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Submission Guidelines

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

Gathered Fragments publishes articles and primary sources relating to the parochial, religious, diocesan, and laical history of the Catholic Church in Western Pennsylvania. We also solicit book and exhibit reviews, news, and other items relating to Catholic history in Western Pennsylvania. Genealogical items are accepted, providing they relate to the broader scope of the Society’s mission. Articles previously published elsewhere will be considered with appropriate permission from the original publication. Submissions should pertain in some way to the broader theme of Catholicism in Western Pennsylvania. Research articles will be considered. Notation of sources must accompany each article. Submitters are urged to consult the most current editions of The Chicago Manual of Style or Kate Turabian's A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, for guidelines on proper formatting.

Submissions are accepted both electronically and by mail. Instructions will be provided by contacting the Society at info@catholichistorywpa.org. The opinions expressed in Gathered Fragments represent the views only of the individual contributors. They do not necessarily reflect the views of the officers, the members of the board of directors, or The Catholic Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania. Advertising in Gathered Fragments does not necessarily imply endorsement.

Membership Information

Gathered Fragments is published once a year by The Catholic Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania, Diocese of Pittsburgh, 2900 Noblestown Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15205-4227. Rates for subscriptions are currently: $150 for member of Msgr. Andrew A. Lambing Circle, $125 for member of Msgr. Francis A. Glenn Circle, $100 for Synod Hall sustaining members, $45 for institutional members, $35 for individual members, and $20 for women religious members.

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

Cover Photo

Sisters Catherine Davenport and Mary Mark Mullen survey the damage by Japanese bombers to their convent in Chihkiang, Hunan, China, 1940. Source: Sisters of St. Joseph of Baden Archives.

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Editor’s note: In the first installment of her memoir, Beacon in the Dark, which was published in the fall 2017 issue of Gathered Fragments, Sister Mary Mark took us through the first half of her missionary experiences in Chihkiang (known as Zhijiang today), Hunan, China. Arriving in China in 1933 during years of warlords and somewhat primitive lifestyle, she ends that half with the arrival of some modern conveniences – ranging from transportation improvements, such as the advent of the bus, to entertainment improvements, such as movies and chewing gum.

For this second half of her memoir, Sister Mary Mark takes us from those early days of modernization into the Second Sino-Japanese War, which some historians consider to be the beginning of World War II.

As Chihkiang was home to a large air base, the war became a daily part of the sisters’ lives as they worked on carrying out their missionary work. Sister Mary Mark’s story provides some insight into their struggles.

Chapter 10: Spring in China

The haze of Chinese spring drifted up from the river, hanging in soft wisps over the rich moist earth. The trees in the mission yard were a fresh sparkling green and almost overnight, it seemed, the red earth was carpeted with grass. The fertility of the soil in China was a constant marvel to me. I sometimes thought if I planted a stick in the ground, I would wake up one morning to find it sprouting. Anything will grow in China!

In the classroom, the girls became restive. Their bright eyes turned with distaste from the black and white characters in their books to the low windows framing the enticing picture of the bright young greenness outdoors. It seemed the right time for a picnic. So, after breakfast one morning, surrounded by a happy chattering group we filed through the city gate, strolling along terraced rice fields that looked like miniature lakes reflecting the transparent blue of the sky. Thick white mist spread like a blanket over the rolling hills and under the warm sun, tiny tongues of mist curled up from the spear-like green shoots of rice.

We crossed a small brook running over muddy stones. The girls scampered back and forth, gathering clusters of the little white flowers growing along the bank. Wandering tranquilly over the hills, drinking in the soft, warm earth-scented air, we might have been a thousand miles from the noise and dirt and poverty of the city. In the peaceful stillness, the lonely raucous cry of a black-bird matched perfectly the austerity of the distant snow-capped mountains.

When Sister Catherine heard the word “picnic” mentioned, she had visualized packing rice bowls and chopsticks in baskets. She had never heard of our traveling restaurant. The owner of the restaurant was on the scene of the picnic when we arrived. His cafeteria consisted of the two boxlike containers, which he carried suspended from the ends of a crossbar. One box held a pile of wooden dishes and a bundle of chopsticks. In the other box, the restauranteur had his supply of noodles and a mixture of ground meat seasoned with chopped peppers, ginger, and garlic. On the little stove, made from a discarded oilcan, a pot of water bubbled and hissed over the charcoal fire.

The resourceful Chinese could prepare enough food for only a few of the children at a time so two or three of them clustered around him, watching as he dropped the long strips of dough into the boiling water, eagerly waiting for their dish of noodles covered with the rich, spicy sauce. The other girls romped and played while waiting their turn. With a sharp stick, they scored off squares on a bare spot of the dusty earth, marking each square with a magical character, hopping and jumping from one to the other, just as children play anywhere in the world.

When our chef had nothing more to cook, he packed his boxes, bowed his wordless thanks, and trotted back to the city, well satisfied with his day’s work. Then we gathered the scattered youngsters and left soon after, for the air was getting cold and some of the little ones were growing sleepy.

As we neared the city wall, an old farmer stopped us to ask if we would help a sick neighbor of his whom he thought had chickenpox. Leaving the girls to return with the other Sisters, I went with Sister Catherine to see the man. It was quite evident to Sister that the man’s illness was more serious than chickenpox so we did what we could for him and promised to return later with medicine.

The next morning we found him lying on straw in the street. We were told that he had been refused admission to the Old Folk’s Home, so they left him on the street.

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The next morning we found him lying on straw in the street. We were told that he had been refused admission to the Old Folk’s Home, so they left him on the street.
We could not take him to the mission, lest we endanger the health of the orphans, so we made him as comfortable as possible on his bed of straw and went off to find a place for him. On a nearby hill, we found an abandoned fort, a little pillbox that had been vacant since the siege. It seemed just the place we needed. Here our patient would be isolated and we could care for him without exposing others to the danger of contagion. When we returned, we found our patient lying at the gate of one of the pagan temples. It then occurred to us to try and buy food for him at the temple since it was too far to carry it from the mission. Following the sound of voices, we came to a room where five pagan priests were engaged in spiritual reading. One of them put a bench outside the door for us. Another, who appeared to be the Superior, ordered the bench to be taken inside and with a grave courteous bow, he invited us to enter while we explained our errand.

The priest said he knew about the sick man at the gate and had tried to have him taken to the fort but no one would carry him because his disease was contagious. He added that he did not want him at the gate, for the odor from his sores was offensive to worshippers who came to the temple. However, he gave us fresh straw for the man’s bedding and promised to provide him with food daily. He refused to accept money, saying that they were like us in the practice of charity. This led him to talking doctrine. With our limited vocabulary, it was dangerous to enter too deeply into the discussion lest we say something we did not intend. The girl, who was with us as interpreter, refused to speak in the presence of these men but after we reached home, she had the other orphans roaring with laughter at the story of the pagan priests trying to convert the Sisters.

Later that same week, we were asked to go to the country to see a family who had yellow fever. The woman who invited us offered to accompany us, since the people were her relatives. She warned us to start early in the morning as the distance was five Li (more than a mile).

The next morning she appeared quite surprised to see us at her door. She told us that she could not go with us because her son was afraid she would contract the disease. She added that it was unimportant that we go, for those people would die anyway. A mental picture of helpless little children dying without baptism made us resolve to make every effort to reach them. At the mission, we met a Christian who knew the place and agreed to be our guide. When we reached the district we noticed the people eyed us cautiously from a safe distance. The children ran if they saw us looking at them and the bolder ones even threw stones at us.

Our escort explained to them that we had been told of the illness of a family there and had come to dispense medicine if they wished it to take it. One by one, they summoned enough courage to come near. Before long, every family in the village was represented among our patients. We found the fever patients

**Names of women and men religious mentioned in these pages of *Beacon in the Dark* and their years on mission in China**

**Sisters of St. Joseph of Baden:**
- Sister Catherine Davenport 1935 - 1941
- Sister Christina Werth 1926, 1928 - 1944
- Sister Clarissa Stattemiller 1926 - 1927
- Sister Magdalena Ivan 1930 - 1944
- Sister Mary Mark Mullen 1933 - 1945, 1946 - 1948
- Sister Rosario Goss 1933 - 1945
- Sister St. Anne Callahan 1926 - 1933, 1935 - 1936

**The Passionists, St. Paul of the Cross Province:**
- Bishop Cuthbert O’Gara 1924 - 1953
- Father Germain Heilman 1932 - 1947
- Father Gregory McEttrick 1926 - 1940
- Father Jeremiah McNamara 1924 - 1945
- Father William Westhoven 1924 - 1953

**Brief Historical Commentary on Memoir**

When reading Sister Mary Mark’s work, one must take into account that it is a period piece, with the terminology and a perspective reflective of how Americans thought and spoke during that period of history. Within *Beacon in the Dark*, one not only learns about missionary work in China in the 1930s and 1940s, but also about the American culture of that period.
The sisters taught embroidery as a marketable skill
Source: Sisters of St. Joseph of Baden Archives

not so numerous as we had anticipated but cases of measles were fast reaching alarming proportions.

The Chinese dread measles as we dread infantile paralysis. It proves fatal so often, due to the lack of proper care. We grew weary of listening to mothers complaining, “T’a pu k’en” (he is unwilling). The babies were unwilling to stay in bed, unwilling to eat, unwilling to take medicine and their parents gave into them. The Angel of Death did not ask whether or not they were willing to die.

Many families lost two or three children. Those who survived the measles, succumbed soon afterwards of stomatitis or pneumonia. Almost five hundred died during the epidemic. We were instrumental in saving a few whose mothers followed instructions given, but the great majority simply said, “T’a pu k’en!” We consoled ourselves with the fact that at least we were instrumental in saving many of their souls, for very few of those we saw died without baptism.

The death rate among infants is appalling. It is not at all unusual to hear a mother say she had raised only one or two out of eight or ten children. One woman told me the child in her arms was her fourteenth. I thought I misunderstood her and asked, “Did you say the fourth?” She answered, “No, I said the fourteenth.” I inquired about the others and she told me that was the only one living. Within less than a month, it too had died.

The pagan Chinese have so many superstitions that when they saw us baptizing babies, they thought we were performing some superstitious rite. On more than one occasion, mothers brought their little ones to us and asked us to Sa Tien (perform a superstitious rite common in that section of the country).

At the mission, Anne, one of our orphans, became very ill. She was delirious for days and Sister Rosario and Sister Christina alternated in watching her day and night. One night, when Sister Rosario went to relieve Sister Christina, she saw her sitting at the patient’s bedside with a huge club at her side. Sister Rosario laughingly told her that she could be arrested on circumstantial evidence of cruelty to a delirious patient. She knew the club was to chase the rats away. These unwelcome visitors were a constant annoyance to us. Our cat had the time of his life catching many of them, but in spite of “Tom,” they ran riot and were a perpetual menace.

During the summer months, when school was over, we opened an embroidery school for women. The chief purpose was to make contacts with the pagan women and give them an opportunity of learning the Faith. Most of them became interested in Christian Doctrine and while their tireless fingers wove intricate lacy patterns on this gossamer silk, they pried us with questions. An ancient one, her black hair rolled into a greasy topknot, fixed her bright beady eyes on me, her needle poised in mid-air, as she framed the question, “How could Lucifer and his companions commit sin when there was no devil to tempt them?”

In spite of our care, orphan Annie’s condition continued to grow worse and death seemed imminent. Father William – following the Chinese custom – sent out and bought her coffin. It was no sooner bought, however, than little Anne began to recover and the wood of the coffin was used to make a cupboard for the children’s shoes.

After Anne’s recovery, she and a companion were busily sewing in the refectory one afternoon, when the two of them began to quarrel. I came along just in time to hear Anne shouting, “I’m going to tell Sister. You called me a devil.” The quiet voice of Magdalen answered, “You are a devil. The devil leads people into sin and you make me commit the sin of anger.” I did not need to make known my presence. Magdalen had conquered Anne who,
in spite of her faults, had a good heart and certainly didn’t want to be classed with Satan.

In the midst of preparations for a Corpus Christi procession, Sister Rosario and I went to the store to buy silk for a canopy the girls were making. From a catalogue, we got the dimensions so we took a tape measure with us to make sure we got the correct amount of material.

The Chinese have their own system of measuring. They are trying to adopt standard weights and measures but so far, have not succeeded, at least not in our section of the country. Cloth is sold by the foot, so I asked the clerk if I could borrow a foot rule. He handed me one such as the children use in school. It was equal to about thirteen of our inches. Fortunately I asked, “Is this the one you use in measuring cloth?”

“No,” was his answer and he gave me another one about an inch and a half shorter but still called a “foot” and, like the first one, divided into ten inches. When the clerk saw the German steel tape measure we had, he examined it eagerly, showing greater interest in it than in making the sale.

We needed flowers for the altar on the feast of Corpus Christi, but we had none in the mission garden. Sister Rosario knew a patient who had beautiful baby “mums” in his yard. When his wife came to the dispensary, Sister asked her if she would give us some of her chrysanthemums for the altar. Sister had Miss Hsiae – our Chinese teacher – repeat what she had requested, to make sure her Chinese would not be misunderstood. Miss Hsiae explained that we wanted long stems so we could put the flowers in vases. She even took the pagan woman to the church and showed her the altar we wished to decorate. The woman was grateful for all we had done for her husband and expressed joy that she had an opportunity to give us something in return, promising to bring the flowers without fail. She kept her promise and came to the mission on the morning of the feast day but to our great disappointment, she held a tiny bunch of chrysanthemums in her hand, while in a basket, she carried the heads of hundreds of them, plucked off so closely there wasn’t a sign of a stem. We reminded her that we wanted them for the altar and those in the basket could not possibly be used. Our friend bowed and smiled affably, “These very good! Very good in tea!” That might well have been true, but at that time, I’d much rather have ice in my tea than flowers.

Chapter 11: Cholera Epidemic

The summer of 1936 was unusually hot. The city was still overcrowded with refugees from the Red invasion, and in addition, thousands of coolies had been imported for the construction of an airport about a mile from the city. The airport was badly needed for the impending war with Japan, and the coolies worked feverishly, laboriously hauling pebbles from the riverbed and struggling with the huge roller used to smooth out the runway.

This army of coolies lived in shacks grouped together in camps, or else they occupied abandoned temples high in the hills, but their proximity taxed the resources of the city beyond the limits, and soon the fear of cholera began to be whispered about. This general concern was heightened when the city officials, aware of the unsanitary conditions, distributed copies of health rules to be observed during the summer months. In them, we were warned not to eat raw fruits or vegetables, to drink only boiled water, not to allow refuse to accumulate, to swat the fly, and not to eat food that had been walked on by the feet of flies or other insects.

If the people conscientiously obeyed this last rule, they would all die of starvation, for nothing was ever screened. Another precaution was the general “Clean Up” days. Also, it became common to see people carrying fly-swatters instead of fans. But the fly-swatters and the health rules proved to be ineffectual weapons against open sewerage and over congestion. The deadly germs had already penetrated the city.

Cholera struck the airport workers first. “Ten men died at the airfield yesterday,” was the message which came to us at the mission early one morning. Catholic Action began immediately.

We were not allowed to enter the field, but when the men became ill, we went to them in their shacks, temples or wherever they were lodged. Each day there were more coolies struck down. Every resource in our dispensary was used in an effort to save their lives, or to prevent the disease from spreading. For weeks before, our dispensary had displayed a sign stating that anti-cholera injections were given there, but the notice had almost gone
unheeded. Now that the Chinese saw their neighbors, apparently well in the morning, cold in death that night, they flocked to the mission.

“Ta chen! Ta chen!” (Injection! Injection!) rang through the air from the frightened Chinese. Usually from two to three hundred hypodermics were given daily, but one day, the number went over five hundred.

We made our sick calls in the morning. The rest of the day we were on call, as various families sent for Sister Catherine to help their sick ones. In the evening, when the laborers returned from work, we went out to find those who were stricken that day.

In addition to those who had cholera, there were many who imagined they had it and those nearly died of fright. One morning, shortly after midnight, the compound was awakened by someone pounding furiously on the gate and calling, “Please Sister, see a dying person.” Sister Catherine and I dressed quickly. We grabbed our lanterns and the medicine kit, hurrying into the night with the messenger. The blackness of Chihkiang on a moonless night is a Stygian darkness that seems to fall like a sooty hand over the entire city. It can almost be felt, closing in on the senses with the baffling sensation a sleepwalker might have, caught in a whirling, thick fog. Our only light was a feeble gleam from our lanterns as we cautiously picked out way along the broken road. There was not a sound to guide us, except the bark of a dog in the distance.

When we reached the patient, she was not even seriously ill. The poor creature had walked from the country in the intense heat. When at night she began vomiting, the family was sure she had cholera. The epidemic made us see Chihkiang as it really was, Chihkiang in all her paganism and utter lack of humanitarianism. Anyone who was not a member of the immediate family and who contracted the disease was put out of the house and forced to remain on the street until death brought relief, or the Catholic Mission took care of him. The men’s catechumenate, which was closed for the summer, was converted into a temporary hospital. Patients who came to the dispensary and were too sick to leave, as well as those found in the streets, were cared for there.

One evening, as Sister Catherine and I hurried along the road on our way to a patient, we passed a lotus pond. There was a brown object bobbing up and down in the water. We went closer to see what it was and found a cholera victim. To get relief from his raging fever, he had rolled into the pond and was drowning, while his companions stood by and laughed at him. Sister and I waded into the water and between the two of us, we managed to drag him to the bank. There, we baptized him before he died. Saddened by this evidence of cruelty, we continued on our way. Farther along the road, we saw another cholera sufferer, writhing on the ground in torment. Sister Catherine asked one of the crowd (a crowd will gather in China, no matter what the cause) to get her a cup of water. She wanted to give the sick Chinese some medicine. They got the water for Sister readily enough, complimenting her on her lack of fear in touching the patient. But they wouldn’t even give the dying man a cup of water to ease the agony of his fevered body. They had never heard of the Corporal Works of Mercy, but were convinced that some supernatural power was needed to remove the evil of cholera, so they had recourse to every kind of superstition. Dragon parades were a daily happening. As the hideous monster was carried through the streets, accompanied by the clang of gongs and bursting of fireworks, the head of each family went out and reverently burned imitation money and joss sticks before it, to implore its protection.

At this time too, the Chinese built three altars. These were laden with food. Six native priests performed their strange rites there. Then, playing on flutes, they proceeded in single file to the river bank. Here again there were services supposed to give to the water the power to preserve from illness.

In the midst of this paganism, it was consoling to see the fervor of the Christians. One evening, we were at supper when Chang Ruth came into the refectory. We were surprised to see her, for her home was a day’s walk from the city. Someone asked, “Did you come to get the anti-cholera injection?” We were edified to hear her answer, “No! Many people are dying at our place, so I came to go to Confession and Holy Communion.”

Cholera raged for several weeks; then, gradually, it abated. But the toll in lives was extremely high. There were a few homes which had not felt death’s heavy hand.

Ordinarily, there is an undisturbed stillness at night in the interior of China. There are no traffic noises; no voices of crowds returning from places of amusement. There is none of that din which sometimes causes wakeful hours in the United States. During the epidemic though, the explosion of fireworks, the clash of cymbals, the blowing of clarions and the beating of drums disturbed our sleep night after night. Bonzes (Buddhist priests) were performing funeral rites for some departed soul.

The Chinese attitude toward death is curious in its incongruity. We think nothing of saying, “My mother or my father is dead.” While a well-bred Chinese will tell you, “My mother – or my father – as the case may be – is not here,” deliberately avoiding the word death as something too unpleasant to talk about. And yet, when a Chinese is dying, all the near relatives come and talk to him about
what a wonderful funeral they will have for him. The coffin is bought and the last touches put on it in plain sight of the dying person.

The women of the family sit around making mourning apparel for the rest of the family. If they were well-to-do, they will have four or five suits of silks and satins that have been worn on important occasions such as weddings, holidays, etc. These are taken out of trunks and aired. New shoes and stockings are made for the coming funeral.

I remember Sister Magdalena and me visiting a very sick young man. We had been going to see him for some time, for he was dying of tuberculosis and while we could not help him physically, Sister had instructed him and baptized him. One afternoon while we were there, he had a severe hemorrhage and a number of his relatives were there just waiting for him to die.

In the throes of his hemorrhage, they dragged him out of bed, sat him up in a chair, and began to dress him in his silk gown in anticipation of his coming death. They wanted to get him dressed before his bones stiffened, they explained. I nearly died myself when I saw them jerk him out of bed and start dressing him. There wasn't a thing we could do about it though. His soul had been taken care of, so all we could do was stand by and watch them follow this old Chinese custom. It is hardly necessary to add that he died very soon after that shake up.

There are several degrees of mourning in China: one for parents and husbands; another for brothers and sisters; and still another for uncles and aunts. A Chinese mourns for his superiors and equals in relationship, while just a very affectionate husband will don mourning for his wife's funeral. If he doesn't, no one thinks of criticizing him.

The mourning dress itself is the ugliest imaginable. It looks like a coverall with a piece attached which covers the head. This headpiece resembles a high, pointed hood and it is extremely spooky-looking. The material is unfinished, coarse goods, which looks a great deal like burlap. With this outfit on, from the back, mourners look very much like pictures one sees of the Ku Klux Klan. They even cover their shoes with white. For white is the mourning color in China. But it is the very plainness of the undyed cloth and not the color that is the chief idea of Chinese mourning.

For parents, Chinese sometimes mourn for two or two and a half years. During that time, they wear no silk and the men are expected to retire from public life for a time. The first seven weeks, no weddings take place, nor do the members of the family attend the theater. The first seven days after a husband's death, the wife and children sit on the ground and sleep on mats on the floor near the coffin. If the family happens to be wealthy, funeral rites are performed every seven days, until seven rites have been performed seven times. Children and unmarried are not entitled to funerals because they are not ancestors.

If a family has money, an astrologer is called in. It is his business to find a propitious time for the funeral day. He must also give them a time for the funeral procession to start and a time for the coffin to be lowered into its grave. It may be midnight or any time of the day or night he considers lucky. This lucky hour may be days, weeks, months or even years later. In the meantime, the coffin is present either in the home or in a nearby temple.

Funeral notices are sent out by the family to notify relatives and friends when they can come and worship the spirit of the departed Chinese. This notice must also give the date of the deceased's birth and death and a list of his children. When a child dies, he is immediately put into a crude rough box and buried at once.

A typical Chinese funeral procession features innumerable miniature reproductions of every article necessary in Chinese life. These replicas are made of paper and bamboo and are painted all sorts of colors. They include houses, boats, sedan chairs, clothing, paper money, servants, and sometimes soldiers and policeman. It is surprising how realistic they look. If the deceased was an officer, he must have a horse and a bodyguard in the next world. If a merchant, he must have a chief clerk and assistants. A magistrate has to have a secretary and attendants and all must have a house and a sedan chair and carriers.

These things are carried in the procession just ahead of the corpse on the day of the funeral and are given their place among the mourners, musicians, lantern bearers, pagan priests, gong ringers, etc. The paper substitutes are burned at the grave and the pagans firmly believe they take shape again and are of use to the deceased in the next world.

By contrast, the Christian funerals seem the acme of simplicity. When one of the orphans or any person in the mission died, we did the undertaker's work ourselves. The bottom of the coffin is covered with lime, then lined with white paper. When the corpse is placed in the coffin, the lid is sealed all around with white paper and is marked with a cross made from strips of white paper running the length and width of the coffin. Usually, we buried the deceased from the mission after a Requiem Mass the next day to the measured toll of the mission bell, which, especially during epidemics, had become a familiar sound. That bell had come to ring, etc. The paper substitutes are burned at the grave and the mourners, musicians, lantern bearers, pagan priests, gong ringers, etc. The paper substitutes are burned at the grave and the pagans firmly believe they take shape again and are of use to the deceased in the next world.

The routine work of the mission had to go on, as much as the Japs would allow. We had more and more sick patients at the hospital and a greater number of people to visit in our district. I recall visiting one of the Christian families one day and noticed a large quantity of raw meat spread out on the table, the shelves, on benches – any place where it could be placed. It seemed to be everywhere. The woman told me they had killed a water buffalo and were drying the meat. When I showed surprise that they killed a buffalo which might have been of such help with work in the fields, the woman explained, “We don’t kill them unless they are sick.” “But,” I asked, “aren’t you afraid to eat the meat if the buffalo was sick?”

“Oh, we cure them first, then kill them,” she assured me airily. The woman's nonchalant attitude toward possible contaminated meat bothered me. I kept thinking about her all the way home. At the mission, it was rumored there was a Jap raid due at any
moment, so the horror of impending bombs made contaminated buffalo meat relatively unimportant.

CHAPTER 12: 
SHADES OF BETSY ROSS

In February 1938, our church bell rang for the last time calling Christians to Mass. The war between China and Japan was sweeping further into the interior. The local soldiers had been called from Chihkiang to fight against the Japanese and because of the proximity of the new airfield, Chihkiang became a military objective. In lieu of sirens, the ringing of bells and the beating of gongs became warnings of air raids. Our mission bell was borrowed by the city officials to be hung in the center of the city where the four main streets met. Its voice now was to be one of warning, instead of peaceful exhortation.

In spite of the war – or perhaps because of it – Chihkiang continued to progress. In June 1938, we visited the first bank Chihkiang ever knew, the Farmers Bank of China. A real bank with soldiers on guard! It was something we had never expected to see in the city.

One morning, Sister Rosario, accompanied by one of the orphans, was on her way to the bank when the alarm sounded. A Japanese plane flew high over the city – very likely on a reconnaissance flight. Obeying instructions, Sister stood with her companion, close to the building. A soldier noticed the white of Sister’s linens and ordered her to turn her face to the wall, lest the white be seen from the plane. In spite of the seriousness of the situation, she had to laugh, for as she told me afterwards, she felt like a naughty child in school as she followed the soldier’s orders and turned to face the wall.

That same day the American Embassy notified Father William that all American property must be plainly marked with American flags. Father hurried over to the convent to see if the Sisters could make one. Naturally, we assured him we could so directly after lunch, Sister Rosario and I went to the store and bought red, white and blue material. We hurried back to the mission and began measuring the stripes and cutting the stars. It was tedious work to get each star sewed neatly and the blue cloth cut out from the other side, especially since our flag was to measure thirteen by twenty-seven and a half feet. Betsy Ross had reason to be grateful there were only thirteen stars on the flag she made.

The next morning found the sewing machine still humming when the air raid alarm sounded. Father William dashed over to the convent to see if the flag was finished and there we were, still sewing on stars! We displayed it anyway that day and that night we stayed up until it was finished.

The only means of illumination at night in the mission was from the lanterns. One of the priests, finding us in our shadowy community room, on an evening, had dubbed it “Spooky Hollow.” The weak, fitful glow from the lanterns showed as odd a picture as one could see in China. Five white robed Catholic Sisters gathered around a dining room table, their heads bent low as they strained their eyes sewing white stars on the blue field of an American flag. The weak lantern light played across the red, white and blue material, then lingered on the faces of the Sisters as they handled the cloth with the serious pride of Americans in a foreign land.

After the warning by the American Embassy, Father William had given orders that the orphans who were able to run were to leave the mission when the first alarm sounded. When the time came, Sister Rosario went with them. They fled to the hills and hid in the ravines, gullies and even between graves. No one who has not experienced it can possibly understand what it is like to be one of a frightened surging mass of humanity, running madly for a place of safety. Fear lends wings even to Chinese feet. They lunged and jostled against each other in a frantic scramble to reach the hills and safety.

The rest of us stayed at the mission to take care of the blind, the crippled, and the babies. The older girls helped us get them to the air raid shelters. A Sister was assigned to stay with each group. We waited there in the shelters, with the whimpering old women and the crying babies, for the bombs to fall. But nothing happened. Thinking the alarm was a mistake, the Sisters left the shelters and returned to the mission to see if everything was all right there. Just as we reached the door, we heard planes overhead and the sound of machine guns. We tried to persuade ourselves they were our own Chinese planes practicing. When the sounds came
closer and grew louder, we hurried back to the children. As we reached the shelter, the first bombs exploded. I was with the group in the girl’s school. The building had been fortified with sand bags but when the bombs struck, the whole place rocked crazily and I thought the roof was coming down around our heads. I learned later, it was just the repercussion from bombs landing on the airfield. That was the Jap’s only objective that day and they scored a direct hit. Several workmen were killed and the injured were brought to our hospital.

At that time, thank God, air raid victims were few, so Sister Catherine admitted maternity cases to the hospital. These and the victims of air raids kept us busy.

Normally, one does not expect to find very humorous things happening in a hospital, but this was a Chinese hospital, in the midst of war. At dinner in the evenings when the air raid alarm was silent, Sister Catherine’s funny stories were a blessed tonic for our jangled nerves and overtired bodies. One morning, Sister Catherine entered the maternity ward and instead of finding the newborn baby in its crib, she found the baby in bed with its mother and the baby’s seven-year-old sister curled up in the crib.

Since there were so few of us for the work which had to be done, no Sister stayed at the hospital on duty at night, unless it was absolutely necessary. A Chinese nurse was in charge at night.

A woman, who was admitted to the hospital, brought her servant with her. To while away the long hours of the night, the servant busied herself with the tasks she ordinarily would do at home. The next morning, when Sister Catherine came into the ward, a strange sight met her eyes. The room was festooned with garlands of little, fat sausages, strung like round greasy lanterns from the bed to the stove, across to the door and back to the bed—to dry! When Sister Catherine found her voice, she explained to the servant it was very unsanitary to have sausages hanging in a room where there were so many sick. As the woman hurriedly removed her sausage links, she gravely thanked Sister for having warned her in time, before the meat became contaminated.

Another of Sister Catherine’s favorite stories was about the coolie who came to the dispensary, described all the symptoms of a patient and insisted that he wanted medicine for “his inside.” Sister gave him some tablets. He looked at them closely, and when she handed him a glass of water and told him to swallow one, a puzzled expression crossed his usually bland face. He did as he was told, then managed to explain to Sister it was his wife who was sick. He referred to his wife as “his inside,” an expression common enough, but one which Sister had not heard used. The Chinese refer to their wives as “their inside” because they manage the inside affairs of the home.

The coolie’s companion complained of pains in his head. Sister gave him some tablets. He looked at them closely, and when he handed him a glass of water and told him to swallow one, a puzzled expression crossed his usually bland face. He did as he was told, then managed to explain to Sister it was his wife who was sick. He referred to his wife as “his inside,” an expression common enough, but one which Sister had not heard used. The Chinese refer to their wives as “their inside” because they manage the inside affairs of the home.

The coolie’s companion complained of pains in his head. Sister gave him a capsule. He was quite mystified at first and emptied its contents into his hand. When he asked, “Shall I eat the overcoat too?”

As the Japanese penetrated father into China, refugees continued to pour into Chihkiang, each one intent on getting as far into the interior and beyond the reach of the Japs as possible. They were a pitiful sight. Most of them had lost their property and their means of earning a living with the advent of the Japanese. The long trek from the coastal cities to the interior city of Chihkiang had wiped out whatever resources they may have had to start with. Now, they were living as beggars, in old abandoned temples or wherever they could find room. They slept on the riverbanks, in damp rice fields, between rocks high in the hills. Undernourished and exhausted, they coughed and shivered as they lay hunched up under meagre dirty coverings, trying to forget their woes in merciful sleep.

Bishop O’Gara ordered a refugee camp built in Chihkiang to take care of these unfortunates. In obedience to his wish, Father William had some long, one storied buildings erected. The walls and floors were of mud, the roofs of bark. Double-decker beds were built in rows and each family occupied and lived in the tiny space between the beds. A common kitchen was used by all.

Besides caring for these refugees, we used to go out daily to the temples and the rocks in the hills to find those who were staying their just for the night, en route to some other city. Each refugee was destined for a certain place and was obliged to go there. Their gratitude for what help we were able to give them was painful in its pathetic sincerity. We had many baptisms among them, for this kind of life was very hard, especially on the aged and the children. Most of their journeying was done on foot or in a wheelbarrow.

“Mai yu pan fa” (there is no way out of it) was the cry of every refugee. It kept ringing in my ears long afterwards, the mournful wail of a frightened and bewildered people.

At this time too, we heard that Madame Chiang Kai-shek had organized a society to care for war orphans. In addition to caring for those whose parents had been killed in battle or in air raids, this
society sent women into homes in Hankow and other cities when they were about to fall into the hands of the Japanese. These women entreated parents to give up their children and the society would take the responsibility of keeping their youth from falling into the hands of the enemy.

Sister Christina, at the suggestion of Bishop O’Gara, wrote to Madame Chiang, offering to care for twenty-five of the war orphans. We regretted not having space to house more than that. On the first Friday of September, the orphans were at our gates. They ranged in age from six to fifteen years of age. All were dressed in overalls and white waists. Each carried a drinking cup, tooth brush, soap and towel. Some of them had a little bundle of clothes. Miss Fan, their chaperone, called the line into formation. They formed ranks silently and quickly, then turned and bowed deeply to us. Their thirteen-day trip had come to an end. Dusty and dirty, hungry and tired, their hair tousled and faces blistered from the sun, these youngsters gazed at us with an expression that made our hearts ache and tears blind our eyes.

When the excitement of arriving had subsided, the realization that she was an orphan dawned upon one little girl and she burst into tears. One by one, her companions started to sob; tears running down their dirt-streaked faces. In vain, we tried to comfort them, until an elderly Christian woman stepped up and in a tone of authority said, “Don’t cry! Everybody will laugh at you and you will have no ‘face.’” The threat of losing “face” silenced them, but the tears continued to flow. There is only one way to dry weeping Chinese eyes. We brought them into the dining room and gave them steaming bowls of rice, to which on this occasion we added two bowls of vegetables and a bowl of fish.

When their hungry appetites were satisfied, they all had a refreshing bath. Then we coaxed them into the yard. After a few rides on the swings, the sad faces brightened and shy smiles began to turn up the corners of their mouths. One of them whispered that they would like to sing for us. If you wish to hear war songs sung with feeling, then listen to a group of war orphans.

In anticipation of some such emergency, I had stored away bolts of material for clothing and shoes. I knew the war would bring us more and more orphans so I ordered bamboo beds, wooden wash basins, tubs, unbreakable rice bowls, and chopsticks. We were accustomed to receiving four or five orphans at one time, but never before had twenty-five come to us in one group. Although we had the materials, we still had to make clothes for them all. I breathed a sigh of relief when Father William eased the situation by dispensing the children from attending church until I could get their new clothes ready for them. The older girls at the mission, as well as the Sisters, helped with the sewing and so within a week, every girl had a new uniform.

We learned gradually from the children that this particular group had all been in various Hankow institutions which were forced to close when the city was about to fall to the Japanese. Some of the youngsters were wearing medals, which led us to believe they were Catholics. When we questioned them, they said they were not. However, when they started to study doctrine and learned about the Sacrament of Baptism, five of them told Sister Magdalena they had been baptized when they were in danger of death.

A letter was sent to the Canossian Sister whose name they gave as having baptized them. On account of the war, it was months before the reply came. Sister gave the baptismal name of each child and the date of her baptism. She expressed her joy that these, her spiritual children, had come under the care of the Sisters.

Of the twenty-five, eight of the children had some schooling. Our mission school had not been registered so Bishop O’Gara said that these children, as well as our other war orphans of school age, were to attend the public school until we could take care of them.
for a couple of weeks, we were honored one evening by a visit from a Mrs. May, who was in charge of the Children’s Department of the War Relief Work. With her was one of Madame Chiang’s secretaries. They were both very well pleased with the children whom Madame Chiang had placed in our care and they remarked how well and happy the girls looked. Shortly after their visit, Sister Christina received the following letter:

Dear Sister Christina:

...I want to take this opportunity to thank you for the interest you and the other Sisters are taking in these little ones; and also for the marvelous work and sacrificial spirit of all the Catholic Priests and Sisters who help us in our national crisis.

Yours sincerely,
May Ling Soong Chiang.
(Madame Chiang Kai-shek)

CHAPTER 13:
A CHINESE CHRISTMAS

Christmas day dawned with the sun shining brilliantly. The sky was a clear bright blue, almost the shade of a robin’s egg. Clouds like little puffs of white cotton fluff drifted lazily, pushed by the crisp breeze, first in one direction, then in another. Somehow the weather reminded me of my first Christmas in our mission five years before.

I recalled the excited anticipation with which we decorated the church I had one of the orphan girls helping me. The men had gone to the woods for greens and returned with beautiful leaves with red berries, which looked very much like holly. I didn’t know the name of the plant in Chinese, so I told the girl, “Put these leaves in vases on the altar.” Just then, I was called to the convent. When I got back to the church, I discovered that my helper had obeyed me literally and put the leaves in the vases, but had picked off every berry.

What fun it had been getting some Christmas gift ready for each child at the mission. There had been a present for everyone. With limited funds and the inability to get exactly what we wanted in the
stores, ingenuity was highly taxed. That Christmas, there was joyful evidence that the inventive faculty of the Sisters had paid dividends in the delighted shouts of surprised and happy youngsters. The older people expressed their joy in more subdued but nonetheless effective manner. Each one bowed deeply to the Sisters when a gift was placed in his – or her – eager hands.

I remember we went to bed about eight o’clock that first Christmas Eve, tired but happy in the knowledge that we were to hear Midnight Mass and five additional Masses on Christmas day. After we had gone to bed, Father William slipped over to the children’s dining room with a lovely Christmas tree all trimmed for us. Of course, there were no trimmings on it such as one finds in the States. But there were all kinds of cards, nuts, tangerines, little china doll-pins, thread and innumerable trinkets. When we returned from early Mass on Christmas morning, our surprise and delight were equal to those of any small child when he discovers that Santa Claus has come. I still have one of the cards from that first Christmas in Chihkiang.

There is very little snow in our part of China. But that day, it did snow, a light powdery whiteness that the sun melted before noon. Then, there was the Christmas dinner. It was roast goose, since meat in China is for the most part pork. They have very little beef, unless you count a tough buffalo meat, which the Chinese sometimes eat and consider a great treat. That goose! How good it was, with all the trimmings that could be had in Chihkiang. It was a day to keep in memory’s book and the sunshine then was a fitting symbol of a happy day. But this Christmas of 1938, we dreaded the sunshine. A clear day meant air raids. Rain and fog were the best possible gifts we could receive. For on rainy days, the Japs did not come. We had Mass at five o’clock in the morning, so as not to be interrupted by an air raid. There was a good attendance at the Mass too, early as it was. Many had walked in from the country, braving the threat of Jap planes in order to hear Mass on Christmas day. Then, as soon as Mass was over, they hurried back to the country before the Japs came.

The first alarm sounded just as we sat down to breakfast. We gulped down some coffee and got the children to the hills. We planned to have our Christmas dinner in the evening, when we could eat in peace.

Father William had made arrangements for the blind and crippled women to live with Christian families in the country. But they came in for Mass and the most helpless of them asked to be allowed to remain at the mission that night. After the girls left for the hills, I went around the compound to make sure everyone was gone. Usually, I managed to catch up with the children before they reached their destination. This time, though, I discovered a cripple still in the compound. The water carrier had been hired to carry her out in case of an alarm, but he failed to come for her. I dashed out in time to see his going out the mission gate with his own baby in his arms. I asked him if he had forgotten the old woman. He told me he could not carry her. I reminded him of his promise and told him that now it was too late to get anyone else. I begged him to let me carry his baby while he took the old woman. I promised I’d go with him to find a safe place for the woman, after which he could rejoin his family. Finally, he very reluctantly agreed.

