich property owners, had him follow courses with the Brothers of Ploermel. He kept an ardent taste for reading, especially works of history and geography. Later on, he had a special love for the review *Historia* and for spy stories. Since his memory was faithful, he would talk forever on certain subjects, especially on world history concerning espionage and sabotage. From 1901 to 1907, he did his studies at the minor seminary of Sainte-Anne d'Auray, after the courses at the Saint-Jean Baptiste College in Guéméné-sur-Scorff. He then practiced the profession of notary's clerk at Master Daniel's at Guéméné, then with Master Husson at Chitenay, a small village near Blois (Loir-et-Cher), from 1907 to 1909. April 27, 1910, he took the religious habit at the Assumption, under the name of Brother Vincent-Ferrier, at Louvain. After 9 months of regular novitiate at Louvain, he was sent to New York (U.S.A.) where he stayed ten years as a lay brother without vows. His situation was straightened out April 27, 1920 by a first annual profession: *"Regardless of a character that is a bit sharp and fiery, and at times with a certain crudity in language, Brother Vincent can become a good lay brother. He is well intentioned and devoted. He will always be useful in a house for work and charges that do not require special aptitudes"*, wrote Fr. Tranquille Pesse. Brother Vincent was able to pronounce his perpetual vows in Worcester July 12, 1924. From that moment on, he had only one residence, Worcester, from 1921 to 1968. He was affiliated to the North American Province and became an American citizen. He was at first employed as sacristan and fac-totum in the parish of Our Lady of Guadalupe in New York. At the college in Worcester, he did the humble domestic jobs of cleaning and maintenance. He worked from morning to night, in one place or another, without ever stopping. He especially saw to it that the ravages and damages that took place inside a secondary school like the Preparatory School were repaired. He did this without saying anything or causing any problems. The students appreciated him for his protective discretion. At night, after the interns had gone to bed, he walked through the halls and the corridors to shut doors and windows and put out the lights that were burning needlessly. He only rested once he had ascertained that all was in order. A religious with a great spirit of charity, he never made an unfavorable remark against one of his confreres. He was an enemy of all criticism and defended on the spot the one who was being attacked and saw to it that the conversation changed subject if people were critical of a confrere during a conversation. Very thrifty, he dressed himself from head to toe with what his Brothers gave him. At the time of more official visits to the outside, he almost had to be forced to wear more decent clothes. It was not a surprise that at the time of his death there was almost nothing in his things to pack. Brother Vincent's death came about on November 2, 1968, at the age of 84, after a long and painful illness that he endured with great patience. A fall in August 1967 saw him break his hip. Even though he was operated, he became almost impotent, unable to care for himself or do the least work. He was placed under the care of Brothers Jean Saint-Pierre and François Lachance with the help of Brother Richard Mandeville, infirmarian in Worcester, who was a precious help. Brother Armand Goffart gave the added light of his experience and encouragement for his longtime friend of more than 50 years to the fraternal ministrations that were given Brother Vincent right up to the end.



Addenda.

His parents objected to his becoming a lay brother and, because of this, he postponed his first profession for 10 years. He had a brother who was a secular priest who died 14 years after being ordained. Brother Vincent was a model of kindness and humility. He always took the time to speak with the students who stopped to talk with him. He would meet Brother Armand Goffart daily at the wine cellar for a little glass of wine. When he watched the news on TV, he was easily upset by the sufferings of people. He was buried first at Assumption Preparatory School in

Worcester, Massachusetts on 5 November 1968. He visited his home in Brittany in the summer of 1960. Bro. Vincent was naturalized as an American citizen on 2 April 1930. He was born at Brangolo en Saint-Caradec-Trégomel.

Notes on Brother Vincent Petro by Fr. Marius Dumoulin, A.A.

On 2 November 1968, God called back to Himself our dearly beloved Brother Vincent Petro, after a lengthy and painful illness accepted with admirable patience. He fell in August of 1967 and broke a hip. He was operated but remained almost impotent, unable to care for himself. He returned to the hospital on 19 November 1967 and was put under the care of Brothers Jean St-Pierre and François Lachance from Quebec... The Little Sisters of the Assumption in Worcester also came to visit him several times a week to care for him. He had received the Anointing of the Sick several times during his long illness. He died almost totally conscious surrounded by his Brothers in prayer.

... He had received fine courses from the Brothers of Ploermel. He liked to read and had a good training in geography and history. He was able to cite from memory all of the departments of France and in history, the dates of countless events. Many times, we tried to test him on these points, but rarely did he fail to answer correctly!

He was an avid reader of the magazine "Historia". He read a lot, especially books on spies and sabotage... He could be teased concerning his opinions, but only smiled and didn't change his opinion. He had a happy temperament and in his daily life had an even humor and a great simplicity that was disarming. All liked him. On the occasion of a feast, he liked to speak in the dining hall. But once he had started, there was no stopping him. He had to be told when it was long enough, and he would accept this humbly and return to his seat joyfully.

A hardcore Breton, he knew his maternal tongue and didn't hesitate to show it. In his conversation, he would use the word of his tongue right next to the French word that had just been said. At Christmas, when the gifts were being opened and Christmas carols were being sung, Brother Vincent never hesitated to sing old tunes from his home. Once launched, he had to be stopped again.

Bro. Vincent was sent from Louvain to America in September 1910, right after his postulancy and a short novitiate. He first went to our parish of Our Lady of Guadalupe in New York. In 1921, he was transferred to the College in Worcester, which later became the Preparatory School. He would remain there the rest of his life. He never had the desire for more important work. He did the most humble jobs: house cleaning, sweeping, dusting. He worked from morning to night without stopping... In his later years, weakened by old age, he had greatly slowed down. He would sit before the TV and sleep a long time.

Concerning his religious life, Bro. Vincent did not show any special aptitude for prayer except for the common exercises. And yet, he was remarkable by his charity. He never would speak ill of others...

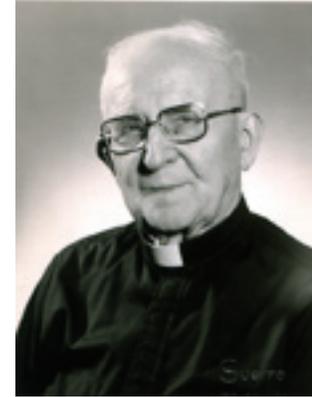
Such was the life of Brother Vincent: a good religious, tireless worker, sower of good humor. His humility and charity will certainly have opened the doors of heaven to him. He rests here below in the company of the fathers and Brothers that he loved; in Paradise, they will have received him with special affection and given him an important place in their ranks. ~He had a good education but chose the humblest possible way of life. His vows were delayed for many years because his parents wanted to see him go on to the priesthood, as had one of his brothers. He came to the Congregation as a "familiar" and was immediately sent in 1910 to New York. He worked at Our Lady of Guadalupe until 1921, and then spent the next 47 years sweeping floors at Assumption Prep in Worcester. After the tornado, he remained at Assumption Prep. He pronounced his vows in 1920 and his perpetual vows in 1924.

He was a very hard worker and an original character. He was easily aroused to express his thoughts in a rather forceful way, never letting anyone forget that he was from Brittany. He bore his long illness with great patience and was cared for by his brothers and the Little Sisters of the Assumption. He was buried at the Prep School cemetery then transferred to Fiskdale.

Pacôme (Antoine-Marie) Philip

1891-1979

Religious of French origin of the Province of North America, provincial treasurer (1947-1951).



Citizen of the world.

Antoine Marie Philippe was born in Brittany, March 15, 1891, at Lanvaudan (Morbihan). All of his secondary studies were done in the alumnates of Le Bizet (Belgium) from 1904 to 1907 and Elorrio in Spain from 1907 to 1909. At first, he decided to enter the Carmelites, but his health problems did not permit him to remain. The Vannes major seminary refused to accept him because he had tried religious life. He then turned toward the Assumption. May 8, 1910, he took the habit at Gempe (Belgium) under the name of Brother Pacôme. Annually professed May 17, 1911, he went to the Limpertsberg novitiate (Grand Duchy of Luxembourg) where he pronounced his perpetual vows May 19, 1912. His philosophy took place at Louvain from 1912 to 1914 and his theology at Rome from 1914 to 1918. He was ordained a priest March 3, 1917. Immediately after this, he was named to the community of the college in Worcester (U.S.A.) where he taught until 1931, except for an interruption when he went to the parish in New York (1921-1923), and then he was treasurer until 1938. At this time, he began a long life of priestly ministry with the Latinos in the two parishes of New York, Our Lady of Guadalupe and Our Lady of Esperanza, going between 14th Street and 156th Street. In turn, superior and curate, he added the job of provincial treasurer to his parish responsibilities from 1947 to 1951. He hesitated for a time before asking to be affiliated with the young North American Province although he had become a naturalized American citizen since April 2, 1924. He finished three terms as superior and pastor at Our Lady of Guadalupe from 1949 to 1958 and 1961 to 1964. In 1964, he was named to the Fiskdale sanctuary and returned toward the end of his life to the Our Lady of Guadalupe parish. Always even tempered, smiling, and lively, Fr. Pacôme who once again took his baptismal name of Antoine-Marie, was appreciated by his confreres for his willingness to help, his sense of organization, and his apostolic devotedness. He was known for his preaching and had a fine sense of public relations. All during his life, his health gave him some problems, since he suffered from hypertrophy. It was during his long years of ministry in New York that he had a widely known reputation as a confessor and spiritual guide. Each week, he was assiduous at his confessional at Saint Patrick's Cathedral. Each day, he greeted with simplicity and friendliness the many unknown persons who came to the parishes of the Assumptionists or who came to get help. He did not hide his contacts with well-known personalities in the world such as Thomas Merton, Dorothy Day, or Gypsy Rose Lee. His interest in the future of the Congregation manifested itself in many ways. Before everything else, Fr. Antoine was a very practical man who knew very well the needs and desires of the Province. Each year, he wished to take a great part in vocational work by getting money for the formation of the young religious. He reached the ripe old age of 88 and, in his old days, liked to entertain his confreres with personal memories that he had kept of the 'elders' of the Assumption, notably Fr. Emmanuel Bailly who received his perpetual vows at Limpertsberg or Fr. Joseph Maubon who gave him his first obedience in 1918. With the proverbial tenacity attributed to certain Bretons, he was able to remain active in ministry until the age of 86. At that time, his health forced him to take a well-deserved retirement. He died November 21, 1979. Fr. Edgar Bourque, at the time Provincial of the North American Province, presided his funeral noting that Fr. Antoine Marie was the first Assumptionist in one hundred years who had dared to die on the same day as Father d'Alzon, November 21.

Addenda.

Charity in Action by Rev. Anthony M. Philippe. [The New York Savings News, October 1956, 2]

The other day, O came across a line from Shaw's play, "Heartbreak House"—"A man's interest in the world is only the overflow from his interest in himself." Any real hope for the betterment of the world at large must be founded on the sincere attempt of each individual to put his own house in order.

The old scholastic philosophers put it in yet another way with their axiom, "No one can give what he has not got." It is hard to expect peace for the world from men who are not at peace with themselves—and to be at peace with themselves, they must first be at peace with God. The foundation of this peace is belief in God.

It is not a mere intellectual assent to His existence, but the deep conviction of the supreme reality of spiritual things and values which expresses itself in love of God above all things and in love of all men, especially the poor and the lowly.

It is to this faith that God has promised victory: not to what the Pope calls "A vague sense of Christianity, flabby and empty," which never really convinces the mind and consequently never really moves the heart. In other words, mere lip service to the words of Christ, with never an attempt to let them permeate the structure of private and public life, will never be sufficient.

Christianity Not Tried.

We know that a great part of the world prides itself on being Christian: but we need only turn the pages of history, or indeed of the daily newspapers to see that there must be something wrong with the world's idea of Christianity—and every thinking man must agree with those who say, "It is not that Christianity has failed—it has never been really tried." If we do not sincerely believe that God is Our Father and fashion our lives accordingly, on what grounds can we regard all men as brothers?

True and applied Christianity means a deep interest in and sympathy with our fellow men and their needs, whether spiritual or temporal. So often the world's Christianity finds expression in a supreme detachment and indifference to others... like the ferryman who was asked by a penniless tramp for a ride across the river.

"That will cost 3 cents," he replied. "But," said the traveler, "I haven't 3 cents in the world." "Well, look," said the ferryman, "The way I see it, a man who doesn't have 3 cents is just as well off here as on the other side of the river."

A Good Example.

The world needs more Christians like Abbé Pierre, the French priest who led what he called, "The Rebellion of Kindness." He was no professional social reformer. He had no preconceived plan. He just happened to be a man who took literally Christ's words about the hungry and the homeless. When people came for help, he just did all that he could for them and was later surprised to find himself as the founder of an Emergency City, which houses thousands of homeless Parisians.

For him, God was in everyone—the poor, the tramp, the liar, and the thief. And so a little girl could write to him, "We were so miserable when we had no roof over our heads. I thought all men were cruel. Now I think I am wrong. Maybe there are more good people than bad. But until now, I had never met them."

When Abbé Pierre launched an appeal for aid, not only all France, but the world responded with amazing generosity—and then Abbé Pierre accused France of one great crime—that people did not know that such conditions of poverty and destitution existed.

The Crime Is Ours.

And can we not all accuse ourselves of this crime, that when a poor man comes for a handout, we are not sufficiently interested to think of him as a person, to wonder what chain of misfortunes brought him to this condition, to wonder what he eats, or where he sleeps, or the reason of it all.

When we really know ourselves with all our weaknesses, then we can have sympathy for those less fortunate. When we ourselves are convinced that our purpose in life is to show our love of God through love of our fellowmen, then we will be in a position to influence others by word and example. We must be interested enough in ourselves to look clearly at the meaning of our existence and convince ourselves of it—then we can sagely leave the rest to our heart.

Only when we know about ourselves can we know about others. And interest comes and grows with knowledge.

Father Philippe died on November 21st. Father d'Alzon died on November 21st ninety-nine years before. And no other Assumptionist has ever died on that day. It strikes me that there is something important for the Province in that fact. I would like to propose that the Centennial Year that the Congregation is celebrating in 1980 began in our Province with the death of Father Philippe.

Ninety-nine years is a long time. Fr. Philippe's death has made me want to find deeper reasons than time to understand why we would want to celebrate the one hundredth anniversary of a man's death. Part of the reason is the gratitude we have in our hearts that Fr. d'Alzon's spirit still lives on in his sons and daughters. A hundred years is a long time for a man's spirit to be still that vital.

And eighty-eight years is a long time. That made of Fr. Philippe an old man. We all know that we face the death of the elderly in a different way than we face the death of the young. It is easier to think in terms of glory and resurrection when there is present the notion of ripeness and readiness. It doesn't mean that there is no sadness or loss. But we are freer to consider the gain.

This morning's Gospel shows us Jesus giving us an important lesson about the Kingdom of God. He had called a little child to Him and told His disciples: "Unless you turn and become like this child the Kingdom of Heaven will never be yours." Jesus is not tending an invitation to return to a childhood once known. Certainly, there is notion here of going back. He is speaking of a turning, a conversion, of going to a place where we have never been before—to a new reality that only He can make possible.

As the Province goes through this most recent loss, I'm mindful of the first loss it experienced way back in 1929. Father Louis-Robert was the first American vocation and he was the first American to die. He was a young priest. Fr. Angelome Cleux, A.A, wrote the story of his short life. He entitled his book "The Dawn of a Soul." In writing about the dawning of a soul, he didn't at all have the idea that Fr. Louis' premature death meant that he had failed to realize a sanctity that was waiting for him in a future he would never know. When we speak of this specific gift of God, the dawning and the setting are as one. Because of his age, if anyone here were called upon to write the life of Fr. Philippe, he might be tempted to call his book "The Setting of a Soul." The writer could easily think that God had completed His work in him because of the time. But in the same way that we didn't think that anything was missing in the life of Fr. Louis-Robert because he died young, we shouldn't think of Fr. Philippe or anyone else not being at the point of a grand new beginning even when he had come to the end of a long life. The reason is the same in both instances. God's work has no beginning and no end.

Ever since Fr. Philippe died, I've been asking myself what his turning or conversion might have been. What was his secret? All Assumptionists know that Fr. d'Alzon wanted for us spirituality as broad as the Church. There was nothing exclusive in his spirit. He encouraged us to go to Saint Augustine, but also to Saint John of the Cross and to Saint Francis de Sales. But in all of this, who left the strongest mark on Fr. Philippe? I opt for St. Francis de Sales. His qualities of simplicity, of sweetness, of graciousness, all bear the Salesian marks of holiness. When a man carries all these traits in his character it is usually because he has been able to build on great strength. Fr. Philippe was not a weak man. Behind his sweetness, meekness, kindness, and brotherliness, one could sense a great pushing and strength. Is it any wonder that at eighty-seven years old, this man could not accept not to be working? One of the saddest days of his life was when he had to be told not only by his superior but also by the pastor of St. Patrick's Cathedral that he could no longer go there for confessions on Saturday afternoons. Everyone was worried about Fr. Philippe except Fr. Philippe himself.

The line of holy men in which Fr. Philippe placed himself by following the spirituality of St. Francis de sales was that of those who had learned that they were small because God is great. Abraham, Moses, and David are truly little ones of the Bible even if they stand as giants. They had discovered that all they had been called to do had really been done by God.

In going through Fr. Philippe's papers after his death, I found a pact, a covenant that he had made with St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus when he was forty years old. He wrote: "I choose you as my special patron. I put the rest of my life under your guidance and protection. I declare this a spiritual friendship. I want you to consider me as your brother, your priest, your missionary." And this is the way Fr. Philippe lived his priestly life. For the first twenty years, it was as a teacher and later treasurer at Assumption College. Then he worked for over forty years in New York City at the parishes of Esperanza and Guadalupe. He served four terms as superior and pastor at Guadalupe. The last time he was appointed there, he was seventy years old. He was also seventy years old when Father Henri appointed him Provincial Treasurer. That might have surprised a lot of people, but we can be sure that it did not surprise Fr. Philippe.

Fr. Philippe saw his work with the Spanish-speaking people of New York City, as well as his work with the poor there, as missionary work. He saw this as a response to the call of the Gospel and the Church to care for the weak, the oppressed, the needy, and the poor. In the past few days, this idea has become clearer and stronger for me. Here was a poor man, a humble man, a simple man, serving the poor. Henry Nouwen has a book entitled "The Wonderful Healer." Any priest knows from experience that to work with the weak and the sinful is to see reflected in them his own weakness and sinfulness. Today, as we try to penetrate the meaning of Fr. Philippe's journey, we can see so clearly that there is another side of the story from that of the wounded healer. There is the side of the healed healer—the healer who is on his way to wholeness. Fr. Philippe was a healer who reached out to the wounded having experienced a turning, a conversion, having been blessed with God's grace. Being conscious of that grace, as well as of his weakness, allowed him to serve them with trust, simplicity, and kindness. He was good because he had experienced God's goodness.

Because Fr. Philippe lived a long time, he had many celebrations in his life. He brought child-likeness to these celebrations. I had the privilege of attending some of his parties. People came to expect that sooner or later he would pull out of his pocket a document yellow with age. It was a letter he had received from the General of the Assumptionists, Fr. Emmanuel Bailly, in 1917 on the occasion of his ordination to the priesthood. One of the thoughts expressed in that long letter was the following: "The spirit of our Assumptionist religious life requires of us an exceptional love of Our Lord Jesus Christ. 'Propter amorem Domini Nostri Jesu Christi'!" This was the second motto that Fr. d'Alzon had given his sons to guide them along their spiritual journey. Fr. Bailly continues: "How could we love Him more than to love Him the way He loves us? And where does He give us a better proof of His love than at the altar where He re-enacts His birth, His earthly life, His suffering and death, and His resurrection?"

These words reflect well the spirit of Fr. d'Alzon. If we are to understand fully Fr. Philippe's spiritual journey, it isn't enough to see how a St. Francis de Sales and a St. Thérèse of Lisieux influenced his growth in specific moral virtues such as simplicity and meekness. The strongest and most fundamental influence in his life was the Assumptionist spirituality and the centrality it gives to the love of Our Lord Jesus Christ. I happened to be in Rome a few days before Fr. Philippe's death, when the General House community opened its Centennial Year. In his homily, Father General said: "Of all the things that characterize an Assumptionist, that which is most basic and what is most simple is that Fr. d'Alzon is our father." No other congregation, other than those founded by him, can claim him as father. That is simplicity itself. We all know that what makes us members of an earthly family is that we have parents that are proper to us. This is the rock foundation that makes us what we are. We can do all the theologizing we want about the spirit of Assumption, but we always have to return to the simple truth that Fr. d'Alzon is our father. And this is what we must keep in mind this morning as we say good-bye to Fr. Philippe who follows him in death during the Centennial celebration. What marked Fr. Philippe most was that he was a son of Fr. d'Alzon. The reason he liked Fr. Bailly's letter was that it reminded him so strongly of who he was and of the ideal he had embraced as a young religious: to love Our Lord with an exceptional love.

(Funeral homily for Fr. Antoine Philippe]

Elisée (Joseph- Marie-Désiré) Rathoin

1896-1977

Religious of the Province of Paris.



A formation during wartime.

Joseph-Marie-Désiré Rathoin was born April 27, 1896 at Fleury-les-Aubrais (Loiret). He did his primary studies at the Olivet Brothers' school and at the Saint-Léon de la Ferté School. Fr. Didier Nègre recruited him in an orphanage run by Sisters and brought him to Zepperen (Belgium) in September 1908. Once he had finished his grammar school, Joseph went, in 1911, to the enchanting banks of the Lac Majeur in Ascona (Switzerland) for two years of humanities. Once he had finished rhetoric, he decided to enter the Assumption and, August 14, 1913, with 34 companions at Limpertsberg, he received the religious habit from the hands of Fr. Emmanuel Bailly, under the name of Brother Elisée. Then came the war, and Luxembourg was invaded at the beginning of August 1914. All contacts were cut off between the novitiate and the other houses of the Congregation. Brother Elisée was unable to pronounce his first vows until May 19, 1918 at Louvain, after having known living conditions that forced the novitiate religious to work on farms and study philosophy the best they could. In 1919, he spent a few months at the Montargis barracks. November 6, 1921, he was able to pronounce his perpetual vows and August 5, 1923 saw him ordained to the priesthood by Bishop de Wachter, auxiliary of Malines.

An eventful teaching career (1923-1947).

In September 1923, Fr. Elisée was sent to the College of l'Assomption in Nîmes (Gard). At that time, the college was very short of space on boulevard Jean-Jaurès where an old boarding school used to be. He taught the first two years of high school with Fr. Arthur Deprez as superior. He was competent, methodical, devoted, and much appreciated by his students; liberal, indulgent, and conciliatory, Fr. Elisée was not always able to control these little Southerners and the deans of discipline had to regain control without hesitating. In 1927, he went to the late vocations St-Denis house, north of Paris, that was run by Fr. Didier Nègre. In August 1929, Fr. Clodoald Sérieix, new Provincial of Paris, chose him for the college in Worcester (U.S.A.) where a third year high school class needed a teacher for French and Latin. Father Elisée inserted himself with joy into the teaching staff and the numerous community of that time. When in 1936, young American religious were able to take over, he returned to France. He was named to the Vêrargues aluminate (Hérault) where he was given courses in history and geography to teach. He also had charge of two small local parishes, Saturargues and Villetelle (1936-1947). Fr. Elisée, the teacher, suffered regardless of his great indignation when faced with the lack of discipline and pranks of his young audience that knew it could count on his paternal goodness. In 1936, he was the victim of a bicycle accident that left him limping lightly. This did not stop him from being called to serve in the military health services in 1939-1940. A religious willing to help, with quick, direct speech, easily angered but quickly appeased, he was always ready in his apostolate to help someone who was in difficulty. In community, he was a charming confrere, with sparkling humor and wit, and jovial.

Curate at Saint-Christophe de Javel and Arras.

In 1947, Fr. Elisée was named to the Parisian parish of Javel where he remained 17 years (1947-1964). He was curate, treasurer, and factotum. Fr. Raymond Bourré, his companion, compared him willingly to three apostles: Nathaniel, Peter, and Thomas. Of Nathaniel, he had the naiveté, the childish and even naïve character accepting without question what was told him, but also the frankness and impertinence. Of Peter, he had the total generosity and zeal, at times untimely. Thanks to his kindness, his office and the church became the hangout for tramps. Fr.

Elisée was their generous chaplain and ardent defender. Fiery, carried away by his enthusiasm, at times, in his homilies he made blunders or gave rough formulas. Of Thomas, he also had tenacious incredulity when faced with certain types of evidence. How could one get him to understand that a stove set for 30 degrees centigrade condemned the apartment to being cold, while consuming the coal ineffectively, or to install a tramp in the crypt with a straw mattress and blankets, was to risk a fire? In September 1964, Fr. Elisée was transferred to the community of Fr. Halluin's house at Arras (Pas-de-Calais), to be the chaplain for the Saint-Antoine chapel. He was a wise confessor and an exemplary chaplain. He had the gift of attracting people and accepted to be disturbed at any hour. He walked the streets of the city, with his quick and staccato pace, to visit the sick and infirm. He liked to put flowers in the chapel at all seasons and brighten up the ceremonies with hymns. One day in March 1972, he was literally floored by illness. He was taken to Chanac (Lozère) March 29, 1972 for a bit of rest. He was hospitalized several times at Mende. He died in the night of January 23, 1977 and was buried on Tuesday, January 25 at Chanac, in the Vals cemetery.

Addenda.

Worcester, 1933.

“On this side of the Ocean, we didn't like the speculative arguments of the Europeans; we don't understand anything; we prefer what is tangible, real, practical as Victor Hugo would say in *Les Choses Vues*. We prefer the illustration of ideas by photos. Here is the description of the Villa d'Alzon at Baker Lake: Would it be the convalescent home of a descendant of one of these brave colonists of the XVIth century or the summer home of one of those bosses of modern industry? Neither one nor the other. It is the name of a cottage of the faculty of Assumption College. Where is it situated? Go quickly by car to the south of Worcester, on the beautiful route of Webster, turn at Oxford and here we are in the woods of Baker Pond. What a nice smell and freshness! Open your lungs, breathe this pure air, and notwithstanding the bumps of the road, dream of the charm of the sunny woods. A last detour and you come to a small prairie with two or three old bungalows that seem to bathe in the deep waters of a silvery lake. Through the pines and birches you can see the light colors of an elegant wooden house. It seems to be quite large, seated on its stone foundations...”

Zacharie (Bernard) Saint-Martin

1875-1932

Religious of the Province of Paris.

Formation and first ministry.

Bernard Saint-Martin was born July 15, 1875 in Vieille-Adour (Hautes-Pyrénées). He went to the Arras aluminate, in the Pas-de-Calais (1887-1890), then to the nearby one at Clairmarais (1891-1892). Because of health reasons, he was sent to the Midi, to the Brian aluminate (Drôme) to finish his humanities (1892-1893). He took the religious habit at the Livry novitiate (Seine-Saint-Denis) August 15, 1893 under the name of Brother Zacharie. Fr. Joseph Maubon who gave him the habit at Livry attracted him to the East. Brother Zacharie set sail in June 1894 for Phanaraki (Turkey) where he finished, under the direction of Fr. Ernest Baudouy, his novitiate and pronounced his perpetual vows August 15, 1895. At that time, he was sent to teach at the Eski-Chéir School for three years (1895-1898). In 1899, he began his philosophy at Kadikoy and pursued these studies as well as his theology at Notre-Dame of France in Jerusalem. Msgr. Piavi ordained him a priest December 20, 1902. From 1903 to 1904, he taught at the Varna College in Bulgaria. In 1905, he went to the Calahorra aluminate in Spain where he learned Spanish.

Parish ministry in New York.

In 1906, he was sent to New York, United States, where he gave himself to parish ministry in the two Latino-American parishes, Our Lady of Guadalupe until 1914, and Our Lady of Esperanza from 1914 to 1919, [Concerning this parish, see the booklet edited by Fr. Crescent Armanet, *Church of Our Lady of Esperanza*, New York, 1921, 159 pages.], at which time he returned to 14th Street. In 1911, a first attack of tuberculosis forced him to take a time of rest. He returned to Europe for a year at San Remo, on the Italian coast. In 1913, he was able to return to work in New York. His health situation dispensed him from any military service during the First World War and he was thus able to give himself totally to the animation of the two New York parishes. He visited the sick assiduously in the hospitals and chaplaincies. He was also bursar for the 14th Street community (1920). In 1924, he was chosen as a counselor. He took great care in preparing his sermons in English and Spanish. Because of this, he was greatly esteemed by his parishioners. In her autobiography, Dorothy Day gave witness to the spiritual help that the ministry of Fr. Zacharie gave her at the time of her conversion. In 1930, Fr. Zacharie has a burnout and had to be sent to a sanatorium run by Sisters in upper New York. The following year, he returned to the great metropolis, but it was to be hospitalized with the Franciscan Sisters in the Bronx. During a crisis, he had Fr. Paul de la Croix Journet called. This latter found him seated on his bed shaving. When Fr. Zacharie asked him for confession and the sacrament of the sick, he simply said with great calm to his confrere: “*Pass me the breviary and I’ll be able to follow the prayers.*” On September 13, 1932, Fr. Clodoald Sérieix, Provincial of Paris in charge of the vicariate of North America, visited him with the superiors of the New York communities. The 23d, feeling that his end was close, Fr. Zacharie received the viaticum and died September 26, at the age of 57, while trying for the last time to make the sign of the cross. His body was buried in the Assumptionist cemetery, near the college in Worcester where Brother Eleutherios and Fr. Louis Robert were already buried.

Addenda.

Article on St. Therese of Lisieux by Dorothy Day in Catholic Worker, Oct.-Nov. 2003, 5.

My confessor at the time was Father Zachary, an Augustinian Father of the Assumption, stationed at the Church of Our Lady of Guadalupe on West Fourteenth Street. He was preparing me for confirmation, giving me a weekly evening of instruction.

*One day, Father Zachary said to me, “Here is a book that will do you good.” He had already given me Challoner’s Meditations and the St. Andrew Missal. The book he now handed me was *The Little White Flower: The Story of a Soul*, an unbound book which had a tan cover with a not too attractive picture of a young nun with a sweet insipid face, holding a crucifix and a huge bouquet of roses... I wasn’t looking for anything so simple and felt slightly aggrieved at Father Zachary. Men, even priests, were very insulting to women, I thought, handing out what they felt*

suited their intelligence – in other words, pious pap... I told Father Zachary, trying to convert him to my point of view. Living as we were in a time of world revolution, when, as I felt, the people of the world were rising to make a better world for themselves, I wondered what this new saint had to offer...

I was so new a Catholic that I was still working for this committee for some months after my Baptism, and I talked to Father Zachary about the work. "I am in agreement with it," I told him. : We should not be sending troops to Nicaragua. I am in agreement with many of the social aims of Communism. 'From each according to his ability and to each according to his need,'"

*Father Zachary could only quote Lenin to me, saying, "Atheism is basic to Marxism." He was the gentlest of confessors with me, who, at that time, was a female counterpart of Graham Greene's *Quiet American*, wanting to do good by violence.*

After one year in Bulgaria and one year in Spain, he came to New York and was curate at Our Lady of Guadalupe for 27 years. He received Thomas Merton back to the practice of the faith. He died at Our Lady of Esperanza and was buried in the Prep School cemetery in Worcester.

New York, 1926.

"The Assumptionist religious of the two houses in New York have the rare privilege of being totally given over to a ministry of souls. They do so with zeal and success in both Hispano-American sanctuaries where it is our joy to see prayers, confessions, and communions grow. The Latino faithful are our *raison d'être* and deserve our main attention even though they have less financial resources. The ministry demands the use of two foreign languages that need to become more and more familiar to them. In order to do so, I ask that we no longer speak French at one of the two meals and reserve this meal to read or speak Spanish or English. For the sermons in Spanish, it is normal to have recourse to the two Spanish Fathers who can alternate in both churches. To the parish work that we need to do very well, we should not be afraid to take on a bit of outside ministry if the occasion presents itself. However we should avoid limiting ourselves to simple chaplaincies..."

The Autobiography of Dorothy Day: The Long Loneliness 151-152.

I never regretted for one minute the step which I had taken in becoming a Catholic, but I repeat that for a year there was little joy for me as the struggle continued. I knew a good priest who helped me along the way. I was living in New York that winter and went to confession in a church on West Fourteenth Street, Our Lady of Guadalupe. It was a narrow little church, served by the Augustinian Fathers of the Assumption, and there were masses at seven, eight and nine o'clock each morning. Before every Mass priests came from the rectory next door to hear confessions. There were three confessionals on either side of the entrance door, and there were bells on the confessionals so that at any other time of the day one could ring a bell and a priest would appear. My priest's name was Father Zachary and his previous assignment had been in the Holy Land. He was a Spaniard, a gentle old man who was good and patient with me. He was so gentle that one welcomed his questions, and when he found that I was baptized but not confirmed he began preparing me for confirmation. He gave me Challoner's book of meditations to read and a St. Andrew's missal so that I could learn to follow the seasons of the Church.

Lambert (Joseph-Théodore) Saive

1883-1955

Belgian religious of the Province of Paris (1928), then North America (1947).



Formation.

Joseph Théodore Saive was born November 22, 1883 at Liège in Belgium, son of Joseph and Ursuline née Galoppin. He began his studies at Laeken, near Brussels, and went to a boarding school run by the Sisters of Perpetual Help from 1892 to 1894 before entering Saint-Michel College (1894-1895). He became an alumnist at Taintegnies (1895-1899) and finished his humanities at Clairmarais in France (Pas-de-Calais), from 1899 to 1901. September 25, 1901, Fr. Vincent de Paul Bailly vested him with the religious habit at the Louvain novitiate, under the name of Brother Lambert. Fr. Félicien Vandenkoornhuysse wrote about him: *“Brother Lambert had a difficult time at the beginning of his novitiate. Of an impetuous nature, he was always on the move. He has a great need to communicate his impressions and doesn’t know how to give his tongue a rest. He is easily provoked to fight and is quarrelsome. He has a number of originalities and acts strangely at times. I must say that during his second year of novitiate, he corrected these faults thanks to concerted efforts on his part. He now keeps silence. Even if he is not yet a model of meekness, he doesn’t constantly look for quarrels with his confreres”*. Brother Lambert pronounced his perpetual vows October 18, 1903 at Louvain where he also studied philosophy from 1903 to 1905. Following our tradition, he was then asked to teach in apostolic houses: Le Bizet, from 1905 to 1906; Zepperen, from 1906-1907; and finally Vinovo in Italy, from 1907 to 1908. He studied his theology at Rome from 1908 to 1912 and got his licentiate. He was ordained to the priesthood in Rome by Cardinal Respighi June 11, 1911.

Ministry and changes.

Fr. Lambert was named to teach. He first went again to Vinovo from 1912 to 1916 where he perfected his Italian. He was then sent to the Elorrio aluminate in Spain from 1915 to 1919, where he learned Spanish. In 1919, he was named to teach at Assumption College in Worcester (U.S.A.). He taught there from 1919 to 1932 and was at the same time a monitor. The last part of his life was consecrated to pastoral ministry in New York at 14th Street from 1932 to 1955. [The two parishes in New York are distinguished by the street names: 14th Street for Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, # 229, and 156th Street, for Our Lady of Esperanza Church, # 624. Today these two parishes for Hispanic Americans have been returned to the diocese and are served by the diocesan clergy of New York.] On September 18, 1954, he had to be taken to the city’s Saint Vincent Hospital. For quite some time, he had been suffering from a cancer that was eating away at his body. It was in New York that he died June 23, 1955 at the age of 72. He was buried in Worcester. *In the course of his many years in pastoral ministry, Fr. Lambert got to be known and esteemed as a distinguished religious, with a great sense of humor and a great patience toward the faithful. Respectful of the guidelines and eventual severities of those in authority toward him, he was able to endure with an extraordinary morale his very long and painful illness.* Of Belgian origin, Fr. Lambert, at the time of the setting up of Provinces, did not request to return to his native country. In 1928, he asked officially to be part of the French Province of the Center (Paris) in which he worked and where he was known. During a trip to Belgium, after World War II, he was seized by a bit of nostalgia and requested to be named to his native province; but very quickly, in 1947, because he had been in the U.S.A. so long, where he had become familiar with the language and the customs of America, he finally asked to be affiliated to the new Province of North America, now detached from Paris and erected in 1946.

Addenda.

He was also treasurer at Assumption College and Superior as well as Pastor of Our Lady of Guadalupe from 1943 to 1949. He died at St. Vincent's Hospital in New York.

Letter from Fr. Aimé Deschamps dated Feb. 12, 1947.

Father Lambert is suffering from a malignant tumor of the bladder in its third stage. Father Lambert is well aware of this since De. Mecca has told him so at his own request. This cancer presents no immediate danger except that of a fourth hemorrhage, which if not checked in time might be fatal. Aside from that eventuality, Fr. Lambert should feel no ill effects of his affliction..