I took his solemn baby in my arms and he hoisted the woman onto his back. We left the woman with some friends in a safe spot and I gave him back his sad-eyed baby just as the urgent alarm sounded. Then I hurried off to find our children. The dust from twenty-five Chinese planes taking off from the air field blinded me as I struggled through the whirling red cloud to the hills.

When I reached the hillside, I couldn’t find the orphans. Sisters Catherine and Magdalena saw the hospital patients to safety; then, they joined Sister Rosario and myself. But they had not seen the orphans either. We started out to look for them when we saw in the distance, dozens of Jap planes coming toward us. They were not in their usual V-formation, but flew in a straight line. We waited, crouched down in the gullies of the hills for hours. The planes flew across the city and dropped their bombs on the air field. Hiding there in the tall weeds, we watched the vicious fight between our planes and those of the Japs, until our eyes were blinded by the glittering reflection of the sun on the silver plane wings. Now and then the blue sky was blackened by the smoke from a plane as it went into a sickening spiral dive, plunging dizzyly to earth and crashing with a horrible burst of flame. Gradually, the battle moved further across the sky and when it seemed safe to move, we started looking for the girls. We found them not far away, in a field where we had agreed to go in case of an alarm at night.

By that time, a full moon had risen and we heard the “all clear”
Weaving until his month expired. Then I told him I'd send for him to save his “face,” I kept him busy at other work connected with the job. But things went from bad to worse. He complained that he could not learn. And here he was posing as a teacher! The weaver was a very old man, but he was unusually capable. We thought he would be all right after he got used to teaching. We tried to excuse him, thinking perhaps it was his first experience, but one time, unfortunately, instead of leaving the city, he went to his home. A bomb scored a direct hit there and he was killed instantly. His body was found, after the raid, with both arms and legs covered.

His widow recommended another man to take his place. I had confidence in this woman’s judgement, because of her husband’s ability, so I didn’t inquire further about the new teacher, but engaged him for a month’s trial.

From the beginning, he didn’t seem to understand the work, but we tried to excuse him, thinking perhaps it was his first experience at teaching. We thought he would be all right after he got used to the job. But things went from bad to worse. He complained that this predecessor had put a curse on him and he would have to do something. The mission must have a devil on it.

To meet this scarcity, it was decided that we open an industrial school. In it, the orphans who could not learn in school, but were capable of other work, were taught to spin thread and weave. One of the Christian women had died and her family wished to sell the loom on which she had made cloth. The mission bought it and gaged him for a month’s trial.

The weaver was a very old man, but he was unusually capable. He always left the mission at the first sound of the air raid alarm, but one time, unfortunately, instead of leaving the city, he went to his home. A bomb scored a direct hit there and he was killed instantly. His body was found, after the raid, with both arms and legs covered.

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When I investigated, I found that this man had been an apprentice in one of the cotton factories in town and was dismissed because he could not learn. And here he was posing as a teacher! To save his “face,” I kept him busy at other work connected with weaving until his month expired. Then I told him I’d send for him when I needed him again. From the expression on his face, I think he understood that I had tried to save his “face” and he bowed graciously to me, left, and never made any further attempt to find employment at the mission.

**Chapter 14: Bombs and More Bombs**

In April 21, 1939, eighteen Jap planes raided Chihkiang, utterly destroying about one-third of the city. We had had many bombings outside the city but this was the first time the city itself was hit.

When the alarm sounded, Sister Rosario took all the girls and fled to the hills. Father William and the four remaining Sisters stayed in the mission to care for the blind people, the cripples, and the babies.

In a letter written to her mother, Sister Rosario graphically described the horror of that day.

“…..I shall never be able to find words to describe the pandemonium. There was something merciless in the great stream of people rushing madly through the streets in the dust and heat; swirling through the city gates in a headlong rush for shelter; something terrifying, like the Yangtze in flood.

I held the smallest girls tightly by the hand, urging them along faster, but still it took us a full half hour, running as fast as our legs could carry us, to reach a place that was not too crowded, on a hill overlooking the city.

My little ones – silent only because they were out of breath – safely hidden in the underbrush, I crouched among the thick branches of a low-hanging bush. Fighting to regain my breath, I looked down over the empty streets. I could see our American flag waving proudly over the mission and the words of the Star Spangled Banner kept getting all mixed up with my prayers.

Then the aeroplanes [sic] came. They swooped low like hawks, their wings glittering in the sunlight. The roar of
the engines thundered in my ears. The planes seemed to hang suspended for a moment, then all was smoke and flames, in an ever-widening path across the city.

After the bombers left, I peered anxiously through the clouds of smoke for the flag. It was gone! I saw only the flames and the black smoke-clouds climbing.

It was hours before the guards would allow us to return to the city. The misery of those hours of waiting will live with me always. Would we find anyone alive at the mission? Perhaps at that very moment the priests and Sisters were in their last agony! My Jesus, Mercy! Suppose we were homeless – what would I do with the children? Sacred Heart of Jesus, I place my trust in Thee!

I gathered the whimpering terrified children around me. Together we recited the Rosary. Their responses came haltingly, punctuated with sobs and quick-drawn breaths, as they tried to control their tears and fear.

When the ALL CLEAR sounded, we started back to the city. It was bleak with an agony of smoking black rubble. People searched the ruins of their homes hopelessly, for some lost one. The dead lay everywhere in the mangled earth.

It seemed an eternity before we reached the mission. Broken tiles, plaster and glass littered the compound, but the buildings were still standing.

I hurried to the dispensary and could not restrain the tears as Sisters Christina, Mary Mark, Magdalena, and Catherine each greeted me with a smile as she went about her work caring for the wounded who were everywhere. I never dreamed so many patients could be crowded into that four-room building. Out in the yard lay the dead and dying, while their relatives bewailed the tragic death of a loved one………"

While Sister Rosario was running to the hills with the girls, Sister Catherine helped the cripples to an air raid shelter, Sister Magdalena led the blind to another, while I gathered all the babies together with me in a third.

Watching from my dark, little dugout hidden beneath the trees, I saw Sister Christina leave her shelter and dash across the yard, just as the bombers appeared overhead. Before I could find my voice to call her, she had disappeared into the church. The gleaming sun shone mockingly down on the cross atop the church. I breathed a prayer for Sister’s safety. The next instant, a deafening explosion shattered the air. The earth trembled under our flimsy shelter. The rumble of falling timbers and the staccato torrent of flying shrapnel and debris completely drowned the terrified screams of the babies clinging to my skirts.

A huge demolition bomb struck the post office, just two doors from the mission and the concussion tore the roof of the church away. Through the thick pall of smoke and dust, I could no longer see the church, but I heard Father William’s voice as he shouted, “Sister Christina!”

Father had gone to the bell tower and from there had seen Sister Christina as she dashed into the church. She knelt in one of the rear pews praying and on an impulse, had moved closer to the altar, kneeling within the sanctuary.

When she heard the explosion, she lay flat on the floor against the sacristy wall, hardly daring to look as the roof crashed in directly over the pew in which she had been kneeling just a few moments before. Plaster, splintered beams, broken tile, and glass littered the church. Stunned with the realization of her miraculous escape, Sister tremulously found her way through the sacristy door into the yard, without hearing Father William as he rushed into the ruined church through blinding smoke, calling her name. In the yard, she called out and was answered by Sister Catherine.

After waiting to see if the bombers meant to return, we all began to straggle out of our hiding places into the compound. I was dazed by the destruction all around us.

Our gatemen made the rounds of all the buildings and returned to report that every window in the convent and the girls’ school was broken. In one of the classrooms, every board in the floor was ripped from its place, but there was not a single casualty among our mission people. “But they broke our new teapot!” the gateman added ruefully.

The moans of the injured, outside the mission, mingled with the cries of those mourning their dead. All that afternoon and far into the night, the wounded and dying were brought to the mission for treatment on cots or on blankets in the yard.

Father Gregory had left Chihkiang for a visit to the United States and had gone just one day’s journey when he heard of the
raid and returned “to bury you,” he said. Instead, he stayed to help us take care of the injured.

Many died that night. The next morning, as many patients as were able to be moved and had a place to go to were carried out, for we feared another raid and they did not want to be found in the city again. All day there was a constant stream of patients in and out of the mission for treatment. The sight of the ugly ragged cuts from flying shrapnel made me heartsick. I could not even drink the cup of strong coffee someone forced into my hand.

As usual, after a heavy raid, rain followed and every building in the mission leaked. Walls and ceiling – the board ones – were repaired and the windows boarded up. As soon as the weather permitted, new tiles were laid on the roofs.

For several days thereafter, the streets looked as though it were Chinese New Year. Every shop was closed. Scarcely a soul was seen on the desolate, torn streets. The moist, red earth was honeycombed with shell holes and gaping bomb craters. Charred stumps of broken buildings still smoldered in the brooding silence. Over and over again, I heard the story, “I ran when the siren sounded. When I returned, I had nothing but the clothes I am wearing.”

One old woman refused to leave the remains of her wrecked home. She doggedly tried to set up housekeeping again in the ruins, using a thin piece of bamboo matting for a roof.

All those who had any relatives or friends in the country went to them. The others took their children and all the earthly possessions they could carry – if they were fortunate enough to have anything left – and went to the hills early each morning, returning to their homes after dark.

For a month, we did the same. Packing a sandwich for each of our charges as well as ourselves, we roamed the hills all day long, like gypsies, until darkness allowed us to return. Soon after, even the safety of darkness was taken from us, for the Japs began bombing the city at night. One night we had two alarms, one at nine o’clock and another after midnight.

The night alarms were the most terrible horror of all: the panting, pushing crush of people in the inky black night, as they all tried to get through the city gate at once; a sudden scream as some unfortunate tripped and fell beneath the feet of the onrushing terrified mob; my fear of losing some of the children in the darkness or having them trampled upon. Such were the terrors of the night.

After that horrible night of two alarms, we packed up a few belongings and took our girls to the refugee camp across the river. At least we would not be so likely to be killed in the stampede over the bridge when the siren sounded. There, the younger ones played while the older orphans studied or sewed. We carried the medicine kits with us and cared for any patients who came to us. It was difficult to find even the sick at home these days. Those who were unable to walk were carried to the country.

We continued to make our sick calls outside the city. Gradually, the people returned to the city and resumed their work.

Father William bought a piece of property adjoining the refugee camp. There was a Chinese shack on it. He bought another house and had it moved to the new property in sections and reassembled after it got there. We used the shack as a convent.

There were no glass windows – just thin paper pasted over the lattice to serve as windows – and the walls did not quite reach the roof. One of the mud plastered huts in the refugee camp was converted into a hospital. A mud wall separated the two houses.

The former occupants had kept their water-buffalo in one of the rooms on the ground floor. Father had a board floor laid and the walls papered with thin yellow paper. Each night I fell asleep as though it were Chinese New Year. Every shop was closed. Scarcely a soul was seen on the desolate, torn streets. The moist, red earth was honeycombed with shell holes and gaping bomb craters. Charred stumps of broken buildings still smoldered in the brooding silence. Over and over again, I heard the story, “I ran when the siren sounded. When I returned, I had nothing but the clothes I am wearing.”

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After that horrible night of two alarms, we packed up a few
That entire summer it seemed we did nothing but run, run, run from enemy planes. Hardly a day passed without at least one raid. We had bomb jitters for certain. One particularly heavy raid destroyed most of the buildings around our new quarters but our houses were only slightly damaged by concussion.

A temple in a field near us had been stocked with ammunition. A corner of the temple was hit and fires started. After the bombers left, we returned from our shelter and while we were all working in the hospital, we heard a terrific explosion. The fire in the temple had reached the ammunition! Nothing was left but the gate. Bullets and shrapnel rained down in our yard as we went from cot to cot, binding up cuts and treating burns. The rough wood of our temporary home was scored by vertical traces of bullets.

We had left the orphans in the adjoining yard, thinking the danger was over. I ran across to them and found them huddled together near the wall, like so many little chickens, badly frightened but unharmed.

Some days later, the Japs began dropping time bombs that might explode anywhere from six to forty-eight hours after they landed. So, there was just no relief from the tension. The danger in Chihkiang became so great that Bishop O’Gara finally ordered Sister Christina and me to take twenty-two of the smaller orphans to Kienyang. This was one of the Passionist’s missions, about thirty miles over the mountains.

It was a happy day for us when we tucked in the little ones – two in a chair – and started out, accompanied by Father Germaine. It was a sad day too, for our having to leave the other priests, Sisters and orphans behind.

When the mountain passes became very steep, our carriers asked the grown-ups to get out and walk. I did not mind the enforced mountain climbing for the day was sunny and warm. The wind, sighing through the bamboo trees and scrub oak, moved in wraith-like swirls around me. I almost forgot the horror of the past months: the sickening thump of bombs, the screams breaking the silence between raids. In the peaceful serenity of the mist-hung peaks, I felt absurdly safe.

**Chapter 15: Homeless in Chihkiang**

My four weeks of comparative peace in our temporary home in Kienyang were interrupted by a message saying that I was needed back at the mission. I decided that Sister Rosario would take my place at this retreat while I returned to Chihkiang, so the same chair which brought Sister Rosario to Kienyang took me back to the mission.

I had been back at the mission just about a month when in the early afternoon of September 4, 1940, the urgent alarm sounded. There was just time to get the orphans across the river to a hiding place, when we heard the bombers approaching the city.

The angry throb of the motors this time was deeper than usual, a tone of ominous significance to our ears, accustomed as they now were to listening for the approach of enemy craft. We know what the deep notes meant. Each Jap plane was carrying a full load of bombs! As the planes came into sight, it seemed to our terrified eyes as though the sky were filled with them. We watched them dive out of the clouds and swoop low over the city, dropping their bombs like black hail. Their target was the city that day and the earth belched fire and smoke every time a bomb struck.

For three hours, we watched building after building crumble under the impact of the terrific bombing the city took. Through the blaze of fire, I could see the white inner walls of the convent instead of the grey brick on the outside, so I knew our convent had been hit. How badly, I could not tell from where I was. The whole city was ablaze from incendiary bombs. How much damage had been done to our convent? Would we be able to use it? Finally, the suspense became too much to endure. I had to know! Sister Magdalena and I with some of the older girls started across the river, back to the mission. When we reached the city, it was a mass of burning debris. We walked over mounds of stone and smoldering wood piled high as a house. Climbing and struggling, we searched for the mission. It was hard to find among the ruins. Our shoes were scorched and the hems of our habits were singed before we managed to locate what remained of our mission.

The smell of iodoform and cod liver oil indicated where the hospital had stood. The convent had received a direct hit. Half of it was gone. One wall was standing but that too looked as though it were going to collapse at any moment. The embroidery school was a mass of plaster and brick. Bits of our American flag were found among the debris. The rectory was so badly damaged from concussion, it had to be torn down. One of the walls in the mission was destroyed and another that we didn’t know existed was unearthed.

When the priests saw us coming home, they ordered us to leave immediately as they were afraid we would be trapped. Fires were making rapid headway and the whole city seemed to be a great circle of raging flame. Each girl grabbed a piece of her bedding on the way out. Sister Magdalena saw a sheet and filled it with what-
ever she happened to get her hands on. Then she hurried to the catechumenate with the girls.

When the fires had died down a little, we came back. Dazed, we wandered through the mission, hardly believing the havoc our eyes took in was real. Buildings, furniture, dishes were blown to bits. We could not get into some parts of the compound, for beams, brick and plaster barred the way. We did manage to squeeze in through a little outside kitchen and after hunting among the ruins there, we found some coffee. The lid had been blown off and the can was twisted and bent, but the coffee was still usable. We brewed some but none of us could manage to drink more than half a cup. There was complete destruction everywhere we looked.

Most of the compound wall was down, so a watchman was hired to stand guard that night. We spent the night in a room in the girls’ school but no one could sleep. Strained nerves jumped and throbbed. In my ears, the awful sound of bombs crashing echoed and reverberated through the long hours of the night. I tossed restlessly hour after hour, wondering how to bring order out of the chaos around us. A nerve in my face twitched maddeningly. I knew such weariness then, as no amount of physical labor could engender. That worried me! I wondered if I were going to be ill, for I had never experienced such utter physical exhaustion before. I prayed that God would spare me from sickness just then, because there was such a lot of work to be done and my strength was needed now, as never before. I began to say the Rosary, asking the Blessed Mother to help me that night and in the days to come. While I fingered the beads of the third decade, I heard one of our girls scream in terror. Bandits! That was the first thought that leaped to my mind as I hurried to the room where the girls were sleeping.

I was so many of our fears, the threat of bandits proved this time happily unfounded. Reaction from the shock of the bombings had set in and the poor girl was just having nightmares. No wonder! Nerves can stand only so much strain and ours had been tried to the limit of their endurance that day. Finally we quieted her and I left when she started to fall asleep again, her breathing interrupted now and then by a convulsive sob.

Daylight was beginning to break when I came back to our room. With the dawn, the rain began a pelting furious downpour that drenched one completely in five minutes. The sky was a dismal grey with large threatening clouds, like huge black veils hanging massed over the mountains in the distance. Ordinarily, it would have been a depressing day. Now the rain and the black clouds were good omens to those of us at Chihkiang that day, for it meant surcease from the relentless Jap bombs.

The other Sisters were going quietly about the room, faces pale and eyes strained and circled with weariness, but each wore a calm smile as she bade me good morning. Somehow their smiles made my throat ache and I had to blink a couple of times to chase a sudden mist from my eyes. If ever I have seen courage in the midst of trial, it was that morning when my companions greeted me with a smile.

We hurried through what breakfast we were able to manage and began the work of trying to bring order out of confusion. It was almost impossible to hire workmen for many days, for everyone was busy clearing up the debris in his own home and trying to repair or rebuild it. It was many days before all the rubble in our mission was cleared away. Meanwhile, we worked as hard as we could to get some of the houses in shape for living and continuing our work.

The girls’ school was converted into a convent for us. The church was the first place to be repaired of course. Until it was ready, Mass was said each day in the chapel of the house in which...
we had found refuge six months of the previous year. When we vacated it, it was used as a women’s catechumenate.

Bishop O’Gara visited Chikiang to ask if the Sisters wished to move temporarily to Kaotsun, a neighboring Passionist Mission. He realized our nerves were wearing thin. With his kindly understanding, he thought we might wish to leave the mission in order to rest and recover from the shock of the many bombings to which we had been subjected. But each of the Sisters preferred to remain at her post. There was too much to be done to leave.

It was during this visit of the Bishop’s that our war orphans asked his Excellency’s permission to be baptized. Their request was granted. So shortly afterwards, they were baptized and confirmed. Their reception of these Sacraments had been delayed purposely, because the Children’s War Relief Society still had a claim on them and it was feared after the war, they would be taken from us and placed in circumstances which would make it difficult for them to live up to their religion.

On the heels of the Bishop’s visit, we celebrated the Golden Jubilee of Sister Christina’s life in religion, on the October 2, 1940. Because of the war, Sister requested that there be no celebration, but we just couldn’t allow that day to pass unnoticed. There had to be some festivity for such an occasion. So at six-thirty that morning, a High Mass was celebrated. Many of the Christians received Holy Communion for Sister’s intention. After Mass, there were fireworks and every Christian in Chikiang came to Sister Christina to congratulate her on reaching this great milestone in her life.

That afternoon, the children gave an entertainment for Sister. There were songs and drills done with a fervor and exactitude that was a token of their deep affection for this fine Sister. This was followed by Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

Then, the native women, who were very fond of Sister Christina, asked to be allowed to prepare a Chinese banquet for her. There were just forty-eight different dishes served. We recognized the duck and chicken, because they were served whole – even the head and feet were on the dish, as is customary in China. I doubt if many of our Sisters will be able to say they had a Chinese banquet on their Golden Jubilee.

Meanwhile, as so much of our mission had to be rebuilt, it was decided that one of the Sisters would return to the United States to explain the needs of the mission. Sister Catherine was chosen to go. Two Sisters of Charity came to the mission in Chikiang and all three were to leave from there. Before the war, those leaving Chikiang went by way of Juanling, down to Hankow and from there to Shanghai. But on account of the war, those places were closed to travel. The route now was Chikiang to Hangyang, then to Kweilin. From Kweilin, they would take a plane to Hong Kong. At Hong Kong, they embarked for America.

For four days, Sister Catherine and the two Charity Sisters waited impatiently for word to leave. On the fifth day, about eleven o’clock in the morning, they received word to be at the bus station in half an hour. Sister Catherine was working in the dispensary when the word came. She hurried over to the convent, taking off her white hospital coat as she hastened, ate some lunch with the Charity Sisters, and was at the station in little more than twenty minutes.

At the station, they met a Passionist priest who was to travel to Hong Kong with them. There was just time to have their luggage examined minutely by the soldiers, their passports checked, when the mail truck started to leave. Hurriedly, their luggage was thrown into the truck and they managed to climb into the truck and sit on the luggage, which was to be their “Pullman chair” for the journey.

That same day, the travelers reached Tung Koo, about thirty miles from Chikiang, where they spent the night. There was some talk about the truck not leaving the next day and the Sisters were worried. Because of the war, news was all bad. With each passing hour, it became more imperative to reach Hong Kong without delay.

Very early the next morning, the Charity Sisters looked out of the window of their room and saw a comfortable looking Red Cross bus in front of the hotel. Immediately, the Sisters made arrangements to continue their journey in the Red Cross bus. At first, the owner of the bus seemed reluctant to allow them to ride in it. But after much bargaining, it was finally agreed that they could continue the trip in the bus. Their luggage was transferred and they started on their way.

In the middle of the afternoon, after riding miles and miles along lonely mountain roads, the priest who was with them suddenly noticed a number of buses off to the side of the road. There were a lot of people standing nearby, just milling around. As the Sisters’ bus came closer, the priest said, “Either there has been an accident or this is a holdup.” They reached the spot a few minutes later. Several Chinese with machine guns stepped up to the bus and told the passengers to get out and put up their hands. This was done quickly and in fear and trembling by all on board. The bandits threw all the luggage into the road and the passengers were ordered to open each bag and suitcase.

Grinning maliciously, the bandits pawed over the contents of the Sisters’ bags, taking everything that caught their fancy. Sister Catherine had a new habit she was saving to wear when the boat docked in America. She was wearing an old one, for the travelling
conditions in China in those days were not easy on clothing. One of the bandits took her new habit and started walking away with it. Sister nearly fainted. She flew after him, forgetting to be afraid in her indignation at losing her new habit. She caught up with him and begged the rascal to give it back to her. She told him it was too small to be of any use to him. After talking and arguing with him for a long time, to her surprise, he did give it back.

Then, they tried to take the Sisters’ passports, but they just refused to give them up. Without passports, there was no hope of getting any farther in China. All three of the Sisters were carrying watches belonging to the other Sisters and priests at the mission to be repaired in Hong Kong. The bandits took every watch. They took the Sisters’ shawls, even their shoes.

When their shoes and watches and shawls had been taken from them, the passengers were lined up to be searched for money. The Sisters wear two large pockets on a band on the inside of their habit. As soon as they realized their money was going to be taken from them, they left a little money in a small pocketbook where the thieves could find it and the bulk of the money, they put in one of the pockets on the band. Through a slit on the pocket opening of their habits, they managed to turn the large pockets front and back, instead of wearing them as they always did, to the left and right sides of the habit. Everyone knew the bandits were wise enough to realize that foreigners would not be travelling without some money.

With hearts thudding with dread, the Sisters stood and watched the searchers approaching them. The robbers felt around the sides of the pockets and found the money which the Sisters had purposely left there. There was much excitement and a great deal of disappointment among them at the small amount of money they found. Their leader was enraged because there was not more. He growled out an angry order to his men. With stiff faces, his underlings came to the Sisters again and took off their headdresses, hoping to find something hidden in their bonnets. But they found nothing! Puzzled, they went back to their chief and reported that fact.

Meanwhile, the Sisters were still standing in line, wondering if their hiding place was going to be discovered after all. Luckily, it wasn’t. The Passionist priest had a book of checks that had been signed, the amounts to be filled in as he needed them to buy supplies for the mission. He had the presence of mind as he got out of the bus, to wrap the checkbook in a handkerchief and throw it into the ditch at the side of the road. All the bandits got from him were his overcoat and a good suit of clothes.

After the thieves had taken everything they could find, their victims were told not to move or make a sound until the signal was given. While they scrambled up a hill, one of their number covered the frightened passengers with a machine gun. As soon as the last of the gang was safely on the top of the hill, they fired shots into the air. That was the signal that the bus could start on it way.

The holdup was reported at the next town but the passengers were told that since it did not happen in that district, the police there could do nothing about it. All in all, our Sisters and the priest lost some money, watches and clothing, but their strategy saved the bulk of their passage money.

None of them realized the seriousness of the situation until afterwards. At the time, they were too intent on outwitting those fellows to stop to think they might just as easily have been killed. Somehow that never entered their heads at the time. As Sister Catherine declared with some heat afterwards, “I had been in China ten years, and this was my first experience with those much talked of bandits. And it would have to be on my way out of China too!”

Chapter 16: Pests and Pestilence

While Sister Catherine and her party were undergoing the horrors of a bandit attack, we at the mission were being plagued by a different but nonetheless terrifying experience. After our convent had been destroyed, we had to use an old Chinese building for temporary sleeping quarters while our convent was being rebuilt. Like everything else in the city, this wooden building had been bombed too, but there were still parts of it which were usable. The first few nights, we slept wherever we could put a bed. Then after several days, we had one section of the floor partitioned off into four small rooms so that each Sister could have some privacy. The board partition did not quite reach the floor or the ceiling, but that
didn’t matter. It was much better than being in various corners of an old building. We gave the section a thorough cleaning and moved in.

As long as the weather was cool, everything was fine and we were grateful to have this place in which to sleep. But suddenly we got a spell of very unseasonably, warm weather. We were careful to screen the beds with mosquito-netting, for there are no screens in China. When it is warm, it seems as though the darkness is a signal for myriads of every kind of flying or crawling insect to besiege the poor sleeper. The hum of whirling wings, the buzz of the angry mosquito vainly trying to penetrate the closed nettings, are all hazards, which in China one must learn to cope with, but there was one ordeal we had yet to encounter.

The horror began shortly after midnight on the second night of the hot weather. Out of the old wood, streams of bedbugs crawled, slithering under the nettings onto our mattresses, burrowing between sheets, crawling over us there in the darkness, in a silent relentless advance. Sick with horror, I brushed them from my arms, feeling the prick and then the welt as one other drew blood. I heard one of the Sisters cry out in disgust, as she lit her lamp. No wonder! These dark red, crawling horrors were massed on the woodwork like bunches of grapes on a stem. There must have been thousands of them and, as they squirmed under the light, we could see the writhing mass on the wood, trying to evade the beam from Sister’s lamp.

Tired as we were, it was impossible to sleep any more that night. There was no other place we could stay, so somehow we had to get rid of these pests. But how? We finally decided to smoke them out by burning sulphur.

The minute it was daylight, we ripped all the bedclothes from the beds and stripped the room of everything which was not infested. Sister Christina had some rock sulphur in the dispensary and she figured out how much we would need for each room. We intended to sleep on tables and chairs the next night while the bugs were being exterminated.

That whole day we spent clearing out the rooms, sealing up the windows and every crack we could find. Then, just before an early supper, we lighted the sulphur. In the first room, there was a little iron stove. We put the sulphur in a porcelain face basin and placed it on the stove. Since the partition did not reach the ceiling, we felt this would suffice for all the rooms. In the bottom of the basin, we had hot ashes to melt the sulphur.

Fortunately, the weather was warm enough to make sitting in the yard comfortable. From where we sat, we could see the blue flame of the burning sulphur in shadow against the window.

When it grew dark, I noticed that the flame seemed larger than it had before. Its shadows on the window became more and more elongated as I watched. I became uneasy. I slipped into the building to take a peek at the room. I opened the door a tiny bit and gasped in fright. I could see the burning sulphur dripping down onto the floor. It was so hot, the sulphur had burned a hole through the porcelain basin and the floor boards had caught fire.

I flew out of the building to tell the other Sisters. We pumped water from the well and hurried back to the burning floor. The water raised so much smoke and dust from the ashes, we could see nothing in the room. Still, we had to get that basin out before the whole place caught fire.

With water soaked towels over our mouths and noses, we went back to get the basin. Then, our eyes got the benefit of the blinding sulphur fumes. Eyes smarting and tears streaming down our cheeks, choking and strangling, we at last got our hands on the basin. We threw it out the nearest window and then managed to reel out into the yard. We were a sight, as we gasped and panting, trying to gulp air into our tortured lungs. The sulphur fumes made one of the Sisters ill and having to sleep that night on a table only added to her discomfort.

When we were able to see again and some of the smoke had been expelled from our lungs, the thought of the Bishop’s reaction to our attempts at extermination made me laugh, in spite of my tiredness and the queasy feeling in my stomach. I could just hear Bishop O’Gara say, “Well, what the Japs don’t do, the Sisters themselves will.” Thank God, he never learned anything about that exciting night. And we never saw another bedbug in the place from that day on.

After that bout with the pests, I was better able to appreciate Yang Steve’s estimate of a Jap raid. It seems that Yang Steve and some of his friends were sitting on the hillside waiting for the “all
clear” to sound. They city had been heavily raided by Jap planes and the boys were looking down on the bombed-out buildings. They were discussing the damage done to the city and their homes.

“They did a lot of damage,” said Steve. “But they did a good thing too.”

“What was the good thing?” asked his friends in surprise.

“Well,’ Steve answered, “I figure there must have been over fifty or sixty bushels of bedbugs burst up in the fires after that last raid.”

Sister Magdalena had never quite recovered from an illness of the previous summer. The constant air raids had worked additional havoc on her overstrained nervous system. It seemed best for Sister to return to America. She left soon after the fire in our temporary house, with several Grey Sisters of the Immaculate Conception, who were returning to Canada.

Just shortly after Sister Magdalena left, we were threatened with famine. The weather that summer had been so hot and the rain so scarce, the rice fields were dried up. The price of rice soared to such exorbitant sums, few people could afford to buy it. Novenas of Masses and other prayers were offered by the Christians, begging God to send rain. The pagans proclaimed a fast, and no fish, meat or eggs were sold for five days. The south gate of the city was closed to keep out the hot air in the hope that rain would fall. Whether this had anything to do with bringing rain or not, I don’t know, but it rained all right. There were torrents of it! So much so as to produce a flood. The river rose until it was a foot below the floor of the bridge. The people of Chihkiang boasted that the bridge was protected by a stone cow, which stood in the river near the bridge. Floods had never washed it away. Reds and bandits had tried in vain to destroy it. When Jap bombs dropped all around it and did not hit the cow, the people were confirmed in their belief in the stone cow.

In many places, the city wall had been hollowed out for air raid shelters. This weakened the wall in one place and the constant heavy rain caused it to collapse. With its collapse, four houses were pushed into the river. With the houses went furniture, animals, coffins, and even some people. A group of men stood on the bridge trying frantically to rescue those who floated along.

One man in the water was holding onto a large basket filled with bolts of cloth. The basket was pulling him under, but he clung to it nevertheless. The men threw a pole to him, shouting for him to hang onto it. He grabbed the pole but refused to drop his basket. They told him he was too heavy to pull up with the basket of wet cloth. Gasping, he managed to tell them that his wife and family were depending on him. If he lost this basket of cloth, they would have no means of making a living. Then, as though the effort of explaining his action had sapped his last strength, he let go of the pole and went down with his basket of cloth.

China has suffered so much from floods, the Dragon Feast [Dragon Boat Festival] has become one of the big feast days in their year. It is on the fifth day of the fifth month, so they call it the DOUBLE FIFTH feast. Similarly, they call the anniversary of their Republic, which falls on the tenth day of the tenth month, the DOUBLE TENTH.

The Dragon Feast is based on an old legend. Many, many years ago, there was a terrible flood and the water remained at flood level for days. The people believed there was a dragon down under the water, which was pushing the water higher and higher. In order to placate this monster, they made little three-cornered cakes from ground rice. They wrapped them in leaves that look very much like our corn husks, only smoother. The cakes are steamed in the leaf, then tied on a long blade of grass. They are sweetened with a little brown sugar and they look like cream of wheat that has been cooked very thick and then left to congeal. Well, these cakes are thrown into the water to the dragon. A short time afterward, the water began to abate. So they believe the dragon liked the cakes and stopped pushing up the water.

The custom of throwing cakes to the dragon prevails to this day. On the feast day there are boat races and the boats are shaped like dragons. Prizes are given to the winner. Crowds of people stand around on the bridge and the river bank, waiting for the races. Everybody is dressed in his or her very best and brightest colors. They munch away at the rice cakes all day long and think they are having a grand time. But feasts and floods were wiped out of their minds with the news which startled the world on the December 8, 1941.

Our retreat closed on the evening of December 7. The next morning just after we returned from Mass, Miss Welch was waiting at the convent to see us. We were very much surprised to find her there at such an early hour and wondered what could be the reason for her call. She had visited us frequently and we always enjoyed her company, but now we were apprehensive. She did not keep us

Sister Magdalena Ivan (second from the left) returned to the U.S. with Grey Sisters of the Immaculate Conception

Source: Sisters of St. Joseph of Baden Archives
waiting long for an explanation.

She had her radio on for the early morning news and learned that PEARL HARBOR HAD BEEN BOMBED. She knew we would be at church then and would not have heard the broadcast.

Sister Christina hurried over to tell the priests, who immediately tuned in on their radio. For the rest of the day, we listened anxiously for the news. Our hearts were very heavy at the thought of America at war. We knew what it was like! In the rain of bombs falling about us, to know that America was at peace had been heartening. Now she too was caught in the great conflagration.

For the Chinese, December 8 was a day for rejoicing. Their one and only thought was expressed by a coolie who came to the mission yard that same afternoon. “Now,” he exulted, “America will have to enter the war and help us fight the Japs.

**Chapter 17:**

**GIs Play Santa Claus**

In the spring after the bombing of Pearl Harbor an AVG man was sent to set up a radio station in Chihkiang. He was a tall, heavy-set man, with a hearty sense of humor. Standing beside the little Chinese, he looked immense. The natives seemed to think if he were a specimen of the American Army, the war would be over in no time at all.

His was the first jeep to stand at the mission gate, but it was by no means the last. Soon afterwards, our American boys became a welcome and familiar sight in the streets of Chihkiang. Members of the 14th Air Force and the 10th Weather Squadron came and remained until the end of the war. They were all fine boys and we were very proud of them. They lived at the hostel in the city but spent much of their free time at the priests’ house where they were always welcome.

One afternoon, Father William hurried over to the convent to ask if I would bake a pie and make a salad, as he had invited some American soldiers for dinner. It was a pleasure to do something for our boys. Sister Christina and Sister Rosario came out to the kitchen with me to help prepare apples for the pie and make the salad. After dinner, Father brought his guests over to the convent to meet us. They were pleased to find American missionaries in Chihkiang and some of them had never met nuns before. They very gallantly declared the pie was delicious; in fact, they said the entire meal was the best they had had since coming to China. In the course of the conversation, the Commanding Officer asked about the food we ate and where we got it. There were many things we had not been able to get for some time. Butter and coffee, for instance, were impossible to obtain.

The next evening, two of the boys came to the mission. Sister Christina and I were in the yard at the time and they stopped to talk for a few minutes, before going to the priests’ house. One of them pulled a can of butter out of his pocket, saying with a broad grin, “The General sent this to the Sisters!” The other boy produced a tin of coffee saying that was from the rest of the men.

We were most grateful and I promised to send a note of thanks. The lad who had given us the butter repeated with a sly grin, “Remember, Sister, the butter is from the General.”

The following morning, I wrote my “thank you” note and asked Father William to have it delivered at the hostel. When Father saw the envelope addressed to the General, he laughed heartily, explaining that there was no General there, just a Commanding Officer. When I saw our prankish friend the next time, I took him to task about his little joke. He very sheepishly explained, “Oh well, Sister, he is sort of a General – a general nuisance!”

There were times when the boys did not have enough work to keep them busy so they offered to do anything they could to help around the mission. One of them repaired all of our watches. We had not been able to have anything like that done for a long time and it was uncertain how much longer it might be before the watches could be put in repair. Two others put an extension of Father William’s radio in the convent and supplied us with earphones. It was wonderful to hear the words “This news is coming to you from the United States, San Francisco, California.”

After the American fighter planes landed on the Chihkiang airfield, the Japs were afraid to come by day, so they confined their visits to nights. A raid at any time is a terrifying thing but when it is accompanied by an air battle and that at night, one is forced to realize that one’s only hope of survival is in God’s hands.

The Japanese announced over the radio that they were going
to bomb Chihkiang on July 4. They came the night before, to keep that promise. The first alarm had sounded about five-thirty in the afternoon. But since it was raining, we thought it unnecessary to take the children out. The enemy planes would hardly come that night. But when the URGENT sounded and we heard the American planes take off, we knew it was too late to run.

The Jap planes came in flying low over the mission. We dashed into the house and flung ourselves on the floor – children and Sisters huddled together close to the wall. Anti-aircraft guns started their RAT TAT TAT and so low were the planes that we could hear distinctly the bullets striking the wings. Great searchlights stabbed the darkness with long penetrating rays, illuminating the sky with the brightness of day. The dogfight between our planes and those of the Japs began with a pushing, furious attack. We watched and prayed.

We used to count the planes as they left the field on a mission and send a prayer heavenward for their safe return. Then as they came straggling back, we would recount them and when one of them failed to return, it was almost like a death in the family.

One of the American aces who came to visit the mission quite frequently made a point of asking the prayers of the Sisters. “The Chief,” he was called, and I never knew him by any other name. He was an American Indian; tall, rangy, and bronzed with straight black hair and high cheekbones that bespoke his ancestry. His great-grandfather was a full blooded Sioux.

“The Chief” was not a Christian; in fact, he vehemently declared that he was “nothing,” but he was very earnest as he said, “When you see my planes go out over the convent, Sisters, give me a serious thought.” He was squadron-leader and took his responsibilities very seriously. After painstakingly explaining to me just what being a squadron-leader meant, he concluded by gravely stating, “When I waggle my wings and my boys don’t follow, well, when I get back, they get a serious talking to.” I could well imagine!

One very successful pilot always came to Father William after completing a mission. Giving Father a Mass offering, he would say, “Please say a Mass for the Japs, Father. I just had to kill some more.”

Sergeant “Slim,” a great lanky boy from Maryland, loved chocolate fudge. He would come ambling through the mission yard with a package of sugar and cocoa tucked under one arm and a can of milk in the other and wait around while Sister Christina made the fudge, all the while regaling us with funny stories about the “gang” back home.

The soldiers were impressed with the work we were doing for the “poor little orphan kids” and wanted to know what they could do to help. At Christmas time, they left a huge box on the dining room table. It was filled with chewing gum, magazines, books, gloves, and handkerchiefs – anything they could get at the PX. Things that had been sent to them from home were there too: candy, coffee, soap, Dutch Cleanser, Brillo pads, butter, Ivory Flakes, even vigil lights.

Our orphans were delighted and very eager to reciprocate. They were busy as bees, making all kinds of souvenirs the boys wanted to send home: silk scarfs and Chinese shoes – embroidered silk ones. The girls were pleased to know that their work was being sent to America.

One group of men from the Air Force brought in a discarded parachute they wished to have made into souvenirs. The girls unraveled out the fine silk threads painstakingly and made socks, but the socks were not so beautiful because there were too many knots in the thread. That same silk was probably produced by silkworms in China, woven in America, and made into parachutes. It saved American lives in China and was ripped apart by Chinese orphans and American Sisters and made into souvenirs to be taken back to America.