Father Lambert, a Belgian, spent his most active years in the United States, first as a teacher and treasurer at Assumption in Worcester, then in parish ministry at Our Lady of Guadalupe in New York, where he was pastor, and at Our Lady of Esperanza also in New York. (Notes by Fr. Armand Desautels.)

Worcester, 1928.

"You are going to find that I change a lot. It's true, but I know that intelligent persons know how to change and Fr. Aymard [Faugère] confirmed my opinion by saying that only fools have fixed ideas. I am writing to definitely stabilize myself in one of the 4 Provinces of the Congregation and pass, this time for good, to the Province of Paris, which had been my first option. My reasons are: I have been working for this province since I am a religious. My knowledge of English, Spanish, and Italian let me offer more services, especially here, than in a Belgian province. In the Belgian province, I am a stranger. All know that I have never wanted a Belgian province and later on, I'll suffer more especially when the Flemish will be more numerous. In the beginning I had no problems, but now I am afraid of this division in the Belgian province and I will suffer much in having to separate myself from the Center of the Congregation in which I have spent 27 years of my religious life and 17 years as a priest. Please transmit my desire to Fr. General and intercede in my favor".

Eleutherios (Epaminondas) Schinas

1891-1919

Greek religious.



From Greece to Worcester.

Epaminondas Schinas was born in Greece, at Marathocambos, in the isle of Samos, of Orthodox parents June 3, 1891. In October 1899, he went to study with the Fathers of Sion in Jerusalem. He converted to Catholicism and in 1904 went to Constantinople to the Assumptionist school of Kum-Kapu where he only stayed a year (1904-1905). In July 1905, Epaminondas was sent to pursue his studies in Belgium at Bure (1905-1906). From there, he went to Taintegnies for humanities (1906-1908). He received the religious habit from the hands of Fr. Vincent de Paul Bailly at the Louvain novitiate August 28, 1908, under the name Brother Eleutherios. He was professed annually the following year and sent to Gempe where the novitiate had moved and pronounced his perpetual vows there August 28, 1910. In September 1910, Brother Eleutherios started his philosophy at the Louvain house of studies that was still under the direction of Fr. Merklen at that time with whom he was very close. Three years later, on September 7, 1913, he was added to a small group of religious that Fr. Emmanuel Bailly sent as reinforcements to the college in Worcester (U.S.A.). Brother Eleutherios worked devotedly as teacher and monitor. The qualities of his heart rivaled with those of his spirit. Faithful to his religious obligations, he was a scrupulous teacher fulfilling all of his responsibilities and well liked by his students. He became for them a fervent apostle of the Eucharist. A few days before Christmas of 1918, he went on a promenade to a nearby lake where the students were ice-skating and caught cold. Pneumonia was declared and even though he was showered with care, Brother Eleutherios died a few days later, January 2, 1919, at the age of 28. Before leaving Europe, he had become a member of the clergy by receiving the tonsure July 7, 1912, but did not have time to reach the priesthood. Brother Eleutherios' body was buried in the small cemetery of the college in Worcester.

From Fr. Omer Rochain concerning Brother Eleutherios.

“I had the sad task of announcing to you by telegram the death of our dear Brother Eleutherios Schinas, January 2 [1919]. Since the foundation of the college in 1903, he is the first religious that God called back to Him at Worcester. He will be our first intercessor. From the heights of heaven, he will protect the work to which he devoted himself during almost six years... Brother had an excellent health. From year to year he only had a small bout of flu, and that was all. Last December 19, he went for a promenade to a lake near the college where the students skated during the noon recess. He caught cold and felt some shivers. Without being alarmed at what he thought was nothing,, he went to his room to prepare his afternoon class and said nothing about the way that he felt. The following morning, he got up as usual and woke up the community, since that had been his job during four years. He immediately came to see me. He told me that he had suffered all night from a violent headache and that he wouldn't be able to teach his class. I told him to go and rest and that I would replace him for his class. He immediately went back to bed never to get up again... The doctor who was most devoted came up to three times a day, and even at night, to visit his sick patient, since he was so desirous of saving him. At each visit, he was amazed that the Brother showed so much strength against death. During three days, the Brother was in agony. He could have departed from one moment to the other. I almost never left him. Brothers Joachim and Armand kept a constant watch over him. On January 2, about 3 a.m., a very noticeable change took place in him. Feeling that death was close, I called Fr. Pierre-Célestin [Régnier]. We recited the prayers of the agonizing.

Addenda.

He was born on the island of Samos, Greece. Brother Eleutherios was the first religious to be buried at the Preparatory School cemetery in Worcester. He was a Greek scholastic, was a monitor and teacher at Assumption and hoped to return soon to study theology. He died of pneumonia. (Notes by Fr. Armand Desautels.)

Worcester, 1915.

“Fr. Emmanuel Bailly gave me permission a week ago to send ten dollars to my parents. Since it is thanks to you that I obtained this help, I would be ungrateful if I did not thank you. Classes have started almost two months ago. The days fly by; my many occupations barely leave me any free time. I find many consolations with my students this year since they work hard and for the most part, want to be priests. It is the love for youth that makes my life a bit sweet, for there are times when I am tempted to get discouraged. I’ll tell you quite frankly where that comes from. It is because of my contacts with my superior [Fr. Omer Rochain]. I tend to flee from him. I have noticed so many times his ignorance of souls and of things that I prefer to stay out of the way rather than continually compromise myself for little things. A month ago I was severely rebuked in the full chapter for having said, it would seem, that the new schedule was stupid. And yet I had defended this same schedule publicly. Yes, I had said to Brother Hermès that one had to apply the rules with discernment...”

Clodoald (Antonin-Pierre) Serieix

1880-1948

Religious of the Province of Paris, Provincial of Paris (1929-1935).

Second Provincial of Paris.

Antonin-Pierre Serieix was born May 18, 1880, in the small village of Saint-Exupéry (Corrèze) in the diocese of Tulle, France. He received his secondary education at the Assumptionist alumnates in Le Breuil (Deux-Sèvres), from 1892 to 1895, and Brian (Drôme), from 1895 to 1897. On September 8, 1897, at the novitiate in Livry (Seine-Saint-Denis), he received the religious habit and the name of Brother Clodoald, pronouncing his first vows there on September 9, 1898, before going to Notre-Dame de France in Jerusalem to pursue his religious formation under the direction of Fr. Athanase Vanhove. It was there that he took his final vows October 4, 1899, and studied philosophy (1899-1901). From 1901 to 1904, he was sent to Brousse, Turkey, as a teacher. He studied theology, first in Kadikoy and Phanaraki (1904-06), then in Jerusalem (1906-07) where Latin Patriarch Filippo Camassei ordained him a priest May 9, 1907. The report for his priestly ordination stated some of his qualities: *“He is serious, calm, delicate, and distinguished. He has a good mind; he is attracted to the interior life; and he is capable of bearing responsibility.”* The future would prove these appreciations to be accurate.



The young priest was sent to Kadikoy for two years (1907-08) where he exercised a pastoral ministry and taught Holy Scripture. Since he had learned English, he was sent to England where he alternated between Brockley and New Haven, either as curate, superior, or pastor (1908-14). In July 1915, because of World War I, he was called into military service, serving in the infantry service in Tulle, then in an auxiliary service in Paris. Discharged in March 1919, he returned to England as superior at Bethnal Green in London (1919-1923).

In 1923, he was named Superior of Assumption College in Worcester, Massachusetts, and Vicar Provincial of North America. This was the period when the Congregation was reorganizing itself into provinces. The communities in England and the United States were made dependent on the French Province of Paris. Under Fr. Clodoald's firm yet gentle direction, the college in Worcester developed and expanded. He built a large new wing to accommodate college-level students, as well as a gymnasium and tennis courts. He also commissioned and placed on the property an imposing stone statue of Fr. d'Alzon.

In 1929, Fr. Clodoald became Provincial of Paris, replacing Fr. Aymard Faugère. His initiatives were numerous: Nîmes began building the new *Collège de l'Assomption* and a new community was founded in Perpignan to take charge of *Collège Saint-Louis-de-Gonzague*; a similar effort was tried in Pontlevoy; since the house of studies in Louvain was given to the Province of Belgium-Holland, he opened a scholasticate in Lormoy (Essonne). Having experienced first hand in Worcester the advantages of borrowing money to finance new constructions, he took out loans as he proceeded to develop the Province. However, at the time, such a practice was generally frowned upon in France, which led to misunderstandings between him and the Superior General, Fr. Gervais Quenard, who ordered him to leave financial matters up to his Provincial Treasurer. In 1935, Fr. Clodoald resigned as Provincial. At his request, he returned to the United States where he was assigned to Our Lady of Esperanza Church on West 156th Street in New York City. He died there March 8, 1948, and was buried in the Assumptionist plot in Fiskdale, Massachusetts.

Brilliant and impulsive, a good student, and a talented teacher, Fr. Clodoald, without ever making a great show of his talents, did not take too easily to opinions contrary to his own. Tall and ascetic looking, he was sensitive to the fact that he had a weak voice and that he could never address large groups. Though strict with himself, he was

attentive to others and a good spiritual director and advisor. He always had frail health. Suffering from stomach trouble and asthma, he constantly pushed himself out of a sense of duty. He was found dead in his chair on the morning of March 8th, sitting up as if he were about to undertake another day of ministry.

Addenda.

While he was superior in Worcester, he was the host of the famous French ambassador and writer, Paul Claudel, in 1929.

The Death of Fr. Clodoald Serieix by Fr. Engelbert Devincq.

Death visited our young American province for the second time; it came to get a religious already advanced in age, remarkable by his intellectual and moral qualities, and the services he rendered, Fr. Clodoald Serieix. Wherever he passed, he left the impression of a worthy priest, in the full sense of the word, worthy in speech and manners, in the way he ministered as a priest, in his dealings with people, in the guidance he offered to the souls that requested it, and even in his dreams always inspired for the greater good of the works under his care. The news of his death will be met with many regrets. Assumption College owes him a debt of gratitude especially for his devotedness as the superior during six years. That is why we must speak of him to refresh memories concerning what he did for us.

His funeral.

Fr. Clodoald never had great health; he was impressive by his height and ascetic figure, and yet he always suffered in one way or another health wise. He retired to New York after having served as Provincial of the Paris Province and his strength ebbed away. For more than a year now, his asthma was a great torture for him. This did not deter him from ministering in the parish where he was living. However, he had to make great efforts because of this asthma that was slowly debilitating him and weakening his heart. When the phone rang on the morning of March 8 announcing that he had been found dead in his room, we were not terribly surprised. Our goof Father had left without noise, without bothering anyone, during one of his numerous asthma attacks that had been stronger than the strength left in him.

Death always holds a lesson wherever it strikes. And yet it has consolations when one thinks of a life full of merits of the one who has died, when one sees the religious affection for his body with the beauty of the liturgy. Fr. Clodoald was brought her in his tomb on Wednesday evening, March 10, after the funeral service in New York. The whole numerous community and the students were there to receive him. Monsignor Phelan, the vicar general of the Springfield diocese, officiated at the greeting of the body, then the Office of the Dead was recited in a pious manner.

Our good father rested in his humble and modest wooden casket, that of the poor. To think of it seriously, is the casket important? You can understand a beautiful casket as a symbol of the love by the living, but for a religious who gave up everything, he goes into the earth with the renunciation promised by his vows. The hood that covered his head hid his beautiful white hair. Suffering had left its mark on his traits, so much so that the religious who had lived with him had difficulty recognizing him. He was more impressive if not more handsome.

The next day, the funeral set for 9:15 a.m. followed to the letter the prescriptions of the Church. Let us state that the new chapel that is quite big was very full. Besides our students, strangers, priests, religious, and lay people were numerous sharing in our bereavement. May they know that their presence touched us greatly! Fr. Clodoald was well-known and esteemed. We were glad to see that. Without naming people, let us note the presence of delegates from the communities of Sisters from Worcester, alumni, priest from neighboring parishes, and friends of the college; the Saint John the Baptist Society and the Canado-American Association were represented by their president. In the sanctuary, in front of the religious were Msgr. Phelan and Msgr. Mathieu, pastor of the parish in Putnam, Conn.

One could feel a great atmosphere of piety in the assistance. The beauty of the celebration and the greatness of the mystery of death had seized the assembly. After the chanting of the Lauds of the Office of the Dead, solemn high mass was held; Father Provincial was the celebrant with Fr. Marius Dumoulin as deacon and Fr. Marc Leboeuf as sub-deacon. Two choirs sang the Gregorian Chant mass, one composed of the religious in the sanctuary and the other of students in the choir loft... Before the final commendation, Fr. Crescent Armanet, superior of our house at

156th Street in New York, gave the eulogy. He was well suited for this as the Superior of the deceased who had lived 13 years with him. He knew him inside out and knew what he was talking about..

Around 11:30, the procession left to accompany the body to the cemetery. The road was not in the best of conditions since the abundant snows of the winter made it quite difficult for cars to drive. His casket had to be carried by hand with several teams taking part in this to the psalmody of the "Miserere". A final prayer, sprinkling with holy water and Fr. Clodoald's casket was lowered into the grave. He now rests in the tiny cemetery of the College. Soon a white cross will be set up with his name and the dates of his birth and death.

Our Old Superior.

The good Father Clodoald! The old religious who had him as Superior in Worcester from 1923 to 1929 all said this when they heard of his death. There was unanimity in their remarks. When he arrived from England, almost nobody knew him; his approach was a bit difficult, his speech rapid, his serious look, all of this made the religious ask questions. They didn't have to wait very long for an answer. The new superior won over rapidly the religious by his many qualities that broke the ice and inspired confidence. Humble and simple, he didn't put himself forward, even though he was very learned. He was always afraid to hurt others feelings. He never gave orders. He asked. In his remarks, his tone was paternal in a way that did not lord it over people and obtained great results. He seemed so small even though he was tall, so much so that many visitors thought others were the superior. The Franco-American priests all loved him. Some would have wanted him to be more virile, but he was so good that his mannerisms were forgiven. I am not speaking here of the college students of that time since he had their respect without intimidating them. They listened to him with great attention because his words were always prepared with care and dealt with precise questions. He was stubborn when he thought that he was right, even to the point of obstination. His years as Superior were a time of goodness, but it was a goodness tempered with firmness.

Let us add that his Superiorate was a time of fruitful works that last. When he arrived, the space for the High School and the College was too restrained. It was time to think of building. It was also necessary to separate high school and college. Fr. Clodoald got to work at once. His office almost became the office of an architect. He filled large sheets with lines going everywhere. He drew all sorts of plans according to what was going on in his mind. He consulted others, but always came back to what he thought. The fruit of all this was a new building that was part of a whole plan for the future and a gym that for a long time was seen as one of the best in the area. All of this was linked to the old buildings. The corner stone was placed in 1925, and in 1926 a new building arose that the ever-expanding High School invaded.

It was also under his tenure that 12 tennis courts on top of the hill were built... They were all built in line with one another...

In 1929, the college was to celebrate the 25th anniversary of foundation. This date could not pass unnoticed... Everyone worked on its preparation. There was a souvenir album, and a concert that was to be the culmination of the celebration. Fr. Clodoald had a great part to play. It was thanks to him that we had the honor to receive Mr. Paul Claudel, French ambassador to Washington, accompanied by his wife. He was a well-known visitor, more known in the literary works than that of diplomacy. The civic authorities of Worcester met him. We had never before seen so many priests and friends in our walls. We remember for a long time the apotheosis at Mechanic Hall for our College before an assembly of 1800 persons.

Assumption College continues to go forward and with reason has plans for further expansion. While looking toward the future, it doesn't forget to look backwards. It is its duty... Fr. Clodoald figures among the pioneers who put down roots very deeply that will permit a future development.

[L'Assomption, March-April 1948, 29-33]

Father Clodoald was first assigned to the Near east missions, but then spent many years in England, except for the time of World War I, when he served in the army. From 1923 to 1929 he was Superior in Worcester and President of Assumption College as well as Vicar Provincial for North America. He was Provincial of Paris during the following six years and ended his life as curate at Our Lady of Esperanza in New York. A gentleman if ever there was one! He was buried at the Prep School cemetery. (Notes by Fr. Armand Desautels.)

Bartholomew Sharkey

1920-1956

Irish religious of the Province of Paris, England, and North America.



A life of zigzags.

Bartholomew Sharkey was born May 20, 1920 at Ballaghaderreen (Achrony) in Ireland. From 1933 to 1938, he did his secondary studies in Dublin. He entered the Congregation of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate where he did his philosophy from 1939 to 1941 and had made his perpetual vows September 15, 1942. He decided to leave this Congregation. He began his novitiate with the Assumption first in England, at Bindon House where he took the Assumptionist religious habit in October 1946 and made his first vows, which were also his perpetual vows December 7, 1947 at Les Essarts (Seine-Maritime), having learned French in six months. He obtained a special indulgence since he was already professed with the O.M.I. We have no other information on the years 1941-1947. “ *In obedience to his confessor*, notes Fr. Rémi Kokel, at that time the Provincial Superior in Paris, in 1947, *Brother Bartholomew refused asking to be admitted to major orders, although he had already received all of the minor orders in 1942. Then after consulting another religious, he changed his mind, but he gives the impression of being very unstable and lacking judgment*”. These remarks guided Fr. Bal-Fontaine, the Provincial of Paris previous to Fr. Kokel, upon which the vicariate of England depended at that time, to never call Brother Bartholomew to the priesthood. The situation changed after a new time of probation at the Les Essarts novitiate where the master of novices, Fr. Coulet, was favorable to going forward: *Brother Bartholomew is a serious religious, balanced, mature, faithful to the prescriptions of the rule, not narrow-minded, and open with his superiors. It seems to me that he will do fine work for the Adveniat Regnum Tuum*”. After his theology studies at Lormoy (Essonne), Brother Bartholomew was ordained a priest May 1, 1948 at Soisy by Bishop Roland Gosselin. The biographical information that we have is nonexistent concerning his activities during the years 1948 to 1953. According to the *Directory of Religious* 1948-1949, he belonged to the Province of England, which was erected December 26, 1946, and was named to the Davézieux aluminate in Ardèche and to that of Clairmarais in the Pas-de-Calais for the school year 1949-1950. Concerning 1950-1951, we found nothing on the lists of the Directory of that time in the Provinces of Paris and England. He transferred to the Province of North America residing at the Our Lady of Esperanza parish. The rest of his journey was noted in a small article of the *Lettre à la Famille* (March 1952, #131, p. 26): “*Fr. Sharkey arrived in the United States barely a year ago and has left Our Lady of Esperanza for Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico. Fr. Provincial [Fr. Wilfrid Dufault who became the Superior General in May 1952] who has just returned from there, after having made the canonical visitation, became aware of the urgent need for priests, first in Mexico, and then at Popotitlan, for the harvest is ripe and the workers are crushed with work. Since Fr. Sharkey had indicated last year that he would be interested in going to this mission to learn Spanish and evangelize the Indians, Fr. Wilfrid acted on his request. It was on December 30 [1951] that Fr. Sharkey took the plane to this land of enchantment*”. Without casting doubt on the truth of these declarations, it is clear that this religious had a very great mobility, which could not hide a delicate personal situation. In 1953, he asked to be secularized. The archbishop of Brooklyn (U.S.A.) accepted his eventual incorporation or incardination into his diocese. Fr. Bartholomew declared himself unhappy in religious life and ready to leave it. He felt alone because of his Irish nationality. Time did not permit him to realize his project of definitive exlaustration from the Congregation, since he died at 36 years old, October 16, 1956.

Addenda.

In 1950, he became curate of Our Lady of Esperanza. He died from a blood clot following lung surgery just two months before his incardination would have been effective. He was buried in a grave of a cousin's lot.

From a letter dated 17 October 1956.

Fr. Bartholomew Sharkey of the Province of Paris died suddenly yesterday morning, October 16 at 7:10 at St Anthony Hospital in New York. Father had been taken to the TB hospital on 17 September. A few days ago, they took out one of his lungs. Yesterday morning, he got up and drank a glass of juice. He was waiting for Holy Communion when he died. He had been getting up since a few days. His nurse told me that he died of a blood clot.

He had been transferred to the Province of North America in 1950 for six years. As of December 1953, he had been attached "ad experimentum" to the Brooklyn diocese in New York. The funeral will be held on 19 October at 10:30 in St. Thomas More Church in Rockway Point, New York where he was curate. The body will most likely be transported to Worcester to be buried in the community's cemetery.

Antoine (Jacques) Silbermann

1858-1933

French Religious, missionary in Argentina.

A true missionary.

Jacques Silbermann was born July 23, 1858, in Cernay (Haut-Rhin), Alsace. Having lost his father, Antoine, when he was two years old, and his mother Victorine, born Schmithlin, in 1864, he was placed in a foster family in Auxelles-Bas, next to Giromagny in the territory of Belfort, by the Child Welfare office. In 1874, his village pastor had him admitted to the minor seminary in Luxeuil (Haute-Saône), in the diocese of Besançon. Two years later, he transferred to the Clairmarais aluminate (1876-78).



He received the religious habit November 21, 1878, at the novitiate in Paris. In memory of his father, he received the name of Brother Antoine. His introduction to religious life began under the direction of Fr. Picard and continued in Sèvres (Hauts-de-Seine) under that of Fr. Joseph Germer-Durand. In 1880, the novices were obliged to leave the house in Sèvres and seek refuge in Paris, in the apartment of Mr. Février. It was there that he took his final vows December 10, 1880. A few days later, after being ordained a sub-deacon in Versailles (Yvelines) on December 18, he left for the novitiate in Osma (Spain) where the Congregation had resettled the philosophical and theological formation of its French students.

In 1882, he was given permission to accompany the first pilgrimage of Our Lady of Salvation to Jerusalem. Upon his return, he went to Paris where he was ordained a priest December 23, 1882. He was then asked to join the community at Fr. Halluin's orphanage in Arras, which he left in 1883 to strengthen that of Notre-Dame des Châteaux (Savoie). This, too, was only a brief assignment because, in September 1883, he was sent to Eastern Europe.

Asked to found a college in the Bulgarian capital of Sofia, which had only an ephemeral existence, he was sent to Karagach-Adrianople (European Turkey) where he remained for the next 15 years (1884-99). Missionary, professor and superior, he completely devoted himself to the multiple dimensions of this assignment which, at the time, was the center of the Eastern Mission. From September 1899 to February 1903, he was the superior of the residence in Phanaraki.

In 1903, Fr. Picard entrusted him with a mission in the United States, where the possibility of an agricultural school seemed to be in the offing in Granby, Massachusetts. However, when the project proved not viable, Fr. Antoine returned to Phanaraki, the point of departure for new responsibilities he would assume in Brousse (1904-05), Eskişehir (1905-08), and Yamboli (1908-09).

It was then that, at age 51, he began a new life as a missionary in South America, first in Chile: Los Andes (1909) and Concepción (1910-14), but especially in Argentina where his sense of initiative allowed him to become a true pioneer. With the help of Fr. Romain Heitmann, he founded the parish in Belgrano (1914), and then devoted himself to the service of the chapel in Santos Lugares where everything needed to be done. He built a magnificent grotto dedicated to Our Lady of Lourdes, which quickly became a pilgrimage center attracting large crowds. When the chapel became a parish, Fr. Antoine was appointed its first superior (1920). He then audaciously undertook the construction of a shrine. Little by little, and despite all types of numerous difficulties, he eventually had the pleasure of seeing his dream realized.

In 1923, he was appointed superior in Belgrano, remaining there until 1930. He then returned to Santos Lugares where he spent his last days and where, after a long and painful illness, he died November 15, 1993, at the age of 75. His body lies in the church of Our Lady of Lourdes.

A very lively person, straightforward, honest, almost brutally frank, and having a heart of gold, Fr. Antoine stamped whatever he did with the characteristics of his orderly, meticulous, and methodical nature, undertaking his responsibilities in a spirit of remarkable obedience and availability. In 1961, out of gratitude, city officials named one of the streets of Santos Lugares after Fr. Antoine Silbermann.

Addenda.

He seems to have been assigned to the world. In 1903, he spent 3 months in North America to help found the agricultural school at Granby, an idea of the pastor of Holyoke, Massachusetts, but it never materialized. Before and after, he was in the Near East mission. Then he went to Chile and from there to Argentina, where he was the first superior at Belgrano and served in the other two houses: Santos Lugares and Our Lady of Mercy.

Santos Lugares, 1931.

“We are only in fall and yet you can feel the cold. Several white frosts have made the trees shed their leaves. It seems that the cold has arrived sooner than usual. Just like the plants, our church has stopped growing. During my absence in Chile, special unforeseen circumstances brought experts to examine the work that had already been done and they found and pointed out serious facets and dangers in the construction of the towers. Besides that, they advised us that costs were abusive. The emotion caused by this first report by experts made us get a second opinion from experts. The results agreed with the first and we stopped all work. We have just dismissed our architect whom we had a blind trust. We are now going to study what remedy to bring without harming the esthetics, then we'll go forward quickly with the work at reasonable costs. As soon as the preparatory project will be finished, I'll send everything to Fr. Séraphin Protin who will evaluate everything. The major work will be finished at the end of next year. On the 14th of this month, we celebrated the 15th anniversary of the blessing of the grotto...”

Marie-Gabriel (Léon-Victor-F.) Soulice

1873-1940

Religious of the Province of Paris.



A diocesan priest who became a religious.

Léon Victor François Soulice was born June 2, 1873 at Châtel-Aillon, commune of Angoulins (Charente-Maritime), in the diocese of La Rochelle. He was schooled by the Marianist Brothers in Marans, then at the Pons College (1886-1891). He did his philosophy and theology at the La Rochelle Major Seminary and was ordained as a diocesan priest May 30, 1896. At first he was named to teach at the Pons College from 1896 to 1901, then was a parish priest during almost six years (August 1901-April 1907). He obtained permission at that time from his bishop, Msgr. Eyssautier, to become a religious of the Assumption that he knew through Fr. Marie-Léopold Gerbier (1851-1916). Under the name of Brother Marie-Gabriel, he was admitted to the novitiate, at the time in Louvain, Belgium, where he took the religious habit August 6, 1907 from the hands of Fr. Vincent de Paul Bailly. His master of novices during several months was Fr. Benjamin Laurès, until December 1907, then Fr. Antoine de Padoue Vidal. Annually professed August 10, 1908, he was sent during his second year of novitiate to the Bure aluminate to teach: "*Fr. Marie-Gabriel Soulice entered the Assumption to flee the isolation of parish ministry. He bravely separated himself from his mother and sister who lived with him in his rectory. At the novitiate, he got to know and appreciate religious life. He sincerely likes our way of life and says that he is ready to do whatever obedience will request of him, although he isn't too attracted to the alumnates*". His two years of novitiate finished, Fr. Marie-Gabriel pronounced his perpetual vows August 6, 1909 at Gempe. Almost immediately, he was sent to the England mission where he would spent 17 years in different positions: Bethnal Green (1909-1912), Newhaven (1912-1913), again Bethnal Green for three months, Brockley (January 1914-December 1917) and Charlton (1917-1923). At the time of the creation of the various Provinces of the Assumption, he chose that of the Center or Paris upon which depended the vicariates of England and North America. He wrote: "*By birth, I belong to the Province of Bordeaux, but since my vows in 1909, I have always worked in that of Paris*". In 1923, he was named to the college in Worcester (Massachusetts, U.S.A.). In 1928, he went to the New York parish at 14th Street where he was named second counselor of the community in August 1932. We have almost no details of his presence or apostolic action in the New World. The context of the year and month of his death explain this lacuna, as the following note that appeared in the *Lettre à la Dispersion* # 829 in the month of August 1940 that was never published or distributed, clarified. Fr. Marie-Gabriel Soulice died July 11, 1940 in New York, at the dawn of his 68th year.

Notification of the death of Fr. Marie-Gabriel.

A letter from New York that went through Rome and then arrived in Paris to Fr. Gervais Quenard, September 9, 1940, announced that Fr. Marie-Gabriel Soulice died toward the end of July. All correspondence was very closely watched during this time, so the note gave no details and the date of death is only approximate. During this time, it is very difficult to know exactly what is happening. Let us resign ourselves and wait. May God permit that the souls of Purgatory do not have to wait too long for the aid from our prayers and suffrages! La Dispersion will give the details of the death of this religious as soon as it gets them, as well as notes on his life, which was spent almost entirely in England and the United States. This will happen as soon as we can send them.

Addenda.

He was appreciated as a confessor for Sisters. (Fr. Armand Desautels.)

Newhaven, 1912.

“I wanted to write you as soon as I left Bethnal Green and I arrived here, but because of the problems that your trip to the Orient and the ceremonies of the consecration [Msgr. Petit], et even more your trip to France, I preferred waiting. I would however been glad to express my gratitude; since the decision that you made to send me to Newhaven has been very agreeable. I had put off as a temptation the desire to write to you, thinking that it was better not to say any thing, and at the time when I was totally lost, God intervened. I’ll take advantage of your next trip to England to speak with you. I need your advice very much. The work that I have here and at Seaford is the one that I prefer. God grants me the joy to do a bit of good. I work especially to get people to love and desire Holy Communion. They are more numerous now. On 60 to 70 children of whom I am in charge for the two convents, more than half go to communion each day and the others, 3 to 5 times a week. I thank Our Lord for permitting me to make him known and loved in spite of my miseries.

Rumold (Jean-Joseph) Spinnael

1880-1967

Religious of the Province of North Belgium, assistant general (1929-1946).



Beginnings.

Jean Joseph Spinnael was born April 5, 1880 at Nieuwenrode-Wolvertem, Belgian Brabant, in the diocese of Malines. He did his secondary studies at Taintegnies (1895-1898), then in France at Clairmarais (Pas-de-Calais). He took the religious habit, under the name of Brother Rumold, September 18, 1900 at Gemert in Holland. He made his first vows September 18, 1901 at Louvain as well as his perpetual vows June 29, 1903. Between the end of his novitiate and the beginning of philosophy, he taught sciences at the Saint-Trond aluminate (1901-1902). His philosophy was studied at Louvain (1902-1904), followed by four years of theology at the same place (1904-1908). Brother Rumold was ordained to the priesthood July 7, 1907.

Active life.

Father Rumold began his apostolic life in 1908. It was long and well filled in very varied sectors, oftentimes with important positions. At first, he was a teacher at the house of studies in Louvain (1908-1911), then at Taintegnies (1911-1912). In August 1912, he was chosen to teach at the college in Worcester, U.S.A. where he remained eleven years (1912-1923). At the time of the creation of provinces, he returned to Europe and became provincial treasurer of Belgium-Holland (1923-1926). These three years were followed by another three of pastoral ministry at Haine-Saint-Pierre where he was superior of the community (1926-1929). Delegate of his province for the general chapter, he was elected assistant general and went to live in the eternal city during fourteen years (1929-1943), navigating among the different residences to permit the General Curia to remain in contact with all the communities, often isolated and cut off from all contact because of the war. In 1943, Fr. Rumold was at Lyons (Rhône) and in 1944 lived at Chaville (Hauts-de-Seine) according to the needs of the times. Of a rather lively character, he held to his opinions and for a moment could lose his serenity, which never abandoned him. A man without a grudge, he was pleasant in the community where everyone called him 'uncle'. He was not demanding for himself and happy to live a simple life. He knew how to keep good relationships. A scrupulous priest, he celebrated Eucharist regularly and never omitted his breviary. For him, the basic principles of religious life in community and the prescriptions of the Rule were the solid bases that should not be touched. Each month, he would turn over to the treasurer his small old age pension, have his account book signed, and leave humming. He was not closed to the initiatives of the aggiornamento of the Councils, but one could hear his often-repeated quip: *'While they're at it, let them get rid of everything'*. The evolution of time didn't make him become embittered or disillusioned. On the contrary, he let his happy temperament overflow and enjoyed community life, enjoying gentle teasing. After his responsibilities on the General level had come to a close, Fr. Rumold returned to Belgium. He went to the communities and residences of Le Bizet (1946-1948) and a chaplaincy at Coq-sur-Mer (1948-1955), then that of Froyennes (1955-1956). He only spent one year at Starbroek (1958-1959) before settling in Brussels (1959-1963), then in the nearby suburb of Brussels-Woluwe (1963-1967). It was there that he died July 16, 1967. He was buried at Nieuwenrode, in the cemetery of his native village, where his brother, Fr. Libert, was to join him in 1985. *In July 1967, his community of Woluwe was happy to celebrate his 60 years as a priest, without suspecting that he would be done in by heart problems a few days later. Fr. Rumold left as he had always wished, without noise and without bothering anyone. Wanting to have a cup of coffee in the morning of July 16, having barely gotten up, he fell and died instantly.* [According to Fr. Stéphane Lowet.]

Addenda.

Father Rumold, in his 60 years of priesthood, had a variety of assignments, two of which were for longer periods. The first of these was in Worcester where he was treasurer from 1912 to 1923, and the second was in Rome, where he was Assistant General from 1929 to 1940. He was a quiet, joyful religious, an excellent community man, very strict on questions of the rule and on poverty. (Notes by Fr. Armand Desautels.)

Putte-Kapellen, 1959

“I am sending you my request to discharge me as superior of Putte-Kapellen. From my semester report at the end of December 1958 and the one of the preceding end of the month of June, you have been able to get a good idea of the situation in this house. Several times, I brought to the attention of the Provincial the way two or three religious acted, especially Fr. Silvinus Nolmans who was the main cause of lack of understanding and an element of disorder. I can understand that Fr. Provincial [Stéphane Lowets] has great difficulty in finding him a place. Concerning myself, in these conditions, I don't feel able to organize even a minimum of religious life. I didn't know this Father before coming here, but since then, I have found out that he wasn't unknown in the Province. If he stays here, which is probable, and if he acts in a victorious way, what will be the impression on the religious who know him? Thank you for taking the time to read my letter”. (Fr. Rumold Spinnael.)

Marie-Clément (Joseph) Staub

1876-1936

Religious of the Province of Paris.

An heir but also a founder.

Born July 2, 1876, in Kaisersberg (Haut Rhin), the birthplace of the well-known Dr. Schweitzer, Joseph Staub learned as a young boy in his poor, Alsatian, and thoroughly Catholic family the demands of renunciation and asceticism that make for strong individuals. He studied in the Assumptionist alumnates of Mauville (Pas-de-Calais) and Taintegnies, Belgium, from 1890 to 1894, and in Clairmarais (1894-96). He received the Assumptionist habit from Fr. Vincent de Paul Bailly September 8, 1896, under the name of Brother Marie-Clément, at the novitiate in Livry (Seine-Saint-Denis) where he made his annual profession September 8, 1897, and his final profession September 8, 1898, in the hands of Fr. Emmanuel Bailly. His studies in philosophy took place in Rome (1898-1900). He began his theological studies in Louvain (1901-02), but finished them in Rome (1902-04) where he was ordained a priest March 19, 1904, after receiving doctorates in both disciplines: philosophy and theology. .



He served as sub-prior at the novitiate in Louvain (1904-06) and then became master of novices of the coadjutor brothers in Gempe, Belgium (1906-09). After one year on a preaching assignment in London (1909), he was sent to Assumption College in Worcester, USA (1910-17). A meeting he had in Europe with Mrs. Edith Royer, who told him of the vision she had received from the Sacred Heart, was a decisive experience that oriented his life toward the propagation of this devotion. In 1912, he established the American Center of the Archconfraternity of Prayer and Penance at the Church of Our Lady of Esperanza in New York City. In 1915, at Assumption College in Worcester, he began the Saint John's Guild, which became an important source of religious and priestly vocations. In 1917, he founded the national Canadian center for the devotion to the Sacred Heart whose shrine, commonly called the Canadian Montmartre, was blessed January 6, 1927.

While he was still a student in Rome in 1904, Fr. Marie-Clément had been impressed by the proclamation of the heroic virtues of Joan of Arc, to whom he made this promise: "*Joan, my sister, I will do something for you when I become a priest.*" He kept his word by founding on Christmas Eve 1914 the Congregation of the Sisters of Saint Joan of Arc. He wanted to respond directly to one of the needs of the time by offering the assistance of devoted sisters to priests and religious in the apostolate. While on his preaching tours, Fr. Marie-Clément had noticed the difficulties priests were having in finding housekeepers and helpers who were both competent and reliable. From the beginning, the Sisters of Saint Joan of Arc have been dedicated to the service of priests, rectories, bishoprics, and seminaries. Following the example of Mary, the Mother of Christ, whom Fr. Marie-Clément liked to call "Queen of the Clergy," the sisters were to lead a life of intense prayer, humble and efficient work, and unfailing presence, as they performed their duties as housekeepers, receptionists, secretaries, sacristans, and catechists. The Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joan of Arc are principally located in the United States and Canada, though they have also had throughout their history a certain number of communities, for varying lengths of time, in Europe and elsewhere: Beaulieu-lès-Fontaine (Oise, France) [The tomb of Fr. Marie-Clément is located at the motherhouse of the Sisters of Saint Joan of Arc in Sillery, Quebec.] before World War II, Rome in 1987, and Congo-Zaire in 1989.