Many of the GIs wanted jade bracelets to take home. Real jade is not easy to find for there are so many imitations. One of the mission women knew of a family who might be persuaded to sell some jade bracelets to the soldiers. At the GIs urging, she brought the jade to them for inspection and it was beautiful, perfect jade. Those same bracelets had a history. The family was in straitened circumstances and when they heard of the demand for real jade, they exhumed the body of their grandfather and removed his valuable bracelets to sell to the Americans.
A quality we came to know and admire in these boys was their esprit de corps. In one instance we knew about, after the explosion of an oxygen tank which had been struck by an enemy bullet, the order was given to bail out. One of the crew was so badly injured he could not bail out, so his companions elected to stay with him. Thank God their guardian angels were on the job and they all landed safely.

We could not help contrasting their loyalty with the lack of it shown to the many dying Chinese soldiers we had seen along the roadside, men left there to die because they were too badly hurt to go on. We saw ample proof of the tremendous loyalty, courage, faith and charity of our American boys and consider it a privilege to have known them.

Another of the soldiers who became a general favorite at the mission was Sgt. J.W. Schwarz of the 10th weather Squadron. He came from Cleveland, Ohio, and was one of the finest lads we knew. With characteristic American resourcefulness, he decided to supplement the scanty fare at the hostel with fresh vegetables from his own garden. He wrote to his best girl and with the seeds she sent him, he started a victory garden on a little plot of ground outside the city gate. When he was not busy with his weather instruments and charts, he watered and tended his corn, beans, cucumbers and beets under the blazing China sun and the choicest products from his garden he brought to the mission. I am sure Sergeant Schwarz would have been amazed had he ever known I considered him an instrument of Divine Providence. But I did! For his supplementing our vegetables at the mission with his garden fare was most opportune. For just at this time the Vincentian Sisters of Charity came to us.

They were from Hungary and had to evacuate their own mission in Paotsing the day before the Japs took that city. These five Hungarian Sisters were unable to return to their county nor could they get passports to America, so they had no place to go. They requested that they be allowed to remain in our mission. Certainly they were more than welcome and their help was invaluable to us in caring for the sick and wounded who continued to come to our dispensary. We made the Sisters as comfortable as possible in our patched up convent. The chapel, which had not been used since the convent had been bombed, was arranged as a dormitory and the room beneath it was used for our community room. In spite of the horrors of night raids, there was this much to say for them: they didn’t interfere with our work during the day, although we weren’t quite so fit after a sleepless night, to carry on our duties toward the children and the sick.

A tiny baby was left at the mission one night after an alarm. Five year old Lucy – the daughter of one of the men who worked around the mission – found it at the gate. Lucy carried it in to me, asking if she could keep it. The infant was wrapped in a piece of soiled, charred rag. Upon closer examination, I recognized the cloth to be the starry field of our American flag that had been destroyed in one of the bombings.

We tried to continue our work as usual, only sometimes classes had to be dismissed early because the children were falling asleep at their desks on account of the previous night’s raid. Considering the situation in Chihkiang at that time, it was no surprise to us to receive word from Bishop O’Gara that the aged and the sick missionaries were to return to America at once. Sister Christina was seventy and her nerves could not stand the strain much longer. So she left Chihkiang in an army transport plane and finally reached the United States in a troop ship.

Conditions finally became so bad, word came from the American Consul that all American civilians must leave the country at once. With the order to evacuate came the problem of placing the orphans in good care. First the little children were sent to Koatsun, where there was another Passionist mission, and where it was hoped they would be safe from the war.

Because the little tots were gone, there was an empty, lonely silence around the mission now. A few of the children’s swings, which the Jap bombs had missed, swayed disconsolately in the wind as though bewildered at their abandonment by the eager little
figures who had filled them so joyously before. A seesaw, one end ripped off, stuck up in the air, just as though it were waiting expectantly to be used once more by the chubby tots who had laughed and fought to have the first ride on its smooth wooden seat on a bright summer morning. There was no childish laughter now, shrilling excitedly in the compound yard, nor was there need for me to wipe the tears from angry baby eyes over the quarrels children will have while playing one of their imaginative, important games. The children were gone and every post and stone in the yard seemed aware of the void they had left.

Then Sister Rosario and I took the older girls to Yungsui, a Passionist mission in the northern part of the Vicariate, where arrangements were made to place them with Christian families in the neighborhood. The American boys came to our assistance in conveying us to Yungsui. They took us there in a weapons carrier! With our cooking utensils and wash basins wrapped in our bedding, we clambered into the high body of the machine and set out. Sitting on our bedrolls, we bounced over the war-torn road – I who had once found riding in my brother Joe’s Model T Ford not quite to my liking!

And what a dignified entrance I made into Yungsui! When the truck stopped before the mission gate, our bedrolls were placed on the ground, so that we might use them to step down from the high tailboard. As I stepped down on my bedroll, my foot touched the round rim of the wash basin, landing me flat in the dusty road. Before anyone could come to my assistance, the shock to my pride put me back on my feet with no more injury than dusty skirts and ruffled dignity.

We were in Yungsui but one week when a most disheartening message arrived from Bishop O’Gara. We were to start back to America at once, by whatever means of transportation we could get.

Chapter 18: Through China’s Back Door

My twelve years in China had not been easy years. Hardships of every kind had been just part of the daily living there, something that was taken for granted as part of the work. Floods, famine, pestilence, fleeing from the Reds, and hiding in terror from Jap bombs had been hard. But now, I was being asked to do the most difficult thing of all – leave China and the work I loved so much.

The Japs were advancing so rapidly toward Chihkiang that we were forbidden to return there to try to get a plane. Furthermore, the Chinese army had commandeered all privately owned trucks and buses for troop movements. Thus we had a problem. Nevertheless, it was agreed that the priests from neighboring missions should join us in Yungsui and accompany us to Chungking, where we would be joined by the Sisters of Charity, being evacuated from Juanling.

By good fortune an American jeep came through one day and the Sergeant consented to take three of us as far as Hsu San, where there was an auxiliary airbase. Father Jeremiah, Sister Rosario, and I made up the trio.

We reached Hsu San that same night and Sister Rosario and I were assigned an army tent, with a machine gun at the door. In that atmosphere we felt as though we had become a couple of WACs (Women’s Army Corps), whether we wished it or not. It was cold that night, the tenth of December, and before bedtime, one of the soldiers filled a stove with charcoal which kept the tent comfortably warm until morning. In the mess hall the next morning, we had a delicious breakfast of pancakes and coffee. How good that tasted after our sleep in what was practically the open air! Breakfast over, we had another jeep ride to Lungtan. On the way, our driver told us of an experience he had, which puzzled him a lot. He was riding along a country road, when a woman, the only person ahead, as far as he could see, decided to cross the road in front of the jeep. He turned off the road and stopped the jeep, but the trailer of his jeep hit and killed the woman. Her widower assured the driver it was all right, because the devil was after her, and if the jeep hadn’t got her, the devil would have. What our driver didn’t understand was that it is a superstitious custom for Chinese to dash in front of a moving vehicle in the hope that if they get across safely, the devil, who is right behind them, will be killed.

We had been told there was a Catholic mission in Lungtan. When
we reached the town, Father Jeremiah went immediately to locate it. He returned after some time, to tell us that the mission consisted of one room in a Chinese house where a Chinese priest came once a month to say Mass. There was no possibility of our staying there.

The jeep driver would not recommend the hotel there, so at his suggestion, we went to the Protestant mission, from which the foreign missionaries had been evacuated just a few days before we arrived. The mission house was completely furnished and the native Chinese minister was still there with his cook. He was very gracious about our coming to him and we were grateful to spend the night in comfort.

Next morning we heard that a Chinese truck was going toward Chungking and possibly as far as the city itself. Much bargaining finally got us space on it and we continued our exit from China, sitting on our bedrolls among a few other passengers who were Chinese. The truck was a good one and the driver exceptionally careful, but a short distance from a regular wayside stopping place, he brought the truck to a halt. He explained that there were soldiers in the next town who would take the truck for their own use, if we put up there for the night, which meant, of course, that we would be stranded. Since the place where we had halted was a very tiny village, there was nowhere to stay that night. Somehow, we persuaded the driver to go on, when there was reason to believe the troops had passed on. When we reached the town however, our driver’s word proved to be right. Some soldiers were still there when we drove in and they did want the truck. Our driver had been thinking fast and when the soldiers approached, he was already at work tearing down the motor. He told the soldiers the truck needed repairs and I noticed the repairs were not finished until after the troops left the town.

We spent that night in a Catholic mission, which was under the charge of a Chinese priest. We were then travelling through Szechuan Province and it was encouraging to see how well established the Church was there. There were native priests and in some sections, native Sisterhoods. I wondered how many tales of sacrifice and heroism could be told of those who had brought Christianity to that Province. I had reason to know at first hand, the cost of spreading the Faith in Chihkiang. There was still so much to be done in our part of China, I could estimate very closely how long it had taken to establish the Church in Szechuan.

While my spirit thrilled at the strides Catholicism was making among the Chinese here, the state of my health was nothing to rejoice about. My stomach rebelled at the food we had to eat. I never could eat Chinese food, with or without chopsticks, but from the time we left Lungtan until we reached Chungking, it was a case of either eating Chinese food, and with chopsticks at that, or not eating at all. So, for the length of the journey, I had a diet of tea. Travelling in buses and trucks, sitting on the floor chilled to the bone by icy air whistling around, with little food and less rest; that was a perfect prescription for pneumonia. So, I was glad to escape with only neuralgia.

By the time we reached the next town, the pain had become so intense as to be almost unendurable. Father Jeremiah managed to locate an old, crumbling Chinese house which must have been standing for centuries. It was dusk when we reached the place and in the half-light, it looked as though it were a relic of the Ming Dynasty – remote, feudal, brooding over memories of past splendor and glories never to return. I should not have been surprised to see a ghostly figure step out of the crumbling doorway and bow before us with gracefully slender hands half hidden in the flowing sleeves of his brilliantly colored satin robe.

We found it was a mission that the soldiers had taken over for their quarters. The priest and his housekeeper seemed embarrassed at our arrival and there was much whispering between him and the housekeeper. When Father Jeremiah asked if I might have some place in which to lie down, explaining that I was suffering from neuralgia, the reason for the whispering became patently evident. The priest and the housekeeper occupied two rooms there. The soldiers had taken every other room in the house. The priest told us of his dilemma, every word of which, I’m certain, outraged...
the innate courtesy of his Chinese soul. “If the Sisters would not mind sharing the housekeeper’s room, and Father sharing my room, I should be honored to have you as my guests.” At Father Jeremiah’s assurance that such an arrangement would be quite all right and that we would appreciate it very much, the whispering ceased and every effort was made by the kindly old man to make us comfortable.

The rest that I got that night didn’t cure the neuralgia but it did put me in good enough condition to tackle then worst stretch of the journey the next day. We had been warned that this stage would take us over the Pa Ma Shan, a mountain so high that it took a whole day to cross it. Very heavy clothing was needed because it would be bitterly cold as we neared the summit.

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The weather was beautiful when we started out in the morning. It was sunny and clear, with a slight wind that was invigorating. The road up the mountain was a succession of sharp curves and at each turn the air became colder and the road icier. As we looked upward, the mountain appeared to be wrapped in blue shimmering satin, for it was all encrusted with ice, and the light reflecting off its hard glistening surface gave it a bluish tint. The truck’s motor groaned in protest as it inched its way up the dizzy height.

As we glanced down, the town we had left looked like a miniature village. I was fascinated by the views, both above and below me, but just as we neared the top, we came upon another truck with appeared to be stalled, though it was headed downhill. It was an army truck and the Chinese officer in charge hailed us and asked to borrow the chains from our truck to help him reach the bottom of the mountain in safety. Father Jeremiah talked with him, explaining that he had chartered the truck to get two American Sisters out of the danger of falling into Japanese hands; we could not delay long enough to wait for him to go down the mountain and then send the chains back. The officer was not inclined to be gracious about Father’s refusal, and just when we thought we would be delayed after all, another truck rounded the mountain top. It was a passenger bus, so the officer ordered the driver to take off the chains. We were anxious about the occupants of the bus, since the driver decided not to wait for the return of his chains, but no doubt he had confidence in his skill.

The mountain climb was evidently too much for our truck, for the rest of the way we had to stop every half hour while the driver tinkered with the motor. But eventually, we rolled into Chungking. Once, when the truck stopped, we noticed a woman standing in front of her house. We were so cold by that time, we felt as though we would never be warm again. Sister Rosario suggested we go and talk to the woman. Perhaps she would, with Chinese politeness, invite us in to get warm. Apparently the poor woman had never seen anything like us before and wondered from what strange world we came. She was either so surprised or so frightened that she forgot her politeness. We greeted her and she mumbled something, staring as though her eyes would bulge out of her head. We asked her honorable name and she told us that. Then Sister Rosario ventured, “It’s a very cold day, isn’t it?” The woman looked us over from head to feet, then snorted, “You cold! With all those clothes on you!” Since she didn’t invite us to warm ourselves at her fire, we climbed back into the truck, colder than ever.

The town that was our destination that night was so crowded with refugees pouring in from Kweiyang that it was almost impossible to find a corner to stay or a place in which to get some food. The hotel where we were to spend the night was totally unprepared for so many unexpected arrivals. In order to save his “face,” the proprietor told Father that the food was not very good and advised him to take the Sisters to another inn where the food was much better.

We started out in the darkness, carrying little paper lanterns, in which candles burned, to light the way. Like all the roads in China at night, the one we cautiously trod was inky black. Our procession of lanterns with their wavering light, reminded me of a children’s Halloween parade. As we made our way along, there appeared out of the darkness another paper lantern. By its light, we saw a fat smiling Chinese – a perfect example of bowing affability. For a moment, I thought my memory of our children’s parade was playing tricks on me. Then the man spoke to Father and he seemed much interest in our haste to reach Chungking. He insisted on walking to the inn with us, talking in his high-pitched voice about China and things Chinese. Proudly he told us that China’s culture was thousands of years old, that his ancestors were wearing silks and satins while our ancestors were scampering around half clothed, climbing trees and running around with tomahawks.
He bowed himself away and into the darkness just as we reached the inn.

The thought of food was delightful just then, for we were all famished. We entered the place, which was dark and unpleasant. The dining room was on the upper floor. Wearily, we climbed the stairs to the dirtiest room I have ever seen in all my years in China. One look at the room in which we were supposed to eat took my appetite away. The floor was actually piled so high with refuse from previous meals that Sister Rosario and I had to lift our skirts to wade through the garbage in order to reach a table.

I know it is customary in China to throw bones, etc. on the floor, but these bones and the other refuse must have been there for years and the smell of wine was sickening. Yet this was the only place in town where we could get something to eat; we had to make the best of it.

We sat down at a table in a corner of the room where we could face the wall. That view was less revolting than the rest of the room. We ordered tea and rice. The waiter stuck his head out of the window and shouted our order downstairs. Then he put a large teapot out the window and lowered it to the ground with a rope attached to the handle. After waiting about ten minutes, during which time he stood with the rope in his hands, staring at us, the rope was jerked, someone called out, and the teapot was hauled up through the window again. The water was scalding hot, so we used some of it to rinse out the cups and bowls placed before us. After we were certain the dishes were reasonably clean, we poured more boiling water into the cups and added the tea. The rice also was steaming hot, so we know it was safe to eat it. We did manage to swallow a little of the rice and drank several cups of the hot tea, enough to warm us a little, after the coldest ride I have ever had. I dreaded having to cross that room again and step through its filth. Sister Rosario shared my disgust, for as we were walking through the rubbish on our way out, she groaned, “Give me my tomahawk and let me get back to my ancestors.”

**CHAPTER 19: ENFORCED FURLOUGH**

Chungking is said to have been the most heavily bombed city in the world and it had indeed been leveled almost to its rocky foundation. Usually the city is enveloped in a thick grey fog, but on the day of our arrival, a pale sun gleamed weakly over the destruction of that heroic city.

The sun and the welcome we received at the Maryknoll House made up for many of the discomforts of the trip. Here we were served a delicious lunch – the first food I had been able to enjoy for more than a week. I couldn’t help thinking as I sat at the table how relative time really is. The past days had seemed so much longer in pain and discomfort than the span of time which had actually elapsed. But I was grateful to have finished this much of the journey in safety. Then too, Chungking had a special interest for Sister Rosario and I for it was here that Sister Clarissa died, the first member of our community to give her life for China.

Sister Clarissa was one of the pioneer band of sisters who came to Chihkiang in 1926. This was the year in which Nationalist China, eager to take its place in the family of nations, had enlisted the aid of Soviet Russia and Russia, only too glad to avail herself of the opportunity to spread her doctrines, flooded the country from Canton to Peking with men and money to aid the cause of the Chinese Kuomintang. The fires of anti-foreign feeling were fanned anew and Christianity was denounced as responsible for most of China’s ills. The result of this agitation was soon apparent. Missions and missionaries felt the weight of the cleverly planned campaign and many had to flee for their lives.

Our Sisters were driven into exile. Hiding from the Communists by day and travelling by night, the Sisters were constantly in the gravest peril, and Sister Clarissa – never over strong – began to show the effects of the hardships she had to endure.

The last part of their flight to the safety of Shanghai was undertaken in the extreme heat of June. Torrential rains alternated with blazing heat. Mountains high enough to tax the endurance of professional climbers, total lack of drinking water, meagre and unpalatable food, these were just some of the trials to be endured by the delicate Sister Clarissa, who by that time was so weak and ill, she had to be carried in a sedan chair, jolted and flung side to side as the sweating coolies panted their way over the mountains. There was scorching, blistering heat everywhere and every rock and stone was a red hot furnace.

Burning with fever, without even tepid water to relieve her thirst, what words are there to describe Sister Clarissa’s suffering? When the coolies stopped at the mountain’s top for a little rest, Sister pleaded for water, if only to moisten her lips. But there was none to give her.

Barely conscious, Sister was brought to the hospital in Chungking. Here with every facility at hand, it was hoped her life could be saved. For a while, she showed some improvement then came a turn for the worse. Day after day, she tossed in delirium, even then not complaining, until God in His Mercy ended her suffering. Shortly after midnight, July 21, 1927, far from her native land, Sister Clarissa died.

Father Jeremiah took us to the hospital where Sister Clarissa died but none of the Sisters there could give us any information concerning the whereabouts of her grave. While we were waiting in Chungking for transportation, we went to visit a native community of Sisters of the Sacred Heart. Their foundress was once a pagan nun who had been converted to Christianity when she was eighteen years old. She had been chosen by the Bishop as Superior of the new community when she was thirty-three.

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During the conversation, we spoke of our first band of Sisters having been in Chungking eighteen years before. We told the Superior that one of our number had died there and we had been trying in vain to find her grave. We knew she had been buried in
the same cemetery as the deceased Franciscan Missionaries of Mary but when the new auto road was built, the graves had to be moved. When she heard the story, the face of the Superior lit up. She exclaimed, “Why that is the Sister who is buried in our cemetery! We often wondered who she was.” Then, she told us that after the remains of the Franciscan Sisters had been moved, their chaplain saw our Sister’s grave still there. He took pity on her and had her remains moved to their own cemetery.

So, Father Jeremiah, who had been in the party of refugees in 1927 when Sister Clarissa died, came with Sister Rosario and me to look for the grave. The chaplain, who had ordered Sister’s body moved had drawn a diagram of the cemetery and marked the location of Sister’s grave. We found it just as he had described – at the foot of a large stone cross. Beside her were buried thirty Chinese Sisters. The soldiers had removed the markers from most of the graves because they needed a stone. We wondered why they took all the stones and left the large cross. The Superior told us the soldiers were superstitious about touching it.

Father Jeremiah blessed the grave while we recited some prayers for this Sister of ours who had died so far away from her own country. Now that we knew where Sister’s grave was, Father Jeremiah assured us that he would have a tombstone placed there to identify Sister’s last resting place.

As it turned out, our visit with these Sisters of the Sacred Heart lasted two weeks and we spent most of the time teaching them some English. They were very grateful to us, but I think we learned as much Chinese from them as they learned English from us. The lessons were interrupted by word that we could get passage from Chungking to Kunming on an Army transport plane. It took only a few hours to reach Kunming and our stopover there was very brief; just long enough to transfer to a plane of the Chinese National Air Company for the next lap of our journey, the treacherous route over the “Hump” to Calcutta. The CNAC [Chinese National Aviation Corporation] had bragged they had never lost a plane on this route but just two days before we left Kunming, one of their planes did go down with several Protestant Missionaries on board. We left before any definite word was received as to survivors. Realizing that we were going to fly this same route at the worst time of the year, when visibility is very poor and the downdrafts are most powerful, I made a fervent act of contrition just before we took off. We flew very high all the way, so that it was not possible to see much during the nine and a half hours of our trip, but now and then, in the distance, I could see the peaks of mountains, snowcapped and austere, stretching to touch the sky. This particular vista from the air was a favorite photo subject during and after the war, and it is as awe inspiring as any picture has recorded it.

We had hoped to stay with the Loretto Sisters in Calcutta, but it was almost ten-thirty when we landed. When we voiced our anxiety about being taken in at the convent at that hour, the customs officer put us immediately at ease. “The Loretto Sisters are taking in nuns at all hours of the night, Sister. So don’t you worry. I’ll go along with you and see that you get in.” He was as good as his word too and escorted us to the very door of the convent.

When we apologized to the Sister who answered our knock for coming so late, she laughed away our anxiety, assuring us that
we had arrived at a respectable hour. Most of the refugees from China usually came to them around two o’clock in the morning due to the uncertainty of plane transportation.

The mission of the Loretto Sisters was over one hundred years old. That it had flourished and grown with the years was evidenced by the fact that it lacked none of what we Americans call the necessities. Our stay there was like a stray visit to fairyland after twelve years in the interior. No child could have been more delighted with what he found in a land of make believe than we were, to see again the modern conveniences we had been without so long. The utter luxury of a modern porcelain bathtub! Faucets of shining chrome, which at a turn poured out a cascade of hot water. Light that could be had by flicking on a switch, vivid steady light, with none of the feeble flickering glow we were used to from the smoking lamps we had put up with for so long. Mattresses with springs that gave our sleep the luxurious quality of reclining on a floating cloud. Also, it was bliss to be able to go to sleep and know that our rest would not be disturbed by the scream of air raid sirens – there would be no terror of fleeing in the darkness from Jap bombs and the dread of being trampled upon by a panic stricken mob. There was quiet and cleanliness and a peace that soothed our exhausted bodies and strained nerves.

I shall never forget the kind hospitality of those Sisters of Loretto. We remained with them for two weeks before we were notified by the American Express Company to proceed to Bombay by train. We were travelling during war times they told us (as though we didn’t know) and we were asked to make allowances for the fact that accommodations and food were not such as might be desired. The passengers were advised to provide themselves with the necessities. Our stay there was like a stray visit to fairyland after twelve years in the interior.

The trip to Bombay took three days and nights. The cars were overcrowded but we were lucky enough to have a compartment, which we shared with two Charity Sisters. It was a good thing none of us was afflicted with claustrophobia. Even so, after the third day, we began to long for a little more space in which to move around.

The last night, I was very wakeful and sat for hours watching the darkness and listening to the roar of the train as it hurtled through the night. Sometime after midnight, the mournful shriek of the train whistle and the lessening of speed made it evident to me that we must be approaching some wayside station. The schedule which we had and which I had practically memorized by this time did not indicate a stop there but we did come to a halt. Naturally, I wondered and I became especially curious when I heard the pounding of horses hoofs and the excited shouts of men. What all the commotion was, I could not imagine. I was not long left in any doubt. My musings were interrupted by a soft yet very insistent knocking on the door. I looked at my companions. They were sleeping soundly and the rapping on the door had not disturbed them the least bit. I opened the door cautiously and saw a tall distinguished man with the clean cut features and sensitive face of the cultured Indian. He was wearing Western clothes but his finely shaped head was swathed in the white silk headdress common to his race. He bowed gracefully and then began to speak in a singularly pleasant voice. His English was tinged by a slight foreign accent.

“A thousand pardons, Sister, for disturbing you at this unholy hour. Only necessity could compel such intrusion. I come as a suppliant for your charity. There is not space to be had on this train and I have a new bride whom I am anxious to bring to Bombay. It is imperative that we reach there by morning. Yours is the only compartment where I know she would be safe for the night. Would you – that is, could you – allow her and her maid to share this space?”

“But there is no space available here,” I said. “The compartment is occupied by myself and three other Sisters.”

“Could you not allow her to sleep on the floor? She has her own bedding and it would be for just a few hours,” he persisted anxiously.

I pitied the man for I knew from his dress and his speech he was not accustomed to ask favors from anyone. I told him that his bride would be welcome to use the floor space and then I wondered what the other Sisters would think of this new exotic addition to our party.

“I shall never forget your great kindness, Sister. I and my house are forever in your debt. Thank you!” He bowed again, grately this time, and waked rapidly away from the doorway.

Five minutes later, there came another gentle tap on the door and when I again opened it, there stood before me a picture which might have stepped out of the Arabian Nights. His bride was small, exquisitely formed, with great dark eyes and masses of blue-black hair which made her heart-shaped face seem even whiter and more delicate. Her mouth was expertly painted a vivid red and the eyes were slightly shadowed with a brown ointment to give them added depth and luster. She wore a small bandeau of silk across her chest and her pantaloons of a thin transparent
into the New York harbor. Though I had lived in Pennsylvania all
had the unforgettable experience of passing through the Narrows
Atlantic proved to be as unkind as the Pacific.

easily enjoy the return trip. But it made not the least difference. The
I had hoped that with fine weather and a calm sea, I'd be able to
the trip out as I was seasick the entire voyage back to New York.
the very little of my fellow passengers. My trip home was much like
the experience of last night's exotic visitor, who I might otherwise have been inclined to credit
to my imagination with the coming of daylight.

Arriving in Bombay, we lodged with the Franciscan Sisters of
Mary and both Sister Rosario and I have much for which to thank
them. But another disappointment awaited us in Bombay. We had
hoped to be able to leave for America soon after our arrival there;
instead, it was exactly five and a half months before we were able
to sail. Day after day, through the long months, we visited the
American Consul in the hope that we would get some word of
our sailing date. The answer each day was a disappointing, “Not
yet, Sister.”

There were more than a thousand American civilians in Bom-
bay awaiting transportation. It was jokingly spoken of as “the
American Invasion of Bombay.” The housing situation for nuns
became more critical as more and more missionaries were forced
to the seaport cities in the hope of getting back to America. Prices
soared until the meagre necessities of life became almost
prohibitive. Finally, when the waiting was becoming intolerable,
word came that the Swedish Exchange ship, the Gripsholm, was
being sent to India to carry all civilians home.

We boarded the ship on the fourth of July 1945. With us were
more than eight hundred missionaries. Of this number, six were
priests, one a brother, two cloistered Sisters from India, two Sister
Servants of the Holy Ghost, and one Franciscan Sister. But I saw
very little of my fellow passengers. My trip home was much like
the trip out as I was seasick the entire voyage back to New York.
I had hoped that with fine weather and a calm sea, I'd be able to
enjoy the return trip. But it made not the least difference. The
Atlantic proved to be as unkind as the Pacific.

However, all our trials come to an end eventually and soon I
had the unforgettable experience of passing through the Narrows
into the New York harbor. Though I had lived in Pennsylvania all
my life, I had never seen New York. It was a warm day in August
when I first glimpsed the skyscrapers towering so proudly against
the clear sky. The sun was shining and its rays touched the tops of
tall buildings with gold.

The Statue of Liberty, holding her torch aloft, had a symbolic
meaning more clearly understood by me now than ever before. I
had learned at first hand enough to appreciate the word LIBER-
TY and all it stood for. Standing at the ship’s rail, I had a moment
of awe because I had been lucky enough to have been born an
AMERICAN.

As I walked down the gangplank, my hungry eyes spied my
family impatiently outside the railing there. Twelve years had taken
their toll, for as my eyes went fondly to each loved face, I knew
my father and my mother would not be there. The emotion of
seeing those well-loved brothers and sisters again was almost too
much for one heart to stand. I couldn't speak as I felt their arms
tighten around me. On their faces, joy struggled with concern – at
my extreme thinness no doubt.

In the days that followed, I felt something like Rip Van Winkle
after he had awakened from twenty years sleep. The speed and
rush of New York, after the leisurely pace of China, bewildered
me. I couldn't understand why everyone was in such a hurry. Life
here flows at a much faster tempo than I had been used to in Chi-
na. I found myself contrasting one custom after another here with
those in China, and as the days stretched into weeks, my longing
for China became more acute. The old arm of China was reaching
across the miles and I kept feeling its insistent pull. A sign bearing
Chinese characters or a smiling Chinese lad on his way to school,
filled my heart with a nostalgic yearning for the mission and the
children there.

I had circled the globe since I left America in quest of Chinese
souls. In the isolated mountainous regions of Chihkiang, I found a
people whose indomitable courage and indestructible spirit make
me eager to work among them again, for the glory of God and
the future greatness of China.
Beacon Coming into the Light
In 1920, the St. Paul of the Cross Province of the Passionist order of priests accepted missionary work in Hunan, China. Within a few years, the priests approached several communities of women religious, including the Sisters of St. Joseph of Baden, to join them. The Sisters of St. Joseph accepted this ministry and from 1926 to 1948, a total of 15 Sisters of St. Joseph of Baden served in China. Included in this number was Sister Mary Mark Mullen, who served there from 1933 through 1948. In 1946, during a temporary respite in the United States, she wrote *Beacon in the Dark*, which is a memoir of her missionary life from 1933 through 1945. While the plan at the time was to have the work published by The Society of the Propagation of the Faith, the Society ultimately decided against the project and the work was never printed. Sister Mary Mark's hope for the memoir's publication finally came to fruition in 2017 when The Catholic Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania agreed to publish the memoir in two parts. The first installment was printed in the fall 2017 issue of *Gathered Fragments* and the final part appears in this issue.

Flying Tigers and the Second Sino-Japanese War
In this second installment of *Beacon*, war dominates Sister Mary-Mark's accounts of her missionary work in Chihkiang (known as Zhijiang today) in Hunan, China. Even before Sister Mary Mark's arrival in China in 1933, Japan and China had been in conflict starting with Japan's 1931 invasion of Manchuria. Tensions between the two countries continued to exist over the next few years, ultimately escalating in the beginning of the Second Sino-Japanese War in 1937, which would be considered part of the Pacific Theater of World War II by the end of 1941. Fighting would not cease until 1945.

During the war years, nations were using air power like they had never before. Even before the outbreak of the war with Japan, China looked to improve its air force. Just months before the war's beginning, China recruited retired U.S. Army Air Corps Captain Claire L. Chennault to train Chinese air force pilots. Although Chennault worked diligently to train the Chinese, this fledgling Chinese air force proved to be no match for the 1939 Japanese campaign of sustained bombing of every major city in China, including Chihkiang.1

By 1940, Japan was close to destroying China's air force and Chennault was sent to the United States in order to procure economic support. Since the United States was not officially at war, President Roosevelt was required to act clandestinely and he quietly authorized the creation of an American volunteer air force in April 1941.2 With Roosevelt's approval, Chennault organized 300 pilots and ground crew into the American Volunteer Group (AVG) division of the Chinese Air Force. This air division was assigned to protect the vital supply corridor, known as the Burma Road, which stretched from Chongqing, China, to the British colony of Burma (the country of Myanmar today). Through the US Lend-Lease Act, the AVG was provided with 100 P-40 Tomahawks that had been rejected by the British as obsolete.

On the nose of their planes, the AVG men painted the face of tiger sharks, which may be the reason why reporters of the time referred to them as “Flying Tigers.” The nickname was first introduced on March 24, 1942, when an American correspondent quoted a Chinese newspaper article saying the American fliers were practically “fei-hu” (flying tigers).

The Chinese newspapers had started to refer to the AVG as the Flying Tigers after the December 20 victories over Kunming, and the term caught on with the American press. Since the birth of the Chinese Republic in 1912 the tiger had been used in place of the dragon as the national symbol. 'Flying Tigers' was a natural for the press. ‘How the term Flying Tigers was derived from the shark-nosed P-40s I will never know,’ Chennault wrote later.3

With its first entry into combat on December 20, 1941,4 this division would prove to have one of the greatest records of the war, recording 299 Japanese planes destroyed – and possibly 153...
more – while losing only 12 planes in a little over six months of combat. Unfortunately, an additional 61 planes were lost on the ground and 22 more were burned in a fire. By March 1942, the AVG had lost too many planes to properly defend the Burma Road and turned to bombing Japanese supply bases. Finally, because of the US entrance into the war after the bombing of Pearl Harbor in December 1941, the Flying Tigers were disbanded in 1942 and replaced by the US 23rd Fighter Group.

On March 10, 1943, President Roosevelt established the 14th Air Force and placed it under the command of Chennault, who was promoted to Major General; the 23rd Fighter Group was then absorbed into the 14th. The focus shifted to flying supplies from Burma to China over the Himalayas, known as “The Hump.” The Flying Tigers, the 23rd Fighter Group, and the 14th Air Force used the Chihkiang airfield.

Not foreseeing the all-out war that was on the horizon, Sister Rosario understandably did not comprehend the potential effects of the proximity of such a large airfield. As illustrated by Sister Mary Mark's stories in Beacon, the airfield would factor greatly into their lives as it was the direct cause of much of the suffering of the sisters and their missionary work during the war.

In the early years of the war, the sisters did not immediately grasp the direction that life was leading them but the American government officials had a sense. After the onset of the Second Sino-Japanese War in 1937, the American Consul issued three separate notifications for foreigners to leave, a point that Sister Mary Mark fails to mention in Beacon. Taking these notifications under advisement, the bishops in China decided that missionaries would remain and thus, the Sisters of St. Joseph stayed and continued their work.

The airfield construction in Chihkiang continued and in 1938, the landing of an airplane was recorded by the sisters: “Several days ago, a Chinese airplane landed on the air port [sic] here for the first time in the history of this city.”

From that summer on, there was “plenty of action” in the skies above Chihkiang. By October, the sisters finally acknowledged the fact that the presence of the Chinese airplanes on the airfield provided a target for the Japanese – their one solace was that when the Japanese came, the Chinese planes went up after them. Dealing with recurrent bombings of the city by the Japanese, the sisters worked with ever present stress, which is not only conveyed in the sisters’ stories but also through the letters that the sisters wrote home. In one letter, Sister Rosario proclaimed:

I think I can truthfully say the best and most fervent meditations I have ever made were made on the hillside or in a field with bombs bursting not too far away. I simply fly to the Arms of God the Father, as I used to run to Papa when I was a little girl.

And Sister Mary Mark had to dig deep to find some humor in the situation:

They [the bombers] flew directly over us and believe me when they are directly over you and you know they are loaded with bombs weighing from five hundred to a thousand pounds you just think that your minutes are numbered and you don't feel so very brave. However, it keeps one in good trim to die for it is then that you make an act of perfect contrition like you never made it before.

In the early stages of the war, the American Embassy gave orders for all American property to be marked with American flags in order to provide some protection. As related in Beacon, the sisters carried this out but in the end, this proved fruitless as their mis-

**The sisters cared for many orphans during their years in China**

*Source: Sisters of St. Joseph of Baden Archives*

The Sisters and the Chihkiang Airfield
Over the course of the initial years of the war, the Sisters of St. Joseph, who were carrying out their missionary work in Chihkiang, would come to understand the importance of the air power in the war. Prior to the war, the construction of an airfield on the outskirts of the city had been but a diversion for the sisters, who viewed it as another sign of development. In October 1936, Sister Rosario Goss wrote home:

Our town is surely progressing. A week ago, the Chinese celebrated the anniversary of their Republic. It was a free day so we took the girls for a walk. You will be surprised to know that we went to see the AIR PORT [sic]. It is just being made but it is supposed to be finished within forty days. We saw hundreds of men at work. We were told that there are thousands working on the field. They are leveling the hills and filling in the valleys. It is to be one of, if not THE biggest air ports [sic] in China.

Within this same letter, she also commented on the increasing hostilities between China and Japan, downplaying the possibility that war would come to Chihkiang:

You will probably be reading about the trouble between China and Japan. Do not worry about me. IF there is any fighting, it will not be near here. Thousands of soldiers have been passing through this town on their way down river to prepare for an attack by the Japanese. I repeat, there is no danger here from them so even if the papers do print anything about trouble, rest assured that it will not affect us.

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The main room, which had a mud floor, was used as a chapel, refectory and community room while the orphans slept in the shack’s loft; a mud hut was set up as a hospital.

As always, the sisters welcomed orphans into their mission, including 25 sent to them by Madame Chiang Kai-Shek, the wife of General Chiang Kai-Shek, chairman of China’s National Government. With the onset of the war, Madame Chiang took on the cause of orphans, whom she termed as “warphans,” and she established the Chinese Women’s National War Relief Society to look after them. When thousands of “warphans” had to be evacuated from Canton and Hankow, Madame Chiang personally oversaw the complete withdrawal of the children before she herself fled the area. Included in these warphans were the girls whom she sent to the sisters on September 2, 1938. The sisters cared not only for these orphans but for many more.

With their commitment to education, the sisters opened a school in 1941 and they were able to provide the children in their care with education. In the following year, the sisters also opened a small industrial school to teach students how to spin and weave. During those early years of the war, the government ordered all city walls to be torn down and Chihkiang complied. With the city left without the walled protection, Sister Rosario reported that there was a night during which bandits raided a government middle school and normal school, killing one of the teachers and carrying off twenty young girls; the sisters provided temporary refuge in their school for the remaining 150 students. Caring for the orphans along with the civilians and the refugees, the Sisters of St. Joseph stayed in Hunan trying to keep up their work in spite of the war and at times, there seemed as though there was no end in sight.

Homeward Bound

In the fall of 1944, after living through five years of warfare, the U.S. Air Force advised the sisters and children to evacuate; all Sisters of St. Joseph were ultimately to head home. In order to ensure the safety of their charges, Sisters Mary Mark and Rosario delayed their departure in order to situate the orphans in neighboring locations in Hunan that were away from potentially targeted cities and considered relatively safe from the Japanese – taking the older children to Yungsui and sending the younger ones to Kaotsun. On November 28, all American, including the missionaries, were ordered to evacuate central China and the last two sisters had to start for home. When the other sisters from their mission had left earlier in the fall, the trip to the United States typically took one month; however, Sisters Mary Mark and Rosario spent nine months en route to the United States.

In Beacon, Sister Mary Mark describes their lengthy exodus, which included a visit to the gravesite of Sister Clarissa Stattmiller who had died in China in 1927. Their departure from China took them west, into India, where their first layover was with the Loretto Sisters in Calcutta, of which Mother (Saint) Teresa was a member at the time.

After leaving Calcutta, the two sisters landed in Bombay where they spent months with the Franciscan Sisters of Mary at the Villa Theresa. It was here that they faced some challenges with the
extreme heat. Limited to one bag during their flight from China, they had left behind their gray habits, which were more comfortable in hot weather. During their time in Bombay, they initially faced the hot temperatures in their black habits but as described by Sister Rosario, they quickly and resourcefully acted to rectify the situation:

Now that we’ve had to stay so long in India with the weather getting hotter as time goes on, we had to get material for lighter habits. Nowhere in this city could we find enough gray or white cloth to make us each two habits so we had to buy sheets and make them up. Sister (of Charity) Alma Maria (Gilmartin) not being able to make her own gave a pattern and the sheets to an Indian tailor. Unfortunately she forgot to warn him about the blue stamp on the corner of each sheet. Evidently the man tried to make them as beautiful as possible and they returned with the big blue brand in the most conspicuous places on her habits.