Blessed with a strong and balanced nature, as well as with a contemplative spirit, this man of God was completely dedicated to the care of souls. He died at age 60 in Quebec City, Canada, May 16, 1936, on the anniversary of the canonization of Joan of Arc (1920). At his funeral, Cardinal Villeneuve, archbishop of Quebec, addressing himself to Fr. Marie-Clément's spiritual daughters, bore him this eloquent testimony: "Your founder was a true priest, a holy priest, and an ardent soul." The cause of Fr. Marie-Clément Staub was introduced in Rome in 1981.

Addenda.

In the summer of 1905, he was named director of the magazine 'L'Assomption'; he wrote three articles on the Sacred Heart, and in 1906, in his diary he writes: "If I could anchor this devotion in a few devoted persons! –What a joy! – I hope that the pages of 'L'Assomption' will attract some of the 4,000 readers. In the confessing ministry, I do my best to guide people toward the 'Heart that so loved men'. I have faith and trust in His words and promises." [Les Assomptionnistes au Canada, Yves Garon, A.A., 1997, 14.]

He learned of the Archconfraternity of Prayer and Penance of Montmartre and began his life-long apostolate to spread the devotion to the Sacred Heart, preaching it in England in 1908-1909. He was sent to Worcester in late 1909. The first convent of the Sisters of St. Joan of Arc was the little house that had been the birthplace of Assumption College. In the fall of 1918, Fr. Marie-Clément established the motherhouse of the Sisters in Bergerville, a part of Sillery, Quebec. It was there that he died in the evening of May 16, 1936. In January 1981, the diocesan process of information leading to beatification was completed.

A second thing may have distracted Father from his project of a Canadian Montmartre: the project of a "Montmartre In the United States" proposed by Father Emmanuel Bailly, Superior General, in October 1913. It would almost be necessary to quote his long letter entirely. But here is its substance.

The proposition is official: "It seemed to us, the Fathers of the Council, to Fr. Stéphane and to me..." Up to that point, they had thought that the chapel of Assumption College in Worcester could become a shrine to the Sacred Heart in the United States, but seeing the "unforeseen spread" of the Archconfraternity, it didn't seem opportune to "limit to a college chapel [...] what the Montmartre of the United States should be". It is in Washington, the country's capital that this church should be built.

This idea of a "Montmartre in the United States" was without doubt inspired to Fr. Emmanuel by the proposed "Canadian Montmartre" of Fr. Marie-Clément, and not the other way around, as was believed.

[Lea Assomptionnistes au Canada, Yves Garon, A.A., 1997, 17.]

Biographical Brochure: Fr. Marie-Clément Staub, a.a. 1876-1936: J. Lepage, Foreword.

A brother recruiter stopped his car in front of me and asked for the address of the pastor. He looked at me fixedly and said: "What kind of Father are you? –A priest of the Assumption. –Is that the same as 'Assumptionist'? –Father of the Assumption, Assumptionist, Augustinian of the Assumption, that's all the same thing. –So, Fr. Marie-Clément was a Father of the Assumption? –Well! You knew Fr. Marie-Clément? –Yes, he preached on the Sacred Heart at Granby. I was 14. He made quite an impression on me; I still have the booklets that he gave out. He was a saint, but I don't know anything else about him."

'Marie-Clément Staub, A.A. 1876-1936: Apostle and Founder' by Wilfrid Dufault, A.A., Postulator.

It was a rare privilege for a young priest to be commended by the Vicar of Christ for the success of a mere four years of apostolate. Marie-Clément Staub, an Assumptionist from Alsace, was gratefully happy as he was awed when, during the audience granted him with the Superior General Emmanuel Bailly in March 1914, Pius X responded with warm approval to the young priest's request for a blessing upon the apostolate of the Sacred Heart that he had been promoting in America since 1910.

Young Staub's success story truly merited this privilege. When assigned to ministry in the United States in the fall of 1909, his ambition was to make people realize Christ's love for them as signified in his Sacred Heart. The year before he received the assignment, he had heard of an association, the Archconfraternity of the Sacred Heart, whose purpose was to pledge special prayer and penance weekly, or at least monthly, in reply to the appeal of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. To this cause he had given his whole-hearted support and had obtained permission to make it his principal ministry.

So, upon arrival in America, he was determined to persuade as many as he could to pledge special prayer and penance in a spirit of reparation to the Sacred Heart. He preached unceasingly, undaunted by his limited knowledge of the English language, and even by a throat ailment that made public speaking difficult. He enlisted the help of volunteers, lay and religious, for the enrollment of members into the Archconfraternity, and for the distribution of flyers, medals, and brochures. He solicited the endorsement of bishops in the United States as well as in Canada. To Pius X, in that memorable audience of 1914, Father Marie-Clément was able to present a sheaf of bishops' letters of approval and encouragement, together with a record enrollment of 77,000 members in the Archconfraternity, the result of a mere four years' apostolate in America.

After the eventful audience. Father Marie-Clément wrote in his diary: "Pius X seemed impressed by all these details. To encourage our work, he enrolled personally as a member of the Archconfraternity, and, he even prepared a 'Rescript' entirely in his own handwriting, recommending the Archconfraternity to the priests of the entire world and enriching our work with precious favors."

On September 15, 1921, Fr. Marie-Clément Staub was elected 1st delegate to the General Chapter of 1922 on the first ballot. Throughout Quebec and New England, one can find statues of the Sacred Heart in front of churches where Fr. Marie-Clement preached the Sacred Heart.

Notes from Fr. Marie-Clement Staub.

Yes! 2 March 1917, the First Friday of the month of St. Joseph will remain a great day in the history of the Assumption and that of the family of Joan of Arc. I want to write it down here, at the chaplaincy of the Trappistine Monastery of St. Romuald where I have returned after spending time at the chancery of the Archbishopric of Quebec.

It is a great day in the history of the Assumption. Today, in fact, His Eminence Cardinal Bégin signed the documents that admit our Congregation in the beautiful diocese of Quebec...

It is a great day for our Joan of Arc family. Today, a Prince of the Holy Church, renowned for his virtue, goodness and wisdom, has officially adopted our little family first as a "pious society"... His Eminence accepts also the definite founding of a Novitiate as soon as Rome approves it.

Father Marie-Clément Staub: Whether Father Marie-Clément will even be beatified, we do not know. We are convinced that he was the most extraordinary Assumptionist to have lived in North America. His personality was powerful and he was driven by the love of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. He came here from England in 1909. and was attached to Worcester, though he was usually out preaching. He was the initiator in America of the Archconfraternity of Prayer and Penance. He founded the Sisters of Saint Joan of Arc. At Assumption College, he founded the Saint John's Guild to encourage vocations to the priesthood. Hundreds of priests and nuns owe to him, under God, their priestly and/or religious vocations. He was the first Assumptionist in Canada and founded our house in Quebec, next to the General House of the Sisters of Saint Joan of Arc. (Notes by Fr. Armand Desautels.)

Donat (Pierre-Marcel-Joseph) Teissier

1898-1970

Religious of the Province of Paris.

A time of formation.

Pierre Marcel Joseph Teissier was born October 23, 1898 at Chasseradès (Lozère) in the hamlet of Mas, right on the cliff above the Chassezac. He finished his primary studies at the hamlet school when he met Fr. Didier Nègre, at the time superior of the Vinovo aluminate, near Turin (Italy). That is how the tiny Marcel left for the far away Piedmont where he did his studies until 1913, the year when he went to Ascona (Switzerland) for two years (1913-1915). It was at Vinovo that, because of the war that kept the Limpertsberg novitiate (Luxembourg) isolated, young Marcel took the religious habit July 26, 1915, under the name Brother Donat. It was a traveling novitiate. Several cases of typhoid obliged it to be transferred to Rome, piazza d'Ara Coeli, in September-October 1915, then from May 1916 to Notre-Dame de Lumières (Vaucluse) where he pronounced his first vows July 26, 1916. Adjourned by a revision council, Brother Donat, who was luckier than 12 of his companions called up for their military service, was able to finish his second year of novitiate. From September 1917 to July 1919, he studied philosophy at Bourville (Seine-Maritime), in a modest temporary scholasticate for young religious not yet called up for military service. In August 1919, Brother Donat was sent as a monitor to Assumption College in Worcester (U.S.A.). But the army had not forgotten him: he was called up in November 1920 to Hussein-Day in Algeria. In the beginning of January 1922, Brother Donat was discharged and went to Louvain for theology. Perpetually professed at Zepperen August 28, 1923, he was ordained a priest July 26, 1925 at Louvain by Msgr. Lagae, a Dominican missionary in the Congo.

In service at the alumnates.

Fr. Donat gave himself during more than 35 years to serving at the alumnates. From 1925 to 1931, he was named to teach the 1st year high school class at Poussan (Hérault); from 1931 to 1935, he was named to the late vocations house at Saint-Denis (Seine-Saint-Denis); from 1935 to 1937, he was at the Chanac aluminate (Lozère). From 1937 to 1948, he saw to the development of the Montéchor aluminate (Pas-de-Calais); from 1948 to 1951, he returned to teach at Chanac; from 1951 to 1954, he was a teacher at the Soisy-sur-Seine aluminate (Essonne). He then spent four years at Vêrargues, a former aluminate, which he guarded and saw to its sale (1954-1958). He returned once again to Chanac to be the superior (1958-1962). The superiors named him to teach at Davézieux (Ardèche) from 1962 to 1964. Chanac became a rest home. He was named its superior in 1964. It was there at Christmas 1964 that he had a first cerebral hemorrhage that left him half paralyzed, on the right side. He soon became just a sick man for whom several other accidents added to his lack of being able to function. He lost his good humor and his usual spirit. With the help of a cane and the arm of a companion, he walked with tiny steps. But the time came when he could no longer do anything by himself. He had to be taken in a wheel chair, dressed, and fed like a child. In the first days of 1970, his health got worse. He could no longer celebrate mass, even seated, and had to be satisfied with taking part in that of a confrere. His only distractions were accompanied promenades, praying the rosary, enjoying a cigarette, and listening to the news, either on the radio or TV. The days dragged by in this rhythm, with a progressive detachment and disinterest for everything. He knew that his days were counted. Sunday, February 22, 1970, he died from a new cerebral hemorrhage attack, collapsing suddenly in his chair with his head reversed. Fr. Donat's funeral was celebrated the following February 24. His body was temporarily buried in the vault of friends, while waiting for a new monument for the Assumption to be installed in the new cemetery of Vals.

Addenda.

Portrait.

“s a young priest, Fr. Donat was sent to the aluminate of Saint-Roch of Poussan where the 6th form is given to his care. Right from the start, he shows that he is a good pedagogue, gifted with qualities that will be his during his whole life. With no pretension to pure intellectualism, he is a realistic teacher, with common sense, and very close to his students. He excels in French and can complete and repair their formation, which is often lacking, but also in Latin to give them a solid base. Father Donat is very clear, methodical, and progressive; he is patient but at the same time demanding and both loved and feared together. It is based on this reputation that Fr. Didier receives him in 1931 for a house for late vocations. After 18 years, when Fr. Donat returns to the alumnates, it is to take up the same 6th form and show the same qualities as before, refined and enriched by experience. Thus, everywhere he goes, to Chanac, Soisy, Davézieux, even though at 64 years old, it is more difficult, he does well. He suffers from hypertension: neither medicines nor diets help lower this tension and the noisy presence of youth becomes difficult for him...”

Symphorien (Elie) Terraz

1872-1944

Religious of the Province of Paris.



Biographical summary.

Elie Terraz, brother of the future Father Marc and cousin of Brother Humbert, was born February 20, 1872 at Notre-Dame du Pré (Savoie) in Tarentaise. He experienced the aluminate life at Notre-Dame des Châteaux (1886-1889) and finished his formation at the Nîmes aluminate (Gard) from 1889 to 1890. He took the religious habit at the Phanaraki novitiate (Turkey) August 15, 1891 under the name of Brother Symphorien and the guidance of Fr. Ernest Baudouy. It was there that he pronounced his first vows August 15, 1892. He was sent for studies to Notre-Dame de France in Jerusalem (1893-1898), was received for perpetual vows November 1, 1893, and ordained to the priesthood by Msgr. Appodia September 17, 1897. As a young priest, he was sent to the mission in New Orleans, U.S.A., to evangelize the Blacks (1898-1900). He then returned to the Oriental mission in various positions: Gallipoli (1900-1902), Eski-Chéir (1902-1903) in Turkey, and Varna, in Bulgaria (1903-1905). His superiors sent him again to the U.S.A. in New York (1905-1919). He applied for and obtained full American citizenship, since he spoke English well (1911). This naturalization did not avoid him problems during World War I. Fr. Symphorien was first mobilized at Chambéry (Savoie) from August 15 to November 3, 1914 as infirmarian. He was able to return to New York in December 1914. Mobilized a second time under the Dalbiez Law, he was recalled to France in February 1916 and sent as a military infirmarian in a Lyons hospital (June-December 1916). Given his deferment, he returned to New York January 25, 1917. From New York, in 1919, he went to the Notre-Dame de Lumières novitiate (Vaucluse) from 1919 to 1920. His next obedience led him to Belgium at Taintegnies (1920-1921), then to Zepperen (1921) where he taught English. At the time of the division into provinces in 1923, he chose to be part of the new Province of Paris, while his brother, Fr. Marc, chose that of Bordeaux. Their nephew, Fr. Donatien Terraz, remained in the Province of Lyons. After two years at Zepperen (1921-1923), Fr. Symphorien returned to serve in America, but this time at the college in Worcester (1923-1930). His last obedience was to Davézieux (Ardèche) where he was named in 1930. He was given the responsibility of teaching beginning English to the young alumnists. Since this task was not enough to fill the days of a veteran of the missions of the Orient and North America, he spent a good part of his time serving the parish of Davézieux, without a pastor since 1930. Moreover, the bishop of Viviers wished this parish to be served by the Assumptionist religious who had established an aluminate in the commune since 1927. Fr. Symphorien described the locality in 1933: *“Davézieux is situated on a plateau along the right bank of the Rhône River. More than 20 villages are spread out over this plateau of 20 km. When the weather is clear, one can clearly see on the East the immaculate top of Mont Blanc, the Alps of Savoy, and the mountains of Dauphiné, which, at that time of the year, are covered with a brilliant snow... In the middle of this plateau, in a very defined bowl, is hidden the city of Annonay, a true evocation of an old oriental city. You can see houses dating back to at least 400 years, built by masons who didn't know how to use a plumb line. You wonder how the walls still remain standing. Why go to Italy to see the leaning tower of Pisa? Come to Annonay; you will see hundreds of leaning houses, and in some places, huge overhead beams crossing the street, shoring up the houses that threaten to collapse on the heads of passers-by...”* Fr. Symphorien died at Davézieux on Saturday, October 29, 1944. He was buried Monday, October 30, the very day that another religious of the house, Brother Jean-Baptiste Lagarde, died.

Addenda.

Fr. Symphorien first came to the USA with Fr. Tranquille Pesse on 23 October 1905. Both thought they would be named superior in Worcester, but Fr. Symphorien was sent to New Orleans to care for a parish and help with the new foundation, whereas Fr. Tranquille was named superior in 1906 in Worcester. While in Worcester, 17 May 1927, Symphorien obtained a U. S. patent for a specialized sundial. He taught especially biology in Worcester.

Fr. Symphorien (1872-1944), after having been a missionary in the Orient from 1899 to 1905, spent some twenty years in America, and since that time, he was pastor at Davézieux. He was a gifted scientist, capable of a thousand inventions, but especially a brave man. His older brother, Fr. Marc, worked at Santos Lugares and one of his cousins, Bro. Humbert, died at Zongouldagh. [Lettre à la dispersion, No. 39, 1944]

The old Fathers narrate the following: Fr. Symphorien had poor eyesight and took snuff. His cowl showed signs of this. One day, they told him that a big pastor was waiting for him in the parlor. He went quickly to his room to shave and clean up. In the parlor, they had put a bust of the Curé d'Ars.

As he left for France in 1928, a pickpocket in the Worcester railroad station stole a large sum from him. Bro. Sylvestre Troussard who accompanied him was also robbed. While at Davézieux, he set up a marvelous manger scene for Christmas having a water wheel that moved with pennies.

From a letter by Fr. Symphorien to his Provincial dated 21 June 1927.

It will soon be 4 years that I have been attached to the College in Worcester as a teacher. Fr. Clodoald first gave me a sophomore class. I had to dust off Latin, Greek, and French grammars that I had not touched since the aluminate: i.e. 35 years... For the second year of teaching, the Superior called me to his office 3 weeks before classes started to tell me that I would be in charge of algebra and English. I told Fr. Clodoald that at 54 years old, I had never opened an algebra book and that as far as English was concerned, I didn't feel ready to teach a language that my students already had worked on for years. All of this was to no avail since he named me to teach both. I did the best I could, but a miracle did not take place and my third year saw me teaching biology. I should have been flattered to go from the ranks of teaching high school to that of college professor... For the fourth year, they gave me a "pre-med" course to teach... What does next year have in store for me? I have no idea... I don't find this funny at all. Our students left for summer vacations on 15 June.

He was part of the team that went to Louisiana to attempt a foundation among the Negroes. He arrived there around Christmas 1898, about a year before the mission was closed. He returned to the United States and taught at the Prep School in Worcester in the 1920s. The students gave him a hard time in the classes!

(Fr. Armand Desautels)

Varna, 1904.

"About two months ago, I sent you a brave letter asking very simply for the Catechism in Pictures, under pretext that it would be good for our Catholic children. I am not sure that my conscience was very much at peace because of my indiscretion, but I threw the letter in the mailbox not even reflecting on the gravity of this sin. Then I was remorseful for having signed such a request. But Fr. Vincent de Paul is as charitable as his holy patron, with requests coming from all sides! Two months later, the post office advised me that there was a package to pick up. It is strange how quickly they answer you at la Bonne Presse! You can't imagine how happy we are even though for the customs of Varna it takes at least 4 hours, even for small packages! When they asked me to declare the content, without blinking I said that they were almanachs. Thanks to you, the catechism enters through the eyes and the ears of our children and it never leaves them. I have them recite the prayer before and after the religious instruction for your intentions. Many thanks, my good and charitable Father!"

Letter to Fr. Picard by Fr. Symphorien Terraz

Esplanade Avenue 1819, New Orleans, LA. USA 11 November 1899

My Very Reverend Father,

Thank you for your letter of last 26 October. I appreciate the wise advice and encouragement that you send me and I promise to take advantage of them.

However, your letter gives me the impression that you were badly impressed by the excessive impatience that I showed concerning the future of our mission in Louisiana. I regret having annoyed you, my Very Reverend Father, and I would ask you to kindly forget my vivacious language. Religious obedience brought me from Jerusalem to Louisiana. I was and still am a young religious, lacking experience, with the naïve belief that all should go well and quickly. Sadly, I found myself in a house of suffering and transformation. The trials and the slowness that Providence had placed on my path had unbalanced me. Your letter came just in time to guide me on the right path.

Our friends assure us that the archbishop would be more in favor of giving us a parish than a public chapel and it may be wise to check out with discretion the archbishop on this point... Besides, the diocese will do nothing concerning paying for our house since it already has large debts itself.

In summary, The Archbishop has kind and flattering words for the Assumption; he wants the Press and the Missions, believes that these are necessary works, and feels that the time is ripe to undertake them and their success is certain. But the material guarantees granted by Msgr. Chappelle do not seem in conformity with your wishes.

We do hope that what seems a difficulty for us will solve itself through your wisdom and the discernment that we pray for you to receive... Symphorien Terraz

Bavo Maurits (Albertus-Antonius) Theys

1916-1993

Religious of the Province of North Belgium.

Formation.

Albert Antoine Theys was born at Kortrijk-Dutsel January 19, 1916, Belgian Brabant, in the diocese of Malines. He began his secondary studies at the Zeperen alumnate (1929-1933) and finished his humanities at Kapelle-os-den-Bos (1933-1935). He entered the Taintegnies novitiate September 29, 1935 where he took the religious habit under the name of Brother Bavo. Fr. Domitien Meuwissen, master of novices, presented him for his first vows taken September 30, 1936: *“Brother Bavo, with a lively character and who is susceptible but usually friendly, went through novitiate timidly but surely. He has difficulty opening up, but succeeded in being more simple and trusting”*. Having finished novitiate, Brother Bavo went to the Saint-Gérard scholasticate for philosophy (1936-1938). He passed through the Saint-Augustine house in Louvain to study theology. He was admitted to perpetual profession and made his vows March 31, 1940. His local superior, Fr. Polyeucte Guissard, did not hide the character and relational difficulties Brother Bavo had. *“Brother Bavo needs to continue being careful, notably on the points that occasioned a six month delay in his perpetual profession. He knows that he has a tendency to murmur and discuss because of his natural vivacity and his spontaneous resistance to authority. He needs to become more flexible and join to an exterior obedience that of the submission of the heart. On the other hand, he is well gifted for studies, has an open, willful, and energetic intelligence”*. In 1940, the Louvain convent was totally destroyed by bombs and had to be abandoned. Thus, Brother Bavo continued his studies at Saint-Gérard. Msgr. Charue, bishop of Namur, ordained him a priest there July 27, 1942.

In the teaching ministry.

Having graduated from Louvain University in Thomist philosophy, he taught philosophy in 1945 at Taintegnies, then from 1945 to 1948 at Saint-Gérard. In 1948, he was sent to the college in Worcester (U.S.A.) with the agreement of his provincial, Fr. Rodrigue Moors: *“Father Bavo, from the Belgian Province, was transferred in 1948 to the Province of North America for three years. Since he wanted to renew his transfer, Fr. Wilfrid Dufault wrote to me that he agreed”*. The advantage that Fr. Bavo had over normal humans was that he was a true philosopher, really so, since the terrible war years did not prevent him from graduating in philosophy from Louvain and teach during three years in a scholasticate. One of Father’s favorite sayings was that philosophy leads everywhere, as long as one gets out of it, preferably with a smile. In June 1953, however, he was a victim of the tornado that destroyed the college in Worcester and had to return to Belgium to be treated for trauma. He then taught for a short time at the Putte house (1953). From 1953 to 1980, he lived at Stabroek and Borsbeck. During this period, he taught philosophy at the S.V.D. scholasticate in Kalmtout and the Assumptionist scholasticate at Leuven. From 1980 on, he was part of the Kapelle-os-den-Bos community and gave courses at Malines at the Ecole Supérieure of Nursing at Leuven. He died at Kapelle January 29, 1993, close to 78 years old. His body rests in the cemetery of the village.

Personality.

Fr. Bavo was an intelligent man, even erudite, always searching for truth, a bit cynical but with a great sense of humor. He lived a bit apart from others, for he had a need for a certain freedom and especially a feeling of autonomy. He liked to till the soil, cultivate plants, and plant trees. He admired and respected nature. It assured him his human equilibrium. Nature also gave him access to the mystery of God.

Addenda.

Letter to Fr. Henri Moquin from Fr. Bavo Theys dated June 1955.

I hope that your Province grows during this year of 1955. Fr. Ildefons sent me the projected plans for your new college published in the Boston Post Magazine. I must tell you that I am in admiration. I must say that the Americans are braver than we are. Upon seeing the beautiful site and the magnificent buildings, I was tempted to ask for a transfer. I imagine that in a few years you'll have a full contingent of personnel as I look at the American students at Lormoy. For my part, I am still a philosophy prof at Putte (Antwerp). We have a nice property here, a castle, and 30 hectares of oak and beech trees.

Glance.

“A sympathetic Belgian, yes, it happens. Plus a doctor of philosophy. He is young; so are we all, to be sure, but I imagined him more venerable, bald, and with a beard. I don't know why. No doubt it was because the philosophers that I had met in my youth fit this description. And Socrates, don't they say about him? Well, let us pass on that... He was ordained a priest in 1942; I figure that he must be 32, the perfect age or the age that expects stubbornly a brilliant future, the age when one looks to the future. He arrived here on 5 November, fresh, pink and all smiles. *Belgium saw my birth, he confided, but when will it see me again?* Is his to be the vocation of a 'globe-trotter'? *Quien sabe!* Some claim that his soul sings: he is always humming a romance. So much the better, it is a sign of youth. Fr. Bavo found the crossing on the *Nieuw Amsterdam* a bit rough, but as a good philosopher he took advantage of this to meditate on the fragility of the greatness of this world. *Vanitas vanitatum*. What do you want? Father does not have good sea legs, and who could blame him? *Quandoque dormitat et bonus Homerus!*”

Sylvestre Troussard

1887-1965

Religious of the Province of Paris.

A religious life in the New World.

Sylvestre Troussard was born December 29, 1887 at Cisseylès-Merceuil on the Côte d'Or. Before entering the Assumption, he did two years of military service at Dijon (Côte d'Or), from 1908 to 1910. April 29, 1913, Fr. Possidius Dauby who gave him the religious habit, under the name of Brother Sylvestre, and after a postulancy of five months, received him as a coadjutor novice at the Louvain novitiate. His religious life project continued at the college in Worcester, Massachusetts, (U.S.A.) where he went from May to August of 1914, but from where he was recalled by the military to serve on the Western front until March 1919. He was finally able to return to the Worcester community from 1919 to 1922. He was called back to Saint-Gérard in Belgium where he made his first vows November 1, 1923. His obedience sent him once more to Worcester where he remained from 1923 to 1939. He pronounced his perpetual vows there August 6, 1927. At the dawn of World War II, he returned to France to the Soisy-sur-Seine community, his last residence (1913-1965). He died at the Hôtel-Dieu de Beaune (Côte d'Or) May 9, 1965 at the age of 78. His funeral was held Wednesday, May 12, in the parish church of Merceuil, his native village. He was buried in the family vault in the Merceuil cemetery. On Friday, May 13 an office in his memory was celebrated in the parish church of Soisy-sur-Seine with the participation of the Ermitage aluminate.



Testimony by Fr. David Laurent.

“Brother Sylvestre was a humble soul, with a rough exterior and a heart of gold. He often grumbled, not by lack of devotedness, since he always did meticulously the most difficult work as well as the most hidden. This most likely came from his Bourguignon temperament, and in my opinion especially because his spirit of poverty was very great and he was annoyed by the smallest failures to observe it. I liked Brother Sylvestre a lot because of his great honesty and his deep piety. The Virgin came to take him during the month of May. For him, I am sure, this was a grace, since he had a Marian devotion that was so great that, it seems to me, this was the most characteristic trait of his religious life. It was known by all that every Saturday he would take his shower and also get his spiritual cleaning like a clock! His habits of cleanliness and order were common knowledge to all. Woe to the one who had misplaced one of the tools in his shoe repair shop or the boiler room! With the same care and punctuality, he was the postmaster at the Ermitage for many years. If perchance, illness impeded him from going to the Post Office, the whole town became agitated. His old three-wheeler with a basket was the wake-up call for our nearest neighbors. I can still remember his great emotion, even to tears, the day he broke it while missing a curve in front of the monument of the dead! He regretted his clumsiness as a lack of poverty although he took such great care of it! Everyone knows how much he liked to talk: Verdun and the War of 1914-1918 were his favorite subjects, but his favorite books, the ones that he read assiduously, were the lives of saints and the history of France. His knowledge was astounding. He loved his brothers greatly. He was teased by them just like children do with a grand father, and was perhaps a bit grouchy, but so good, so full of supernatural spirit. Toward the end of his life, a bad sciatic nerve in the right leg made walking difficult, but it was only in November 1964 that the first symptoms of paralysis appeared. His leg lost its vigor and his right hand started to get stiff. He had to abandon his last job, that of postmaster. It became clear that it was hemiplegia (paralysis of one side), slow but irreparable. He was hospitalized in January 1965 at the Corbeil Hospital (Essonne). Thanks to his sister and a nephew from Verdun-sur-le-Doubs, the Hôtel-Dieu de Beaune accepted to receive him February 1, 1965. Having returned to his native Burgundy, Brother Sylvestre was encouraged. From Soisy we went to visit him from time to time. He died there Sunday, May 9, 1965”.

Addenda.

In Worcester, he was the driver for the superior. The community had only one car, a Buick.

Brother Sylvestre was stationed three times at Assumption in Worcester, in 1914, until he returned to France for the war; from 1919 to 1922; and again from 1923 to 1939. For canonical reasons, he had to start his novitiate over again in 1922. He was a tremendously hard worker and, in spite of his roughness, was a fine community man. (Notes by Fr. Armand Desautels.)

Soisy-sur-Seine, 1961.

“This is a poor beggar who comes to ask your goodness and especially your charity, with the authorization of Father Provincial [Paul Charpentier] and Fr. Superior [David Laurent], a prolongation of rest in Bourgogne, since at the present I am handicapped by rheumatism in the right shoulder and arm. I wasn’t able to work during the whole month of May, but now things are a bit better, although I am quite tired. I place all of this in your hands with obedience for a final decision. The work for the new construction at Soisy has started, but it is dragging; it doesn’t have the fast pace of things like the enterprises in America of which I have kept a good souvenir. I remain your devoted religious. When will you come to visit us here?”

(Brother Sylvestre.)

Post scriptum by Fr. David Laurent: “I am very much in favor of extending dear Brother Sylvestre’s vacation since he has worked so hard all year, so that he can recuperate all his strength in his dearly loved Bourgogne. Two months would permit him to recuperate his former vitality”.

Marcellinus (Jacobus-Antonius) Trum

1916-1985

Religious of the Province of Holland.



A formation between Belgium and Holland.

Jacobus Antonius Trum, called Jac or James according to various obediences, was born May 3, 1916 at 's Hertogenbosch, Holland. After his studies at the apostolic school of Sainte-Thérèse of Boxtel (1929-1935), he did his novitiate at Taintegnies in Belgium where he took the religious habit September 29, 1935 under the name of Brother Marcellinus. He pronounced his first vows there September 30, 1936. Fr. Domitien Meuwissen, his master of novices, presented him in the following manner: *“an intelligent religious, gifted for music, drawing, and languages, full of common sense, who always looks at the good side of things and doesn't get too upset over things. I hope that he will get more fervor and generosity in serving. He is a bit lacking in energy and is not attracted to mortifications. I think that he will always need to be prodded forward to keep him in an energetic direction”*. After novitiate, he did two years of philosophy at Saint-Gérard and a year teaching at Boxtel. In September 1939, he started theology at Louvain and, after a period of exodus in France, had to pursue his studies in the Dutch scholasticate of Bergeyk. He was admitted to pronounce his perpetual vows September 30, 1939 and was ordained to the priesthood at Nimègue July 18, 1943. In February of the following year, Brother Marcellinus who took the name of James was named to teach philosophy at the Bergeyk scholasticate (1944-1948), then he left to teach the same subject at Nultfield College in England while he took courses at London University.

A life of ministry 'sui generis'.

From 1953 on, Father James usually resided in the United States. Teaching sociology, Latin, and religion at the college in Worcester (Massachusetts), he was granted his Master of Arts Degree in philosophy in 1956 from the University of New York. During 1955-1956, he exercised his ministry in Canada. In 1957, he returned to Holland during which time he helped with ministering in the Millingen parish. At the end of the year, he left again for the United States. He was placed in charge of pastoral ministry to immigrants where he worked as assistant to Msgr. Swanstrom with the permission of Cardinal Spellman (New York), and was linked to the Resettlement Division. Then in March 1959, he was named *'missionnarius emigrantium'* by the Congregation of Bishops and traveled throughout the United States. [In fact, Fr. James Trum's ministry will evolve progressively through the years. More and more in charge of parish ministry, he usually lived with secular priests, living quite detached from the Assumption. The desire of the provincial curia of Holland was to have him attached or affiliated to the North American Province, but it seemed that Fr. James, very desirous of independence, preferred the loose structure of legally and morally belonging to his original Province, without the obligation of community life. Each year, the Roman Congregation of Bishops asked that his indult for pastoral assistance to immigrants, which Fr. Edward Van Monfoort helped him to obtain, as an immigrated European priest be renewed.] In November 1962, he joined an international organism that programmed food for the Third World. Named director of the Catholic Relief Services for Cameroon, he needed to be an American citizen and got his papers November 20, 1962. In June 1962, Fr. James was seriously hurt in an auto accident in Liberia. After several months of rest in Holland, he returned to the United States in October 1965, worked half time for immigrants, was curate at Saint-Andrew's in New York, and, beginning in 1974, worked in pastoral ministry at Saint Peter's in the same city. At the end of 1984, Fr. James went for a vacation to Holland where he was called Jac. His health situation required that he enter the rest home of Molenweide in Boxtel; then, in February 1985, his transfer to Bois-le-Duc Hospital took place. He died February 14, 1985 and was buried a few days later in the cemetery of the Province.

Addenda.

Fr. James studied at Boston College where he received his Master's Degree in philosophy in 1954, He also did special studies in Philosophy, Economics, and Sociology and Matriculated at London University (1951-1953) where he passed the Intermediate Arts Degree.

Rome, 22 April, 1970.

In answer to your request of 16 March 1970 concerning Fr. Marcellinus Trum, I come to answer you at once. Please excuse me for not having written sooner, but I was absent from Rome during several weeks. During this absence, I met with the Provincial of Father Trum [Edward Van Monfoort] and he gave me the following explanation: Father Trum is now attached to an Assumptionist community in New York (U.S.A.) where he is doing fine work. If this religious still needs an authorization for residency in the U.S.A., his Provincial suggests asking for an extension in total agreement with the Superior General [Paul Charpentier]. Please accept my religious respect".

(Fr. Félicien Sleutjes, General Procurator to Monsignore Ernesto Civardi, secretary of the Congregation for Bishops.)

Letter by Fr. Marcellinus Trum dated 3 May 1953.

Dear Fr. Provincial,

As you probably know from my Provincial (Rev. Fr. Wiro van den Dungen) I have been in England since 1948. Until last year I had been teaching and studying philosophy and now I am just studying philosophy and filling the gaps with parish and supply work.

I matriculated at London University, passed the Intermediate Arts and after that started on a three-year course for a B.A. degree in Philosophy of which course I shall have completed two years at the end of this term. A B.A. degree qualifies for teaching in any college in England, as you probably know.

As the Rev. Provincial intends a possible change for me, I give you this information (at his request) so that you might be in a better position to judge about any future possibilities if the intended change can be made effective. Father Marcellinus Trum

Letter to Fr. Bernard Guillet by Fr. Marcellinus Trum from St. Louis, MO.

Many thanks for the letter you forwarded to me as well as for your own little note with the Assumptionist literature that you sent me consequently.

I know I should have written earlier but I had to wait this long because my situation was not definite. In fact I cannot stay. When I arrived here, I took immediate steps to enroll at the university but when they heard that I had been given not more than two years to get a Ph. D. degree, they strongly advised me not to go through with it since it would not be possible, in their opinion, to get the degree in such a short time. I wrote to my provincial about it but he did not think it possible to allow me the much-needed four years.

So I am returning to Holland for a vacation and from there I'll probably go to New Zealand.

Consequently I would like to ask you to do me a big favor. The pastor would like to keep me here as long as possible for he has counted on me for several special occasions. (The church is at the same time a shrine for pilgrimages, etc.) He has a Triduum coming up Nov. 19, etc. Moreover, that would give him a chance to look out for other arrangements for the immediate future. Perhaps you could make, with Fr. Moquin's approval, the necessary arrangements for a sailing, if possible, on or around the tenth of December. What I would like to know as soon as possible, however, is the definite date of sailing that you could arrange for me, so that the pastor may know exactly how long I am able to stay.

I realize that it would have been preferable to write to Fr. Moquin directly but I may risk perhaps his being away on business.

I thank you in advance for whatever you may be able to do in order to be agreeable to the parish priest who has been most kind to me.

I trust you will allow me also to call on your hospitality the last few days before sailing.

With best wishes to you and to everybody in 156th Street, including Mrs. Martin and Hortensia, I am... Fr. Marcellinus Trum, A.A.

Felipe Uceda

1864-1906

Spanish religious.

An almost unknown religious.

General Tomb
of Old Cemetery
Longue Pointe,
Québec

1723-1917



We have only found for this coadjutor brother a laconic mention of his death, without a date, published in *l'Assomption* of November 1, 1906: "*Bro. Philippe Uceda, lay brother, of the Augustinians of the Assumption, at Greendale (America).*" His name is inscribed in the necrology for October 11, and according to the date given for his birth, he died at the age of 42 in the U.S.A. According to the Register for Professions, he said that he was born November 23, 1864 at Berlanga (Spain). He took the religious habit March 19, 1892, no doubt at Livry in France (Seine-Saint-Denis) and pronounced his first vows October 15, 1894. There is no personal file under his name in Rome and the general files of the archives say nothing about him. We deduce with reservations that, after his first profession, this religious undoubtedly was sent to South America where the mission dates to the 1890s and from there, that he went to the North of the continent at a date unknown to us. We reproduce the biographical notice from the booklet on the deceased religious in North America that says: "*A Spanish lay brother, involved in the beginnings of the Congregation in North America at New York City and for the attempt to found an aluminate in Granby and at Worcester in 1904. A mental illness caused his transfer to a hospital of the Brothers of St. John of God at Longue Pointe, Montreal, December 20, 1905. He died there and was buried in Montreal.*" An excerpt from a letter that we quote helps us to understand in which context the Assumption implanted itself in North America. It illustrates one of the stages of the life of Brother Felipe.