They also had not given up the hope that they might be able to return to China which Sister Rosario conveyed in a letter to home:

Latest news from China says our Vicariate has not yet fallen into enemy hands…It seems almost too much to hope that we shall be recalled to China before proceeding to the States. May God’s Holy Will be done.

By the summer, Sisters Mary Mark and Rosario gained passage on the Griphsolm, the Swedish liner that had been sent to provide passage to Americans heading home from India. On board were more than 615 missionaries. Because they were on their return trip, there was time for introspection and a war-weary Sister Rosario wrote:

I volunteered for China for life and do not wish to take back what I have offered. But since the order to go has been given, I am resigned. I would rather be in America through obedience knowing that I am thus where God wishes me to be, than to remain in China of my own will. My fervent prayer is that post-war days will find our Sisters again in China if such be the will of God.

By departing China when they did, the sisters did not have to endure the months of intense fighting in 1945, including a savage, unsuccessful drive by the Japanese to take over the Chihkiang airfield in May. After having left the U.S. in February 1933, Sisters Mary Mark and Rosario now returned more than 12 years later, landing in New York City on August 2, 1945 and they arrived at their motherhouse in Baden on August 7, 1945. On August 6 and 9, the U.S. dropped atomic bombs on Japan, and on August 21, Japanese envoys met with the Chinese for a preliminary surrender at the Chihkiang airfield. On September 2, 1945 the formal surrender of Japan occurred on the USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay, Japan.

Return to China

With the end of the war, the sisters could return to their missionary work in China. In May 1946, a new band of Sisters of St. Joseph was selected and Sister Mary Mark was part of this new group of six. They set sail from San Francisco in December 1946 and arrived in China in January 1947. The sisters arrived to a country in the midst of another civil war (1946-1949) between the Nationalists under Chiang Kai-shek and the Communists under Mao Zedong. As the war was affecting travel, the sisters started their missionary work by studying the language and working with orphans and the sick in Peking (known as Beijing today) while waiting for the opportunity to return to the interior. In August 1948, they learned that Bishop O’Gara had decided that once the sisters were able to head into the interior, they would take up missionary work in Supu, Hunan, instead of Chihkiang.

On November 1, the sisters left Peking for Shanghai by plane, with the intention of obtaining transportation into the interior. However, November 6 marked the beginning of a major military action, known as the Huaihai Campaign that was waged between the Nationalists and the Communists until January 1949. Within a month of arriving in Shanghai, the sisters faced a difficult decision, as described by Sister Baptista Young:

Father Arthur said that there are no bookings out of Shanghai to the interior before January, and he feels that Shanghai is doomed before that? Should we wait and still try to get to interior and be caught, or take this last evacuation
boat to the States. … We are bringing no baggage home with us – just what we need. The rest we are leaving here for our use when we return. It is too hard to get things over, so we are leaving a trunk here at Sacred Heart with things in it which we can more easily get in the States.33

Shortly after, the sisters departed for the U.S. in December 1948. Bishop O’Gara was disappointed by their departure, although he felt that their leaving was influenced by the American government:

I presume that the American Consular authorities made it impossible for Americans to secure transportation to the interior and brought great pressure to bear in having them evacuate. Perhaps this is all for the best.34

Whatever hopes that the sisters had of returning as missionaries to China would have been restrained by the fate of the missionary work of others.35 By the early 1950s, the Communists had either expelled or made life impossible for remaining missionaries and so, by 1955, the Passionist priests had also left China.36

Within the United States, the sisters’ missionary work in China was felt in the places where the sisters ministered – especially within the schools. As part of their school lessons, the sisters would often teach about China. From July 1946 through June 1949, the sisters supplemented their lessons through the printing of a newsletter entitled “The ‘Little Design’ in China,” which was used to educate and encourage support of the China mission. Within the pages of this monthly publication, the sisters ran stories and answered questions about the life and culture of the Chinese. Topics included the school system, Christmas customs, games children played, as well as how to eat with chopsticks. Through this dissemination of information, the sisters encouraged their students and supporters to understand life beyond the United States and they pulled them into their evangelistic spirit.

While the China mission influenced many in America, the lasting impact within China was something that was not realized by the sisters until 1980, when they were contacted by Sister Theresa Joseph Lung, the one native Chinese Sister of St. Joseph, who had been a member of their religious community from 1933 until 1948. Continuing to minister in China after 1948, Sister Theresa Joseph stayed true to her faith in the face of religious oppression under the Communist Party. She took her vocation underground through the establishment of a rural dispensary where she not only provided medical care but also taught catechetics and brought communion into the homes of the faithful. From 1955 and after, she endured imprisonment, restricted life, and poverty; in 1980, through correspondence, she managed to reconnect with the Sisters of St. Joseph. In 1983, Sister Catherine Davenport, missionary in China from 1935-1941, and Sister Donna Marie Tahaney, another member of the congregation, along with diocesan priest Father John Harvey and Passionist priest Father Jerome Vereb, C.P. traveled to China to visit Sister Theresa Joseph. During this visit, Sister Theresa Joseph was able to again profess her religious vows. Until the day she died in 1994, Sister Theresa Joseph lived a life of reaching out and caring for others.

As for Sister Mary Mark, when she returned from China in January 1949, she was 56 years old with many years of ministry work remaining. She returned to the field of education, serving as principal for six years each at St. Titus School in Aliquippa and at St. Mary in Freeport and as a teacher at St. Mary in New Castle and Holy Name in Ebensburg. Following a year as a part time teacher at Sacred Heart in Altoona, she finally retired in 1970. After spending 48 years as a Sister of St. Joseph, almost one-third of which were spent in China, Sister Mary Mark Mullen died at the age of 80 on July 25, 1972.

Sister Mary Mark’s memoir, *Beacon in the Dark*, is a lasting testimonial to the faith and the missionary work of women religious in China. All of the work done for their mission in China, both
abroad and at home, was part of the charism of the Sisters of St. Joseph, which is one of unity and reconciliation with God and the “Dear Neighbor.” Through the linking of East and West, the sisters identified with hope “that the world can come to greater unity.”

Dedication and Acknowledgement in Sister Mary Mark’s Memoir

It should be noted that in the front of her manuscript, Sister Mary Mark penned an acknowledgement and a dedication:

“Grateful acknowledgement is made to Sister Rosario Goss for her invaluable help in the compilation of this book.”

“To the memory of Sister Mary Clarissa Stadmiller [sic], the first Sister of Saint Joseph to give her life for China. Amen I say unto you, as long as you did it to one of these My least brethren, you did it unto Me. (Matthew 25: 40).”

Endnotes:
4 Rosholt, Days, 8.
5 Ibid.
6 Emphasis by Sister Rosario Goss. Sister Rosario Goss, SSJ, to home, October 18, 1936, Sisters of St. Joseph of Baden Archives, hereafter referred to as CSJB Archives. 7 Ibid.
9 Goss, “History,” CSJB Archives.
10 Sister Rosario Goss to home, February 27, 1938, CSJB Archives.
11 Goss, “History,” CSJB Archives.
12 Sister Rosario Goss to Sister Rose Angela Goss, January 2, 1940, CSJB Archives.
13 Sister Mary Mark Mullen to Mark Mullen, October 29, 1939 (from Kienyang), CSJB Archives.
14 The Sisters of St. Joseph made a flag that was 13x27.5 feet and a second one that was half that size. Goss, “History,” CSJB Archives. According to Havoc, the Sisters of Charity took a shortcut for the stars – they cut out their stars from tough white paper and pasted them on. See Pendergast, Havoc, 95
15 Sister Mary Mark Mullen to Mark Mullen, July 1939, CSJB Archives. According to Havoc, In October 1939, “Chinkiang, site of a thriving mission, which was bombed six times within one week. … During that saturation bombing the Josephite Sisters’ convent (located quite near the Flying Tigers’ air base) was badly damaged, and the Sisters and their orphans and all their works had to move outside the city.” See Pendergast, Havoc, 98.
16 According to Chapter 14 of Beacon, the convent and girl’s school had shattered glass, broken plaster, and doors ripped off of hinges. One classroom had every floor board ripped up. The yard was full of shrapnel from bombs.
17 Sister Rosario Goss to home, March 12, 1939, CSJB Archives.
18 Goss, “History,” CSJB Archives.
20 Sister Rosario Goss to home, February 12, 1939, CSJB Archives.
21 Sister Rosario Goss to home, January 22, 1939, CSJB Archives.
22 Goss, “History,” CSJB Archives
23 Rose Hum Lee, “Madame Chiang’s Children,” Survey Graphic: Magazine of Social Interpretation, January 1943 vol. 32, page 136: “The government of Chiang Kai-shek withdrew to Hankow, farther up the Yangtze river in central China. In mid-1938 Japanese armies from north China were threatening Hankow and the Chinese government withdrew farther to the west, this time to Chungking… a city famous for a climate which no one will dispute is the worst in China—if not in the world!” Rosholt, Days, 6.
24 Sister Rosario Goss to home, September 19, 1938, CSJB Archives.
25 Goss, “History,” CSJB Archives (note: the 20 girls were eventually rescued).
27 Sister Rosario Goss to Sister Rose Angela Goss, April 9, 1945 (from Villa Theresa, Bombay), CSJB Archives.
28 Ibid.
30 Sister Rosario Goss to Sister Rose Angela and home, January 28, 1945 (from Chungking), CSJB Archives.
31 Community circular by Mother Emerentia Snyder, August 3, 1948, CSJB Archives.
32 Bishop Cuthbert O’Gara to Mother Emerentia Snyder, December 6, 1948, CSJB Archives.
33 Sister Baptista Young to Mother Emerentia Snyder, December 3, 1948, CSJB Archives.
34 Bishop Cuthbert O’Gara to Mother Emerentia Snyder, December 6, 1948, CSJB Archives.
35 The Sisters retained their missionary fund for China until the 1960s. Mother Benigna Kirkpatrick to Bishop John Wright, May 2, 1960, CSJB Archives.
36 Pendergast, Havoc, 219.
The Vocation Office of the Diocese of Pittsburgh Marks 70 Years

Rev. Michael R. Ackerman

This past January the Vocation Office of the Diocese of Pittsburgh marked its 70th anniversary. According to The Pittsburgh Catholic, on January 29, 1948, Father Ferris J. Guay was appointed the first director of vocations by Bishop Hugh C. Boyle. Father Guay was tasked to implement a program fostering vocations to the priesthood for the diocese while maintaining his responsibilities as parochial vicar at St. Brendan Church in Braddock.

The initial approach to this endeavor involved a two-pronged effort. Guay was to be the “recruiter,” responsible for individual meetings with prospective seminarians and for reporting to the bishop. He was also the liaison to the newly established Diocesan Vocations Committee, which included members of the religious communities that served the Diocese of Pittsburgh. Father Thomas J. Quigley, the diocesan superintendent of schools, was responsible for engaging elementary and secondary schools in classes, liturgical celebrations, and appropriate means for reflecting on God’s call.

While the idea of having a specific vocations office was emerging around the country, the idea of the need to promote vocations was certainly not new. Pope Pius XI in his 1935 encyclical, Ad Catholicí Sacerdotii (On the Catholic Priesthood), vehemently stressed that the promotion of vocations was paramount to the survival of priesthood. Later that year, the Serra Club was founded in Seattle, Washington, to promote vocations and vocation awareness, and Serra International was founded in 1938. Pope Pius XII continued the vision of his predecessor and established the Pontifical Work for Priestly Vocations in 1941.

Buoyed by the return to peacetime and a burgeoning school population numbering close to 150,000 students in over 200 Catholic grade schools and 54 high schools in the Diocese of Pittsburgh, the conditions were ripe for vocation promotion. Father Guay took to his task with enthusiasm. Aside from traveling to parishes and promoting membership in the Serra Club, which began in Pittsburgh in 1943, the highlight of vocation promotion was the April Vocation Month celebration. According to archives in the Pittsburgh Catholic, some 3,000 gathered for a Holy Hour for Vocations with Bishop John F. Dearden at St. Paul Cathedral in 1955.

Following the sudden death of then-Monsignor Ferris Guay on February 14, 1958 at the age of 43, the role of vocation director...
passed to Father Joseph H. Knorr, then the vocation assistant. Father Knorr, a native of Resurrection Parish in Brookline and ordained in 1956, continued much of the work that he had undertaken with Monsignor Guay. The April Vocations Month Holy Hour remained as the major centerpiece of the vocation effort. Knorr also asked seminarians to contribute articles and reflections on priesthood for the Pittsburgh Catholic, including one by a student at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., Donald Wuerl (later Cardinal Wuerl of Washington, D.C.), that was published in April 1962. On December 24, 1964, Father Knorr was reassigned by Bishop John J. Wright to a new position as the diocesan director of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith and the Catholic Missionary Aid Society. His replacement was Father Hugh M. Gloninger, then assistant at St. Bernard Parish in Mt. Lebanon, who would hold the title of Vocation Director until June 1, 1971.

During Father Gloninger’s time as vocation director, the Second Vatican Council enacted two documents that were to have a profound influence on the formation of priests: Presbyterorum Ordinis (On the Ministry and Life of Priests) on December 7, 1965, and Optatam Totius (Decree on the Training of Priests) on October 28, 1965. Both documents stressed the need for holiness and piety in the formation of priests, the importance of family life for fostering vocations, and the need for excellent seminary training both for academic and pastoral needs. In light of this, Bishop Wright, who had attended Vatican II and been involved in crafting much of the aforementioned documents, opened Pittsburgh’s minor seminary, St. Paul Seminary, on the grounds of the former St. Paul’s Orphanage in August 1965. From this point forward, the vocation director’s mission shifted toward recruiting men to St. Paul Seminary, and many of his vocation gatherings were held on the campus.

Vatican II also had another profound impact on vocation in that it broadened the idea of vocation beyond priesthood and religious life. An April 19, 1962 article in the Pittsburgh Catholic written by Daniel Roos, a junior at Wheeling Jesuit College, bemoaned the lack of attention that the Church paid to the lay apostolate. His premise was that the development of the laity for moral life is tantamount to priestly development for a vibrant Church. Efforts at vocation promotion came to be more collaborative among priests, laity, and religious orders, and new conversation began as to what it meant to grow in holiness as a Catholic. However, this did not contribute necessarily to an increase in vocations to the priesthood. A May 28, 1971 article in the Pittsburgh Catholic lamented the decline in priestly vocations and a decrease in reception of the sacraments in the Diocese of Pittsburgh. Several other articles debated the purpose of priestly celibacy and whether a married clergy would make priesthood more attractive to young men. These trends made vocation promotion challenging, but the vocation office still forged ahead.

On June 1, 1971, Father John M. O’Toole assumed the office of vocation director, a title that he held for 15 years until June 16, 1986. He and his assistant, Father Albert J. Semler (1972-1980), focused on taking the work of vocation development to the people. Father O’Toole implemented vocation awareness programs including Holy Hours and Masses for Vocations in each of the 16 deaneries. He also encouraged home Masses and a traveling vocation chalice. He implemented a Vocation Conference on themes and issues related to priesthood and religious life in conjunction with the Diocese of Greensburg, and established an affiliate program for high school and college men including retreats and visits to St. Paul Seminary. In particular, he recognized that empowering families and parishes to create vocation councils and support seminarians was essential to the growth of a culture of vocations.

On June 17, 1986, Father Robert J. Clarke became the vocation director under Bishop Anthony J. Bevilacqua, as well as vice rector of St. Paul Seminary. Father Clarke began to use mass media in innovative ways to promote vocations, and sponsored a number of ads on WTAE and KDKA radio to highlight priesthood and the need for men to respond to God’s call. He also established the “Come and See” weekend at St. Paul Seminary, and sponsored open houses at St. Paul’s to encourage men to explore the possibility of priesthood and service to the Church. Father Clarke’s simple approach to vocation was highlighted well by an October 2, 1987 Pittsburgh Catholic article on how to promote vocation awareness. He stated, “I tell them [young people] that as baptized Christian men and women they already do have a vocation. They should be responding to it now, where they are in life.”

Father Clarke served as director until October 28, 1991, when Father Edward J. Burns assumed the title. Father Burns (now bishop of Dallas, Texas) has the distinction of serving as vocation director on two occasions, from 1991 until 1997 while he was successively vice rector and then rector of St. Paul Seminary, and then again as rector of St. Paul’s from August 18, 2008 until March 9, 2009 when he departed to become the bishop of Juneau, Alaska. Father Burns continued many of the practices of Father
Bob Clarke’s time, but he also added his own touch as well. Father Burns pushed parishes to promote the 31 Club, an effort of Serra International to promote vocations, and made an effort to encourage men of all backgrounds to consider if their life was fulfilling. Although the numbers at St. Paul Seminary plateaued at around a dozen men, Burns emphasized the quality over the quantity of applicants and seminarians.

On October 27, 1997, Father David J. Bonnar became the rector of St. Paul Seminary while simultaneously being appointed by Bishop Donald Wuerl as the Director of Pre-Ordination Formation and Director of Priestly Vocations. Father Bonnar implemented some innovative ideas including vocation commercials on KDKA that aired during football games as well as throughout the course of regular broadcasts, and the seminary’s first website. He promoted the idea that every parish have a vocation council which would serve a Diocesan Vocation Council. He advocated Sunday parish visits for seminarians to parishes, and he even established poster contests in the parishes and deaneries to promote interest in priesthood and religious life.

Following Father Bonnar’s tenure, the Diocese of Pittsburgh turned to a co-director model for vocations and promoted Father Thomas J. Burke and Father Thomas A. Sparacino to the Office of Vocations on October 7, 2002. The approach of the Burke–Sparacino era mirrored the early years of the office. Father Sparacino was tasked with developing high school programs and visiting Catholic schools and youth groups, while Father Burke was given college and post-college ministry. The affiliate program, gatherings such as Theology on Tap, Young Adult Holy Hours, and Adoration, and even retreat experiences encompassed what was a holistic approach to vocation awareness. Sparacino and Burke worked in conjunction with Father James A. Wehner, the rector of St. Paul Seminary, who succeeded them as vocation director for six months, from February 4, 2008 until August 18, 2008.

After the brief interim return of then-Monsignor Edward Burns to the Office of Vocations, the role of director passed to Father Matthew R. McClain on April 20, 2009. Father McClain served in the office for a brief time, but was well suited for the task due to his subtle humor, dynamic homilies, and pastoral parish visits.

On March 9, 2010, Father Joseph M. Freedy became Director of Priestly Vocations. Freedy, a former college quarterback, used his athletic ability to institute Quo Vadis Days in the diocese in 2012 – a four-day camp focused on priesthood, fraternity, sports, and sacraments. He also effectively branded the office using the domain name, PGHPriest.com, which permitted dynamic content, videos, and communication to be established for a mobile, fast-paced society. Other initiatives accomplished under Freedy’s leadership include the Vocation Conference “Called by Name,” a College Christmas Discernment Retreat, a high school silent retreat, and a renewed vigor for high school retreats and workshops on prayer. After seven years, Father Freedy left the Office of Vocations, and Father Michael R. Ackerman assumed the position on May 30, 2017, which he currently holds.

The Office of Priestly Vocations, while changing its strategy, has never changed its approach to vocation. It is quite simply to allow men to encounter the living God and his plan for their lives. Although society has become hectic and focused on the immediate, there is no substitute for spending time in prayer, adoration, and reflection on God’s purpose for us. Future events for the office include vocation retreats and workshops, parish visits with seminarians, vocation conferences and fairs, and the continued development of online and media resources11 to meet the growing needs of the diocese, and those who consider a priestly vocation. The number of priestly vocations continues to be an issue for our diocese, and others across the United States, but the quality of applicants has never been higher. The priority will be, as it always has, to remind people of their Baptismal call to serve God and the Church, and to allow men to ask the question of how they can serve God. This has sustained our diocese for 70 years, and with God’s help it will continue to do so.

Endnotes:
1 “Father Guay Named Vocation Director,” The Pittsburgh Catholic, January 29, 1948, 1.
2 The encyclical is available at the Vatican website, accessed August 10, 2018: http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_19351220_ad-catholicici-sacerdotii.html.
3 In 1950, Bishop Boyle directed that April be devoted to “a very special promotion of vocations to the priesthood and religious life” with a Holy Hour for Vocations conducted on “Vocation Sunday” at St. Paul Cathedral. Father Guay announced that priests and sisters would visit parish schools to promote vocations. “Vocation Month to be Observed,” The Pittsburgh Catholic, March 30, 1950, 1.
4 “3000 Jam Cathedral for Vocation Holy Hour,” The Pittsburgh Catholic, April 28, 1953, 1.
5 “When Do Seminarians See the Light?,” Pittsburgh Catholic, April 12, 1962, 8. The future cardinal was then a Basselin Scholar at the Theological College, the national seminary administered by the Sulpicians and affiliated with the Catholic University of America.
8 Daniel Roos, “The Laity Also Have Vocations,” Pittsburgh Catholic, April 19, 1962, 12.
The canonization on October 14, 2018 of Pope Paul VI as a saint occasioned memories of the arrival of then-Monsignor Giovanni Battista Enrico Antonio Maria Montini to Pittsburgh in September 1951 to visit the family and the grave of Monsignor Walter S. Carroll – Montini’s closest American co-worker and a highly respected Vatican diplomat.

Montini’s Background
The future pope was born in Concesio in the Diocese of Brescia in northwestern Italy on September 26, 1897. He was ordained a priest in May 1920 at age 22. In 1922, he entered the service of the Vatican’s Secretariat of State in Rome, where he would work with American Father Francis J. Spellman. In 1937, Montini was appointed Substitute (Sostituto) Secretary for Ordinary Affairs under papal Secretary of State Eugenio Cardinal Pacelli. After Pacelli was elected pope (Pius XII) in 1939, Montini continued his role as chief of staff under the new Secretary of State, Luigi Cardinal Maglione. Upon the latter’s death in 1944, Montini was appointed Pro-Secretary of State.

The outbreak of World War II thrust Montini into a pivotal role as Pius XII directed Montini to create an information office to deal with prisoners of war and refugees. Between 1939 and 1947 that office received almost ten million requests for information and produced over eleven million replies. Working under Montini was a young Pittsburgh priest, Walter S. Carroll.

The Three Carroll Brothers
Walter Sharp Carroll (1908-1950) was the youngest of the three sons of Irish immigrants William J. and Bridget Margaret (Hogan) Carroll. The family belonged to Holy Rosary Parish in the Homewood section of Pittsburgh. The priest-diplomat’s two older priest-brothers were Howard Joseph Carroll (1902-1960) and Coleman Francis Carroll (1905-1977), both of whom became members of the hierarchy. Howard served from 1938 to 1944 as assistant secretary of the National Catholic Welfare Conference (later renamed the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops) and from 1944 to 1957 as secretary of the Conference. He was appointed bishop of Altoona-Johnstown in 1957 and died at age 57 in 1960. Coleman became the first auxiliary bishop of Pittsburgh in 1953, was appointed first bishop of Miami in 1958, and then became the first archbishop of Miami in 1968. He died at age 72 in 1977.

Walter S. Carroll
Walter Carroll, like his brothers, attended Holy Rosary elementary and high schools. He then enrolled in Duquesne University from which he graduated in 1930, winning the university’s annual oratorical contest in his senior year. He undertook graduate studies in philosophy at the University of Fribourg in Switzerland, from which he received a doctorate in 1933. He then attended the North American College in Rome, taking theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University, which granted him a licentiate in 1936. He subsequently studied canon law at the Apollinare Institute and received a doctorate in January 1940. He also undertook special studies at the Universities of Tours, Florence, and Perugia, and became fluent in several languages.

During his studies, Walter Carroll was ordained a priest in the chapel of the North American College in Rome on December 8, 1935 by Francesco Cardinal Marchetti-Selvaggiani, the vicar of Rome. Present at the ceremony was the seminary rector, Bishop Ralph L. Hayes, who was a native of Pittsburgh. While continuing his studies after ordination, Father Carroll also did parish work in Rome and England and served temporarily in the Vatican Secretariat of State in 1939. The young priest returned to Pittsburgh in late February 1940 and on March 3 offered his First Mass in 8521 Frankstown Road. Bishop Hugh C. Boyle promptly appointed Father Walter Carroll as assistant pastor of St. Basil Parish in Carrick, but six months later approved Rome’s request that the young priest be granted leave to accept an appointment to the Secretariat of State in September 1940.

Walter S. Carroll became only the third American to serve in the Secretariat of State – Francis J. Spellman, who later became archbishop of New York, was the first; Joseph P. Hurley, who became archbishop-bishop of St. Augustine, was the second. As a special envoy of Pope Pius XII during World War II, Carroll had responsibility for prisoners of war and refugees; that expanded to include resettlement of the enormous number of concentration camp survivors and displaced persons in Germany and Austria in the post-war period. Carroll established a branch of the Vatican Information Bureau in Algiers in 1943 at the behest of Montini to deal with German and Italian POWs and facilitate contacts with the Allies, who were planning the invasion of Sicily and mainland Italy.

In March 1943, Carroll was named a papal chamberlain with the title of Very Reverend Monsignor. The following year, he was elevated to domestic prelate with the title of Right

Three Carroll priest-brothers
Source: The Pittsburgh Catholic, November 11, 1943
in all his actions. All who knew him must have a feeling of awe and reverence, for surely he was a saint on earth.”

Montini’s Visit to Pittsburgh

Montini was the guest of Bishop John F. Dearden of Pittsburgh and stayed at the bishop’s Edwardian Tudor mansion on Warwick Terrace in the city’s Morewood Heights section. He also celebrated a Low Mass at Sacred Heart Church in Shadyside to mark the opening of the school year; that was followed by his celebration of a Solemn Pontifical Requiem Mass at Sacred Heart Church in the presence of ten bishops, hundreds of priests, representatives of all branches of the U.S. military, leaders of relief agencies, newspaper correspondents, and thousands of ordinary Pittsburghers. The third Mass was celebrated on Saturday, March 4, in the Church of Santa Susanna in Rome by Bishop Martin J. O’Connor, rector of the North American College. A listing of the participants at each of the three Masses was a veritable “Who’s Who” of the diplomatic, political, military, and ecclesiastical worlds that included a number of future cardinals, archbishops, and bishops.

President Harry S. Truman conveyed the thoughts of many when he wrote to the deceased’s family: “His untimely passing cuts short a life already filled with achievement and rich with promise.” Archbishop Cicognani commented: “Msgr. Walter was called to do a very intimate and personal service of the Holy See, and he dedicated himself and his priesthood wholeheartedly to the important and arduous task.” Two strangers that Monsignor Carroll had encountered in Rome years before wrote these words to the Carroll family upon learning of his death: “Even strangers, as we were that first day in Rome, could see goodness and self-sacrifice

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At the episcopal residence in Pittsburgh (September 1951). L to R: Fr. Joseph Lonergan (pastor, St. Bernard), Fr. Jacob Shinar (secretary to bishop), Msgr. Henry Carlin (vicar general and pastor, Holy Rosary), Msgr. Montini, Bishop Dearden, Fr. Howard Carroll, Mrs. Bridget Carroll, Msgr. Coleman Carroll (pastor, Sacred Heart and later archbishop of Miami), Fr. Thomas Lappan (director of St. Vincent de Paul Society, director of Refugee Resettlement Program, and pastor, St. Athanasius), and Fr. Joseph McGeough of the Vatican Secretariat of State (later, archbishop and nuncio to Ireland)

Source: The Pittsburgh Catholic

ing recognition of another miracle, canonized him on October 14, 2018. Just four years had passed since Paul's beatification and only 40 years since his death. The new saint's feast day is celebrated on September 26. 24

The sole reason for the future pope's visit to Pittsburgh in 1951 was to honor Monsignor Walter S. Carroll. Such an affectionate gesture speaks volumes about the priest-diplomat. The definitive biography of Monsignor Carroll, when written and published, will be a compelling read. 25

Endnotes:

1 English-language wire reports of the election and coronation of Cardinal Pacelli as Pope Pius XII were the work of Rome-based Father Walter S. Carroll of Pittsburgh as special correspondent of N.C.W.C. News Service. See "Triple Tiara of the Papacy Placed on Head of Pius XII: Pittsburgh Priest Tells of Impressions as He Witnessed Pontiff's Coronation," The Pittsburgh Catholic, March 16, 1939, 1-2.


4 "Local Priests' Brother is Ordained in Rome," The Pittsburgh Catholic, December 12, 1935, 1.

5 "Pittsburgher, Ordained in Rome, to Offer Mass His Brothers Assisting," The Pittsburgh Catholic, February 29, 1940, 1, 16. The mother's home was near the parish church and lay directly across the street from the site on which the parish would construct a new complex.

6 "Pittsburgh Native Named to Vatican State Secretariat," The Pittsburgh Catholic, September 26, 1940, 1, 3.


8 Msgr. Carroll Brings Appeal for Refugees," The Pittsburgh Catholic, February 27, 1947, 1, 11.

9 "Pittsburgh Priest Made Monsignor," The Pittsburgh Catholic, March 18, 1943, 1.

10 "Rome Catholic Club Has Mass Offered for Msgr. Walter Carroll," The Pittsburgh Catholic, March 16, 1950, 5; "Offer Mass for Late Msgr. Walter Carroll," The Pittsburgh Catholic, March 8, 1952, 1. Cesare Baronio (1538-1607) was an Italian cardinal and ecclesiastical historian. He was declared Venerable in 1745. His cause for canonization was reopened in 2007.

11 "Father Carroll Gives Broadcast in English of Pontiff's Message," The Pittsburgh Catholic, April 17, 1941, 1.


16 Msgr. Montini Pays Visit Here," The Pittsburgh Catholic, September 13, 1951, 1.

17 Montini's stay at the residence was recalled 58 years later when the mansion was put up for sale. Maryllynne Pitz, "Bishop's Mansion for Sale," Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, March 11, 2009, 1, 3.


19 Mt. Carmel Cemetery was established in 1889 by the Carmelite Fathers who staffed Holy Trinity (German) Parish in Pittsburgh’s Hill District. It remained a parish cemetery until 1958 when it became the first parish cemetery to be merged into the Catholic Cemeteries Association.

20 "Bishop Wright Lauds New Pope as ‘New Paul’," Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, June 22, 1963, 1, 3.


22 "Bell Tower Dedicated at Sacred Heart Church: Archbishop Cicognani Officiates, Paying Tribute to Memory of Monsignor Carroll," Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, November 1, 1954, 7.


24 Of the last ten deceased popes who served in the 159-year period 1846-2005, four have been canonized (Pius X, John XXIII, Paul VI, and John Paul II), one has been beatified (Pius IX), and two have been declared Venerable (Pius XII and John Paul I).

25 Italian historian Andrea di Stefano has undertaken research on the diplomatic and political aspects of relations between the Holy See and the United States. See Andrea di Stefano and Ann Rodgers, “Pittsburgh Priest Had Role in Liberation of Rome in 1944,” Pittsburgh Catholic, June 7, 2016. After Monsignor Carroll’s death, his diaries and personal papers were entrusted to his brother Coleman Carroll. Coleman’s successor as archbishop of Miami, Edward A. McCarthy, subsequently selected George R. Kemon — a Philadelphia native, former editor of the Miami archdiocese’s newspaper, and adjunct college professor — to write Monsignor Carroll’s biography. Kemon’s untimely death in May 1988 left the project unfinished. See Ann Rodgers, “Diaries of a Wartime Priest,” Fort Myers News-Press, July 14, 1984, 1D-2D.
Beyond the Card Catalogue: A Tour of the Vatican Library

Rev. Aleksandr J. Schrenk

Just three months after my ordination to the priesthood last June, I left Pittsburgh and returned to Rome to complete the final year of my License in Sacred Theology (STL) at the Pontifical Institute Augustinianum. Life as a student priest in Rome can be isolating, and I was eager to find an outlet for pastoral activity. As such, I happily accepted the invitation to say Mass every Tuesday morning for the Franciscan Sisters of the Eucharist (FSE). Like most religious orders, they maintain a generalate near the Vatican, a useful base for occasional business that must be carried out in the various congregations there and a place for members of their community to stay while in the Eternal City. As it happened, this pastoral outlet led me to a unique academic opportunity.

The sisters who live in Rome serve in various ministries in the Vatican and beyond. One serves as a psychological counselor at the North American College (NAC), which is how I came to know the community in the first place. Another, Sister Gabriella Pettorossi, works in the Vatican Library. When Sister Gabriella generously offered to give a tour of its collections to a group of priests and seminarians from the NAC, I jumped at the chance. As a student of history and a self-professed bibliophile, the tour was a highlight of my time in Rome. Eager for more information, I asked Sister Gabriella if she would mind meeting with me on a separate occasion to provide some additional information about the Vatican Library and her work there. Sister Gabriella graciously assented to my request.

The insights she shared with me are of great interest, not only to the historian and the archivist, but to anyone who has ever wondered if the romantic notion of the Vatican – hushed whispers in the corridors of Renaissance palaces, secret treasures under lock and key – is at all in tune with the reality. To some extent, it is! The Vatican Library, which is also called the Apostolic Library, houses an awe-inspiring collection of over eighty thousand manuscripts, codices, and papyri alongside a formidable array of coins, medals, maps, documents, and many thousands of modern printed books. But the collection is not as restricted as many imagine it to be, and, in fact, it grows more and more public and visible every day thanks to digitization efforts and other campaigns that seek to make its priceless materials more and more what they truly are – an integral part of the patrimony of all mankind.

The process of accessing the Vatican Library is itself a fascinating one. The day before our meeting, Sister Gabriella sent me a message to say that the Vatican Gendarmerie would be expecting my arrival at the Porta Sant’Anna. That massive marble and wrought iron gate is one of the few crossings from the Republic of Italy into the Vatican City State. As I passed through, one of the Swiss Guards noticed my clerical collar and snapped me a smart salute. Despite the imposing surroundings, what followed was not so much a border crossing as it was a routine security checkpoint.

I found myself in line behind a crowd of Italians, most of whom seemed to be family or longtime friends of the staff. Their destination was the Vatican pharmacy and grocery store, which offers a wide range of food products without the usual EU taxes, including milk from the papal farms at Villa Barberini. A few apparent scholars were headed in the same direction that I was. From the Gendarmerie checkpoint, I passed by the main Vatican post office. Following the Via Sant’Anna, I noted a few handsomely terraced gardens on my right and admired the medieval fortress walls that house the Vatican’s central bank, the Institute for the Works of Religion (IOR). From there, I passed into the Cortile del Belvedere, a Renaissance courtyard that now serves as a parking lot for Vatican employees and the city state’s small fire department. To the right is the entrance of the Vatican Library. Above the door is inscribed a commemoration of its latest renovation: Pius XI P.M. AN. VII: Pope Pius IX, Supreme Pontiff, in the seventh year of his pontificate – that is, 1929, the year of the founding of the Vatican City State.

As I would learn from Sister Gabriella, the library is a recent foundation in relation to the bimillennial history of the Church. While the Holy See has maintained an archives since the late antique era and popes continually added manuscripts and other documents to its collection, the disastrous Avignon Papacy had reduced the papal holdings to a mere 340 books by the reign of Pope Eugene IV (r. 1431–1447).

In 1447, Tommaso Parentucelli acceded to the Chair of Saint Peter. A lifelong lover of books and learning, he had once worked as an advisor to Cosimo de’ Medici. At the time, he had been asked which volumes, in his estimation, a proper humanistic
library should have. He came up with a list of no fewer than 1,500 manuscripts, which would have been a staggering collection at the time.

As a newly-elected pontiff, nothing stood in the way of making those recommendations a reality. He therefore sent emissaries around the known world to buy and to copy manuscripts. They acquired more than 300 after just two years – progress which, given the labor-intensive and expensive process of producing written materials before the invention of the printing press, represented something close to single-minded devotion. The collection, having been granted such a strong foundation, continued to grow. By the papacy of Sixtus IV (r. 1471-1484), the collection had more than three thousand manuscripts. Today the Vatican Library houses the third largest collection of manuscripts in the world behind the British Library and the Bibliothèque Nationale de France.

The cultured and humanistic Pope Sixtus V (r. 1585–1590) constructed the library’s current home off of the Cortile del Belvedere, as it had previously been housed in the damp and fortress-like lower floors of the Apostolic Palace. Designed by Domenico Fontana and dedicated in 1587, at the time, it was the largest space in the world that was not dedicated to a military or ecclesiastical function.

It was within the doors of this venerable institution that I met Sister Gabriella. She walked with me through the modern entryway, which features a security check-in desk and an RFD-activated turnstile. Only scholars with a programmed card can enter.

Impressed with this level of security, I asked how the normal public obtains access to the collections. The process, she said, is simpler than one might suppose. To handle the many requests that arrive from scholars around the world, the library maintains an admissions office. There are certain provisions and clauses that determine access to the collections, and these are freely available to the public on the library’s website. Students in university studies, for example, are required to have a specific research interest and a letter of recommendation. Most researchers are graduate and postgraduate students or professional academics. Contrary to public perception, most users of the Vatican Library are not religious sisters or priests, but lay people.

We arrived at an antique elevator that bore us up a few floors. There, we came upon the office of the Most Reverend Jean-Louis Bruguès, the Archivist and Librarian of the Holy Roman Church. I inquired about his dual title. Sister Gabriella’s explanation touches upon another common misconception about the library – specifically, its relation to the famed Secret Archives. While Archbishop Bruguès is in charge of both collections, they are separate institutions.

There is, however, a shared history. When the library was founded in the fifteenth century, the archives were housed together with the library. Much romance surrounds the archives’ status as a “secret” collection, but the word in Latin simply means “personal.” Simply put, the archives are the collected personal correspondence of the Roman Pontiff. Whatever pertains directly to the Holy Father stays in the Secret Archives, and its contents are divulged to the public after a suitable amount of time has passed – about a century. This sort of record sealing is standard procedure in most national archives.

The contents of the Vatican Library’s collection are subject to additional misunderstandings. The Apostolic Library is not, technically speaking, the national library of Vatican City. People sometimes assume that the library possesses a copy of every Catholic book ever published – like how the Bibliothèque Nationale collects every book published in France. The Vatican Library has no such pretensions to completeness.
It is also not a solely theological library. It contains secular histories, works of fiction, books of medicine and science, and much more. Some of the most significant holdings of the Library are unique in the world and of inestimable value. One example is the Bodmer Papyri, a series of fragments that contain half of the Gospel of Luke and half of Gospel of John. This document has been dated as early as 175 AD, making it the earliest witness to the Gospel text ever discovered. Another treasure is the Codex Vaticanus, a fourth-century Greek codex that represents the first complete text of both testaments of the Bible extant today.

Fascinatingly, the Apostolic Library also houses one of the largest collections of Japanese manuscripts in the world. The so-called Marega Papers were brought to Rome by a Salesian missionary priest in the 1940s. Their more than ten thousand pages provide direct documentation of the persecution of Christians by Japanese authorities from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century.

Newer books are part of the collection too; in fact, the library contains more than 52 kilometers of stacks (about 32 miles).

The process of acquiring new materials is constant, though most of the library’s acquisitions are the result of direct donations rather than a purchase on the part of the library itself. Funds for the library’s operations come from grants, donations, and fundraising. Only recently, Sister Gabriella told me, has fundraising become a part of the operation of the library. Although the Apostolic Library has no peers save for the national libraries of certain world powers, it manages to operate with a fraction of their financial resources and labor.