From a letter from America.

Dated October 2, 1906, Fr. Tranquille Pesse (1873-1940) wrote from Worcester to Fr. Emmanuel Bailly, superior general, in Rome: "*I write to you hurriedly to transmit a bit of sad news. A telegram sent yesterday from Montreal announced the death of Brother Philippe Uceda; a letter arrived today saying that the Brother caught cold September 28 and that he died in two days. The brother is buried in Montreal. Fr. Adrien [Buisson, 1863-1954] wrote to his family and the New York community will send out the notification to all of the houses of the Congregation to ask for the customary prayers. I am quite busy these days with the buildings; however there are no major problems up to now. Fr. Symphorien [Terraz, 1872-1944] is doing his retreat here among us while Fr. Omer [Rochain] replaces him in New York. I urgently remind you of my letter sent last week and am impatiently awaiting reinforcements and news.*" [Thus, this letter, discovered in the ACR, eliminates all doubts concerning imprecisions and even errors that were reproduced from our usual sources of information. Let us notice first of all that the date of the death of Brother Felipe Uceda can be corrected. He should not be listed under October 11 in the Necrology, but

rather October 1, 1906, according to the explicit indication of Fr. Tranquille's letter. He is not buried in Worcester but clearly in the cemetery of the city of Montreal. The mention that Fr. Adrien wrote to Brother Felipe's family is not fortuitous. This Brother did his novitiate at Osma in Spain (1882-1884), where he stayed until 1890. Fr. Adrien can very well have known Brother Felipe in Spain. Fr. Adrien then left for the mission of Chile until 1902 and ended up in the U.S.A. We think that his personal itinerary can correspond perfectly with that of Brother Felipe].

Addenda.

Bro. Felipe was involved in the beginnings of the Congregation in North America: in New York City, in the unsuccessful attempt to found an aluminate-agricultural school in Granby, Massachusetts, and then in Worcester in 1904.

Letter by Fr. Emmanuel Bailly Dated Rome, November 3, 1906.

Two new bereavements have come to us. Within a few days, we have lost two of our best lay brothers. At Worcester, (United States) Brother Felipe Uceda died of pneumonia, which carried him away after three days. He died in a house where the deterioration of his health had caused him to be committed two years ago. Brother was born in Berlanga (Spain). Aged 42 years, he had taken the habit in 1892 and had about twelve years of profession. Everywhere he went, at Livry, at Laujeon, at Bordeaux, at New York, at Greendale, he edified by his spirit of prayer and mortification and by his never-failing devotion to duty. A single example will show to what extent his holiness impressed the faithful: in Bordeaux, when he went to the grocer to get provisions for the community, he got them free, the grocer asking only for his prayers. [E. Bailly]

Brother Felipe had arrived in New York with Fr. Thomas Darbois and Fr. Isidore Gayraud on December 30, 1901. In May 1903, he was sent to Granby, and when the Granby fiasco closed in July, he went to Worcester. Brother was indeed given to mysticism, but it soon became folly. He had made himself a chalice of wood, and in his room he secretly 'said Mass.' He was sent to an asylum near Montreal. The following document gives more details.

October 1 (not 11 as the Worcester archives have) 1906, died Rev. Brother Felipe Uceda at the asylum St. Benedict Joseph Labre, Longue Pointe, Quebec, Canada, and buried the 3rd of the same month in the cemetery of Longue Pointe, Canada. Were present Brother Louis Fancault and Brother St. Jacques who signed, after reading [the document]. (Brother Abramarus, Sup.) [He was buried with his crucifix and rosary. I'll send you some old books and pictures as well as some letters that he had.]

Editor's notes.

I have had some research done concerning Felipe Uceda and find that his life is linked closely to Frs. Adrien Buisson and Thomas Darbois who were both in Osmá, Spain for quite some time and both fluent in Spanish. Fr. Buisson left for Chile to be there right from the beginning and we find both Fr. Thomas Darbois and Bro. Felipe Uceda in Chile from 1890 to 1901. At this point, both of these religious arrive in New York City on December 31, 1901 and not December 30 as noted above. Then they both go to Granby for the foundation of the new aluminate on 8 May 1903 and finally end up together as part of the first community in Worcester in November 1903.

After intensive research in the government archives of Canada and the various parishes and cemeteries, we came up with the General Tomb of the Old Cemetery of Longue Pointe, Quebec, Canada where the bones of all those buried in the old cemetery of Longue Pointe had been exhumed. Those that are to be found seem to include the remains of Bro. Felipe Uceda since all the remains from 1723 to 1917 are to be found under the marker installed there and pictured above. The inscription reads: "Here lie the exhumed bones of the old cemetery of Longue Pointe 1723-1917."

Janvier (Marie-Joseph) Vallon

1886-1918

French religious who died at the front.

A life cut down by the war.

Marie Joseph Vallon was born at Saint-Etienne (Loire) October 19, 1886. He began his studies with the Benedictines at Marseilles (Bouches-du-Rhône) from 1898 to 1899. A late vocation, he finished his secondary studies at the Sart-les-Moines alumnate in Belgium from 1904 to 1907. He went to the Louvain novitiate where he took the Assumptionist habit September 11, 1907, under the name of Brother Janvier. Professed annually in 1908, he made his perpetual vows at Gempe September 12, 1911. He was then able to do his philosophy at the Saint-Augustine scholasticate in Louvain (1909-1911). After his philosophy formation, he was sent as a reinforcement to Assumption College in Worcester (Massachusetts, U.S.A.). Besides monitoring and teaching a few hours, he was in charge of singing and a group of musicians that were to be the base of a future orchestra. He accomplished these various functions with an enthusiasm and devotedness that were characteristic of him. The following year, 1913, he was sent to the Locarno College in Switzerland. It was there that he was called up to do his military service on the front lines in September 1915 with the 21st Infantry Battalion. He quickly gained the trust of his leaders, became an officer candidate in September 1916, was promoted to second lieutenant, and then to lieutenant in 1918. He was wounded in a bomb explosion June 14, 1917 and after being treated, went back to the front lines, barely healed, having asked to return to his command as soon as possible. During the retreat of l'Aisne, at the time of the last German offensive on the Western front in the spring of 1918, he was mortally wounded in the heart by several machine gun bullets May 28, 1918, on Hill 178 near Courlandon (Marne). Brother Janvier was only 32. His body remained in the battlefield. At first, he was declared missing, and it was thought that he had been made prisoner until a friend of the religious, looking in March 1919 for the tomb of his son killed in battle, discovered in the Villesavoie cemetery (Aisne), near Fismes, the burial spot of Brother Janvier next to his son's. In 1927, Brother Janvier received posthumously the Cross of the Legion of Honor.

From a letter of Major R. Monigé, July 13, 1918.

"I am pleased to answer you as soon as possible, since I believe that I do not have very bad news to give concerning Lieutenant Vallon from my company. I would long ago have very willingly given news concerning him to his family, but I didn't have their address. Lieutenant Vallon disappeared with his whole section since May 28, at 13 o'clock. At this time, my whole company was deployed on a front of more than 1200 meters to try to stop the Germans. His section was on the extreme left, in contact with a neighboring corps. Our mission was to protect the retreat of the battalion that was reforming behind us. We were told to hold the line until the end. When the enemy attack was launched, I was in the center of my company. Outflanked on the two wings, I was able to fall back with a few of my infantrymen but I was unable to get any news from my poor comrades. My opinion is that Lieutenant Vallon was taken prisoner, possibly wounded, but certainly is not dead. May his family keep up their hope as I do myself, since I do expect to see him again!"

Addenda.

Brother Janvier was killed in action at the Marne in World War I. (Notes by Fr. Armand Desautels.)

From the front lines, May 1918.

“Please excuse me for taking so long to answer you concerning your advice about my salary. I am living on my summit as a hermit in the desert: no post office, no regimental postman, nothing. I was finally able to send a cyclist from the valley to get me a money order for 300 francs that I sent you yesterday. I still am not too well settled on my expenses or my salary. In March, I received 435 francs, in April, 715 with back pay and augmentations. Our main expenses come from the food, between 6 to 9 francs a day, depending on the company. On the average, I must figure on 210 francs a month, plus 20 for the ordering. Besides, I had to buy a uniform, since mine had stayed in Paris. Morally, things are always difficult here. For more than 40 days, we have not had any religious services. That means that I couldn’t attend mass. The lack of activity of a defensive sector, the improper conversations of many officers discourage me a lot and at times I hope to enter the furnace, preferring to risk my body rather than my soul. I don’t have the right to be too demanding on others, nevertheless I become nauseous when I see so much corruption...”

Paulien (Prosper-Claudius) Vassel

1887-1967

Religious of the Province of Paris.



A life of service on numerous fronts.

Prosper Claudius Vassel was born August 6, 1887 at Jullianges, a village of the Haute-Loire situated close to the famous Chaise-Dieu Abbey in the diocese of Puy. His dad was a foreman at the S.N.C.F. [railroad] and moved to the Côte-d'Azur for his work. Because of this, young Prosper Claudius went to a school in Menton and met Fr. Frédéric Raynaud who was famous for his originality and his devotedness to the alummates. His uncle, the future Fr. Marie-Pierre Vassel, preferred to choose for his nephew a diocesan school called la Chartreuse, near the city of Puy. He did his studies there from 1898 to 1904. However, at the end of his studies, the young man asked to enter the Assumption. September 18, 1904, he took the religious habit at the Louvain novitiate in Belgium under the name of Brother Paulien. His uncle chose the same route in 1907. Brother Paulien made his profession September 18, 1905. He studied philosophy at Louvain (1906-1909) and made his perpetual vows June 7, 1907. In 1909, Brother Paulien was sent to the United States to the college in Worcester. He taught Latin and helped out in the treasurer's office. In 1912, Brother Paulien went to Notre-Dame de France in Jerusalem for his theology (1912-1914). He first had to be treated for a bad case of typhoid from which he would feel the after-effects during his whole life. War interrupted this time of formation that he finished in Rome where he was ordained a priest May 3, 1915. As soon as the school year finished, he left again for Worcester where he was needed. Among his students, he had Wilfrid Dufault and Henri Moquin, later Superior General and Treasurer General. From 1919 to 1921, Fr. Paulien was named to serve in the New York parish at 14th Street. This was followed by a year at the college (1921-1922) and another stay in the New York parish (1922-1925). Chaplain at Our Lady of Guadalupe and the Little Sisters of the Assumption until 1927, his ministry was active, clear, and well-ordered as he served all. Very assiduous to the confessional, he was the Providence of penitents who found him at any time of the day and even, sometimes, at night. In 1927, once again he returned to the college of Worcester as treasurer until 1930, before he took up pastoral ministry at the other New York Assumptionist parish, Our Lady of Esperanza, at 156th Street. In December 1931, Fr. Paulien left the U.S.A. for good. He went to England where he stayed six years, successively curate at Rickmansworth, Newhaven-Peacehaven, treasurer at Hitchin, and finally at Charlton where he was able to rest a bit. In 1937, he returned to France at the age of 50. He began his ministry at Montmirail (Marne) where he was named pastor during all of World War II while at the same time taking charge of the shrine at Verdelot during the years 1938-1940. He was superior for the group of religious whose pastoral activity was in the sector of both banks of the Little Morin River. He had the joy, after all of the problems during the war, of being able to salute the American liberation troops. In 1945, Fr. Paulien was sent to Vendôme (Loir-et-Cher) as chaplain of the Ronsard public high school, then to Brétigny-sur-Orge where the Christian School Brothers asked for a chaplain for their Froyennes College returned to France. In 1946, he was once again asked to serve as superior of the Essarts novitiate at the time reorganized with difficulty. In 1949, he was named in charge of the orphanage of Fr. Halluin at Arras (Pas-de-Calais) especially to take care of the Saint-Antoine Chapel. He stayed there 14 years, fixing up the place according to his taste, taking care of the chapel, composing homilies, and counting carefully the number of penitents as he had done in New York. Following a heart failure, Fr. Paulien had to be hospitalized, then transferred to Vendôme with the Sisters of the Holy Heart (1962). He wrote a booklet called 'Spiritualité d'un vieillard' [Spirituality for an old man]. That was where he died August 12, 1967 and was buried August 14.

Addenda.

1935 in France, Mission Country.

Our Missionaries of la Brie.

Here is some news from Montmirail and the 33 other parishes: it's a mission. Just like the Congo or Mandchoukouo, but only 100 km from Paris. Here is the origin of this mission.

In 1929, we were looking for a house for our student candidates for university studies. We thought of a former convent situated at Montmirail, where Bishop Tissier, a friend of the Assumption, would willingly receive us, with a parish in the offing... Finally, the students went to Layrac (near Agen). We kept the parish, and soon we received more parishes when a pastor died. In 1936, we had the whole region...

Then this contagion spread to neighboring dioceses: the Belgian AAs took Vieils-Maisons and 10 other parishes (Soissons diocese)... In 1937, the Meaux diocese gave us Verdelot (with its shrine to Our Lady of Pity) and the neighboring parishes. In all, in 1938 we had 34 parishes in this vast sector of 3 dioceses... few practicing Catholics except at Montmirail, abandoned churches that we had to clean and restore.

Fr. Paulien Vassel, pastor of Verdelot wrote:

In our country churches, it is a spiritual desert. A few children at the Sunday mass, a few women, often not even one man, some 12 persons in all, like at Montdauphin that has 238 citizens.

-Father, we are Catholic, we love our church, you'll have people for Palm Sunday and November 11th, but we are not practicing Catholics.

That is what several mayors told me. They were nice, but you never see them for confessions or Communion. The mothers say:

-I did all that I could: I had my children baptized, they made their first communion and their solemn communion, and they have been confirmed. I have nothing to reproach myself.

After their communion, and oftentimes before, it is work on Sunday till 1 p.m. and therefore it is impossible to go to mass. Last Christmas morning, I met my good parishioners. There were shepherdesses bringing manure to their fields. The meager religious baggage, obtained with great efforts during 2 years of catechism, with many absences, is quickly lost, and for good. The other day, a grandfather of more than 90 years old told me that he had done his first and last communion in 1860.

-I'll call you when I need you, Father.

But he didn't have the time to call me.

Others who refused to receive communion at Easter are dead too. Their death was sudden and they had a beautiful 2d class funeral. There is no ill will in these people, just ignorance and self-respect. This is unknown to Canadians and Irish. -If I went to communion, the women of the area would think that I am crazy.

This is what a woman told the sister who encouraged her to go to communion for the Marian jubilee. The Augustinian sisters of Meaux have a tiny community at Verdelot, where they take care of the sacristy, the sick, a small youth club for young girls with a workroom, and even some YCS girls.

In all of the parishes, it is through the youth groups that we are working to rechristianize the country. Fr. Blaise has a YCW group; Fr. Prosper has Crusaders; Fr. Sauveur a scout troop. Each one works in the sense of his character and that of his parishioners. It's a start. The results are still meager, but we are throwing out seeds.

Adult conversions are rare, but there is great joy for the one who has one from time to time in one of his parishes. The Fathers notice a change in the attitude of the people since their arrival. There is no hostility. It is still indifference but with a nuance of sympathy; we are well received everywhere or almost everywhere. Our people have a religion of work; this is not far from true religion. -Work from 4 a.m. till 9 p.m., Father, protects morality, honesty, and family life.

The Fathers of Vieils-Maisons who have a sector that is very difficult notice hostility disappearing bit by bit. Verdelot is in the Meaux diocese. The neighboring parishes are at our disposal when we shall have people to take them over. While waiting, Bishop Evrard placed in our care the shrine of Our Lady of Pity with its major pilgrimage on the third Sunday in September.

The celebration will be presided by the Bishop this year, with the company of Fr. Rémi Kokel who will sing the mass and preach at Vespers. I expect the Fathers of Montmirail and Vieils-Maisons with crowds coming from their parishes. The goodwill and shared help among the various groups make Montmirail and other places an interesting project. Starting in next October, common retreats, either at Vieils-Maisons where there is more room or at Montmirail since it is more central, will stimulate fervor and fraternal unity.

Paulien Vassel, *Lettre à la Dispersion*, 10 October 1938

Father Paulien was a good teacher and a very active apostolic man. Convinced of the importance of the ministry of the confessional, he spent many hours in that ministry. He was in the United States for a long period of time, first as a scholastic in Worcester (1909-1912), then as a priest (1916-1919), then was stationed in New York for several years at Our Lady of Esperanza. After a few years in England, he returned to France where his longest and most important assignment was at the chapel adjoining the orphanage of Arras. (Notes by Fr. Armand Desautels.)

Ange (Charles-Louis-J.) Vermech

1873-1953

French religious of the Province of England.



Formation.

Charles Louis Joseph Vermech, [There are at least four orthographs for this name: Vermech is the most common, reproduced and used most often by this religious. This is the one that we have chosen. But there are also: Vermeech, Vermeesch, and Vermesch.], was born at Hersin-Coupigny (Pas-de-Calais) December 12, 1873. He began his secondary studies at the Mauville aluminate (Pas-de-Calais) from 1889 to 1891, then continued several months at Arras (Pas-de-Calais) in 1891, and finished at Clairmarais (Pas-de-Calais) from 1891 to 1892. He took the religious habit December 25, 1892 at the Livry novitiate (Seine-Saint-Denis) under the name Brother Ange and the guidance of Fr. Athanase Vanhove. He pronounced his first vows December 25, 1893 in Phanaraki, at the Asian novitiate in Turkey, as well as his perpetual vows February 2, 1895. It was at Kadi-Keuī, on the banks of the Bosphorus, and in Jerusalem, at Our Lady of France that he did his philosophy and theology (1898-1902). Brother Ange was ordained a priest in Jerusalem October 20, 1901.

Ministry.

On his personal information sheet, Fr. Ange listed his successive residences in the following way: Ismidt during four years as teacher (before 1903), chaplain in New York, U.S.A. from 1903 to 1905, a stay at Clairmarais (1905), curate at Brockley in England from 1905 to 1907, curate four years at Rickmansworth (1907-1911), teacher at Bethnal-Green in London (1911-1913), Newhaven from 1911 to 1949, except during the war of 1914-1918 when he was in the French territorial army and an infantry regiment at Béthune (Pas-de-Calais) where he was in the military chaplaincy service; then from 1949 to 1953 in active communities where he was retired in England. These listings do not always correspond exactly with other studies that we have been able to make concerning his various postings. Nevertheless, it is clear that Fr. Ange spent the greatest part of his long priestly life as pastor of the English parish of Newhaven. The rheumatism that he contracted during World War II never hampered his joyful and generous devotedness. In November 1946, he wrote to Fr. Gervais Quenard to ask for *the favor to be part of the new English Province. He has worked there, he said, for 40 years already. Regardless of his age, 73, December 12 [1946], he still thinks that he can serve Our Lord and the Assumption. Fr. Bernardin Bal-Fontaine knew what the religious did in the region. The war, World War II, did not make the situation easy, far from it, but it is not the time to say that there is nothing to do when all has to be redone. Others will one day reap!* The manner in which Fr. Ange had of giving himself totally to all, with a certain open-mindedness, made him very popular in the whole city of Newhaven. He handled with patience, good humor, and piety a period of activity at a slower pace when his growing infirmities made any exterior ministry impossible for him. He died at the Capenor novitiate September 23, 1953.

Facts on Newhaven.

“Newhaven was a small city of 7,000 inhabitants in 1928 in the South of England, Sussex County. A small river, the Ouse, crossed it and its mouth served as a port for the ships of the Franco-English Company that sailed between Newhaven-Dieppe. The Newhaven population was mostly of a multicolored Protestantism made up of Anglicans, Congregationalists, Baptists, Wesleyans, Methodists, Primitive Methodists, and Calvinists. The Catholics were a very small minority with 120 at the most: a few dock, railroad, and business workers. The Catholic priest is now esteemed. Some twenty years ago, the port youth would throw stones at the convent doors. The Superior, Fr. Delphin Coussirat, was even obliged to set an example by chasing several and bringing them to the police station holding them by their ears...” According to the report of Fr. Charles [Ange] Vermech, 1928.

Addenda.

He spent the first two years of his priesthood (1901-1903) in the United States, but his main ministry was in England in the parish of Newhaven where he spent 31 years.

Hersin, 1919.

“I have just returned from Arras and Lille where I was sent urgently for the demobilization. It took me 6 days and I was obliged to return to the hospital to finish certain things that as a priest I could not leave unfinished. I send you the information that you are asking of each one of us and I am adding a word that Fr. Booker, our chaplain, momentarily absent, left in my hut before leaving. Where can I find you? Where should I go for the retreat? As the place where I want to be repatriated, I put Newhaven, but before going through the strait, let me say that I would like to see you. I was very disappointed not to see you in Paris. After that I had to disappear because of an indiscretion. All mailings from *La Bonne Presse* to my address should be stopped. What a joy it is for me to return to the Assumption and give more than before! Your unworthy son thanks you for the bother he gives you to counsel him, clean him up and shine all the rugged angles that need to be straightened out with a hammer!”

(Charles Vermech.)

Jude (Joseph-M.-Charles) Verstaen

1893-1960

Religious of the Province of Paris, assistant general (1946-1952), then provincial.



At the dawn of an apostle's life, a formation at a forced pace.

Joseph Marie Charles Verstaen was born at Bergues (North) September 8, 1893. Orphan because of the death of his father in 1899, he was brought up by a brave mother with four children of whom Joseph was the eldest. In September 1906, Joseph entered the Bizet alumnate (Belgium), under the direction of Fr. Damascène Dhers. A gifted child, reserved, and assiduous in reading, he liked to write poetry, trusting to poetry his apostolic dreams. He began his humanities right at Le Bizet (1909-1910) before pursuing them at Ascona in Switzerland (1910-1911). August 14, 1911, he took the religious habit at the Gempe novitiate under the direction of Fr. Antoine de Padoue Vidal under the name of Brother Jude. He pronounced his first vows at Limpertsberg in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg August 15, 1912 and his perpetual vows the following year at the same date. After his novitiate, he spent two years teaching at the Zepperen alumnate where, while preparing his classes, he found the time to read many books and summarized them carefully on cards. He was able to go to Louvain for philosophy (1915-1916) directly in third year, summarizing in two months the matter of the two preceding years! The years of studying theology at Louvain (1916-1920) were cut by a few months of forced resting in 1918 at Zepperen. He forced himself to read a book each month by using his sleep time. Brother Jude was ordained to the priesthood at Louvain August 1, 1920. The traits of his intellectual and moral personality were fixed: a man of precision, great culture, mature knowledge while still young. He made one think of a living library with an open spirit always attentive to the opinion of others and a sense of synthesis that made for a judgment that was both sure and finely shaded.

Awakener of youth.

Fr. Jude was immediately assigned to teach at Zepperen (1920-1922), then at the American college in Worcester (1922-1934). Every day, he set aside time for personal reading, deepening his grasp of early and modern authors, English, German, or French, thoroughly enjoying Greek patrology. Concerned with new ideas, adept to assimilate new pedagogy, he was however more respected than loved by his students for whom his erudition, served by an infallible memory, could at times seem inaccessible. On weekends, he did pastoral ministry at the orphanage of the Grey Nuns. Having become in Worcester a real solid teacher, Fr. Jude was named in 1934 to direct the Nîmes College (Gard) supported by an intelligent treasurer, Fr. Delmas, a reputed philosophy teacher, Fr. Isaïe Favier, an energetic dean of discipline, Fr. Gilbert Delesalle, and a trained teaching staff. Very human and moderately austere, he gave the college the look and style of a high class establishment. The only reproaches made were that he monopolized in his room the magazines, never made quick decisions, and absented himself too often for pastoral activities that overloaded him (conferences, preaching retreats, meetings of the *Noël* movement for which he founded the bulletin *Le Lien*). He was not able to avoid for the college a draft by the French army in 1939 first of all, then the German army starting in 1942, and finally the ruinous worries of the Liberation groups. By temperament, Fr. Jude always tried to harmonize and reconcile the points of view after having taken the time to inform himself and listen. To those who heard him or his contacts, he seemed to be someone who was calm and even distant; and yet, he vibrated with great sensitivity for anyone who trusted him. He knew how to speak from the heart in the services he gave. Undoubtedly, it was because of that factor that he had a personal influence bathed in esteem, admiration, and friendship in the places and milieus where he lived.

At the heart of responsibilities in the Congregation.

In 1946, he took part in the General Chapter and was elected first assistant and vicar general. As a learned religious who was supple, clear, and nuanced, he was a precious element of the council, having already proven himself as acting assistant to the Paris Provincial. He studied the dossiers carefully, preferring to first listen and spoke only to examine with assurance and a judgment that his confreres appreciated, the various points that were brought up. In 1952, he was not reelected assistant and became assistant Provincial of Paris, while remaining involved in the direction of the *Noël* as general chaplain in contact with Fr. Marie-Etienne Point and visiting the feminine communities of the Assumption. He advised the direction of the *Eaux Vives* magazine, taking over from Fr. Point from 1954 to 1957. From 1949 to 1958, he was put in charge of the Assumptionist Probation program, a time of formation, review of life, and recycling for young priests during the summer vacations. In December 1958, Fr. Jude's health, which never had been very solid, went downhill. He suffered from hypertension and was cared for by the Orant Sisters at Marseilles where he had to interrupt a retreat that he was preaching. February 20, 1959, he was able by taking short trips to return to the provincial house in Paris. At the end of December 1959, he was still able to take part in a meeting for Superiors at Lormoy (Essonne), but he was only a shadow of himself. He had to be hospitalized December 31 at Pasteur where he was treated until January 18, 1960. April 2, 1960, he entered the clinic of the Augustinian Nuns at Santé Street. It was there that he died June 4, 1960. His funeral was celebrated in the chapel of the provincial house at Denfert-Rochereau June 8. He was buried in the tomb of the Assumption in the Parisian cemetery of Montparnasse.

Addenda.

Professor at Assumption College in Worcester (1922-1934).

No matter what the preference, the success, or the length of his apostolate; a religious is at the mercy of a letter of obedience. Fr. Jude leaves Belgium for America... "I am leaving happily; this joy is also tainted with the regret of leaving the work for vocations; and yet, these regrets do not change my deep joy in following the will of God. Pray for the souls awaiting me there. Pray for me: May I not be lacking to any call from God or to the souls that the Lord wants me to sanctify! If possible, write me often..."—It is with these sentiments that Fr. Jude arrived in Worcester in August 1922...

Teacher of the senior class.

... Finally, after more than a year of an interior crisis, his adaptation to America becomes very harmonious. "If the Orient is waiting for me, let it wait! I don't try to encourage going there or not... Personally, I must admit, my situation this year is fine: some 30 young men between 16 and 20 years old with a dozen vocations... a good group at the confessional who want guidance; an orphanage with some 200 children where I go twice a week..."

The years go by. Fr. Jude was totally committed to his students. Fr. Polyeucte Guissard writes of him: "A competent teacher, precise in his courses, demanding for the students, he prepares them with care and method for the upper classes. His cold demeanor did not permit all of his disciples to discover the kindness of his heart. He also kept his distance from the students. If we can believe the comments of the alumni, he was more respected than loved. But all recognize that they have profited much from his well prepared courses."

Philosophy Teacher.

As the years go by, he has gotten closer to teaching subjects that are more attractive to him and more in line with his intellectual capacities. The head of philosophy, Fr. Polyeucte, is called back to Belgium. It is natural for Fr. Jude to take over. But the new philosophy teacher has not been advised beforehand and upon his return from vacations in France, he receives the news. Without doubt, he has studied all of the books of the program at the scholasticate; he also has kept up and perfected his knowledge by readings, discussions, and notes. It is another thing to teach than having the knowledge, especially at the Worcester College having two years of philosophy with both years together for courses.

He has two retreats to Sisters to preach; tasks and travels that cannot be put off; his annual retreat that he doesn't want to put off to follow; all of this will take up all of his time. And it is thus that "I was responsible not only to

teach but to organize a philosophy course as well as one for sociology; I only had some 15 pages ready to be mimeographed when classes opened.”

There is as much work in the second year since the courses are different. “Here I am with 14 hours of class each week for the first semester and 12 the second going from philosophy to pedagogy or the history of economics. All of these courses have no manuals adapted to our students. At the end of the year, I’ll be able to breathe: all will be ready. I’ll only have to update things a bit.” While waiting, he needs to take the time day by day to reflect and read for the subject matter to be taught.

But he is happy to be a philosophy prof. They said that he was born to teach. If he is demanding for himself in the preparation of his classes, he is so also for the students. In sociology, is his doctrine too condensed. There is nothing better to force them to reflect. Was his class too intellectual for them? The next time, he’ll be careful to bring things down to their level. He groups his teaching by themes; he gives them in the form of debates American style. He divides them in sections for tests. And if a student still has problems, he willingly meets him one on one to clarify and encourage him.

How can one explain that he doesn’t follow Cardinal Mercier’s example in the use of the vernacular to better help the students understand Thomism? Fr. Jude seems to say, “No. The traditional language of scholasticism is Latin. He refuses to change... until 1931, when the students call a strike to force the professor to speak French.

This incident only left traces in the archives. All of his former students are unanimous in speaking of the clarity and solidity of his teaching. They speak of his extensive knowledge of Saint Thomas, and especially of the “*Summa contra Gentiles*”; they are also unanimous to admire his penetrating intelligence, his faithful memory, his persevering work. All are grateful to him.

Other positions—Librarian.

He is librarian for some 5,000 volumes and in charge of circulation, filing, ordering new books. This requires reading many bibliographies.

Dean of Studies.

This job is only given to the wise and knowledgeable pedagogue. The prestige of the College depends on his influence on the staff and the level of studies for the students. A confrere said, “The good Father followed the Laws and the schedule; nobody dared touched them. November 11, 1932, the college students asked for an afternoon off in honor of the Armistice. The strict Dean answered: “Do you think that you have a good reason to ask for this when you never went to war?”...

Fr. Jude had a lot of esteem and affection for the Americans during his whole life. When he spoke of them, it was always with warmth. One day, he was at the train station in Marseilles, waiting to leave for Nîmes. An American military convoy intoned their national hymn. Father Jude, standing at the door of the train sang with them. His train pulled away slowly and he regretted this quick departure that had stopped him from speaking with them.

[a friend]

Oscar (Gabriel-Oscar-Otto) Zoppi

1889-1955

Belgian-Swiss religious from the Province of North America.

A long life.

Gabriel Oscar Otto Zoppi was born November 18, 1889 at Fosses in Belgium of a Swiss father and a Walloon mother. Early in life, he was orphaned and taken in by an aunt before he entered, in September 1903, the Bure alumnate. After three years, he went to Taintegnies, at that time a humanities alumnate (1906-1908). He chose the Assumption and went to the Louvain novitiate where he took the religious habit under the name Brother Oscar August 28, 1908. He was professed annually August 28, 1909 at Gempe and pronounced his perpetual vows August 29, 1910 also at Gempe, a village 15 km from Louvain. Right after his profession, he was sent to Locarno College in Switzerland for three years of studies (1910-1913). In 1914, he was drafted by the Swiss army and chose Belgian nationality. A student at Louvain (1913-1914), he was unable to get back to Belgium because of the war and did his theology at Rome and Fara Sabina (1914-1919). He was ordained to the priesthood there June 14, 1919 by Cardinal Pompili. As an apostolic field, he was assigned to Chile. During four years he enjoyed horseback excursions and witnessed a terrible earthquake. The details that he later gave concerning it show quite a fertile imagination! In March 1923, he left Chile for the U.S.A. He was in fact transferred to the college in Worcester (Massachusetts). After a short initiation period in New York, Worcester became his regular residence until September 1945. At that time he went to work in the Spanish parish at 14th Street in New York. It was there, January 30, 1955, that he was found dead a Sunday morning bathed in his blood. He was only 65. He was buried in Worcester in the company of his deceased confreres of the Province of North America whom he joined in 1946.



A smiling face of unbelievable mobility where his ideas and feelings were reflected, he did not like stability. With him, the gestures always preceded the words. He loved to live in the open air: he needed movement, people, conversation, and activity. He didn't enjoy studies, long meditations, nor long ceremonies! Willingly exuberant in the community, he didn't bring sadness. One day when people were surprised by his absence, one of his confreres remarked with malice to the superior who was surprised and tried to get information concerning his whereabouts, 'Fr. Oscar is in all of his states!' During his 23 years of service at the college in Worcester, he was a monitor and teacher. His pedagogy did not sin through excess of conformity! Fr. Oscar was involved in all of the college's musical and theatrical activities. One could quite well summarize his volcanic apostolate by quoting the psalm: 'The noise of his voice was heard through all the earth'. But one cannot accuse Fr. Oscar of being a light headed or superficial religious. For him, the essence of the Law and the prophets was to love God and one's neighbor and one can truly say that his apostolic life was measured by his devotedness that made him rush through the streets, assiduous to visiting the sick, devoted to a thousand errands to help someone, run an errand for another, or give information. How many times did he not hurry to guide disconcerted travelers who arrived in the New World by train, ship, or plane, looking for work or a given address? Leaving to pedagogues and theologians the study of a thousand and one mysteries of science or knowledge, Fr. Oscar, in his sermons, spoke with simplicity, presenting with clarity not so much a doctrine but a life, a Gospel attitude that reached the simple of heart. Fr. Oscar lived according to the heart and he who was thought as solid as rock died of a heart attack. In the catastrophe of 1953 [the tornado at Assumption College], he saw the announcing of the end of the world. It was for him a terrible shock. Very weak, he was so affected by it that many could no longer recognize him for the walking shadow that he had become.[A picture of Fr. Oscar Zoppi by Fr. Polyeucte Guissard.]

Addenda.

Fr. Oscar taught languages, especially Greek, at Assumption College. He was a good student, quite turbulent. He was first in Greek version. It was at Bure that he met Bro. Armand Goffart. Oscar was a 'factotum' (Jack-of-all trades). He would kill the pigs, beg for potatoes, smoke cigars. He had typhoid fever at Bure and when the alumnists went home, he stayed at the aluminate. He cleaned the house and burned the straw mattresses with Bro. Armand. Oscar took care of the room of Fr. Marcellin Guyot who had returned from Louisiana.

Oscar's brother, Albert, became a banker in Brussels and was of a quiet temperament like his father. While in Chile, Fr. Oscar was treasurer at Santiago. Fr. Oscar arrived at the College in Worcester on May 9. He had to learn English and served as a monitor from 1923 to 1926. He then started to teach: French, Latin, Greek, German. Catechism, and history. He played the bass viola with the College orchestra. He would take a pinch of Anchor Brand snuff while discoursing about the loves of the Greek gods and goddesses. It would be too long to deal even briefly with Fr. Oscar's weekend ministry in numerous New England parishes, so I will only say that he was always ready to go wherever his Superiors sent him and was always welcomed there because he was ready to do whatever needed doing... Fr. Oscar was often called to nearby St. Vincent's Hospital (New York City) for ministry to the sick. He was a jolly character and would joke with women who were tense before giving birth. They would relax and before you knew it, they had their baby.

Fr. Oscar would go back to Worcester for the annual retreat, and it was thus that he experienced the tornado of 1953. That gave him a severe physical shock, which continued to bother his heart, even after he returned to New York. He lost so much weight that some religious barely recognized him the following December. Fr. Oscar knew that he was a doomed man, but continued to do his work, even as treasurer, until the end.

Twice he had to spend time in the hospital, but he was anxious to go back to his community, because Oscar hated solitude. Fr. Oscar's lungs kept filling with fluid and in the hospital two and a half liters had been extracted. But it was back in community that Oscar died, victim of angina.. When a brother had brought him his breakfast on the morning of January 30, 1955, he found Fr. Oscar on the floor, his nose broken and much blood having issued from his mouth. It was believed that Father had risen to take some medicine and had had a fatal heart attack.

He was waked in Our Lady of Guadalupe church on February 2 and his funeral was on February 3. Fr. Leopold Braun gave the funeral mass homily in English and Spanish. Monsignor Flannelly, rector of St. Patrick's cathedral was in attendance. Four religious accompanied the body of Fr. Oscar as he was brought by train to Worcester. On February 4 was held a solemn requiem mass at which Fr. Polyeucte Guissard gave a moving eulogy. Then the body of the happy-go-lucky, hard-working, greathearted priest was brought to the cemetery of the religious in Greendale. [ASITWAS by Fr. Richard Richards, A.A.]

Father Oscar was a man with a great imagination and a tremendous sense of humor. He often spoke of his adventures during his four years in Chile. His 22 years of teaching at Assumption Prep were an adventure for him and for his students. But where he was most successful was in parish work, and especially during his last ten years at Our Lady of Guadalupe, where his legendary hard work literally caused his death. He was buried in the Prep School cemetery in Worcester. (Notes by Fr. Armand Desautels.)