That new impetus to fundraising is partially the responsibility of Sister Gabriella. Her title is Secretary of the Vice Prefect, a position currently held by Dr. Ambrogio Piazzoni. His office deals with practical matters, mostly relating to personnel. Sister Gabriella’s work revolves around those sorts of responsibilities, but she also handles presentations and translations on occasion. That is a work well-suited to her abilities, because although Sister Gabriella is a native Italian – born, in fact, in Assisi – she is fluent in English, French, and German. Before entering religious life, she had worked in management and economy marketing, which was good preparation for her personnel-focused position. (“That,” she says, “and I trained as marriage and family counselor!”)

The staff of the library, Sister Gabriella explained to me, is constantly busy with the job of curating and preserving its collection. This is not a new task: the Vatican is home to the oldest manuscript restoration and preservation laboratory in Europe. In recent years, however, their work has become much more about preservation than restoration, as it has been discovered that older works of restoration were often more damaging than helpful.

To achieve its goals, the library is in constant communication with other institutions and remains on the forefront of technology.
Currently a massive scanning effort is underway – a project which is revealing the library’s riches to the world. At DigiVatLib (digit.vatlib.it), anyone with an Internet connection can examine priceless documents that would have previously required a trip to Rome to see. High-quality scans make it possible to zoom in on the manuscripts in incredible detail. In some cases, these digitized versions are as useful to scholars as the originals, since the manuscripts are often so fragile that direct handling is impossible.

As a visitor to the library, I had no grand ambitions to handle any rare or exceptional materials myself. But I did ask Sister Gabriella to set aside some books from the stacks for me. Perusing the library’s online catalogue, I identified three printed books which have a significant connection to the Catholic history of Western Pennsylvania.

I was able to handle the following books, which I list along with their titles, a brief description, and their shelf marks, should the curious reader want to look them up more easily in the Vatican Library catalogue.

The first was a titleless album of photographs of Italian missionaries in Pittsburgh (R.G.Fotografie.Oblungo.I.197). The photos were enclosed in a red leather folder, upon which was printed in gold letters: A Sua Santità papa Pio X – l’Apostolato di Pittsburg offre (“To His Holiness, Pope Pius X, the Apostolate of Pittsburgh offers [the following]”). The album had been presented to the Holy Father by the pastor of Saint Mary of the Mount, identified in the album by its Latin title, Santa Maria ad Montem. Inside, a collection of about a dozen photos chronicled, with captions in Latin, the work of missionaries among Italian immigrants in our region.

The second item was a pastoral letter of Bishop Domenec, the second bishop of Pittsburgh, printed in 1865 (Stamp.Ferr.IV.8584 [int.23]). The pastoral letter was inserted into a larger collection of pastoral letters issued by bishops around the world and presented to the pope. This particular printing was addressed by Bishop Domenec to the people and clergy of the diocese, promulgating a jubilee year, and published by Jacob Porter, who also printed the Catholic. The front page was signed by the bishop in his own hand and dedicated to la Sua Ema Ilmo Revmo il Cardinale Patrizi.

The final thing I requested to see was an otherwise humble copy of a book that many of us know well – the biography of Bishop Michael O’Connor published by Fr. Henry Szarnicki in 1975 (R.G.Vite.IV.7459). There were no notes recording how the book ended up in the Apostolic Library, but there are many possibilities for how it might have found its way there. One very real possibility is that it was the gift of John Cardinal Wright, who lived in Rome as Prefect of the Congregation for the Clergy from 1969 until his death in 1979. The book might have been donated to the Vatican Library after his passing. Many similar books from his personal library are currently kept at the NAC.

I am grateful to Sister Gabriella Pettirossi, FSE, for having made these materials available to me. It was a privilege to be able to visit the Vatican Library, and a great pleasure to see parts of the Catholic history of Western Pennsylvania preserved in its collection. Their presence, alongside works of inestimable historical, theological, and cultural value, is a testament both to the significance of our part of the world in the drama of human salvation and to the undeniable Catholicity of the Roman Church.

Endnotes:
1 The Gendarmerie Corps is the regular police and security force of Vatican City. Though not as recognizable as the Pontifical Swiss Guard (which is responsible for the security of the Pope, foreign dignitaries, and specifically papal buildings), the Gendarmes have more extensive responsibilities, including security, public order, border control, traffic control, criminal investigation, and general police duties.
2 These can be found on vaticanlibrary.va, under “Information for Readers” and by clicking on a PDF link, “Rules for Readers.” Sister Gabriella noted that these regulations, while normative, are often overridden if the scholar can make a good case for why his or her work requires access to the Vatican Library.
3 Archbishop Bruguès was recently succeeded in his position by Archbishop José Tolentino Mendonça, whose tenure as Archivist and Librarian of the Holy Roman Church began on September 1, 2018.
4 The Bodmer Papyri comprise a collection of twenty-two papyri discovered in 1952 in Egypt. They were named after their first purchaser, Martin Bodmer. The papyrus referred to in this article is Papyrus 75 (P75) or Bodmer XIV–XV. The Vatican Library’s internal shelf mark is Pap.Hanna.1. They have given it the additional title Mater Verbi (“Mother of the Word”).
5 This resource is available to anyone to search in English at digit.vatlib.it/opac/stp/?ling=en.
6 The bibliographic material in the Vatican Library’s catalog claims a 1932 date for the collection, but since Pope Pius X died in 1914, it cannot be later than that.
7 La Sua Eminenza il Cardinale Patrizi, “His Eminence the most Illustrious and Most Reverend Cardinal Patrizi,” referring to Costantino Cardinal Patrizi Naro (1798–1876). In 1865 Cardinal Patrizi would have been serving as Archpriest of the Basilica di Santa Maria Maggiore and Secretary of the Congregation of the Roman and Universal Inquisition. He would later go on to serve as Dean of the Sacred College of Cardinals from 1870 until his death in 1876.
Higher education is one of the most visible ministries of the Catholic Church in the United States. There are over 200 American Catholic colleges and universities, nine of which are located in Western Pennsylvania. Although many of these institutions today are modern, comprehensive universities, their origins were frequently much humbler, and they often came into existence only by overcoming major challenges and obstacles.

The story of Catholic higher education in America is a fascinating one, and the Pittsburgh area played a significant role in its development. Western Pennsylvania’s Catholic colleges were typical in many ways, but also played an important role in shaping the Church’s approach to higher education nationally. This article will discuss the early history of Catholic higher education in the United States, especially as it influenced (and was influenced by) the Pittsburgh region.

The First American Catholic Colleges

Prior to independence, Catholics could not legally operate colleges in Pennsylvania or any of the thirteen colonies. Despite this, early Jesuit missionaries sponsored a handful of underground grammar schools in Maryland – the one English colony where significant numbers of Catholics had settled. Those humble schools, none of which lasted more than a few years, represented the unofficial and rather subversive origins of Catholic education in this country.1

It was only after the U.S. Constitution brought an end to the discriminatory laws of the colonial era that Catholics could openly establish schools of any kind. It did not take them long to take advantage of that freedom. In 1789, the Holy See established the Diocese of Baltimore – a single diocese covering the entire new country. John Carroll, a former Jesuit from a prominent Maryland family, was appointed its first bishop and wasted no time in establishing America’s first Catholic college – Georgetown – that same year. Shortly afterward, in 1791, Carroll established America’s first seminary: St. Mary’s Seminary in Baltimore. Indirectly, that action would have a major impact on Western Pennsylvania. One of the seminary’s first graduates in 1795 was Father Demetrius Gallitzin, known locally as the “Apostle of the Alleghenies” for his missionary work on the Pennsylvania frontier. Ordained by Carroll himself, Gallitzin was assigned to serve in the “backwoods” of Pennsylvania, where he founded the town of Loretto as the first English-speaking Catholic settlement west of the Appalachianians. In doing so, he planted the seeds of what would eventually become the Diocese of Pittsburgh.

Since the Council of Trent in the sixteenth century, Catholics have always operated some schools specifically to train clergy and others to educate the public.3 This was as true in the United States as it was in Europe. Seminaries like St. Mary’s were seen first and foremost as a support system for the Church and were kept separate from colleges like Georgetown that served lay students.4 Whereas Protestants founded schools like Yale and Princeton to train ministers,5 Catholics were more likely to view their colleges as a community resource, designed primarily to provide access to education. Although it would have been more financially efficient to educate both laypeople and seminarians on a single campus, this generally happened only in places where Catholics lacked the resources to separate the two.6 For example, as late as the 1950s, the Holy Ghost Fathers built a seminary from the ground up in Bethel Park, Pennsylvania, despite the fact that they already sponsored a university (Duquesne) less than ten miles away.7

Life and Learning at Early Catholic Colleges

Although many early schools used the name “college” from the very beginning, they were not colleges as we understand the term today. Throughout the nineteenth century and into the twentieth,
Georgetown University in Washington, DC, founded 1789, is the oldest Catholic university in the United States. A statue of John Carroll, America’s first Catholic bishop, stands on its campus.

Catholic colleges followed a six-year plan of study rather than the four-year plan that is familiar to modern Americans. As a result, those early “colleges” were like extended high schools or, perhaps more accurately, colleges that operated their own two-year prep programs. Some even included elementary divisions.

This six-year model was common in continental Europe (especially Germany), but it had its drawbacks. Students could be admitted to the “colleges” as teens or even pre-teens, which meant that grown men were sometimes sitting in class alongside much younger boys. The traditional curriculum of Catholic colleges was known as the Ratio Studiorum—a plan of study that had been developed by the Jesuits in the 1600s had barely been updated since, focusing on Latin, Greek, classical philosophy, and rhetoric.

By modern standards, early Catholic colleges were exceptionally small—often with just a few hundred students each. By 1907, the combined undergraduate enrollment of all Catholic colleges nationwide was just 7,000. Most often, the “campuses” consisted of a single building where students lived alongside a dozen or so priests who taught them. A single priest might serve as professor by day, registrar in the afternoon, and cook at night.

This tight-knit sense of community—with faculty, staff, and students all living and working under one roof—was a difficult habit to break even as the schools expanded. This is partly why many Catholic schools built their campuses with tightly-packed, interconnected buildings. As new dorms and classroom buildings went up over the years, they were often attached to convents, monasteries, and other existing facilities to make one labyrinthine structure. The oldest parts of the campuses of Mercyhurst University and St. Vincent College are good local examples of this trend.

Experiments in Western Pennsylvania

Irish-born Michael O’Connor became the first bishop of the newly created Diocese of Pittsburgh in 1843. At the time, there were fewer than 20 Catholic colleges in the United States, and none in Pennsylvania west of Philadelphia. Pittsburghers seeking a college degree had only three local options: the Western University of Pennsylvania (known today as the University of Pittsburgh), or Washington College and Jefferson College (which were still two separate institutions at the time, both with strong ties to Presbyterianism). The nearest Catholic schools were Georgetown, Mount St. Mary’s, and Xavier; while slightly farther away, Villanova and Notre Dame were both only one year old.

Like John Carroll in Baltimore, O’Connor clearly prioritized Catholic education—as evidenced by the fact that one of his first acts as bishop in 1844 was the establishment of two schools: one for boys and one for girls.

The girls’ school was the more successful of the two. To staff it, O’Connor invited the Sisters of Mercy from Carlow, Ireland to join him on the Pennsylvania frontier, and an intrepid group of seven sisters led by Frances Warde, R.S.M., answered the call. The Sisters of Mercy were themselves a very young religious order at the time, having been established by Catherine McAuley in Ireland just twelve years earlier. However, they had already developed a reputation as devoted educators and, at McAuley’s direction, combined their vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience with a unique fourth vow to teach the uneducated. The school they founded in Pittsburgh, St. Mary’s Academy, would eventually grow into Carlow University—but more on that later.

The boys’ college that O’Connor founded in 1844 was staffed part-time by diocesan clergy and failed after just four years. It was replaced immediately by a second boys’ college that fared no bet-
ter, lasting only from 1848 to 1851. Although it seems strange to modern eyes, the practice of shuttering one Catholic college and then immediately founding another in the same location was not uncommon. There were similar patterns elsewhere, usually when a school was financially insolvent. In Los Angeles, for example, the Vincentian Fathers operated a college from 1865 to 1911, but when that school fell heavily into debt, the Vincentians simply abandoned it and the local bishop invited the Jesuits to open a new college (known today as Loyola Marymount University) with a vastly similar mission but no messy legal or financial obligations.

The Diocese of Pittsburgh made a third attempt to establish a school for boys, this time known as the Pittsburgh Catholic Institute, but it, too, closed after just three years. The relative stability of St. Mary’s Academy for girls speaks to the leadership of the Sisters of Mercy who ran it, but the persistent failures of the boys’ schools do not necessarily indicate any unique problems. As some scholars have pointed out, there was almost no rhyme or reason behind why some Catholic colleges survived and others failed during this time period. The most that can be said is that demand for higher education on the American frontier was fairly low (particularly among working-class Catholic immigrants) and early dioceses were often too poor to finance their grand ambitions. Even the Western University of Pennsylvania (Pitt) suspended operations several times in the 1800s.

**Better Luck to the East: St. Vincent and St. Francis**

Meanwhile, outside the city limits, two Catholic colleges with which O’Connor had only minimal direct involvement would find more success, and would introduce two new major religious orders to American higher education. St. Vincent College (1846) in Latrobe and St. Francis University (1847) in Loretto are, respectively, the oldest Benedictine and oldest Franciscan colleges in the United States. Both operated with O’Connor’s permission, but their relative isolation and association with established religious orders proved to be a major advantage.

It would be hard to overstate the importance of St. Vincent College to the development of the Catholic Church in Western Pennsylvania. Not only did St. Vincent bring Benedictine monasticism to the United States (becoming the first of a network of 12 Benedictine colleges nationwide), but it also counted among its alumni three of Pittsburgh’s first nine bishops: Hugh Boyle, Vincent Leonard, and John Francis Regis Canevin (the first native of the Diocese of Pittsburgh to hold that office). St. Vincent was also a rare example of a college that combined seminary education and lay education on the same campus. Its uniqueness was a reflection of the personality of its headstrong founder, Archabbot Boniface Wimmer, O.S.B., who had a tendency to do things his own way.

Mimmer is a giant in the history of the American Church and deserves a great deal of credit for shaping Catholicism locally and nationally. Born in Bavaria in 1809, Wimmer successfully convinced his Benedictine superiors of the need to send missionaries to the Pennsylvania frontier. He published appeals for support in German newspapers, arguing that German Catholic immigrants in America were doomed to lose their culture (and their faith) unless German priests could teach and preach to them in their own language.

From the very beginning, Wimmer’s vision for his American mission included a college. He argued that the Jesuits, who had already taken the lead in American Catholic education, too often focused their ministry on the large cities while ignoring the needs of rural areas. Wimmer had read about the missionary work of Demetrius Gallitzin in Pennsylvania and had concluded that, in the Diocese of Pittsburgh, he would find a particularly large number of rural Catholic settlers underserved by the American clergy.
and in dire need of his support.19

The German Archabbot and the Irish Bishop

Although Wimmer came to the Diocese of Pittsburgh with O'Connor's permission, the archabbot and the bishop did not entirely see eye-to-eye, and their relationship became frosty over time. O'Connor supported the American temperance movement and campaigned against consumption of alcoholic beverages, but beer flowed freely at Wimmer's monastery, which also drew income from a pub in Indiana, Pennsylvania.20 In 1847, O'Connor sought to send a small group of English-speaking diocesan seminarians to St. Vincent and to supply an English-speaking priest to supervise and teach them – but Wimmer considered the attempt intrusive and refused to cooperate.21

Over time, O'Connor became frustrated with the semi-autonomous Benedictine fiefdom operating within his diocese, and Wimmer became agitated at what he saw as overstretch from the authorities in Pittsburgh seeking to clip his wings. By 1850, the situation had escalated so far that Wimmer found it necessary to leave Latrobe for a lengthy visit to Europe, petitioning the Vatican to exempt his monastery from the Pittsburgh's authority.22

It must have been frustrating for O'Connor to watch Wimmer's small college in Latrobe chug along steadily while attempt after attempt to found a Catholic college in Pittsburgh failed. However, Wimmer's operation had one major advantage that O'Connor's never could: it was a self-sustaining community, capable of growing its own food and surviving tough financial times through its own self-reliance. It was a monastery first and a college second. The Pittsburgh colleges not only had higher construction and operating costs than did their neighbor in Latrobe, but they had fewer sources of revenue on which to fall back if they could not sustain enrollment.

St. Vincent's influence extends beyond Western Pennsylvania – certainly an outsized impact for such a small college. From their home base at Latrobe, Benedictine missionaries set out to establish several other monasteries/colleges on the model of St. Vincent, including St. John's University in Minnesota (1857), Benedictine College in Kansas (1858), Belmont Abbey College in North Carolina (1876), and Benedictine University in Illinois (1887). In a very real sense, all Benedictine higher education in the United States is modeled on Wimmer's vision and the prototype college he developed in Latrobe.

St. Francis

Likewise, St. Francis University set important precedents for Franciscan education in the United States. Unlike St. Vincent, however, its origin and identity cannot be traced to any one individual or outsized personality. Its early history is a bit more nebulous as a result. Like most early Catholic colleges, St. Francis Academy (as it was originally known) blurred the lines between high school and college, school and monastery. Instruction was taking place there since 1847, but anti-Catholic prejudice in Harrisburg led to some difficulties incorporating the new school. Although it was clearly offering something like college-level education throughout the 1800s, it was not definitively and legally chartered as a “college” until 1911.23

Demetrius Gallitzin had mused about establishing a college in Loretto decades earlier, but it was not until Bishop O'Connor convinced a group of Irish Franciscans to establish their American base of operations in Loretto that such a dream was feasible. From the start, O'Connor seems to have had a warmer relationship with his Irish countrymen in Loretto than with the German Benedictines in Latrobe. The original facilities of St. Francis Academy were deeded in O'Connor's name and leased to the Franciscans who, unlike Wimmer, did little to challenge O'Connor's authority.24

The close proximity between St. Francis and St. Vincent inevitably led to competition for students, but it is unlikely that either school would have developed drastically differently if the other had not existed. Today, almost all Benedictine and Franciscan colleges in the United States are small liberal arts institutions similar to these two prototypes from Western Pennsylvania. Their rural character and small size reflects the asceticism of their founding religious orders.

Other religious orders had different philosophies. Some, like the Jesuits, embraced and engaged the outside world; as a result, Jesuit schools were more likely to be urban, and more likely to grow into large cosmopolitan research universities. It is no surprise, therefore, that when the need arose for a comprehensive Catholic research university in downtown Pittsburgh, it was neither the Benedictines nor the Franciscans but a more cosmopolitan order of missionary priests – the Spiritans – that proved itself up to the task.

Duquesne

Bishop O'Connor resigned in 1860, having never fulfilled his vision for a successful Catholic men's college in the city of Pittsburgh. However, that vision would get new life eighteen years later under O'Connor's successor, Bishop Michael Domenec.

After the previous failures, the prospect of experimenting with yet another Catholic school in Pittsburgh must have seemed daunting. However, Bishop Domenec saw a target of opportunity in the 1870s when large numbers of German Catholics were being expelled from that country due to Otto von Bismarck's Kulturkampf and persecution of Catholic clergy. One of the groups that fled Germany and settled in Pittsburgh was the Holy Ghost Fathers, known today informally as the Spiritans.25

Best known for their work as missionaries in east Africa and as educators in France and Ireland, the Holy Ghost Fathers at the time had only minimal activity in the United States. Newly exiled from their home country, the German members of the order perceived a need for their services among German-speaking Americans, and many were drawn to Allegheny City (now Pittsburgh's North Side) because of its large immigrant population. Bishop Domenec invited one of these exiles, Father Joseph Strub, C.S.Sp., to become pastor of St. Mary's Church in Sharpsburg, and expressed his desire that the parish eventually start a school. Four years later,
in 1878, Father Strub opened that school in rented facilities on Wylie Avenue — and Pittsburgh’s fourth (and final) Catholic men’s college was born.

The new school experimented with several different names. Legally, it was incorporated as “Pittsburgh Catholic College,” but many versions of that name seem to have been used in casual conversation. An early drawing of the school’s first home on Wylie Avenue includes a sign that says, simply, “Catholic College.” Commencement programs from the early 1900s (when Pittsburgh briefly dropped the “h” from its name) refer to it as “Pittsburg College of the Holy Ghost” with the words “Pittsburg College” in bold letters and “of the Holy Ghost” written in small type underneath, almost as an afterthought. (It was not uncommon for Catholics to name their schools after the cities in which they are located; Seattle University, the University of San Francisco, and Boston College are all examples.)

Had history developed differently, it is not hard to imagine that “Pittsburgh College” might someday have become known as “Pittsburgh University” or even “the University of Pittsburgh.” Unfortunately, another institution claimed that name first. The Western University of Pennsylvania embarked on a major expansion in the early twentieth century, changing its name to the “University of Pittsburgh” in 1908 and moving its campus from the North Side to Oakland in 1909.

The similarity in the names of the two institutions obviously would have caused confusion. Not coincidentally, just two years after Pitt adopted its current name, “Pittsburgh College” rechristened itself “Duquesne University of the Holy Ghost.” This was significant on two levels. First, it meant that the school was boldly laying claim to the name of the French fort that gave birth to Pittsburgh — a reminder to all Pittsburghers that the first successful European settlers in their city were, in fact, French Catholics. Second, it meant that Duquesne was the first Catholic school in Pennsylvania to achieve university status. That accomplishment was the result of a hard-fought legal battle with regulators in Harrisburg, and it made Duquesne, in 1911, the only Catholic “university” for 600 miles between Georgetown and Notre Dame.

**Expansion**

Timing was on Duquesne’s side. The Catholic population of Pittsburgh was on the verge of exploding when the new college was founded. Industrialization would bring Croatian, Irish, Italian, Polish, Slovak, Lithuanian, and other immigrants to the city in droves, and Duquesne fulfilled the mission of most great Catholic colleges by offering an accessible education to those first-generation Americans who otherwise could not afford to leave the city.

Because of the higher construction and maintenance costs associated with its urban location, Duquesne was under added pressure to maintain its enrollment to pay its bills. Unfortunately, the traditional six-year Catholic curriculum proved to be a hard sell. Duquesne (like many Catholic colleges) would discover that an esoteric education based on Latin, Greek, and philosophy was not in high demand among American working-class students, even in the nineteenth century. In the 1890s, Duquesne President William Tohil Murphy, C.S.Sp., summed up the dilemma, noting that:
Catholic colleges could not enforce meaningful entrance requirements because they were too dependent on tuition. Their financial weakness, and the clerical make-up of the teaching staff, meant that little could be offered but the traditional classical course.  

The problem became especially acute when Carnegie Tech opened across town in 1900, offering more career-oriented degrees in a shorter timeframe. Like other Catholic schools of the era, Duquesne understood that a large part of its mission was to help first-generation Catholic immigrants establish themselves economically in American society – and one way to do so was to train students for well-paying professional fields like law and business. Catholic universities felt a need to expand beyond their traditional liberal arts curriculum and develop their own professional schools. 

Duquesne Law School was founded in 1911 – the first Catholic law school in Pennsylvania. By 1912, Duquesne was offering summer and evening courses to boost enrollment and better serve its working-class constituents. A forerunner to the School of Business was founded in 1913, and professional schools of pharmacy, music, and education were all established between 1925 and 1929. A School of Drama also briefly came into existence in 1913, but would not survive competition from the better-known program across town at Carnegie Tech. 

To offer these diverse fields of study, Duquesne faced a challenge that was, by then, common at universities like Georgetown, Notre Dame, and Fordham: it had to hire large numbers of lay faculty. Small, resident communities of priests were no longer sufficient to staff the schools, resulting in even higher operating costs and a greater dependence on tuition.

Duquesne and its Spiritan presidents deserve a great deal of credit for their visionary leadership during this time period. Duquesne’s School of Pharmacy is the oldest of only ten Catholic pharmacy programs in the country. 

Duquesne’s College of Arts, the last all-male holdout, began admitting women in 1927. Even that is remarkably early. Villanova was not fully coeducational until 1968, Georgetown until 1969, and Notre Dame until 1972. In Latrobe, St. Vincent College did not begin admitting women until 1983 (exceptionally late by national standards). In addition, Duquesne’s longstanding policy of openness to all races – which, it has been argued, stems in part from the Spiritans’ history as missionaries in Africa – also sets it apart, not just among Catholic schools, but among all private colleges.

In all of these ways, Duquesne was a pioneer among Catholic universities, and it perhaps does not trumpet these achievements as often as it should. Part of the reason for its humility may be that, while it was ahead of the curve among Catholic universities nationally, it was always playing catch-up to its local, secular rivals. Duquesne’s School of Pharmacy may be the oldest such school at a Catholic university, but it is more than 40 years younger than the School of Pharmacy at Pitt. Duquesne’s decision to admit women was very early for a Catholic school, but it came 14 years after Pitt enrolled its first female students and three years after Carnegie Tech established its Margaret Morrison Carnegie College for women. None of this, however, detracts from the major precedents Duquesne helped to set for Catholic education.

Separating from the Prep Divisions

It was during the 1910s and 1920s that the traditional six-year plan of study at Catholic universities officially began to fall out of favor. Accrediting bodies were starting to standardize the four-year college curriculum, and Catholic schools were forced to comply or lose accreditation. This resulted in an awkward dilemma: what to do with the younger, high-school age students already enrolled on the campuses?

In most cases, Catholic colleges simply spun off their prep divisions into separate, loosely affiliated high schools. Examples of these include Georgetown Preparatory School in Maryland, Boston College High School in Massachusetts, and LaSalle College High School near Philadelphia. Some, like Fordham Prep in New York, are still tucked into corners of the college campuses. Today, although they are no longer legally affiliated, these high schools typically maintain mutually respectful, cooperative relationships with the colleges of which they were once an integral part. Many even use the same athletic monikers (like Georgetown Prep’s “Little Hoyas.”)

The same phenomenon took place in Western Pennsylvania, but almost none of the spinoff high schools survive today. Duquesne Prep existed from 1911 to 1941. Although it enrolled hundreds of students at its peak, it was unable to compete with the dozens of parish high schools that were popping up around the city. As the concept of a four-year high school became more standardized, the Diocese of Pittsburgh also started to invest in its own stand-alone high schools, including Central Catholic (1927) and North Catholic (1939). Both had better facilities than Duquesne Prep, and the older Spiritan institution soon became redundant.

St. Vincent Prep thrived in Westmoreland County for more than fifty years until a fire in 1963 destroyed many of its facilities. It stopped enrolling lay students after 1964, but continued to enroll prospective Benedictines until 1974. Its legacy is still visible on the St. Vincent campus in the form of Prep Hall, its former home, now repurposed as faculty offices.

Today, the only surviving prep school in Western Pennsylvania that was originally affiliated with a university is Mercyhurst Prep in Erie. Tucked into a corner of the Mercyhurst campus, it is the last local vestige of what used to be a common characteristic of Catholic education: educating students at all levels, up to and including college, at a single institution.
The Latecomers: Gannon, Franciscan, and Wheeling Jesuit

The only Catholic men’s college in Western Pennsylvania never to have its own prep division was Gannon University in Erie, which was founded after the six-year curriculum had already gone out of favor. Its origins took shape gradually between the 1920s and 1930s. Originally known as Cathedral College (a kind of counterpart to Erie Cathedral Prep, but not formally affiliated with it), Gannon at first operated essentially as a branch campus of other Catholic colleges, awarding degrees in their name.

Gannon is exceptional in many respects. Not only is it quite young for a men’s college, but it is also one of the few Catholic colleges founded by a diocese rather than a religious order. Today, only ten of the more than 200 Catholic colleges in the United States are directly sponsored by a diocese.40 Most dioceses have always lacked the clerical personnel to staff an institution of higher education, so whenever a bishop sought to establish a new college, he often had no choice but to invite the Jesuits, Franciscans, or others to assume its day-to-day management. Gannon is different; it is and always has been sponsored directly by the Diocese of Erie.

Erie is also one of the few cities in which a Catholic college for women predated a college for men. The Sisters of St. Joseph founded the now-defunct Villa Maria College in 1925, and Gannon at first operated effectively as an all-male branch campus of Villa Maria, awarding degrees under Villa’s charter (and later under St. Vincent’s). Gannon would not achieve its own accreditation until 1941. Villa Maria no longer exists as an independent college, but due to a 1989 merger, it is now known as the Villa Maria College of Nursing within Gannon University.41

Nationally, there was a small boom in new Catholic men’s colleges in the era immediately after World War II. This was a period of rapid growth for Catholic education generally, as the total enrollment in Catholic colleges exploded from 16,000 in 1916 to more than 400,000 by 1965.42 Two factors were directly responsible for this growth: the G.I. Bill, which made a college education affordable for millions of former servicemen, and the postwar baby boom.

It was in this context that the College of Steubenville (now the Franciscan University of Steubenville) was founded in 1946. It was followed shortly after by Wheeling College (now Wheeling Jesuit University) in 1954, belatedly giving the Pittsburgh area its first Jesuit college. Although the Diocese of Pittsburgh was finished building colleges by that time, the same demographic pressures caused it to build a number of new high schools, including Canev-in (1959), Serra (1961), and Quigley (1967), as well as South Hills Catholic (1956—later to merge into Seton-LaSalle) and the now-defunct Bishop Boyle (1962) and Bishop’s Latin School (1961).

Women’s Colleges

Catholic sisters have been involved in education since the days of John Carroll, and often operated girls’ boarding schools in close proximity to men’s colleges. The first such school was Georgetown Visitation Preparatory School, founded in 1799 and still located adjacent to Georgetown University. However, while the men’s colleges were accredited to grant bachelor’s degrees, the women’s schools were essentially high schools with no pretense of higher education.43

This changed in the late 1890s and early 1900s, when some Catholic girls’ schools began to seek their own accreditation to grant college degrees. Often, they started by adding two-year associate’s degree options to the end of their high school curricula, which allowed them to advertise themselves as junior colleges. The first Catholic girls’ school to evolve into a four-year college and confer a bachelor’s degree upon a female student was the College of Notre Dame in Baltimore, Maryland in 1899.44
Because of this complicated history, the exact founding date of many Catholic women's colleges can be hard to determine. Virtually all of the earliest Catholic women's colleges were actually extensions of existing girls' high schools. For example, St. Mary's College of Notre Dame claims 1844 as its founding date, because in that year the Sisters of the Holy Cross opened a school for girls near the all-male University of Notre Dame (established two years earlier). However, St. Mary's was not actually accredited to grant collegiate degrees until more than six decades later in 1908.45

In Western Pennsylvania, Carlow University claims 1929 as its founding date. In that year, it began to offer undergraduate degrees and became a “college” for all practical purposes. However, the high school from which Carlow emerged can trace its roots to 1844 — to St. Mary's Academy, the very first Catholic girls' school founded by Bishop O'Connor and the Sisters of Mercy in the Diocese of Pittsburgh.46 This arguably makes Carlow one of the 20 oldest Catholic colleges in the country and the second-oldest college of any kind in the City of Pittsburgh.

Most Catholic women's colleges, like Carlow, trace their “founding” to the date they began offering undergraduate degrees. However, a sizable minority — including St.-Mary-of-the-Woods College in Indiana, Spalding University in Kentucky, and the aforementioned St. Mary's College of Notre Dame — claim a founding date based on the origins of their antecedent high schools. Carlow could theoretically do so as well, which would extend its history by over 80 years.

Carlow

Carlow was not the first Mercy-affiliated school to offer undergraduate degrees. In fact, it was not even the first in Western Pennsylvania, having been beaten to that milestone by Mercyhurst University by three years.47 However, it is arguably the oldest institution continuously operated by the Sisters of Mercy in this country, and as such, its history is inseparable from that of the sisters and the Diocese of Pittsburgh as a whole.

St. Mary's Academy (which was renamed Mount Mercy Academy and then Our Lady of Mercy Academy), operated in several different locations downtown before moving to the present-day Carlow campus in Oakland in 1895. After opening their college division in 1929 (originally under the name Mount Mercy College), the sisters continued to sponsor both college and prep divisions on the grounds of their Oakland motherhouse until grades 7-12 were moved to Monroeville in 1963. The Monroeville branch of Our Lady of Mercy Academy would ultimately close in 1979, bringing to an end the longest-running girls' high school in Pittsburgh.38 However, the elementary division still exists and shares the Carlow campus to this day; it is now known as the Campus School of Carlow University and enrolls students in grades pre-kindergarten through eighth grade. This makes Carlow one of the few Catholic universities that still maintains its own elementary school.

Carlow's growth as a women's college was limited by the fact that Duquesne was already admitting women by the time Carlow was founded. However, it provided a welcome Catholic alternative to the all-female education available at Chatham University and, like many Catholic schools, enrolled many first-generation college students for whom it was the only convenient option.

Seton Hill, Mercyhurst, and Mount Aloysius

Most other women's colleges in the Pittsburgh region followed the same archetype. Seton Hill University traces its roots to Greensburg's St. Joseph Academy, founded by the Sisters of Charity in 1883 and elevated to collegiate status in 1914.49 A similarly named but separate high school, St. Joseph Academy, was founded in Titusville by the Sisters of Mercy in 1871; after moving to Erie in
in the case of Mount Aloysius College near Loretto, established by the Sisters of Mercy in 1853 as a female counterpart to the boys’ school at St. Francis. It was known by several names (including Young Ladies Academy of Our Lady of Loretto, St. Aloysius Academy, and Mount Aloysius Academy) before it became Mount Aloysius Junior College in 1939. It remained a “junior college” for over fifty years until it began to offer four-year bachelor’s degrees, dropping the word “Junior” from its name in 1991 and becoming the third Mercy-affiliated baccalaureate college in Western Pennsylvania. As recently as 2000 it expanded its offerings to include graduate education. However, like its sister institution in Erie (Mercyhurst), it still offers its historic two-year associate’s degree programs.

Of course, not all of the region’s girls’ high schools evolved into colleges; some simply remained high schools. The most prominent of these was probably Mount de Chantal Visitation Academy in nearby Wheeling, which closed its doors in 2008 after a remarkable 160-year history that predated the State of West Virginia itself. (Its sponsoring congregation, the Sisters of the Visitation, also sponsored America’s oldest Catholic girls’ school in Georgetown – but as was the case in the nation’s capital, they chose to focus on high school ministry rather than found a college.) Nonetheless, Mount de Chantal did play an important role in the region’s higher education, since a portion of its vast property in Wheeling was sold in the 1950s and became the campus of Wheeling Jesuit University.

La Roche
A small handful of Catholic women’s colleges nationwide originated not as girls’ high schools, but as “sister’s colleges” – that is, colleges founded by a religious order of sisters to train its own members. Often, in addition to preparing postulants and novices to take their religious vows, these colleges offered degrees in nursing, education, or other fields in which the prospective sisters could expect to work. Many later expanded their enrollment to include women who were not seeking to take religious vows.

The only local example of this phenomenon is La Roche College in McCandless, founded by the Sisters of Divine Providence in 1963. A mere three years later, it had already expanded to enroll laywomen. By the 1970s, men were attending the college.

Women’s Colleges Today
Today, all five of the Catholic women’s colleges in Western Pennsylvania are fully coeducational. Carlow maintained its single-sex character slightly longer than the others, still describing itself as a “woman-centered” institution well into the early 2000s (even though it has enrolled men in small numbers since the postwar era of the 1940s). This shift toward coeducation is typical; nationwide, only ten Catholic colleges still identify themselves as women’s institutions. The closest to Pittsburgh is Ursuline College (which is also the only remaining women’s college in the state of Ohio) in the Cleveland suburbs. All other Catholic women’s colleges, including all 13 in Pennsylvania, are now officially coeducational.

The women’s colleges in Western Pennsylvania are unique, however, in the degree to which they have maintained their independence. In Detroit, Chicago, Baltimore, Los Angeles, and elsewhere, large numbers of Catholic women’s schools either closed, merged, or returned to their roots as high schools over the past half-century. Many simply lacked the resources to survive as independent institutions and were absorbed into men’s colleges, if not shuttered completely. Locally, the only women’s college to experience such a fate was Villa Maria College, which merged with the younger Gannon University (although Villa Maria Academy still exists in Erie and educates girls in grades 9-12). All others have maintained their status as independent institutions, which speaks to the quality of their leadership.

Conclusion
Western Pennsylvania’s Catholic colleges include a number of firsts: the first Benedictine college, the first Franciscan college, (nearly) the first coeducational Catholic university, and (arguably) the first Mercy-affiliated women’s college. The story of how these
various institutions came into being is, in many ways, the story of Catholicism in the region. They helped to shape the people and the culture of Western Pennsylvania just as they helped to shape the direction of Catholic higher education nationwide.

The region’s nine Catholic colleges (eleven, counting those in Steubenville and Wheeling) have grown dramatically since their humble beginnings and continue to be a driving force in Pittsburgh’s culture, economy, and booming intellectual scene. By adapting to the needs of each generation, what were once essentially high schools with a few dozen students have become major centers of undergraduate and graduate education. All have achieved university status with the exception of La Roche, Mount Aloysius, and St. Vincent – but even those colleges now enroll more student in more fields of study than their founders likely ever could have imagined.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Founding Date</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Original Students</th>
<th>Former Names</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Canonical Sponsor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1844</td>
<td>First of three failed boys' academies</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Pittsburgh Catholic Institute</td>
<td>Pittsburgh</td>
<td>Diocese of Pittsburgh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1844 (Academy)</td>
<td>1929 (College)</td>
<td>Carlow University</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>St. Mary's Academy Our Lady of Mercy Academy Mt. Mercy Academy Mt. Mercy College Carlow College</td>
<td>Pittsburgh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1846</td>
<td>St. Vincent College</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Latrobe</td>
<td>Benedictines</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1847</td>
<td>St. Francis University</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Loretto</td>
<td>Franciscans</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1853 (Academy)</td>
<td>1939 (College)</td>
<td>Mt. Aloysius College</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>St. Aloysius Academy Young Ladies Academy of Our Lady of Loretto Mt. Aloysius Academy Mt. Aloysius Junior College</td>
<td>Loretto/Cresson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1878</td>
<td>Duquesne University of the Holy Spirit</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Pittsburgh Catholic College Holy Ghost College Pittsburg College of the Holy Ghost Duquesne University of the Holy Ghost</td>
<td>Pittsburgh</td>
<td>Spiritans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1883 (Academy)</td>
<td>1914 (College)</td>
<td>Seton Hill University</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>St. Joseph's Academy Seton Hill College</td>
<td>Greensburg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1871 (Academy)</td>
<td>1926 (College)</td>
<td>Mercyhurst University</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>St. Joseph Academy Mercyhurst College</td>
<td>Titusville/Erie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925 (Merge with Gannon, 1989)</td>
<td>Villa Maria College</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Erie</td>
<td>Sisters of St. Joseph</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>Gannon University</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Cathedral College Gannon College</td>
<td>Erie</td>
<td>Diocese of Erie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1946</td>
<td>Franciscan University of Steubenville</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>College of Steubenville Steubenville, Ohio</td>
<td>Steubenville, Ohio</td>
<td>Franciscans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>Wheeling Jesuit University</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Wheeling College Wheeling, West Virginia</td>
<td>Jesuits</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>La Roche College</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>McCandless</td>
<td>Sisters of Divine Providence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When Duquesne, Carlow, and other schools were founded, they served a booming market of first-generation American Catholics who had few other educational options in the region. Since the 1960s, however, Western Pennsylvania has seen the establishment of five public community college systems, six Penn State branch campuses, three Pitt branch campuses and the rapid expansion of secular schools like Robert Morris, Point Park, Pitt, and Carnegie Mellon. Today, there is arguably an oversupply of higher education in the region, forcing schools to be creative in their attempts to compete with each other and with extensive online degree options around the country. They must rethink the audiences they serve as the Catholic population of the United States shifts to the South and West, and as the neediest first-generation students in Pennsylvania are often members of other religious groups.

One thing, though, is certain. The Catholic colleges’ future, like their past, will be closely intertwined with the Church and the region they have supported for over 170 years. Their story will continue to be influenced by the legacy of the Sisters of Mercy, Benedictines, Franciscans, Spiritans, Sisters of Charity, Sisters of St. Joseph, Jesuits, Sisters of Divine Providence, diocesan clergy, and laypeople who have shaped Catholic higher education in this region for generations. The next chapters in their lives will be just as fascinating as the first.

Endnotes:

1 Even the name “Maryland” was cheekily subversive to English authority. Officially, the colony was named after Henrietta Maria, wife of King Charles I — but if that connection seems spurious, it was. The English Catholics who founded Maryland arguably named it in honor of the Virgin Mary, and their queen’s second name may have been an awkward excuse.


6 Rizzi, “We’ve Been Here Before.”


8 Rizzi, “We’ve Been Here Before.”

9 Ibid.

10 Power, Catholic Higher Education in America, 129.

11 Rizzi, “We’ve Been Here Before.”

12 Marsden, The Soul of the American University, 99, 270.


16 Power, Catholic Higher Education in America, 60-62.


18 Ibid.


20 Ibid., 115.

21 Ibid., 85-86.

Ibid.


Ibid., 7.

Ibid., 12-15.


See Kathleen A. Mahoney, *Catholic Education in Protestant America: The Jesuits and Harvard in the Age of the University* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003); Rizzi, “We’ve Been Here Before.”


Rizzi, “We’ve Been Here Before.”

Ibid.


Vincentian Academy in McCandless was briefly affiliated with Duquesne in the 1990s and early 2000s, but that relationship was fundamentally different than the historical relationship of most Catholic colleges to their high schools. Villa Maria Academy in Erie had some connections to the former Villa Maria College, but the college no longer exists.


Rizzi, “We’ve Been Here Before.”


Some of the girls’ high schools in the Diocese of Pittsburgh that never made the jump to collegiate status included Fontbonne Academy in Bethel Park, Our Lady of the Sacred Heart High School in Coraopolis, St. Francis Academy in Whitehall, and Vincentian Academy in McCandless. The Sisters of Mercy operated St. Xavier Academy in Latrobe from 1845 to 1972, when it was destroyed by fire.


Rizzi, “We’ve Been Here Before.”


References to Carolw’s status as a “woman-centered” institution were de-emphasized following the most recent round of strategic planning. Carlow University, *Mission Accountability Self-study and Peer Review* (Pittsburgh, 2015).

The list includes: Alverno College in Milwaukee, Wisconsin; College of St. Mary in Omaha, Nebraska; Mount Mary University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Mount St. Mary's University in Los Angeles, California; Notre Dame of Maryland University in Baltimore, Maryland; St. Catherine University in St. Paul, Minnesota; St. Mary's College in Notre Dame, Indiana; Trinity Washington University in Washington, D.C.; and Ursuline College near Cleveland, Ohio, as well as the College of St. Benedict in Minnesota, which is actually a coordinate college with nearby all-male St. John’s University.

Nor was this a uniquely Catholic phenomenon. Chatham University and Wilson College are among the Western Pennsylvania women’s schools that recently went co-ed.


The community colleges are: Community College of Allegheny County, Beaver County Community College, Butler County Community College, Westmoreland County Community College, and Pennsylvania Highlands Community College. New Penn State branch campuses were located in Beaver, Dubois, Uniontown (Fayette), New Kensington, Sharon (Shenango), and White Oak (Greater Allegheny); Pitt branch campuses were located in Bradford, Greensburg, and Titusville. Other campuses, including Penn State-Altoona, Penn State-Erie, and Pitt-Johnstown, predate the 1960s.
Margaret Eleanor McCann’s contributions to librarianship and the role of women leaders in academia are nothing short of impressive. From her work record at Duquesne University, to her contributions to the Catholic Historical Society, to her active membership roles in associations locally, regionally, and nationally, her remarkable professional life is well documented.

Born on August 4, 1904, she lived in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania until her death on February 10, 1994 at the age of 89. A member of St. Paul Cathedral Parish, she is buried in Calvary Cemetery in Hazelwood. There is much about her personal life we cannot know, the details that made her uniquely Eleanor. The comments we have from a few people who knew her personally describe an intelligent, well-read, witty woman, a lover of Irish quips, and an exceptional dresser who sewed many of her outfits. The attention to detail required for sewing fashionable and beautiful professional suits was abundant in other areas of her life, including her professional calling as a librarian.

Eleanor McCann became a librarian in 1927 upon receiving a B.S. Certificate from the Margaret Morrison Carnegie Library School. The Thistle Yearbook for 1927 lists her activities as “Pittsburgh Honor Scholarship; Margaret Morrison Senate 1, 3; Treasurer 3; Student Council 3; Guild 1, 2, 3, 4; Scribblers 2, 3, 4; Sophomore Chairman of Freshman Regulations.” These activities demonstrate her leadership and collaborative traits (Student Council and Senate) as well as her orderly nature (Regulations). After graduation, she began working that year at the South Side Branch of the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh (CLP) as a reference assistant. Over the next eighteen years, she worked in multiple CLP branches, culminating in a leadership position as Head of the Central Lending Division in 1942. Several years later in 1945, McCann transitioned from public librarianship to higher education when she accepted a position at Duquesne University where she would remain until her retirement, 24 years later.

**Professional Accomplishments**

During her time at Duquesne, Eleanor McCann saw enormous transitions including the renovation of the library building, enhanced library services, development of a University Archive, and growth of diversity among staff. Upon her retirement, she was lauded for giving “unfailing service to the University and its students, filling a position vital to any institute of learning.” The Library at Duquesne underwent a large renovation during McCann’s tenure, adding 32,000 square feet and costing an estimated $600,000. The addition would provide much-needed space for collections, enhanced service points for faculty and graduate students, spaces for special collections, such as the African Collection, space for library instruction, and “the entire building will be air-conditioned.” On a cold day in February 1961, the groundbreaking for the new addition occurred. Photographs of Eleanor McCann, bundled up stylishly in a long tan coat, light-colored gloves, topped with a pill-box hat, her hand on a shovel in the ground and Fr. McAnulty riding a tractor graced the front pages of the Duquesne Duke, the student newspaper. In 1962, the incoming freshmen class was welcomed as the “first to have at their disposal the completed facilities of the new University library.” The library is described in detail, with each room and its intended use explained. Enhanced services included more staff positions, greater hours, new technologies, and more space for study and books. Reviewing current library services and making modifications is an ongoing process in libraries, especially when there are significant changes such as a new building. In a 1961 memo to the University Budget Committee, McCann acknowledged that services would be reviewed and new policies formulated, with the intention “of providing the best service possible, within the limits of our resources of staff and material.” The total proposed library budget was $165,725, a 4 percent increase from the previous year, and was approved.

Technology was making its way into libraries during this time. Announcements about new typewriters and microfilming machines were made, as well as audio-visual equipment. In 1952, the Alumni Association presented the library “Visual Aid Equipment” including a record player and projector. The Women’s Guild at Duquesne University raised money for a listening-viewing room in the new library addition in 1961. McCann was a member of this group of women staff and faculty that was part social club, part fundraising group. In addition to a delightful photo of McCann and two other members of the Women’s Guild listening to the...
space conservation were primary purposes. New technologies and new library spaces were at the forefront of library service during McCann’s tenure.

In his history of the University, and more specifically, the new library addition, Joseph F. Rishel speaks critically of Eleanor McCann and other library staff, noting that they were “determined to test” the capacity of the new building space by buying books. He also argues that there were conflicts over library space being open or closed, stating “Sections of the ground floor, for instance, McCann ordered to be roped off as closed stacks when these had originally been intended as open stacks. Students who defied the rope – it could easily be ducked under – did so at the risk of being caught and scolded.” This negative portrayal stands alone among other university and historical records.

Two documents in the archival files demonstrate a few other areas where McCann grappled with tensions as an administrator and a librarian. They are interesting to revisit, given that tensions still exist today. First, she acknowledged the need to justify the importance of the library, stating:

There will be greater emphasis on selling the library to its users by direct sales methods, and the promotion of “the library as an educational force on campus” will be in full swing. This is contrary to the old – and I believe, the better – order in which the library was considered to be the handmaid in the academic process.17

Indeed, today there are many books written about marketing libraries and strategies shared for documenting their impact on the educational process. McCann discussed other tensions, including low salaries, lack of prestige, and communication challenges with faculty. The second document included a lengthy discussion of book thievery and mutilation that seems to be the result of an inventory that found instances of both. She stated:

Of the two crimes, for they are crimes, the mutilation of a book is far more serious than the theft of the same volume. There is always a chance that a stolen work will find its way back to the library sometime, even after the lapse of many years. But the wanton destruction of a book places the person responsible for it in a special category and merits a most severe punishment.18

McCann continued by explaining the new security measures and controls to be enacted to thwart such behaviors. In addition to these few examples from her own writings and words, we learn more about Eleanor McCann from articles in the school newspaper and several people who knew her.
McCann's positive work with the library was acknowledged in a *Duke* article that stated “The library at Duquesne is not all shelves, books, and card catalogues, however, Eleanor McCann, librarian, has made it much more.”¹⁹ The article encouraged students to take advantage of the library collections, spaces and services, “to experience the vast wealth of knowledge” and to “enjoy the fruits of this endeavor.”²⁰ Other articles advised students in the use of periodicals and microfilms to strengthen papers and learning.

Dr. Paul Pugliese, a former colleague of McCann’s, recalls that she had an ability to see upcoming trends in contemporary librarianship. She was regularly aware of and planning for changing needs in library service and of library users. For example, she regularly added subjects to the curriculum before they became majors, thus being able to meet information demands of students at their point of need. This forward thinking approach was evident in both her library leadership and professional relationships.

McCann was described as ecumenical in spirit and tolerant of differences. She accepted a rare Jewish book collection donated to Duquesne University. Dr. Rabbi Herman Hailperin, who was an expert on the history of intellectual relations between Christians and Jews in the Middle Ages, gave his personal collection of books to the library in 1969.²³ It took several years to be processed and was finally made available in 1972.²⁴ Perhaps related to the Hailperin donation, McCann also accepted a gift of twelve books on Judaism from the Jewish Chautauqua Society.²⁵ She was also very tolerant of people from different backgrounds than her own and hired people of different ethnicities and abilities. Pugliese knew her to be “one of the most considerate and kind” people that he had ever met.²⁶

Some documentation exists about Eleanor McCann that demonstrates her engagement with students. Probably most telling is a sweet article about her in a 1951 issue of *Physics Notes*, which is included in her file in the University Archives. Titled “Our Library” it begins:

This time instead of reporting to you about books and magazines we have obtained for you the exclusive of an interview with Miss McCann, prepared by Miss Theresa O’Neil:

The grey head was bent over a neat, yet work-filled desk. “Uh, Miss McCann, are you busy?” “I am always busy” and she smiled, but took off her glasses ready to listen and to help. “We would like an interview with you for our *Physics Notes*. The charming Mona-Lisa-like half smile appeared again. “Well, our library here has much to offer. The students should become more acquainted with….” “But, Miss McCann, we are interested in you.” “Oh, there’s really nothing much about me you would want to know. A librarian must submerge herself as an individual. Now these new Physics books….”

This is our chief librarian, Miss Eleanor McCann, the attractive, eager-to-assist figure who graces the center reference desk. Never underestimate the knowledge of this woman, for she can tell you all about the library, from the position of the 600’s on the back balcony to the rate of flow of the water fountain at the front.²⁷

An additional paragraph lists McCann’s academic credentials, work history and her service positions in library associations. This brief article in a department newsletter tells us much about McCann as a person and a librarian, as well as how that particular student author looked up to her.

There is a long-standing philosophy of librarianship related to the adage of “teaching a man to fish” rather than simply feeding him. Librarians strive to teach students how to effectively find and
use information, rather than simply providing the information outright. This view is employed to varying degrees, depending on the information requested and the librarian. McCann's own philosophy on working with students is outlined in a presentation she gave titled “Lo, the Poor Librarian.” She stated:

A major part of the university and college library service … consists in untangling the student from the snarl of his assignment, in helping him clear his wits after this experience, then in showing him how to proceed with the work in hand. This is a time-consuming process, and it is an individual one … the library must start with the person, with the individual student and his particular problem. 28

While every student has individual information needs, there is a lot of general library information that students can learn on their own.

It seems that the Duquesne library took seriously the role of teaching students to find information, and particularly library basics, through the publication of a library manual. An announcement in the Duke quoted McCann urging “every student on campus to obtain a copy of this manual because it is completely revised.”29 Furthermore, “The library staff feels it is the student’s responsibility to obtain a manual and become acquainted with this data instead of relying on the personnel to do the reference work for him.”30 The language surrounding the Library Manual was a little more customer-service oriented a few years later, in an article stating “The Student Library Manual, issued to each new student, provides a detailed plan of the library and instructions for the use of all its facilities.”31 McCann even mentioned the Library Manual in a letter to the editor, reproduced here in its entirety with her original bolding.

Dear Editor,

A report on a recent questionnaire, that was distributed to our Alumni indicates a well-defined interest in “continuing education.” The “life-long process of self-education” called to their attention long ago in the modest preface to their Duquesne University Library Manual has at least been made clear to them, and they are now finding out themselves that education is a continuing process. As Mr. Besse says, “An education can survive … only if it is continuously maintained. It cannot be maintained without the book reading habit.”

National Library Week is a good time for us to call this important fact to the attention of those who read the DUKE.

Sincerely,

Eleanor McCann
University Librarian32

Her love of libraries and reading was very apparent in this letter. In addition to the variety of tasks and accomplishments she achieved as the university librarian, she was also a person who loved reading.

Promoting Reading

McCann, a true librarian at heart, held a profound love of information and literature, and helping students and others find the best information possible. She was an avid reader of books, magazines and newspapers, and according to her nephew, maintained her subscription to and relished reading The New York Times until her passing.33 A former coworker mentioned that she also loved The New Yorker magazine and insisted on reading it in order of publication.34 McCann’s commitment to reading was evident in her frequent quotes in the student newspaper about the library and book recommendations. In 1954 she launched the Students’ World Collection of Books, “intended to further development of the individual along social lines”35 that included titles such as How to Get a Job and Keep It and Selective Record Guide. McCann said about the collection, “The angle is really to provide a kind of extra-curricular collection not tied in at any given point with academic subjects.”36 Promoting a love of reading outside the classroom is still a goal of academic libraries today. Furthermore, McCann’s creativity and stewardship of financial resources was evident in the development of this collection, funded by fines paid for overdue materials.

In a column titled Student Book Shelf, she presented a list of ten books “chosen on the basis of their general appeal and value.”37 Looking back at the titles 55 years later, they appear to represent a

An exhibit during Lent in 1963 demonstrated McCann’s own deep devotion to Christian literature. As a true librarian, she promoted reading and stated that the books in the Lenten display were selected to provide “a worthwhile activity during Lent.” Furthermore, she mentioned a book recommended by Bishop John J. Wright, *Imitation of Christ*, as being very rewarding. The article stated “Miss McCann stressed that it is not the type of book that is simply read and put aside. Its value comes from the fact that it deals with topics such as man’s inward feelings, how he knows himself, the love of solitude and silence, etc.” A 1956 exhibit was developed on the theme “Christian Reading – Building Minds for Tomorrow.” The exhibit of books and periodicals was prepared by Duquesne members of the Legion of Mary in celebration of Catholic Press Month and to promote reading. McCann stated: “College prepares the students for further self-education and one of the most important aspects of this education is the development of wise reading habits, especially in areas which should have special meaning for them.”

As much as Eleanor McCann promoted reading for academics as well as pleasure, as a true librarian and faithful person, it seems McCann wanted people to read good literature. There is no evidence in any of the documentation of her own opinions of what constituted “bad” literature, however stories remain about her enforcement of rules related to the infamous Index. Several former co-workers shared stories about the *Index Librorum Prohibitorum* – Index of Forbidden Books – that was present in many Catholic libraries until 1966 when the list was suppressed. With a history going back to the 1550s, the Index represented books that were thought to be theologically or morally corrupt. Librarians in Catholic libraries were often asked to prohibit students from viewing and borrowing books from the Index. At Duquesne, students and faculty needed permission from the bishop of Pittsburgh to check out books listed on the Index, according to the recollections of two former librarians. One shared a story that a local Jesuit priest was not permitted access to books on the Index and was required to get authorization from the bishop before it would be given. Because that was the rule established locally, McCann adhered to it.

### Professional and Personal Service

McCann was respected by her professional peers and often spoke at regional and national conferences on topics of importance to libraries. In 1949, she spoke at the Colleges and University group of the Pennsylvania Library Association on the topic “Integrating the Library with the College Curriculum.” In 1950, she addressed the College and Reference Division of the Pennsylvania Library Association at their conference in Reading, Pennsylvania. The topic was “The Methods of Freshmen Orientation in Library Practice at Duquesne.” In 1960, she was invited by the University of California at Berkeley, School of Librarianship, to present a case study “showing the plan, theories and procedures underlying the University’s practice in the selection of materials for the library.”

In addition to giving presentations, she also served in local and national associations and assisted with regional and national conferences. In 1951 she served as chairman of the College and University section of the Pittsburgh Chapter of the Special Library Association and she served on their board of directors in the late 1960s. The year 1957 was busy for McCann, as she was president of the tri-state chapter of the Association of College and Research Libraries, was elected to the executive council of the Catholic Library Association, and was one of the chairmen at the Pennsylvania Library Association conference. She was the publicity chairman for the Catholic Library Association conference held in Pittsburgh in 1962. McCann enlisted 25 Duquesne University journalism students to help with reporting conference activities in a daily conference publication. She seemed gifted at bringing people together. A former colleague mentioned that she was active during the formation of the Pittsburgh Regional Library Consortium, a precursor to PALINET and the Pennsylvania Academic Library Consortium, Inc. (PALCI), established in 1996. Back in the 50s and 60s, library directors in Pittsburgh met informally to discuss important issues of the day. The importance of these conversations and regional collaboration was recognized and later formally organized into a state-wide group that still exists today.

Eleanor McCann’s professional service went beyond libraries and librarians. She was active for several decades in the Catholic Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania (CHS). In the history of the CHS, McCann’s name first appeared in 1950 when it was announced that the archives of CHS would be housed at Duquesne University. The official rosters listed her various service positions over the years: 1950 – Archives Committee; 1956 – Director; 1960-1963 – Secretary. The establishment of the Archives of the Catholic Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania at Duquesne University was an enormous affair. A front-page
proclamation in *The Pittsburgh Catholic* announced the partnership with Duquesne and invited people to submit items to the archive. A special request was made for “correspondence and photographs of any Bishop, priest or ‘old-timer’ of the dioceses of western Pennsylvania; books, letters, newspaper clippings and any other items pertinent to the history of the Church here.”

At this same time, the Diocese of Pittsburgh, Duquesne University, and CHS launched a project to microfilm past issues of *The Pittsburgh Catholic*. This visionary and worthwhile project that started under the leadership of Eleanor McCann still resides in the library at Duquesne. Gumberg Library continues the project with its ongoing commitment to digital preservation of the paper and making it freely available through the Gumberg Library Digital Collections and the Catholic Research Resources Alliance (CRRA) Catholic News Archive. As the membership of the Catholic Historical Society waned in the 1960s, the importance of laity to its survival was mentioned. For example, a special request was made for “correspondence and photographs with Duquesne and invited people to submit items to the archive. A special request was made for “correspondence and photographs of any Bishop, priest or ‘old-timer’ of the dioceses of western Pennsylvania; books, letters, newspaper clippings and any other items pertinent to the history of the Church here.”

Dedication and Recognition

Eleanor McCann lived her life dedicated to her job. Being a librarian was her calling and her life. Her obituary listed two surviving relatives, a sister and a nephew. This author was fortunate to be able to speak with her nephew, Kevin P. McCullough, about his Aunt Eleanor. Kevin said, “She loved her library job and had a wonderful career at a time when it was difficult for women to be in university management. She was the exception to the glass ceiling through hard work.” Indeed, a 1952 photograph of the Council of University Deans shows eight men and two women – McCann and Ruth Johnson, Nursing. Kevin confirmed that his aunt loved books and reading, but more than anything, “She loved being a librarian and saw her role as an essential part of the education. She served Duquesne well for a very long time.” In her own words, we know that McCann felt most rewarded when helping students find the information they needed. Duquesne University recognized Eleanor McCann’s contributions by awarding her Librarian Emeritus status on September 30, 1969. The resolution stated:

WHEREAS: Eleanor McCann, scholar, author and librarian of distinction whose outstanding contributions to her profession through forty-two years of dedicated concentration have seen her colleagues attest their esteem and elect her to high office in their professional associations; and,

WHEREAS: through her efforts and accomplishments as librarian and her personal dedication to scholarship and undeviating pursuit of knowledge, Eleanor McCann has in her years of service given inspiration and aid to Duquesne University as its University Librarian; and,

WHEREAS: her daily presence will be sorely missed by one and all;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: that the Board of Directors, President, Officers and Faculty name Eleanor McCann, Librarian Emeritus of Duquesne University, perpetuating both the gratitude and affection she has earned from students, alumni, faculty and administration alike and Duquesne’s claim on her in spirit, wherever she travels in pursuit of truth.

Clearly, Eleanor McCann’s contributions to Duquesne University, the library profession, and the Catholic Historical Society were great. From her earliest days in library school student government, she demonstrated leadership and service to others. Her career illustrates a trajectory working through the library ranks into administration, breaking the glass ceiling and serving as one of just two women on the Dean’s Council. Her participation and leadership in professional library associations exemplify service to other librarians and libraries regionally and nationally. The Catholic Historical Society recognizes her service as a lay leader and her devotion during a pivotal time of the association. Those who knew her personally recall her tenacity, strict adherence to rules and order, and professionalism. They also recall her intelligence, curiosity, sense of humor, and kindness. Her life was one of service and it was very well lived.

Author’s Note

This is submitted with heartfelt appreciation to my colleagues – Duquesne’s University Archivist Thomas White for his assistance with the historical records and photographs, and Amy Lee Heinlen, Assistant University Librarian for Access Services, for her editorial expertise. I am also thankful for the invitation to write this article about Eleanor McCann. I now hold the position of University Librarian that she had for 24 years. In researching for this article, it was a pleasant surprise to discover a few other similarities in our experiences. First, like McCann, I too served on the Executive Board of the Catholic Library Association for eight years, culminating in the presidency 2013-2015. Whereas she was instrumental in starting the library collaboration that grew into PALCI, I now serve on the Executive Board of PALCI, representing Duquesne and other medium-sized private institutions in this state consortium. Finally, some of the same issues McCann dealt with in library administration 55 years ago are still present today. Her life of leadership and service is a wonderful example and one I try to achieve daily.
Endnotes:


2 Eleanor McCann is buried in Calvary Cemetery, Section M, Lot 660, Space 8 according to the Catholic Cemeteries Association of the Diocese of Pittsburgh.

3 Eleanor McCann was proficient at sewing and was known for her sense of style. According to Paul Pugliese, McCann’s reply to a compliment on her impeccable suit was that she sewed many of her outfits using the same pattern and added embellishments such as fancy collars and sleeves, hats and jewelry. The photographs selected to accompany this article illustrate her professional fashion sense which matched perfectly her chosen profession. In this author’s mind, she looks like a perfect librarian. Personal interview by author of Paul Pugliese, August 2018.

4 John Greeno, assistant vice president and chief human resources officer, Duquesne University. Information from a “Personnel card that was scanned and saved.”


10 Ibid.


13 Eleanor McCann, “Memo to the Budget Committee,” April 19, 1961, Eleanor McCann, Librarian 1945-1969 File, Duquesne University Archives.


17 Eleanor McCann, “Lo, the Poor Librarian,” 1949, Eleanor McCann, Librarian 1945-1969 File, Duquesne University Archives.

18 Eleanor McCann, “Remarks and Events,” 1949, McCann, Librarian File, Duquesne University Archives.


20 Ibid.


26 Personal interview by author of Paul Pugliese, August 2018.

27 Eleanor McCann, “Physics Notes,” March 12, 1951, McCann, Librarian File, Duquesne University Archives.

28 McCann, “Lo,” Duquesne University Archives.


30 Ibid.


33 Kevin P. McCullough, personal communication to author, August 28, 2018.

34 Paul Pugliese, personal communication to author, August 13, 2018.


36 Ibid.


39 Ibid.


43 Pugliese, to author, August 13, 2018; Vicki Hartung, personal communication to author, July 18, 2018.

44 McCann, “Remarks and Events,” Duquesne University Archives.


47 McCann, “Physics,” Duquesne University Archives.


49 “Miss Eleanor McCann, university librarian…,” Duquesne Duke, October 4, 1957, 8.


51 Pugliese to author, August 13, 2018.

52 John Bates, The History of the Catholic Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania, December 2017, MS, Duquesne University Archives, 60.

53 Ibid, 61.

54 Gumberg Library provides access to the scanned microfilm of The Pittsburgh Catholic March 16, 1844-March 9, 2001 through the library digital collections at http://digital.library.duq.edu/cdm-pc/. The years 1967-1973 are available digitally through the Catholic News Archive at https://thecatholicnewsarchive.org/.

55 Bates, History, 96.

56 McCullough to author, August 28, 2018.


58 McCullough to author, August 28, 2018.

59 McCann, “Lo,” Duquesne University Archives.

60 “Resolution,” September 30, 1969, McCann, Librarian File, Duquesne University Archives.
Western Pennsylvania has played an outsized role in producing and influencing Catholics who went on to achieve national and even international recognition. Many of these were natives of this area, while others came to this area and spent time here, even if briefly, before moving on elsewhere. For that latter group, Pittsburgh was a gateway to the vast west of North America. The confluence of rivers and the positioning of mountains made it so. Native and sojourner alike would rise to prominence in a variety of fields. The Catholic faith as received during their formative years in Western Pennsylvania or as enhanced by their interaction with Western Pennsylvania Catholics left a lasting imprint on them. This article presents but a few of the stories of such individuals who are representative of the larger numbers of Catholics with ties to Western Pennsylvania who have contributed to society and the Church. A few are known internationally, some have been forgotten with the passage of time, and others are unknown to the general public.

Patrick Joseph Peyton was a native of County Mayo, Ireland. Poverty necessitated the migration of his older siblings to the United States. Patrick joined them in Scranton, Pennsylvania, in 1928. Considering a vocation as a priest, the immigrant youth became the sexton (janitor) at the cathedral in Scranton. Father Patrick Dolan of the Congregation of the Holy Cross from the University of Notre Dame visited the cathedral, seeking to recruit seminarians, and met Patrick and his older brother Thomas. Both young men responded to the priest's invitation to enter the seminary at Notre Dame in 1932.

While in the seminary, Patrick was diagnosed with advanced tuberculosis in 1938. His sister Nellie travelled from Scranton to the ill seminarian, reminding him of the family's history of prayers to the Blessed Mother. The seminarian’s mother wrote from Ireland that she would gladly give up her life if her prayers were answered that he would recover to become a priest. Patrick was so gravely ill that surgeons cut away ribs to remove pus from his lungs. His mother died in 1939, but Patrick continued to pray for a cure for himself. He lived, pledging the rest of his life to the restoration of family prayer. Doctors subsequently noted the “miraculous” disappearance of the tuberculosis. Patrick was certain that his return to health was intended for a purpose.

In 1941, Patrick was ordained to the priesthood. Father Peyton was keenly aware of the Catholic custom of families saying the rosary together in the evening before retiring to sleep. The modern lifestyle saw this practice go by the wayside. The distressed priest vowed to change this prayerless pattern. He would therefore emphasize the importance of families praying the Family Rosary, just as the United States entered World War II.

Father Peyton visited Pittsburgh during wartime, where he stayed with Father Edward J. Moriarty (1881-1961), the Irish-born pastor of Saint Agnes Church in the Oakland neighborhood. The Pittsburgh priest’s advice was pivotal in transforming Father Peyton’s efforts into a national crusade that would employ use of the media to spread the message of the rosary. Impressed with Peyton’s campaign to bring back family prayer, Moriarty urged the young priest to “Try to get on the radio. Here [using only the pulpit] you reach a few hundred. On the air you will reach millions.”
ty spoke from experience, as he had successfully encouraged his assistant pastor, Father Charles Owen Rice, to do just that in labor rights efforts for the working poor.

Following Moriarty’s counsel, Peyton then contacted actor/singer Bing Crosby, who promised that he would enlist other prominent Catholics, including Hollywood stars. The result was the airing from New York City of the radio program “Family Theater” on May 13, 1945, with Bing Crosby along with the parents and sister of the five Sullivan brothers (who had perished when their ship sunk during the war) reciting the rosary. The program garnered the largest audience of any program in the Mutual Broadcasting System up to that date.


Father Peyton moved quickly to utilize film, outdoor advertising, and television. His ministry produced more than 600 radio and television programs, and 10,000 broadcasts. He conducted Rosary Rallies that were attended by millions. His message was simple and direct: “The rosary is the offensive weapon that will destroy Communism – the great evil that seeks to destroy the faith.”2 Peyton popularized the worldwide slogans “The family that prays together stays together” and “A world at prayer is a world at peace.” He quickly became known as “The Rosary Priest.”

Peyton was a large and impressive man, with a thick brogue, musical voice, and sparkling eyes. He was famed for his luncheon speeches at which, after giving a few introductory words, he requested that everyone kneel to say the rosary. Waiters stared in disbelief as the high and mighty knelt in prayer.

He paid no attention to controversial accusations that his crusades in Latin America were a front for American intelligence in the 1950s and 1960s, given that for a time the CIA assisted in determining locations and provided some funding. In 1992, Peyton died at age 83 and was buried in his order’s cemetery at Stonehill College in Easton, Massachusetts.3

Father Peyton’s work continues through his original ministries: Family Rosary, Family Theater, Family Rosary International, and Father Patrick Peyton Family Institute. Sean Patrick Cardinal O’Malley of Boston, who has his own ties to Pittsburgh, opened the cause of sainthood of Father Peyton on June 1, 2001. The priest was titled “Servant of God.” The 1,300-page positio that studied Peyton’s life and ministry for heroic virtue and sanctity of life (holiness) was sent to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints in 2015 and theologians approved his cause on June 1, 2017. Pope Francis named the famed Rosary Priest as “Venerable” on December 18, 2017. Two possible medical miracles connected to Father Peyton’s intercession are under review as his cause moves toward beatification.

Monsignor David E. Rosage (1913-2009)

David E. Rosage was born in Johnstown, Cambria County, Pennsylvania and attended Immaculate Conception School and Johnstown Catholic High School. Like a number of German-descent young men, he opted to study for the priesthood at the Pontifical Seminary Josephinum in Worthington, Ohio. He was ordained for the Diocese of Spokane, Washington, on May 30, 1943 by Archbishop Amleto Cicognani, who was serving as Apostolic Delegate to the United States. Father Rosage celebrated his First Mass at Immaculate Conception Church in Johnstown.

Assigned to parish work for his first three years, Rosage was then named diocesan Youth Director in 1946, a position he would hold until 1956, at which time he became the founding pastor of Our Lady of Fatima Parish in Spokane. In 1957, Bishop Bernard Toppel of Spokane gave Rosage the task to “set up a retreat apostolate, find a piece of property, build a retreat house and pay for it.”4 Father Rosage did just that and Immaculate Heart Retreat Center was born. That necessitated the young priest’s attendance at nightly presentations/fund raisers for five years to raise the necessary funds. Father Rosage served as director of the retreat house for 32 years, from 1957 to 1989.

Rosage was a prolific writer, for which he received national attention. He authored more than 40 books on spirituality, beginning

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Monsignor David E. Rosage

Source: The Tribune Democrat
with *Letters to an Altar Boy* in 1953. This was quickly followed by *Hail! The Altar Boy* in 1954. These two works became standard for altar boys in Catholic elementary schools and were highly effective in promoting awareness of a vocation to the priesthood. Both were written in an easy flowing style, intelligible to even very young boys. The works offered inspiration and high motivation for living up to the ideals that a Mass server was committed to follow. While extremely practical books, they touched on every aspect of the altar boy’s spiritual life. Father Thomas O’Donnell, director of the Knights of the Altar, described the books as:

book[s] of letters for all Jimmys, Johns, Bills, Toms, and the entire host of altar boys, who from the smallest one up are the most important people in their parishes. They are God’s Minutemen. Any lad who reads this book is bound to be better and to have a better understanding of the great privilege that is his.

Rosage was a regular columnist for the diocesan *Inland Register* and created a constant flow of pamphlets, magazine articles, and other publications. By 1980, he had sold over three million copies of his books worldwide, with the proceeds going to support the retreat center’s ministry, which serves the states of Washington, Idaho, and Montana. He was considered by some to be the most published priest-writer in the western United States.

In May 1967, Pope Paul VI named Rosage a domestic prelate with the title of Right Reverend Monsignor. He retired from active ministry in 1989 at age 76, and moved to Rockwood Lane Retirement Center where he continued to say Mass daily and provide spiritual direction to large numbers of Catholics in the ensuing years. In December 2008, he moved to Colonial Court where he remained until his death less than a year later on November 14, 2009 at age 96. Recognizing his unique service, the Diocese of Spokane celebrated Monsignor Rosage’s funeral Mass at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Lourdes. Burial followed at Queen of Peace Cemetery located on the grounds of Immaculate Heart Retreat Center.

Although Monsignor Rosage served in one of the least populated rural dioceses in the United States (Spokane had a Catholic population of approximately 40,000 representing only 10% of the total population), his impact on young Catholic boys, his promotion of the priestly vocation through his publications, and his outreach to Catholics seeking spiritual direction affected millions throughout the United States. The entrance of many future baby boomers into seminaries and ultimately priesthood can be attributed, at least in part, to the work of this native of Western Pennsylvania.

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**Abbot-Bishop Leo M. Haid**, O.S.B. (1849-1924)

Michael Hite was born on July 15, 1849 near Latrobe in Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, just six years after establishment of the Diocese of Pittsburgh. The son of German immigrants, his last name came to be rendered “Haid” as part of the family’s cultural adjustment to the New World. Young Michael was baptized at the nearby Saint Vincent Abbey – an institution that would play a central role in his life. He entered the monastery scholasticate at age 12 and made his first vows as a Benedictine monk in 1869, receiving the name “Leo” after Pope St. Leo the Great. Pittsburgh Bishop Michael Domenec ordained Haid a priest on December 21, 1872. Initially, he became a teacher at Saint Vincent and his students included John Francis Regis Canevin, a future bishop of Pittsburgh.

In 1876, Abbot (later Archabbot) Boniface Wimmer, O.S.B. (1809-1887), decided to accept a donation of 506 acres of farmland in Gaston County, North Carolina, just six years after establishment of the Diocese of Pittsburgh. The son of German immigrants, his last name came to be rendered “Haid” as part of the family’s cultural adjustment to the New World. Young Michael was baptized at the nearby Saint Vincent Abbey – an institution that would play a central role in his life. He entered the monastery scholasticate at age 12 and made his first vows as a Benedictine monk in 1869, receiving the name “Leo” after Pope St. Leo the Great. Pittsburgh Bishop Michael Domenec ordained Haid a priest on December 21, 1872. Initially, he became a teacher at Saint Vincent and his students included John Francis Regis Canevin, a future bishop of Pittsburgh.

In 1876, Abbot (later Archabbot) Boniface Wimmer, O.S.B. (1809-1887), decided to accept a donation of 506 acres of farmland in Gaston County, North Carolina, as the site for a new Benedictine monastery and college. The donation from Catholic missionary Father Jeremiah O’Connell of the Caldwell farm bore a striking resemblance to Wimmer’s acceptance in 1846 of the 300 acres of land known as Sportsman’s Hall in Westmoreland County that became the site of Saint Vincent Archabbev. Wimmer was successful in obtaining Roman approval to elevate the foundation to an independent Benedictine abbey. In 1885, the 34-year-old Leo Haid was elected first abbot of Mary Help of Christians Abbey (Maryhelp), located in the rural town of Garibaldi in the most Protestant state in the Union – North Carolina.

The town’s name was changed to Belmont reportedly at the insistence of Haid, who drew upon the scenic view of a nearby mountain – Belmont meaning “beautiful mountain.” One story
attributes the change to Pope Leo XIII’s reluctance to bless an abbey in a place that bore the name of the Italian revolutionary Giuseppe Garibaldi; in fact, the town had been named for an earlier station master, John Garibaldi. The state legislature subsequently incorporated the town under the name Belmont.

Haid opened St. Mary’s College in 1886. The abbey’s success gained the ire of the North Carolina Presbyterian Convention that “passed many violent resolutions to oust the ‘Romish encroachment and usurpation’ of territory, hitherto wholly and exclusively Protestant.” Despite the declamations and harangues of such preachers, the monks continued to pray and work. One year later, Haid was named Vicar Apostolic of North Carolina. He was ordained bishop by James Cardinal Gibbons on July 1, 1888, thus becoming the first American abbot-bishop.

The great Gothic abbey church, built of brick and granite, was completed in 1894 under the direction of Haid. The stained glass windows from the World’s Fair of 1893 were installed in the church. Mother Katharine Drexel was a major financial contributor to the building’s completion. She was to play a large role in the expansion of the Benedictines in the South and in the development of a vast architectural expansion of Catholic churches, schools, and institutions designed by a Belmont monk, Father Michael McInerney, whose story is told separately below.

In 1913, St. Mary’s College in Belmont changed its name to Belmont Abbey College. In 1967, it received national attention with conferral of an honorary degree upon Protestant evangelist Billy Graham. This was a bold ecumenical gesture for that time. The school became coeducational in 1972.

At the request of Haid, the Sisters of Mercy opened Sacred Heart College for women in Belmont in 1892. Accredited as a junior college in 1935, it became a four-year institution in 1966. In 1987, the college for women merged with Belmont Abbey College. Sacred Heart College’s former library later became the archival repository for the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas. The Sisters of Mercy, including the original American foundation in Pittsburgh, opened the Mercy Heritage Center in 2011 — a national archives at Belmont that now holds the records collections of all the formerly independent Mercy motherhouses.

Haid opened Benedictine foundations in Virginia, Georgia, and Florida. In June 1910, Pope Saint Pius X erected Belmont Abbey into a territorial abbey and appointed Haid as abbot nullius — an abbot who is exempt from diocesan control and under direct papal jurisdiction, and who exercises the authority of an ordinary (bishop of a diocese) within the district in which his abbey is situated — with canonical jurisdiction over eight counties in North Carolina. In 1890, Haid was elected president of the Cassinese Congregation (an international union of Benedictine houses within the Benedictine Confederation), which office he held for two terms. He died at Belmont Abbey on July 24, 1924, at age 75 and was buried in the abbey cemetery.

Haid’s career was one of astounding successes. He was the father of five monasteries, each with its own college or school. He ruled the Catholic Church in North Carolina for three and a half decades preceding establishment of that state’s first diocese, Raleigh, in 1924. The Holy See repeatedly honored him: abbot, bishop, vicar apostolic, Roman Count, Assistant at the Pontifical Throne, and America’s only abbot-ordinary. By the time of his death he was dean of both the American abbots and the American Catholic hierarchy. While he was a Benedictine monk and abbot vowed to stability and observance of the monastic cloister, he was obliged to live as an active bishop in the domestic missions of the Church.
He ruled as an abbas, a “father,” preferring the authority of abbatial paternity over the power of episcopal jurisdiction. This was to have a profound and lasting impact in a very Protestant domain.

In 1960, the nullius “diocese” was reduced to the 500 acres of the monastery grounds, thus becoming the smallest “diocese” in the world. In 1975, Belmont Abbey lost its territorial status and cathedral rank to the newly created Diocese of Charlotte. However, in 1998, Pope John Paul II named the abbey church a minor basilica in recognition of its historic and architectural significance. The National Register of Historic Places includes the Belmont Abbey Historic District that encompasses the separately listed abbey-cathedral, several college structures, sites and even the famed statue of Saint Benedict. Many of these evidence the “Benedictine style” popularized by a monk-architect from Maryhelp Abbey, whose story next appears.

Author: John A. Darr

Father Michael McInerney, O.S.B. (1877-1963)

Joseph Vincent McInerney was born on March 18, 1877 in Lock Haven, Clinton County, Pennsylvania, in what is now part of the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown. His parents were Irish immigrants. The father was a stone cutter-contractor. The family soon moved to McKeesport. There, Joseph attended Saint Peter School, where he was taught by the Sisters of Mercy. As a youth, Joseph assisted his father in various construction projects and quickly developed a fascination with buildings. By his high school years, his family had moved to Pittsburgh, where he attended the Holy Ghost Fathers’ Prep School. During high school, Joseph was accepted as an apprentice by W. A. Thomas, former professor of architecture at King’s College in London. Thomas supervised the boy for the next eight years, finally naming him a junior partner (1898-1900). The youth continued his education, taking two years of classes at the College of the Holy Ghost (today, Duquesne University).

Seeking to broaden his education and experience, McInerney resigned his position with Thomas and moved to Belmont, North Carolina in February 1900, where he enrolled in the Classical Studies program at the Benedictine-operated St. Mary’s College. Older than his colleagues, he quickly emerged as a leader. He completed his studies in 1902, obtaining a bachelor’s degree. The monks had already discovered that he understood architecture, so they soon engaged him in their ongoing development of buildings at the Benedictine abbey and college. Interaction with the monks stimulated the youth’s interest in a religious vocation and on August 20, 1902, Joseph McInerney entered the Benedictine order as a novice, taking the name “Michael.” He was professed a year later, and ordained a Benedictine priest in 1907.

Mary Help of Christians Abbey in Belmont was headed by Abbot Leo Haid who was, like McInerney, a native of Western Pennsylvania. Haid had a vision for developing the abbey. The importance of McInerney to achievement of Haid’s vision cannot be over-emphasized. Their dual role is considered to be without parallel in Benedictine history. The two became a creative force unto themselves. A destructive “Great Fire” at St. Mary’s College in May 1900 opened the way for a complete transformation of the abbey and college campus. A plan was quickly devised and construction began thereafter. The abbot and McInerney’s joint work replaced, restored and enlarged buildings, leading to an immediate enrollment increase that assured the future of the college.

Haid also had a vision for the development of Catholicism in North Carolina, spurred by his episcopal responsibilities. McInerney was to facilitate that within the Tarheel State through his design of Catholic churches, schools, convents, hospitals, and other institutions. When Abbot Haid died in 1924, the monk-architect designed a marble and granite tomb, inscribed with the abbot’s history and the three coats-of-arms the latter had used. The insignia of the abbot-bishop’s office, in relief, appeared on the body of the monument, crossed over the vault. McInerney’s design appropriately showed two crosiers at odds. A less well-known McInerney work at the abbey was a splendid brick barn that replaced one destroyed by a tornado, where the cows could walk through pseudo-gothic arches.

During the construction of the Belmont Abbey basilica, Haid secured the financial support of Mother Katharine Drexel, whose evangelization of Native Americans and African Americans was evidenced in her nation-wide building campaign financed by her enormous family wealth. McInerney would serve as the architect for hundreds of the future saint’s projects.

Less than a month after Abbot Haid’s death in 1924, the monks convoked a Chapter at Belmont to elect an abbot nullius, who would be nominated vicar apostolic in accordance with the provisions of the Bulla Erectionis of 1910. Five nominees quickly emerged – including Michael McInerney. At age forty-seven, he
had shown talent for practical administrative duties, but had never held an executive position at the abbey or school, nor engaged in pastoral duties. He was considered a man of solid monastic values and observance. As the monks scrutinized the candidates,

McInerney was the candidate who represented the best chance for maintaining some of the prestige that the monastery had enjoyed under Haid. Father Michael's talents, his possession of a reputation that was already national in scope, the distinction of his work, all endorsed his abbatial potential. And … Father Michael was held in particularly “high esteem” in the monastery at this time. McInerney also had the advantage of representing a reasonable compromise between the demands of the cloister and those of the apostolate.11

The fourth ballot saw another monk edge out McInerney as abbot-elect of Mary Help of Christians Abbey, abbot nuntius, and nominee for the throne of the Vicariate Apostolic of North Carolina. Thereafter, the priest devoted himself entirely to architectural work, often at a distance from the abbey. Yet his ties to the monastery were strong. The priest earned architectural fees that kept Maryhelp Abbey and its college solvent during the Great Depression. He also designed chalices, sanctuary lamps, candleabra, church furnishings, and even grave markers.

The priest focused his art almost exclusively on Catholic projects. His designs were primarily institutional, totaling more than 500 buildings: over 200 churches, 78 schools and orphanages, 27 hospitals, 18 monasteries and convents, and 10 gymnasiums. Benedictine influence was reflected in his use of natural and native materials, austerity of interiors, the use of simple lines, and a disinclination to use of ornamentation and embellishment. He customarily signed his buildings with a long-stemmed cross, sometimes in bold relief and at other times subtly inscribed in the brickwork.

Father McInerney’s work is easily divided into three phases:

• **Phase I (1900-1930):** In his early work, McInerney developed a variation on the German Gothic Revival that acquired the popular designation “American Benedictine” from its frequent use by monasteries. This style’s principal statement presented imposing beauty and simplicity through the use of a box shape distinguished by the roof projection, texturing of brickwork, and the shapes and sizes of windows.

This approach was a reflection of the poverty of the Catholic Church in the South that forced McInerney to produce small chapels. As the Sisters of Mercy expanded their hospital network, he designed their hospitals and related facilities. By the 1920s he had a national clientele and most of his larger projects were outside of North Carolina. Notices of his designs appeared with those of other architects in the Manufacturers’ Record, where he was typically identified as “Father Michael of Belmont Abbey.”

• **Phase II (1930-1945):** In the middle period of his architectural career, McInerney shifted his principal medium from brick to stone, from Gothic Revival to a striking conception of Romanesque arches imposed on classic facades. This coincided with the demand for the monk to design the more monumental buildings in the Catholic Northeast. The interiors were rendered with exposed beams that towered above naves and sanctuaries. This was the most prolific and artistically fruitful period of his career.

• **Phase III (1945-1963):** McInerney’s final period saw a reversal – economized exterior lines, flat roofs, squared towers, and emphasis on the box form. Yet he remained devoted to the Gothic aspirations of his youth. St. Michael Church (1952), in nearby Wheeling, West Virginia, is considered to be the most exquisite design of his last years. Here, he created a striking unornamented interior whose art and expression proceed entirely from the church’s structural design, not from its decoration. His work at the Wheeling church was accompanied by several design projects at the Jesuits’ newly established Wheeling College and at Wheeling Hospital.

The monk published many articles on church architecture, hospital architecture, stained glass, and related topics. He served on the faculty of Belmont Abbey College beginning in 1903, and taught at St. Louis University in Missouri during the summers. The American Institute of Architects and the Stained Glass Association of America honored him.

Mother Katharine Drexel, who emerged as McInerney’s stalwart supporter after Haid’s death in 1924, died in 1955. Father Michael survived until 1963. In his final years, Saint Vincent College in Latrobe awarded him an honorary doctorate in recognition of his artistic contributions to the Benedictine order through a career of more than half a century.

Michael McInerney, O.S.B., died in Mercy Hospital (which he had designed) in Charlotte, North Carolina on March 3, 1963, just two weeks short of his 86th birthday. He is buried in Belmont Abbey Cemetery.12
Louis Beezer (1869-1929), Michael J. Beezer (1869-1933)

American history has witnessed some father and son architect-duos and there have been occasional instances of brothers who became architects. But twin brothers who became architects are indeed a rarity. Western Pennsylvania can lay claim to one such twin-brother architectural pair – the Beezer brothers, Louis and Michael. The two were born on July 6, 1869 in Bellefonte, Centre County, Pennsylvania (now part of the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown) to immigrant German parents. Their lives were intertwined thereafter.

Early work with a construction business introduced Louis to architecture. He advanced to become a building foreman in Altoona by age 21. Louis departed for Pittsburgh where he studied architecture; he returned to Altoona where he began his practice and was joined by his brother Michael there. In 1892 the two began their three-decades-long partnership.

The first mention of the firm in *The Pittsburgh Catholic* was an article noting completion of the new rectory for Sacred Heart Parish in Altoona, described as having “pleasing architectural outlines.” A far greater accomplishment was the brothers’ design of Saint John Gualbert Church in Johnstown. The church was dedicated in 1896 as a permanent replacement for the parish church destroyed in the great Johnstown Flood of 1889. The church was described thusly:

> The new church was planned and built by Beezer Brothers, talented Catholic young men … and is Renaissance in style of architecture. It is the first church to adopt the modern steel construction. A fine campanile stands on one corner of the front, the inspiration coming to the architects from the campanile recently destroyed in Venice. The logia is very ornamental, having over it on the four sides an angels’ frieze in half relief. On the other corner is the bell tower, surmounted by Diogenes’ lamp. The four lions on each of the corners, and the graceful Corinthian pillars supporting the circular roof, are beautiful. Vitrified brick, iron-spotted, and terra cotta are used to great advantage in the construction of the building. The whole exterior of the building is impressive in its grace and majesty, but the beauty of the queen’s daughter is within. There are no applied ornaments. Anything added would crowd, and anything left out would mar the harmony. Plaster of Paris stucco work is used in an artistic manner. The church was recently frescoed and done by a talented artist. Cream and a wealth of gold, with delicate tints of color bring out the beauty of the plaster work. The windows are works of art. The altars and the stations of the cross are in keeping with the building. The building is lighted with a profusion of electric bulbs, most arranged that the light falls softly while showing the great beauty of the interior.

While in Altoona, the brothers designed a 20-room Tudor Revival house, “Elmhurst,” set on 130 acres near Loretto for William Thaw, Sr., heir to a multi-million-dollar railroad and mine fortune. This summer residence cost an astronomical $150,000 (equivalent to $4 million in 2018). Shortly thereafter, Harry K. Thaw (1871-1947), son of the railroad tycoon, gained international notoriety for his 1906 murder of architect Stanford White at Madison Square Garden in New York City over the affections of Thaw’s wife, Florence Evelyn Nesbit.

The twins moved to Pittsburgh, the center of commerce and industry in Western Pennsylvania, in 1900. During their seven years in the Steel City, the brothers designed a number of Pittsburgh churches and houses including Saint Augustin (German) Church and Saint John the Baptist Church, both in Lawrenceville. The young designer John Theodore Comès worked in this firm, and the two churches are typically attributed to his skill and art. Saints Peter and Paul Church in Beaver Falls followed. Yet, the brothers did not forget their roots as an article in the 1902 issue of the *Catholic* noted:

> BELLEFONTE. Messrs. Michael J. and Louis Beezer, the well-known Pittsburgh architects, have presented St. John's
Church of which Rev. P. McArdle is pastor, with a new pipe organ to cost not less than $1,500. The Beezer brothers are natives of Bellefonte, where their parents still live. In a recent letter to the rector, offering the gift, they say it is offered for the love of God and the advantage of the congregation. The work of erecting the organ will begin in the near future.17

After seven years in Pittsburgh, the twins decided to move to the burgeoning West Coast, settling in Seattle. The brothers’ Catholic connections assured them of business in this growing Catholic city and their sound management practices secured their financial success. They retained direct control of daily on-site work rather than subcontracting that work to third parties. Reflecting the times, the Beezer Brothers acted as architects, construction managers, and construction supervisors over a far-flung area stretching as far north as Alaska and as far south as Los Angeles.

Their arrival in Seattle in mid-1907 witnessed their first significant project on the West Coast – designing the Colman Dock as the city’s new steamship terminal. Homes for the nouveau riche, commercial buildings, and apartment buildings quickly followed. But the Beezer Brothers established their professional reputation through projects that met the needs of the newly established diocese in Seattle (1903).18 The massive English Gothic Revival Church of the Blessed Sacrament (1909-1925) and Immaculate Conception School were the first projects in 1909; the Cathedral School followed in 1911. The firm’s work for the diocese was accompanied by projects for religious orders, such as the Dominicans and the Jesuits, with the latter including the preliminary work on the relocation of Seattle College (now Seattle University).

They also undertook construction supervision of Saint Mary Hospital in Walla Walla, Washington, in 1909, designed by another architect. That success launched their hospital design work, principally for the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Peace in the states of Washington, Montana, and Idaho. After World War I, Beezer Brothers increasingly worked outside Seattle. While commercial structures such as banks were a steady source of work, and the brothers even designed Herzl Congregation Synagogue in Seattle, their architectural expertise was truly demonstrated in their Catholic projects. Beezer Brothers’ commercial and ecclesiastical work throughout the West Coast provided structures that were metropolitan in character that commanded popular appreciation in smaller communities.

A commission for Saint Dominic Church (1923-1929) in San Francisco separated the twins for the first time in three decades, with Louis opening a branch practice in San Francisco in 1923. Archbishop Hanna of San Francisco called this French Gothic Revival structure “the most beautiful Catholic church in Western America.”19 Catholic connections between San Francisco and Los Angeles led to Louis’s design (along with prominent California architect Thomas Franklin Power) of the Church of the Blessed Sacrament (1925-1928) in Hollywood, which was reportedly the second largest church on the West Coast at the time of its opening and came to be known as the “Church of the Stars.”20 Louis Beezer died in San Francisco on January 2, 1929.

Louis's years in San Francisco robbed his brother Michael, still in Seattle, of the brotherly interaction that produced commissions and new architectural designs. The Seattle office clearly suffered, went into eclipse, and no significant projects emerged from that office before Michael retired in 1932 at the depths of the Depression. Michael died of a heart attack on September 15, 1933, four and a half years after his twin brother.

The Beezer brothers were devout Catholics and their religious beliefs, coupled with a strong work ethic, helped shape the physical identity of Seattle and local Catholic communities throughout the West Coast.21

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Father George Deshon, C.S.P. (later in life)
Source: Paulist Archives

Father George Deshon, C.S.P. (1823-1903)
George Deshon was born in 1823 in New London, Connecticut of old Huguenot (French Protestant) stock. He was brave and daring and loved to read tales of the conquerors of the olden times; members of his family had served in the American military dating back to the Revolutionary War. At the age of 16, he secured a nomination to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point and was admitted on July 1, 1839. His roommate, classmate, and friend was Ulysses S. Grant. Deshon graduated second in his class of 39 cadets in 1843.22 He was promoted to Second Lieutenant and assigned as a topographical engineer. He was then assigned to the Ordnance Department. Recognized for his intelligence, Deshon was named an assistant professor at West Point and then again assigned to ordnance duties. He returned to West Point as Principal Assistant Professor of Geography, History and Ethics from...
1846 to 1849. It was during this time that the young officer began to examine the history of Christianity and the divisions that had occurred among Christians.

Deshon was then assigned as an Assistant Ordnance Officer to the arsenal in Washington, D.C. (1850-1851) and subsequently to the Allegheny Arsenal in Lawrenceville in 1851; promotion to First Lieutenant occurred the same year. Deshon, however, made a dramatic change in his career track by resigning his army commission on October 31, 1851 and applying to join the Redemptorists (officially, the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer). Deshon the seeker and thinker was also a man of conviction; having found the truth in the Catholic Church, he gave his life to it. His desire now was to proclaim the truth so that other Americans could find themselves as Catholics. Once a soldier, always a soldier – but he would now serve in an army with a different purpose.

The Redemptorists had been established in 1749 by Saint Alphonsus Liguori and were devoted to missionary work. Members arrived in the United States in 1832. Seven years later, they were called to Pittsburgh to assume charge of the German-speaking population. The order soon attracted new members, including immigrants John Neumann (1811-1860) and Francis Xavier Seelos (1819-1867), both of whom ministered in Pittsburgh at Saint Philomena Church. Seelos served in Pittsburgh during the years 1845-1854 successively as curate to Father Neumann, superior of the community, pastor, and novice master. Seelos’s reputation as a spiritual director and confessor explains why Deshon’s conversion to Catholicism and decision to enter the Redemptorists shortly after baptism is attributed to Seelos’s influence.

Deshon oversaw completion of the work. Using the 13th century Santa Croce Cathedral of Florence as a model, Deshon used Deshons the test during construction of the massive Church of Saint Paul the Apostle Parish in Manhattan and assigned it to the Paulists. The parish extended from 52nd Street to 110th Street, and from the Hudson River to Sixth Avenue. The Paulists established their motherhouse and church on Ninth Avenue, between 59th and 60th Streets. The church was located in the infamous “Hell’s Kitchen” neighborhood.

Father Deshon would split his time during the remaining 45 years of his life between the Paulists’ New York house and giving missions throughout the United States. He published a book entitled Guide for Catholic Young Women in 1868. His friendship with President Grant facilitated his mediation of a dispute between the Catholic hierarchy and the American government over Indian missions. He would later publish a volume of his sermons in 1902. He served as the congregation’s novice master, assistant superior, and director of the community’s temporal interests, which reflected his business ability.

The church became known for its ecclesiastical art: Stanford White decorated the side chapels; John LaFarge designed the stained glass windows; August Saint-Gaudens, Frederick MacMonnies, Bertram Goodhue, and William Laurel Harris also contributed to the church’s interior. Lumen Martin Winter’s Angel of the Resurrection, in the northeast corner of the nave, adorns the sarcophagus of Father Isaac Hecker, the best known of the five Paulist founders. The beauty of the church reflected the Paulists’ emphasis on superb liturgy, effective preaching, and exceptional music.

Father Deshon was elected Superior General of the Paulists in 1897. He undertook to expand the order in the United States. Paulist houses were opened in San Francisco, Washington, D.C., Winchester (Tennessee), and Chicago. The order grew to 300 priests and a large number of seminarians. Death came to the

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last of the five founders of the Paulists on December 30, 1903 at age 80. The New York Times reported that 20,000 people paid their respects at Deshon’s funeral and

Among the flowers in the casket were a wreath of immortelles sent by the cadets of West Point, of which Father Deshon was a graduate, and a floral column sent by the Rev. W. M. Grosvenor, rector of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the Incarnation, and an old friend of the dead priest.27

Father Deshon – West Point graduate, engineer, convert, priest, Redemptorist, Paulist, author, and builder – was entombed in a crypt off a chapel on the lower level under the south tower of the Church of Saint Paul the Apostle, which he had designed and built. That was his earthly monument. His spiritual monument lives on in the Paulists’ evangelization by pulpit and print, radio and television, movie screen and internet – as true missionaries to North America with a ministry of Christian unity, reconciliation, and inter-religious relations.

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Father James Reid (1793-1868)
Major Bernard J. Reid (1823-1904)
Judge Ambrose B. Reid (1857-1942)
Father George J. Reid (1863-1937)
Bernard Meredith Reid (1897-1982)
Alfred Damian Reid (1899-1983)
Alfred D. Reid, Jr. (1934-1989)

The Reids were a prominent Catholic family in Western Pennsylvania for five generations, covering a period of almost two centuries, but have now largely been forgotten. The earliest mention of the family is Father James Reid (1793-1868), a native of County Monaghan, Ireland, who at age 24 immigrated with his parents to Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania. Ordained in 1832, he served in Ohio and Maryland before returning to Pennsylvania, where he was accepted into the new Diocese of Pittsburgh by Bishop Michael O’Connor in 1846. He ministered throughout the Ohio River Valley on horse and buggy, finally becoming pastor of SS. Peter and Paul Church in Beaver, which is located at the most northern point in the course of the Ohio River. Father Reid established a number of churches in New Castle, Cannelton, New Bedford, and Sewickley.

Father Reid had several members of his extended family become well known in their professional fields. A nephew, a grandnephew, and a great-grandnephew would achieve secular fame in the field of law. Another grandnephew would achieve ecclesiastical prominence. And another great-grandnephew and a great-great-grandnephew would achieve national fame in architecture.

The priest’s nephew, Bernard J. Reid (1823-1904), was born in Westmoreland County and became one of the first Catholics to become an attorney in Western Pennsylvania. His law office was located in Clarion but he also practiced in Jefferson, Forest and Venango counties in his capacity as counsel to Standard Oil Company. He enlisted in the Union Army during the American Civil War, became a captain in the famed 63rd Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry, took part in General George B. McClellan’s Peninsula Campaign in Virginia, and ended his military career with the title of major.28 Major Bernard Reid married Letitia Farran, whose family included one of the first native-born Pittsburghers (Margaret Farran) to enter a religious order (the Sisters of Charity) and one of the first priests in the Diocese of Pittsburgh (Father John C. Farren).29

Major Reid’s son, Ambrose Bernard Reid (1857-1942), was born in Clarion County in 1857, just four years after establishment of the Diocese of Erie. Ambrose attended the University of Notre Dame, then registered as a law student in his father’s law offices in 1875, and was admitted to the bar in Clarion County in 1878. In 1890, Ambrose moved to Pittsburgh where he was admitted to the bar of Allegheny County and became a partner of attorney Alfred Valentine Demetrius Watterson. At this time, there were few Catholic attorneys in Pittsburgh and no Catholics held the position of judge. That changed in 1911 when Ambrose Reid became the Democratic Party’s candidate for the office of judge of the Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County. The Republican Party dominated Allegheny County politics and its nomination of a candidate was tantamount to election. A week before the election in November, the Voters’ League of Allegheny County published a report about the unprofessional conduct of the Republican candidate. The publicity caused a sensation and voters’ sentiment turned in favor of Reid who subsequently was elected judge. He went on to be reelected twice. Judge Reid became president judge of the court in 1933 and held that position until his death on November 29, 1941.

Judge Reid not only served as a lawyer and judge, but was one of the most prominent laymen in local Catholic circles. He was one of the first instructors at the Duquesne University Law School, an organizer and board member of the Conference of Catholic Char-
ities, member of the board of directors of St. Joseph's Protectory, director and vice president of Calvary Cemetery, an incorporator of St. Mary's Cemetery, board member of St. Michael's Cemetery, member of the board of directors of the Holy Name Society, chairman of the St. Paul Cathedral church committee, member of the boards of Central Catholic High School and Duquesne University, charter member and grand knight of the Duquesne Council of the Knights of Columbus, and an organizer of the Lawyers' Retreat Movement at St. Paul Monastery. Judge Reid also served as secretary of the board of trustees of St. Michael's Seminary – the nonprofit corporation established in 1890 by Bishop Richard Phelan to own, manage and ultimately sell the property on which the first diocesan seminary was located in the Hazelwood section of Pittsburgh, and to oversee the financing of the education of diocesan seminarians. Judge Reid received honorary degrees from Duquesne University, Mount St. Mary's University, and the University of Notre Dame.30

Judge Reid's younger brother, Father George J. Reid (1863-1937), became an attorney with the family firm and then studied for the priesthood. He was ordained a priest of the Diocese of Pittsburgh in 1892 in the second St. Paul Cathedral (downtown) and served in New Castle and Cresson. At the request of Archbishop John Ireland of St. Paul (Minnesota), Father Reid became professor of Sacred Scripture at the archdiocesan seminary 1901-1906. Reid's health later required a milder climate and he moved to Texas where he served for 26 years as pastor in Clarksville in the Diocese of Dallas. He was a prolific historian and author, co-authoring a history of Clarion County and contributing numerous articles to the Catholic Encyclopedia and various Catholic publications. While Father Reid died in Texas, his funeral Mass was held at St. Paul Cathedral in Pittsburgh, with burial in Calvary Cemetery.34 The judge and his priest-brother also had two sisters, Sister Alphonso and Sister Mary Agnes, who had joined the Sisters of Mercy of Erie.

Judge Reid and his wife had two sons, who constituted the fourth generation of the Reid family in Western Pennsylvania: attorney Bernard Meredith Reid and architect Alfred Damian Reid.32 B. Meredith Reid (1897-1982) was the judge's older son. He was educated at Georgetown University (A.B., 1921) and received his law degree at the University of Pittsburgh (LL.B., 1924). He was admitted to the bar in October 1924, and was appointed an assistant district attorney of Allegheny County in April 1925. He later resigned to become an associate of the nationally prominent Pennsylvania attorney Charles J. Margiotti (1891-1956), who served twice as Attorney General of Pennsylvania. In 1936, Reid opened his own law firm. He served in the U.S. Army during World War I. Tracking his father's prominent Catholic role, Meredith served on the board of the Conference of Catholic Charities, as a director of St. Joseph's Protectory, and a faculty member at Duquesne University School of Law.

Judge Reid's younger son, Alfred Damian Reid (1899-1983), did not follow his father into the legal profession. Alfred attended Georgetown University (A.B., 1921), followed by two years of study at the University of Pennsylvania; he then returned to Pittsburgh where he completed studies at Carnegie Institute of Technology (B. Arch., 1924). He began the practice of architecture under famed architect Carlton Strong (1862-1931)35 during two periods 1924-1926 and 1927-1931, but from 1926 to 1927 he was a partner in the short-lived architectural firm of Reid & Burke. After Strong's death in 1931, Reid launched the firm Kaiser, Neil & Reid, continuing Strong's projects. In 1953, Reid formed Alfred D. Reid Associates, and by 1964 he was joined at the firm by his son Alfred D. Reid, Jr. Alfred D. Reid was responsible for numerous Catholic churches and institutions – including completion of the famed Sacred Heart Church in Shadyside that was begun in 1924.34 Other projects during the Carlton Strong phase of Reid's career included the motherhouse of the Sisters of St. Francis of the Providence of God in Castle Shannon, Nativity Church and School on the North Side, St. George School in Allentown, St. Paul Cathedral rectory, school and dormitory buildings at Mount Mercy College, Holy Ghost Byzantine Catholic Church on the North Side, St. Michael Church in Braddock, and St. Basil School in Carrick. Buildings designed by Reid's successor firm included the Little Sisters of the Poor Home in Garfield, St. Joseph Hall and a classroom building at Mount Mercy College, an addition to Mercy Hospital, and St. Justin Convent in Mount Washington – to list but a few.35 Fittingly, Alfred served as a trustee of Mount Mercy College. During and after World War I, he served as a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army (1918-1919). Like his father and his brother, he resided on Devonshire Road in Oakland and was a member of St. Paul Cathedral Parish. All three were buried in the Reid family plot in Calvary Cemetery in Pittsburgh.

In the fifth generation, architect Alfred D. Reid, Jr. (1934-1989) founded the nonprofit Architects Workshop to advance deserving community architectural projects. He designed the new St. Lawrence O'Toole building complex in Garfield, Grace Library at Carlow College (now Carlow University), and Visitiation Church in Johnstown – in addition to numerous institutions and hospitals such as Harmarville Rehabilitation Center, Magee-Womens Hospital, and Pittsburgh Association for the Blind. His unexpected death at age 54, while serving as chairman of the architectural firm of Reid & Stuhldreher, brought an end to the direct line of architects in the Reid family in Western Pennsylvania.36 He was buried from Sacred Heart Church in Shadyside and, reflecting his family's original American roots, was buried in St. Vincent Cemetery in Latrobe, Westmoreland County.

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Thomas Francis Enright (1887-1917)
The year 2018 marks the centenary of the end of World War I – the conflict that began in 1914 and saw the entrance of the United States with the U.S. Congress's declaration of war against Germany on April 6, 1917. One of the first three American casualties was a Catholic Pittsburgher, Thomas Francis Enright.
Enright was born on Taylor Street, a side street off Liberty Avenue, in the Bloomfield section of the city of Pittsburgh on May 8, 1887. He was the seventh (and fourth surviving) child of Irish immigrants, John and Ellen Enright, and the first of their children to be born in the United States. While the family lived just a stone’s throw from Saint Joseph (German) Church on Liberty Avenue, they and other Irish in that neighborhood belonged to the territorial Saint Mary Church on 46th Street in the adjacent Lawrenceville neighborhood. The baby was accordingly baptized at Saint Mary Church, where he would later receive his First Holy Communion and Confirmation. Thomas completed eight years of schooling at Saint Mary School, under the direction of the Sisters of Mercy.

Thomas enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1909, while Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Hall was under construction in the Oakland neighborhood. Private Enright saw service in the 6th Cavalry Regiment in the Philippine Islands where he earned the title Expert Cavalryman while fighting the secessionist Moros (Muslims) during the Philippine Insurrection. By 1914, he was serving at Vera Cruz in Mexico while fighting the secessionist Moros (Muslims) during the Philippine Insurrection. By 1914, he was serving at Vera Cruz in Mexico with the 16th Infantry Regiment. Here, while aboard ship in Vera Cruz harbor, his former classmate from St. Mary School, under the direction of the Sisters of Mercy.

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Four months later, Enright’s Company F was moved up to the trenches at Bathelmont, in the Toul sector in the Lorraine region in northeastern France, to relieve the French forces. A French deserter promptly informed the Germans of the Americans’ presence. A little after 3 A.M. on the morning of November 3, 1917, the Imperial German Army launched a nearly hour-long “box assault” which was an artillery assault to the left, right, and rear of Company F’s position, cutting them off from reinforcements and retreat. Across a frozen no man's land, 200 seasoned German shock troops advanced. Eleven men of Company F were taken prisoner. Five were left wounded. And three were killed.

Deeply regret to inform you that
Private Thomas F. Enright,
Company F, Sixteenth Infantry, is reported
killed in action.

McCain
Adjutant General Department, U.S. Army

The deaths were nationally publicized and hardened American resolve to fight the war. Pittsburgh newspaper headlines screamed from the front pages:

• “Huns Raid U.S. Trenches; Three of Our Boys Dead; Five Wounded, Twelve Prisoners”
The gist of the many provocatively anti-German headlines and articles could be summed up simply in one message – “Huns Kill Local Youth.” Additional local newspaper articles about Enright quickly followed. The press presented the three American soldiers as if they could have been the sons of any millworker or farmer. That message resonated with the public and war bond sales spiked.

World War I ended with an armistice on November 11, 1918, exactly one year and eight days after the death of Private Enright. The Enright family, the mayor of Pittsburgh, and veterans groups called upon the War Department to return the hero’s body to Pittsburgh for burial. Nothing happened for almost four years.

Finally on July 10, 1921, on the same Hoboken Pier 4 from which Enright and his comrades had departed four years earlier, General John “Blackjack” Pershing greeted the transport ships Wheaton and Somme, which carried the bodies of Thomas Enright, James Gresham, and Merle Hay. There were among more than 7,000 flag-draped coffins unloaded from the two ships. Pershing delivered an address and then laid a wreath on each of the caskets of Enright, Gresham, and Hay. These coffins represented but a small fraction of the more than 116,000 Americans who had perished in the war in the one year following Enright’s death. Thomas Enright was the sole Catholic among the three. His reburial attracted national attention, and Catholics felt particularly patriotic.

On Wednesday, July 13, shortly before 10 A.M., the body arrived by train at Pittsburgh’s Union Station (the new name assigned in 1912 to the former Pennsylvania Station or “Penn Station” at the corner of Grant Street and Liberty Avenue), draped with the American flag and banked under a huge mass of lilies and ferns. At the family’s request, there was no formal ceremony.

The casket was transported in an undertaker’s hearse to the home of Enright’s sister, Mrs. Johanna Trunzer, in Etna, a borough north of Pittsburgh. Flags in the area were at half-staff. Neighbors filed through the house during the afternoon to pay their last respects to the fallen hero.

Early on Friday, July 15, the casket was removed to lie in state at Soldiers and Sailors Memorial in the city’s Oakland section. The hall was the largest memorial in the United States dedicated solely to honoring all branches of military veterans and service members. The pallbearers were alumni of St. Mary’s School and veterans of the war. A guard of 12 former servicemen accompanied the casket.

On Saturday, July 16, at 10 A.M., Robert G. Woodside, national commander-in-chief of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, led a funeral procession up Fifth Avenue. The casket, draped with an American flag, was borne on a gun caisson drawn by four black horses, with four khaki-clad soldiers marching at their side. Eight veterans in military dress served as a guard of honor. Enright’s surviving two sisters and two brothers rode in a car following the caisson. Fifty-four posts of the American Legion and the V.F.W. were in the line of march. Veterans from the Civil War (Grand Army of the Republic), the Spanish-American War, and World War I filled the ranks of marchers. The Salvation Army Band played “Nearer My God to Thee” as the casket was carried up the front steps to Saint Paul Cathedral.

The cathedral was filled with more than 2,000 people, including the mayor of Pittsburgh, members of city council, department heads, Allegheny County commissioners, state and federal representatives. Many stood in the aisles; hundreds who attempted entry were turned aside. The cathedral’s two Boy Scouts troops acted as ushers. The cathedral church committee met the body of Private Enright at the door of the church and escorted the casket down the center aisle to a spot in front of the main altar. Newly installed Bishop Hugh C. Boyle presided from his throne in the sanctuary. Father Charles J. Coyne – pastor of Saint Mary Church on 46th Street where Enright had been baptized – celebrated a Solemn Requiem Mass, assisted by Fathers J. Earl McManamy, William J. Munster, and William Hogan. The cathedral’s male choir sang the Mass in Latin under the direction of cathedral organist and choirmaster Joseph Otten. Bishop Boyle gave the final benediction. The choir sang the Miserere and the priests chanted the Prayers for the Dead.

After the final obsequies, the funeral procession left the cathedral for Saint Mary Cemetery in Lawrenceville where Private Enright was reburied with full military honors. A special speakers’ stand had been constructed at graveside and several present there spoke, including Judge Ambrose B. Reid of the Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas, V.F.W. Commander-in-Chief Woodside, Past V.F.W. Commander-in-Chief William E. Ralston, and Father Coyne.

Veterans groups, working with municipal officials, military, fraternal groups, and business organizations devised a “great city-wide demonstration” with a “half-holiday” to honor the fallen war hero on the day of the funeral. The organizers called “upon all patriotic men, women and children to cease from their ordinary work to pay their tribute to a splendid fighter who gave his life for his country.”

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The casket was transported in an undertaker’s hearse to the home of Enright’s sister, Mrs. Johanna Trunzer, in Etna, a borough north of Pittsburgh. Flags in the area were at half-staff. Neighbors filed through the house during the afternoon to pay their last respects to the fallen hero.

Early on Friday, July 15, the casket was removed to lie in state at Soldiers and Sailors Memorial in the city’s Oakland section. The hall was the largest memorial in the United States dedicated solely to honoring all branches of military veterans and service members. The pallbearers were alumni of St. Mary’s School and veterans of the war. A guard of 12 former servicemen accompanied the casket.

On Saturday, July 16, at 10 A.M., Robert G. Woodside, national commander-in-chief of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, led a funeral procession up Fifth Avenue. The casket, draped with an American flag, was borne on a gun caisson drawn by four black horses, with four khaki-clad soldiers marching at their side. Eight veterans in military dress served as a guard of honor. Enright’s surviving two sisters and two brothers rode in a car following the caisson. Fifty-four posts of the American Legion and the V.F.W. were in the line of march. Veterans from the Civil War (Grand Army of the Republic), the Spanish-American War, and World War I filled the ranks of marchers. The Salvation Army Band played “Nearer My God to Thee” as the casket was carried up the front steps to Saint Paul Cathedral.

The cathedral was filled with more than 2,000 people, including the mayor of Pittsburgh, members of city council, department heads, Allegheny County commissioners, state and federal representatives. Many stood in the aisles; hundreds who attempted entry were turned aside. The cathedral’s two Boy Scouts troops acted as ushers. The cathedral church committee met the body of Private Enright at the door of the church and escorted the casket down the center aisle to a spot in front of the main altar. Newly installed Bishop Hugh C. Boyle presided from his throne in the sanctuary. Father Charles J. Coyne – pastor of Saint Mary Church on 46th Street where Enright had been baptized – celebrated a Solemn Requiem Mass, assisted by Fathers J. Earl McManamy, William J. Munster, and William Hogan. The cathedral’s male choir sang the Mass in Latin under the direction of cathedral organist and choirmaster Joseph Otten. Bishop Boyle gave the final benediction. The choir sang the Miserere and the priests chanted the Prayers for the Dead.

After the final obsequies, the funeral procession left the cathedral for Saint Mary Cemetery in Lawrenceville where Private Enright was reburied with full military honors. A special speakers’ stand had been constructed at graveside and several present there spoke, including Judge Ambrose B. Reid of the Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas, V.F.W. Commander-in-Chief Woodside, Past V.F.W. Commander-in-Chief William E. Ralston, and Father Coyne.

Veterans groups, working with municipal officials, military, fraternal groups, and business organizations devised a “great city-wide demonstration” with a “half-holiday” to honor the fallen war hero on the day of the funeral. The organizers called “upon all patriotic men, women and children to cease from their ordinary work to pay their tribute to a splendid fighter who gave his life for his country.”
Final prayers were offered. A squad of ten fired a volley over the grave. Four buglers sounded taps from different points before the casket was lowered into the grave. At the conclusion, a wreath from General Pershing that had been placed upon the casket at Hoboken was laid upon the grave. A simple tombstone marks this Pittsburgh soldier's final resting place in Section M of Saint Mary Cemetery. Private Enright is buried next to his parents.

Public recognition of Enright quickly followed. Some efforts came to fruition while others did not.

- Pittsburgh City Council voted to rename Premo Street in Morningside, where Enright's one sister lived, in honor of the dead patriot. Some residents objected and the street today remains Premo Street.
- The Pittsburgh Commercial Club laid plans to raise funds to build a memorial to Enright with contributions of pennies based on the contributor's age — but nothing came of this plan.
- In December 1928, some eleven years after Enright's death, the Enright Theater was dedicated at 5820 Penn Avenue in the heart of East Liberty. The largest theater in the East End, it seated 3,200. A parade preceded the ceremony and the 324th Observation Squadron flew their PT Army planes low dropping wreaths upon the theater's roof. The ceremony left an impression on attendees due to the fact that an honorific volley of shots shattered the windowpanes of the new box office! The theater was leveled in the late 1950s during East Liberty's urban renewal phase. A memorial tablet was unveiled on the spot in 1961 due to efforts by the VFW.
- Enright Parklet was developed about two blocks west of the site of the Enright Theater. The site straddles the border of East Liberty and Friendship. Its small size explains its designation as a “parklet” rather than a park.
- Enright Court, a small group of modest homes built during the urban renewal phase in East Liberty, was developed off Broad Street. The site is adjacent to the now-closed Saints Peter and Paul School.
- The city of St. Louis renamed Von Versen Avenue as “Enright Avenue.”54 The city had decided to eliminate the public use of German names wherever possible, despite that city's large ethnic German population. Enright sounded much more American.
- One child was named for Enright and his two fallen companions — Hay Gresham Enright McGuire of Freeport (Armstrong County), who as a three-year-old was brought to view Enright's casket during the wake at home of Enright's sister.55

Time may have dimmed the memory of Pittsburghers about Private Thomas Francis Enright's heroic sacrifice. As a career soldier, he might well observe: “Old Soldiers never die, they just fade away.”56

Endnotes:


8 The history of the Mercy archival consolidation is presented in Grant Gerlach, “Out of Sight But Not Out of Mind,” Gathered Fragments, Vol. XXV (Fall 2016), 32-34.
10 Drexel's contribution came with one stipulation: the abbey church had to have a number of pews for the exclusive use of African Americans. The abbot readily agreed. Ibid., 119-121.
11 Ibid., 297.
12 McInerney's work is discussed in two books: Miriam Miller, A History of the Early Years of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Charlotte (1984), and Paschal Baumstein, O.S.B., The Art of Michael McInerney (1992). The dramatic growth of the Catholic population in the South due to immigration from the North and from Latin America has led many parishes to raze the churches and other buildings designed by Father McInerney and replace those with new larger structures.
13 “Altoona,” The Pittsburgh Catholic, December 9, 1897, 13.
14 “Non-Catholic Mission at Johnstown a Success,” The Pittsburgh Catholic, December 10, 1903, 4. The church became a co-cathedral when the Diocese of Altoona was renamed the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown in 1957.
18 The Diocese of Nesqually, established in Vancouver, Washington in 1850, moved its headquarters to Seattle in 1903, and the name was changed to Diocese of Seattle in 1907.
20 Blessed Sacrament was the first Catholic church built in the Hollywood area. The interior of the Italian Renaissance basilica-style church takes its inspiration from the Roman basilicas of St. Clement and St. Paul.
Outside the Walls. A 223-foot campanile dominates the exterior. The church speaks of Hollywood’s Golden Age. The subsequent construction of additional Catholic churches in the area has provided some competition for the moniker “Church of the Stars.”


25 Of the West Point class of 1843, 16 of the 39 became generals in the Union and Confederate Armies during the American Civil War.

26 Incorporated as a borough in 1834, Lawrenceville would be annexed to the city of Pittsburgh in 1868.


28 Enright’s sister had not seen her brother-soldier for five years and did not know he was in France until receiving the telegram from the War Department. “East End Man One of First War Victims,” The Pittsburgh Press, November 5, 1917, 1. Enright’s siblings changed locations with some regularity which may explain why Enright’s sister had not seen him in five years, notwithstanding that he had been in Pittsburgh briefly in 1916, just one year before his death.

29 “Pittsburgh Soldier Killed in Action on French Front,” The Pittsburgh Post, November 6, 1917, 2.


31 Enright’s military decoration had been created in 1915.

32 Of the West Point class of 1843, 16 of the 39 became generals in the Union and Confederate Armies during the American Civil War.


34 Enright’s military decoration had been created in 1915.


36 DeLowery’s life is chronicled in “A St. Mary’s Boy Becomes A Hero” in Raymond Conway, Saint Mary’s Church, Forth-Sixth Street, Pittsburgh, Pa.: Something of Its History, The First 100 Years 1853-1953 (Baltimore: Universal Lithographers, 1953), 175-183. DeLowery was buried from St. Paul Cathedral in 1914, with U.S. Vice President Thomas R. Marshall in attendance. DeLowery’s funeral arrangements served as a template for Enright’s funeral seven years later.

37 “Father Reid Dies in Texas Hospital,” The Pittsburgh Post, December 9, 1937, 13.

38 “Enright, First Slain in War, Buried Here,” The Pittsburgh Gazette, July 17, 1921, Second Section, 6; “Thousands Pay Tribute to City’s First Dead of War,” The Pittsburgh Sunday Post, July 17, 1921, 2.


40 An exhaustive list is provided by Leo A. McMullen in “Architecture in the Diocese” in William J. Purcell (ed.), Catholic Pittsburgh’s One Hundred Years 1843-1943 (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1943), 186-200.
This past January, a crowd filled with alumni, faculty, trustees, and community members gathered in Cecilian Hall on Seton Hill University’s campus for the opening ceremony of a yearlong celebration. The preparations for the event had themselves taken the better part of a year. Lights, decorations, trays overflowing with food, parlors filled with guests, and theatre students dressed as key figures from the university’s history; it was the work of many hours and many hands.

The ceremony itself opened with brief speeches given by Bishop Edward Malesic of the Diocese of Greensburg, Sister Catherine Meinert of the Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill, and university President Mary Finger. Glasses were raised, a toast made – thus, Seton Hill University celebrated its one-hundredth year of existence.

A reminder of that evening remains stretched across the wall of the outer hallway. It is a photographic timeline, detailing the history of the university. Passersby and visitors can read summaries of key events from the recent completion of major building projects back to the university’s founding in 1918. It is perhaps the most visible sign of how important the Seton Hill University Archives is when it comes to preserving the university’s shared history.

Resident Archivist Bill Black has contributed his expertise and the depths of the archives’ resources to a number of centennial projects throughout the year, serving as a member of various committees. He and Sister Louise Grundish, S.C. – former archivist and current assistant archivist for the Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill – spent time proofreading the historical descriptions used in a booklet published alongside the timeline.

Collaboration of this sort is not new; in fact, the archival collections of both the university and the religious community began life as one entity, established in 1870 when the Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill first came into being. The Sisters began their educational initiatives in 1883 with the creation of Saint Joseph Academy; Saint Mary’s School for Boys and the Seton Junior College followed. In 1918, the sisters received a college charter and founded Seton Hill College. However, the creation of a separate archives solely for these educational initiatives didn’t occur until 1969 when the records were officially split. By the 1980s, Seton Hill College had a fully-functioning archives of its own.

The college’s archivist at that time was Sister Mary Alma Vandervest, S.C. Trained as a librarian, she took courses at the University of Pittsburgh. Bill Black joined her in 2000, later becoming the official archivist in 2010. The archives’ location was initially in an 8x12-foot room behind the Harlan Gallery in Reeves Library building, on the basement floor near the Reeves Theatre. Due to cramped conditions, this space was nicknamed the “Vault.”

Black’s priority upon taking up the mantle of Seton Hill archivist was to establish the archives department more fully, with a focus on preservation and proper storage of materials (which was not always possible at that time, given the limited space).

An example of this work was the opening of a locked door on the university campus. It had been shut by an unknown sister many years earlier, and the key long lost. Upon opening the door, Black found a closet containing Alumni Office information that dated back to the early years of the college.

Black also rescued the Bramer Collection, which was part of an endeavor started by the Religious Art Institute of America – an organization created by Monsignor William Ryan, sixth president of Seton Hill College. The Institute eventually dissolved and donations in the form of religious artwork were turned over to the college. When Black learned about the existence of this collection, he searched for its current location and found the pieces stored above Saint Joseph’s Chapel.
Here, the pieces had been exposed to sun and rain through open windows and through leaks in the roof of the chapel. Black has since worked to clean and restore many of these pieces with the help of student workers and interns.

As a result of these initiatives and others, a need for more space became apparent. The 8x12-foot “Vault” was simply not enough. Soon the archives moved to a classroom in Maura Hall, a slightly roomier but still narrow fit for the ever-growing collection. Later, the archives was moved to its present location on the lower level of Brownlee Hall, a student dorm building. Additional rooms allotted to the archives in recent years have been utilized to store large documents and blueprints.

The archival resources are now in constant demand, a change from the early days of Black’s tenure. Departments across the university call in requests for information and transfer materials to be archived.

“[The late President] JoAnne Boyle always called us the ‘memory’ of the college, which I always liked,” Black has said. That memory is kept alive today through the daily efforts of the archives department as well as through the resources it provides for celebrations and events throughout the university’s continuing history, not the least of which is this year’s centennial celebration.

One such celebration occurred in 1968 when the college celebrated the 50th anniversary of its founding. Part of that celebration included the painting of colorful designs on the ceiling and pillars of Lowe Dining Hall. The designs painted then have since been recreated during the recent renovation of Lowe Dining Hall, a project Black played a role in by helping to determine what parts of the building should be preserved as is. Photographs from the archives served as a reference for workers who painted the newest iterations of the designs on the ceiling.

In addition, the archives contain bowls and plates made of French glass. This glass came from the original windows of the Administration building, constructed in 1889. The windows were replaced in 1995; the newly created bowls and plates were then sold as commemorative gifts in celebration of the 125th anniversary of the Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill.

As events unfold – both centennial-related and otherwise – the Seton Hill University Archives remains busy as ever, preserving and promoting the memories of an endeavor one hundred years in the making.
Part I: Introduction

Chinese is a tonal language, an aspect that has confounded many a western missionary who ventured to the Far East and attempted to learn some variant of it. This means that the same sound spoken with different intonations, or “tones,” will have various meanings. For example, depending upon how it is spoken, the sound “si” translates into the number four (sì) or the word death (sǐ). As a result, Chinese speakers consider the number four highly unlucky.

One wonders if this unsettling bit of trivia crossed the minds of American Passionist missionaries laboring in Hunan, China, in 1929. According to the Gregorian calendar, in the fourth week of the fourth month of that year, four of their brethren died in their efforts to bring Christ to pagan China. Passionist Fathers Godfrey Holbein, Clement Seybold, and Walter Coveyou were murdered by bandits on Wednesday, April 24 — the fourth day of that harrowing week. The fourth priest, Father Constantine Leech succumbed to a weeklong battle with typhoid fever on Friday, April 26.

Every Passionist missionary in Hunan accepted the grim likelihood of violence or disease claiming his life and cutting his ministry short. When they boarded passenger ships to China, they expected to die in their adopted country. Four priests dying at once shocked them to the core. Many considered it a special grace from God that the press had begun broadcasting news of the event throughout the United States on April 28, 1929, which at that time was the feast day of St. Paul of the Cross, founder of the Passionist Congregation.

Even more vexing was the question of whether their brethren could be declared martyrs — especially Fathers Holbein, Seybold, and Coveyou. By definition, a martyr is killed as a direct result of his or her faith. To this day, the motivation for the murders is still a matter of scholarly debate, but all theories indicate that the bandits likely acted out of desire for material gain, or as part of a larger political agenda. Moreover, the death of Father Constantine Leech resulted from natural causes. Staunch adherents of the canonical definition objected to the priests being glorified as martyrs. But another audience adopted a different opinion: friends, family, and a larger Catholic community who had followed the struggles of these men in Catholic periodicals like The Sign, The Catholic Telegraph, and The Shield. They observed their suffering in the midst of war, famine, primitive conditions, and political hostility against the West — all in the name of Christ. To them, these priests were martyrs, just of a different variety.

Who Are the Passionists?

The religious congregation to which Fathers Holbein, Seybold, Coveyou, and Leech belonged was founded in December 1720 by Italian mystic Paolo Francesco Danei, also known as St. Paul of the Cross. The official canonical title of the order is the Congregation of the Passion of Jesus Christ. The Passionists follow a contemplative lifestyle structured around prayer and apostolic service, and they live by a distinctive creed: they promote remembrance of the Passion as a way to seek personal union with God and reflect upon the meaning of human suffering, keeping the actuality of the Passion alive in society. For a Passionist, Christ’s presence exists in all who suffer. In addition to the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, members take a special fourth vow to keep alive the memory of Christ’s suffering on the Cross, and they dedicate their lives to this pursuit through their ministry, missionary work, and retreats.

The Passionists are also defined by their habit — a long, black tunic of coarse wool bound at the waist by a leather belt. The robe is adorned by a seal worn over the heart to denote its purity for the love of Christ. The seal is a heart surmounted by a cross, inscribed with the words Jesu XPI Passio in Greek and Latin. A curved mark
appears over the XPI, indicating that it is an abbreviation for Christ in Greek. Three nails appear below the letters, intimating that the memory of the Passion and Crucifixion must always be kept in the heart. The seal may also be worn on a cloak over the left arm as a shield against the powers of darkness. They are historically *discalced*, meaning that they wear sandals on their feet.

According to the original Rule, members of the congregation strive for an interior life governed by prayer and austerity. They rise from a bed of straw to chant Matins and Lauds, the midnight observance, and spend time in meditation. They pause for prayer at canonical hours – at three, six, nine, and twelve, both morning and afternoon – and in addition to avoiding meat during Lent and Advent, they also abstain three days a week throughout the year.

After the founder’s death in 1775, the congregation slowly expanded beyond its birthplace in Italy, and missions were launched to Belgium, England, France, Holland, Australia, and the United States. During a trip to Rome, Bishop Michael O’Connor, first bishop of Pittsburgh, learned of the mission of the Passionists and formally requested that the congregation be established in his diocese. In 1852, he accompanied the Passionist pioneers from Rome to Pittsburgh. The priests had no funds and spoke only broken English, and during the first years of their mission, the bishop assumed financial responsibility for their lodging and language study. However, the Passionists soon impressed the Catholic community of Pittsburgh, and within two years they acquired enough funding to build their first monastery on a steep hill in the southern part of the city – Blessed Paul of the Cross, which would later be renamed St. Paul of the Cross after the founder’s canonization in 1867.

As the Passionist pioneers gained competency in English, their apostolic activity expanded and new sites were added throughout the Eastern and Midwestern United States. The following foundations were added within sixty years of the Passionist arrival. The foundation in Dunkirk, New York, served as a center of Passionist education throughout the United States.

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<tr>
<th>Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania</th>
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<td>Dunkirk, New York</td>
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<td>Union City, New Jersey</td>
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<td>Baltimore, Maryland</td>
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The territorial expansion prompted the provincial chapter of monasteries, yet the pioneers found themselves entangled in parish organization and ministry. Moreover, in their native Italy, church congregations were stirred by emotional sermons and elaborate ceremonies. In contrast, the American mentality favored practicality.

In the end, the religious adapted to their new situation. Father Anthony Testa, the Passionist superior general, permitted them to engage in parish life with a cautious approach, letting the priests most involved with an individual foundation make decisions locally. In the matter of maintaining the Rule, they wisely continued to uphold its original spirit, especially in the training of novices. They adapted their preaching style as well, favoring a more intellectual style of ministry. The success of their approach is confirmed by the comments of James Cardinal Gibbons, archbishop of Baltimore. He praised them with the following words:

They were international men; they became all things to all men; they identified themselves with our country; they became Americans. Their work proves that the rule and spirit of St. Paul of the Cross are adapted to every clime and every age.... I knew the Founders personally and admired them. They upheld the highest type of the Roman ecclesiastic; they were simple in faith and affable in manner, holy in life, great in work. Though not intimately acquainted...
with the language of the country, their sermons always went to the hearts of the people. Their very presence and appearance seemed to reveal the presence of the Holy Spirit in them. Hence, they won the love and veneration of the American people.23

The founders truly “became Americans,” made evident by the fact that they devoted themselves to their mission and died on American soil. The remains of all four men lie at rest in the crypt of St. Paul of the Cross Monastery in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.24

The Passionists in China

In 1920, a new era dawned for the American Passionists. A long and devastating war had just ended in Europe. During its course, a vast number of European priests had been wrenched from mission territories around the world to serve as military chaplains. In November 1919, Pope Benedict XV issued the Apostolic Letter Maximum Illud, calling for a revival of missionary work.25 The pope placed special emphasis upon pagan lands in the Far East.26

St. Paul of the Cross Province answered this call.27 When the Twentieth Chapter convened August 20-28, 1920, capitulars unanimously voted to send missionaries to China.28 They perceived China as a vital mission territory: its pagan population offered fertile ground for converts, and thus it was a logical choice for a new missionary adventure. St. Paul of the Cross Province was financially stable, its membership flourishing. It had the manpower to support the venture.29 Provincials of the time, Father Justin Carey (1920-1923) and Father Stanislaus Grennan (1923-1929), were looking for new ways of spreading the Passionist charism.30

The congregation would share responsibility for a mission district in western Hunan that had been previously established by Spanish Augustinians.31 The Passionists spoke no Chinese, yet this did not deter them. They were headed for a country embroiled in political turmoil: after thousands of years of imperial rule, China was fighting to become a republic, and rapacious warlords vied for control over vast swaths of territory.32 Bandits posed a constant threat to life and property. The missionaries were unfazed by this as well. The pioneers that set sail from Italy to America in 1852 had spoken no English, and they had succeeded in a country sun-dered by civil war.33 The American Passionists bound for China dreamed of walking in their footsteps, bringing Christ Crucified to a land wrecked by suffering, establishing a flourishing province, and in the end, being laid to rest in their adopted country.34

On December 25, 1921, the first Passionist mission band departed Seattle and set sail for China.35 Upon arrival in Hunan, they expected an extended period of service under the guidance of veteran Augustinians. They stepped onto Chinese soil in time to witness a raging famine, and conditions compelled the newcomers to take complete charge after only a few months of intense training. Their appeal for immediate assistance prompted a second wave of Passionists to prepare for labors in the Chinese mission field.36 A third mission band slated for arrival in 1923 would bring the first martyr in desire, Father Constantine Leech.37

The Sign

While American Passionists were launching missions to China, they embarked upon another venture destined to evolve into an important vehicle for promoting and supporting Chinese missionary work. In August 1921, the first issue of The Sign was published in West Hoboken, New Jersey. A monthly magazine written by Passionists for an American Catholic audience, it sought to make Christ Crucified better known to readers.38 Support of the Chinese missions was not a motivating factor in the origins of The Sign. At first, China was merely interesting news. The launch of the first mission band received extensive coverage, starting with the article, “China Calls,” in the November 1921 issue.39 The following spring, Provincial Justin Carey made a dramatic decision that forever connected The Sign with the China missions. Father Cuthbert O’Gara witnessed the episode:

During lent of 1922 the provincial, Father Justin, was in the infirmary with a severe sprained ankle.... I recall one day a commotion in the little infirmary corridor and Father Harold (Purcell), managing editor of the Sign magazine, being called into the provincial’s room. I later on heard Father Harold’s version of the incident. The first band of missioners to China had by that time arrived in western Hunan where they found famine conditions raging. The need was great and urgent. Father Celestine, the superior, appealed to the provincial for funds. The provincial called on Father Harold, who dipped into the capital on hand (money earned by the Sign) to supply the
need of the moment. I have always been of the opinion it was from that day that the needs of China became a primary concern of the Sign.40

Thus, in addition to furnishing financial support from American readers, The Sign became a primary vehicle through which China entered into the mainstream consciousness of American Catholics. By June 1922, “With the Passionists in China” became a fixture in every issue.41 The section consisted of letters composed by the missionaries, or editorials that summarized conditions in Hunan. Articles on the China missions also appeared in The Catholic Telegraph. By January 1924, news from Passionist missionaries regularly appeared in its columns.42

Part II:
First Martyr in Desire: Father Constantine Leech
Fellow missionaries describe Father Constantine Leech as a wholesome, John Wayne-type that compatriots admired and imitated.43 He made light of difficulties and lived by the philosophy, “The man worthwhile is the man who can smile when everything goes dead wrong.”44 After becoming a veteran in China, he amazed comrades by taking mule rides up narrow mountain passes that offered no protection from a thousand-foot drop, all while nodding off in the saddle, legs crossed as if sitting in an armchair, never afraid for a moment.45 Collectively, the martyrs in desire demonstrate a kaleidoscope of missionary experience. Father Constantine conveys the story of the early arrivals who struggled to break ground in the Passionist China foundation.

He entered American Catholic mainstream consciousness in the August 1923 issue of The Sign, in an editorial penned by managing editor Father Harold Purcell, titled, “Off for the High Romance!”46 Father Constantine Leech, a thirty-one year old native of Pittsburgh, had joined the third wave of American Passionists bound for China.47 He was shorter in stature – only 5’6” – and his piercing blue eyes, high forehead, and wavy silver hair already made him look like a veteran priest.48 Born Andrew Leech on January 17, 1892, in the old Manchester district of the North Side, he was the youngest child of John F. Leech and Mary A. Carlin.49 He entered the Passionist preparatory college in Dunkirk, New York, in 1911, and made his religious profession on May 5, 1914. Freshly ordained by Bishop Hugh C. Boyle at St. Vincent Archabbey in Latrobe, Pennsylvania, on February 4, 1923, he would devote his life to missionary work in wild and rugged Hunan. His father had passed away in November of 1892, a mere ten months after the son was born.50 An older brother, John H. Leech, had passed away in 1910. On August 6, 1923, when Father Constantine traveled to Seattle and boarded the S.S. President Grant, he bid farewell to his only remaining immediate family members – his mother Mary and older sister Mary C. Leech.

Passionists in China were encouraged to write for The Sign, conveying the trials of missionary experience to American readers. During his six-year tenure in China, Father Constantine proved a prolific author, penning at least twelve articles for the magazine (the last would be published posthumously). By the time of his death in April 1929, he was a well-known figure.

Retreat of 1929. The three missionaries (x) were killed returning to their missions from this retreat.

Passionist attendees at Chenzhou retreat in April 1929 included three that would be murdered after departure: (1) Father Godfrey Holbein in front row, far right, (2) Father Walter Coveyou in second row, second from left, and (3) Father Clement Seybold in second row, third from right

Source: Passionist Historical Archives
The Mission Experience:31

The Mission Territory and Language

The reputation of 1920s Hunan is best conveyed by an anecdote from missionary Father Caspar Conley. The priest journeyed to Shanghai for medical treatment. Upon hearing that his patient hailed from Hunan, the doctor exclaimed, “That was like crossing the great divide [in America] and going into the wild west”\(^\text{52}\)

The perception was well merited. Hunan was one of the last provinces that had opened its borders to foreigners. The Passionist mission territory was vast: 15,400 square miles, an area equaling the combined American states of Delaware, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island. In the beginning they managed seven missions at Chenzhou, Chenxi, Xupu, Qianyang, Yuanzhou, Baoping, and Yongshun.53 Venturing to a neighboring mission involved days of travel over treacherous mountain passes or river routes that churned with rapids. Modes of transportation were equally primitive: missionaries journeyed by mule, on foot, or via river by sampan, a flat-bottomed skiff made from three planks of wood.54 At times they also hired coolies to carry them by sedan chair.

Travel was part of daily life. Each mission had a number of “out stations” or villages where there were Christians but no permanent residence for the priest, only a hut or chapel to stay for a short stations” or villages where there were Christians but no permanent religious observance.56

In this regard, Father Constantine’s articles in The Sign demonstrate his inclination to make light of difficulties, and his enthusiasm for strenuous mountain travel. He preferred traveling on “Nancy,” his trusty mule.55 Fellow missioner Father Agatho Purtill attested that he “lived in the saddle.”56 Writing about his travels – most of which required days to reach his destination – he imbued his writing with lavish detail, describing “low valleys with rivers or creeks winding around mountain bases, sparkling in the glorious sunlight like streams of molten silver.”57 The threat of banditry also pervaded his stories. When fully aware that his trek would take him through bandit territory, he rode close to carriers hauling his luggage, or took detours along rugged mountain passes to circumvent known bandit haunts.58

The first and second bands of Passionist missionaries in China established a process for new recruits: they lived at the main mission in Chenzhou and studied the Chinese language. In Maximum Iliad, Pope Benedict XV had stressed the importance of learning the native language to ensure apostolic success, and thus the Passionists made linguistic study a priority. Fulfilling this directive was the reason why the Passionist introduction did not proceed more smoothly during the first year.66 It was not uncommon for the language barrier to result in nervous breakdowns among the missionaries and their staff.67

Difficulties and Adaptations to China

Father Constantine’s penchant for smiling in the face of difficulties worked to his benefit, and demonstrates the type of missionary that China needed. His predecessors in the first and second missionary bands had been beset by challenges that threatened their very identity as Passionists. Thus, like the founders who ventured from Italy to America, they discovered a need for adaptation to a new culture, climate, language, and realities that impacted religious observance.

Father Celestine Roddan, the first mission superior, identified language difficulties as the reason why the Passionist introduction did not proceed more smoothly during the first year.65 Father Celestine found that his decisions incited the indignation of fellow missionaries demonstrates that the struggle to learn Chinese severely hampered their work. For example, Father Agatho Purtill, a member of the second mission band, frequently lamented that two Spanish Augustinians had left him alone in the mission at Yongshun, leaving one third of the entire district on his shoulders with no knowledge of the language.58 Father Celestine Roddan, the first mission superior, identified language difficulties as the reason why the Passionist introduction did not proceed more smoothly during the first year. It was not uncommon for the language barrier to result in nervous breakdowns among the missionaries and their staff.57

Father Constantine arrived in Chenzhou in late September 1923.62 By March of 1924 he was already stationed at Yongshun, working as an assistant to Father Agatho Purtill.59 To fellow missionaries, it was a brief learning period. He apparently preferred to learn Chinese out in the field, among the people. Eager to start his life’s work, he wrote the following from Yongshun:

I am glad to be here…. Language, food, climate, bandits, and all other fears and difficulties are gradually giving way to my strong determination to do as much good as possible for God, and His Church, and the salvation of souls.64

Father Constantine’s brief study in the language is likely another instance where he made light of difficulties. The experience of fellow missionaries demonstrates that the struggle to learn Chinese severely hampered their work. For example, Father Agatho Purtill, a member of the second mission band, frequently lamented that two Spanish Augustinians had left him alone in the mission at Yongshun, leaving one third of the entire district on his shoulders with no knowledge of the language. Father Celestine Roddan, the first mission superior, identified language difficulties as the reason why the Passionist introduction did not proceed more smoothly during the first year. It was not uncommon for the language barrier to result in nervous breakdowns among the missionaries and their staff.67

The first and second bands of Passionist missionaries in China established a process for new recruits: they lived at the main mission in Chenzhou and studied the Chinese language. In Maximum Iliad, Pope Benedict XV had stressed the importance of learning the native language to ensure apostolic success, and thus the Passionists made linguistic study a priority. Fulfilling this directive was far from easy. The Chinese language relies upon a tonal system. The meaning of one word may differ depending on whether it is spoken in one of four Mandarin (official Chinese) tones, or in eight Cantonese tones. The challenge was compounded by the prospect of having to write in Chinese as well, and attempting to understand the various combinations of characters. To illustrate the difficulty:

There are approximately 880 phonetics which together with radicals (some of which double as phonetics) make up the 1,000 basic forms a student must know to be able to read and write all Chinese characters. The task requires persistence, hours of practice, and constant review.65

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Father Celestine found that his decisions incited the indignation of Provincials in the United States and resigned his position as superior within a year. He had departed America with the intention of transplanting the Passionist spirit to China, opening monasteries and establishing an environment conducive to training native Chinese in contemplation and prayer. Upon arrival, he discussed the matter with veteran missionaries from other monastic orders in the country, most of whom had attempted and failed to establish novitiate houses.68 Perceiving futility in the effort, Celestine reallocated money earmarked for the founding of monasteries and instead spent it on grain to feed Chinese beggars trapped in the midst of a horrific famine. American Provincial Father Justin Carey called him to task for the decision.69 In addition, the tem-
temperature of a Hunan summer frequently soared to a torrid 105º, making the traditional woolen habit virtually impossible to wear. Father Justin’s successor, Provincial Father Stanislaus Grennan, wrote a letter condemning Father Celestine for following the example of Jesuits, Augustinians, and Franciscans in China, and trading the habit and sandals for cooler silk robes.

Dispensation was eventually given to the Passionists in China to don Chinese garb under certain conditions. Father Constantine, however, was a proponent of the habit and wore it on days when the summer heat turned oppressive. He would not let personal comfort diminish his identity as a Passionist. Moreover, he believed that the habit conveyed an important message to the Chinese.

His [Father Constantine’s] one great idea was that all missionaries wear their habits in their mission house, so that we would impress upon the Chinese that we were not, as they often think, rich foreigners, but religious men devoted only to the sublime purpose of the salvation of our souls and those of fellow men.

The vastness of the western Hunan mission territory introduced yet another difficulty. In the United States, the priests regularly enjoyed communal prayer – one of the hallmarks of Passionist life. In China, the distance between missions meant that each would live in solitude, especially in the early years of the China foundation. Only a fortunate few enjoyed the company of a junior missioner. In lieu of communal service, the Passionists decided that every missionary should spend one half hour of prayer in preparation for the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and one half-hour in thanksgiving afterward. Additionally, time should be set aside for spiritual reading and the Divine Office. As fellow missionaries attest, Father Constantine assiduously kept his horarium and followed it to the letter.

Challenges in Evangelization

Father Constantine numbered among the first Passionists to regularly convey the difficulties of evangelization to an American audience via The Sign. Introducing Christianity to a pagan culture constituted a major challenge. Chinese catechists were indispensable: trained in doctrine, they spoke the language and communicated the missionary’s purpose to the natives. Dispensary work provided the means for a missionary to introduce himself to the locals. Stationed in areas of China where the natives had never seen a doctor in their lives, the Passionists received basic medical training before departing from the States. The ability to heal even minor ailments engendered a sense of trust in the missionaries, paving the way for opportunities at evangelism.

At times, Father Constantine employed creative solutions to attract converts. While trekking through the countryside to visit satellite missions around Yongshun, he brought a phonograph borrowed from Father Agatho and set it up in the middle of a village. Citizens flocked to hear the music, and between pieces, they absorbed Catholic doctrine. The tactic succeeded in holding the attention of Chinese who would never have come otherwise.

One incident outside the Yongshun mission conveys Father Constantine’s devotion to converts. In 1924, he enjoyed visits by a Chinese laborer who performed odd jobs around the mission and, at times, attend Mass or catechism classes. One day he vanished, apparently to join the army. Word later arrived at the mission that the solider was accused of participating in a robbery, which earned him a death sentence. Fathers Agatho and Constantine hastened to the jail where he was being held. Just minutes before his execution, the priests managed to baptize him. For Father Constantine, the work to save a soul did not end there:

Pushing my way through the returning soldiers and the crowd following them, I made my way to what remained of those unfortunate men. I quickly raised my hand over the bleeding body of the Chinese laborer and gave him conditional absolution, hoping and praying that God would pardon him and have mercy on his soul. His body lay forward on the ground, his hands tied behind his back. The head severed entirely from the shoulders lay at one side where it had rolled…. And thus ended another of China’s many tragedies.

Father Constantine wrote with candor about the difficulties of mission life. During another incident in 1924, Father Agatho informed him of a Chinese woman who was dying and requesting a priest. Father Constantine embarked upon a day-long hike through mountain passes too dangerous for a mule, weathering a downpour, slippery roads, and a guide that took a wrong turn, only to finally reach the woman and find her seated by a fire with her family – apparently in decent health. She was not baptized, and since there was no danger of death, Father Constantine could only return home from a pointless quest. Yet, he made no complaint, not even when his carrier accidentally dropped his Mass kit in the river during the return trip. His forbearance is evident in the way he summed up the tale for readers of The Sign: “Such is life in China.” Instances such as this did not faze him. Father Agatho merely intimated the need to make a sick call, and Father Constantine’s face brightened at the prospect of another journey.

Besides performing routine sick calls, visiting satellite stations, and engaging in evangelization with great zest, Father Constantine also inspired fellow missionaries with his precision in religious observance. His deep spirituality evidenced itself in a desire for perfection in all things. He rigidly adhered to the most minute rubric prescribed for Holy Mass. His Chinese altar boys executed their duties flawlessly. Fellow Passionists were elated when he joined them for Holy Week, for they were certain to have beautifully celebrated Masses. They unanimously praised this trait in his character.

This meticulous nature had a twofold impact upon Father Constantine’s life as a missionary. While enthusiastic Chinese Christians heartened him, lukewarm converts, decisions to skip the sacrament of confession before Holy Mass, or the outright failure to attend Mass grieved him.

Work among the Chinese has two sides to it. There is the consoling side; when you see Christians converted from
pagan idolatry and kneeling in humble adoration before the True God in His Eucharistic Home, when you hear their voices sing out God’s praises … all this and more urges on a missionary to do everything possible to bring these millions of souls to the Sacred Heart. The other side of missionary life is the gloomy discouraging one…..

Why am I telling all this? Well, it is the truth and you might as well know things as they really are. Discouraging things meet the missionaries here every day. Sometimes you wish some of the [people] would not come to the Sacraments. You have reason to doubt their sincerity … [they] have no desire to learn what Christianity is and much less do they care to be converted to it. We ask for prayers and even more fervent prayers not only to obtain converts but also that the people will obtain the gift of a strong faith.83

Father Constantine in Longshan

The valiant missionary often remarked that major events of his life usually occurred on Fridays. Thus, it was his favorite weekday. He had learned of his appointment as a China missionary on a Friday. He first arrived in China on a Friday. Father Constantine considered it auspicious that he reach Longshan – the mission destined to be his home for the rest of his life – on a Friday.84

In April 1926, the Passionist, undaunted by mountain travel, hiked up a trail 7,000 feet above sea level and gazed down upon Longshan (Dragon Mountain). A jagged city wall inspired the town’s name: it projected from the mountainside, its twists and crags resembling a dragon.85 Longshan was the most remote location in the Passionist mission territory. A Western traveler making the trek to the mountain village felt as if he was leaving civilization behind.86 The closest mission was Yongshun, a three-day journey. Father Constantine was the first white man that the inhabitants had seen. At first they bolted if he spoke to them, but gradually they warmed to him. His catechist announced to locals that the Sen Fu – Spiritual Father – was a wonderful medicine man, and the magistrate hung a placard in the city announcing the mission’s doctrine and purpose. Both afforded Father Constantine opportunities to interact with inhabitants.87

Like his Passionist forefathers, Father Constantine was “simple in faith and affable in manner, holy in life, great in work.” His description of the Longshan mission reflects his staunch spirit of poverty and determination to succeed:

The priest’s room, servants’ quarters, are all under the roof of one rented Chinese house. Small as my room is, part of it cannot be used. The roof leaks. The house is ancient and leans to one side. We are wretchedly poor.…. My bed is a door placed on two wooden horses. Even these I had to borrow. The altar is likewise a borrowed door placed on some sort of an improvised stand – also borrowed. But I am trying to get things into shape and striving my utmost to give the place the appearance of a real Mission…. I do not grow discouraged at the circumstances.88

In Longshan, Father Constantine found himself pitted against a formidable ideological foe: He Long. A bandit leader who eventually joined the Chinese Communist Party in 1926 – the year Father Constantine rode into Longshan – He Long89 enjoyed a reputation akin to that of Robin Hood. In northern Hunan, he controlled territory through which rich opium caravans passed from the neighboring province of Yunnan to the city of Hankou. Rather than extracting his living by force from civilians like other bandits and warlords, he earned a living for himself and his men by taxing convoys, stealing from the rich. His father was a member of the Gelanhai (Elder Brother Society), and this connection garnered He Long fame throughout China. The Gelanhai fomented anti-Western sentiment and had a history of attacking Catholic missions and converts.89 A cowherd in his youth, He Long claimed no formal education, yet he was a charismatic speaker who could “raise the dead to fight.”90 At first Father Constantine brimmed with hope at evangelizing Longshan. Thirty boys attended the school he opened in the mountain town, but they shied from further involvement: in their eyes, mere enrollment in doctrine classes ensured their standing as “good Christians.” Studying their religious indifference, Father Constantine concluded that He Long’s influence prevented them from becoming active Christians.92

Of all the sufferings Father Constantine endured in Christ’s name, fellow missioner Father Cuthbert O’Gara reveals that solitude in distant Longshan may have been his greatest cross to bear.93 Father Cuthbert was stationed alone at a new mission in Wuxi. On one occasion, the two priests discussed the effects of loneliness:

He made a remark which struck me at the time and which I remember quite clearly…. He maintained that a missionary should always have a companion, stating that he had experienced both ways of living, knew the nervous strain, and was convinced that a man should not be alone. In view of the fact that Father Constantine’s mission was the most remote in the Prefecture and that he was destined to spend many solitary, harassing months there I often speculated as to how he managed to carry on, feeling as he did; and I am now convinced that he suffered far more than any of us can well realize.94

Hunan in the 1920s: A Political Cauldron

Harassment of Passionist missionaries by bandits and Father Constantine’s trials with He Long were symptoms of the ills that plagued 1920s China.95 After the fall of the Qing dynasty, the country lost all appearance of stability. Regional armies and militias seized power over swathes of territory, their fragile coalitions swelling and waning as alliances shifted from one warlord to another. Two parties gropped for political control: the Guomindang and the Communists.96 Under the leadership of Dr. Sun Yat-sen and his successor Chiang Kai-shek, the Guomindang sought to unify China by fostering nationalism and democracy, while the Communists under Mao Zedong sought to unify the country through social revolution. In addition, events such as the Boxer Rebellion of 1900 and the May 30 Incident – a case where British Municipal Police in Shanghai fired upon Chinese protestors – brewed anti-foreign sentiment throughout the country.97 Yet
another massacre occurred in Shaji, Guanzhou Province, when British and French troops guarding foreign concessions exchanged fire, killing Chinese demonstrators in the process. As the country weathered profound political changes, the Passionist missionaries would soon find themselves struggling not for converts, but survival.

Part III: Second and Third Martyrs in Desire: Fathers Godfrey Holbein and Clement Seybold

When Father Constantine embarked on the voyage to China, his fellow Passionists in America viewed missionary work in the pagan country as “high romance.” By 1924, The Sign and The Catholic Telegraph regularly reported dramatic incidents from mission life: famines exacerbated by droughts and civil war, armed bandits, robberies at gunpoint, life-threatening travel through surging rapids and soaring mountain passes. When the Passionists decided to send a fourth mission band to China, the prospect of danger heightened American awareness that missionary work involved more than a romantic quest for conversion: it was a journey into calamities that could result in a priest’s death.

American Provincial Father Stanislaus Grennan was a catalyst for growth of the China missions and a dynamic personality who ardently supported the effort. A magnificent preacher, he spoke often about China during parish missions, glamorizing the undertaking and proclaiming it as “a great sacrifice,” and a “chance for martyrdom.” A teacher of sacred eloquence (the one-year course following ordination to the priesthood in which priests were taught the art of public preaching), he held audiences spellbound. His enthusiasm proved infectious for Passionist novices who were pondering their future. One student in Pittsburgh wrote his sister:

We sometimes hear from our missionaries in China. They are most enthusiastic over their singular vocation. It is true they have to suffer hardships and inconveniences of all kinds, but the peace and happiness they enjoy and the blessings and graces both they and their relatives receive, more than compensate for their heroic self denial. … What would you say if our Lord would call me? You would willingly give me to Him, would you not?

The student was Claude Alphonsus Holbein, who changed his name to “Godfrey” when he took his vows as a Passionist in 1917. He was born in Baltimore, Maryland on February 4, 1899 to Frank L. Holbein and Mary E. Kelley. Standing 5’11, he was boyishly handsome: wavy brown hair, blue eyes, fair skin, an oval face, and a winsome smile. From the start he exhibited “a loveable disposition,” an attribute that fellow missionaries also noted and admired later in his life. Claude was one of eight children; four of them (including Claude) eventually joined religious orders. His father died when he was very young. According to family tradition, he was destined for the Catholic priesthood. When Claude was three months old, his family visited his sister who had become a nun, and during a church service he pointed to the tabernacle keyhole atop the altar. This, the family believed, demonstrated his strong spiritual devotion.

At age eight he attended a parish mission given at St. Joseph’s Monastery Parish in Baltimore, conducted by Passionist Father James Molloy. At that time, Claude heard his calling to the Catholic priesthood – and to the Passionist order. After graduating from St. Joseph School in Baltimore in 1911, he enrolled in the Passionist Preparatory College at St. Mary’s Monastery in Dunkirk, New York. On May 15, 1916, he was clothed in the Passionist habit, and on May 16, 1917, he professed his vows as a Passionist in Pittsburgh. Through the course of his novitiate his studies took him to Scranton, Pennsylvania; Brighton, Massachusetts; and also West Hoboken, New Jersey, where he would first hear about Passionist missions to China.

Another classmate of Confrator Godfrey Holbein was also destined for missionary work in China: Confrator Clement Seybold. A native of New York state, he was born in Dunkirk on April 19, 1896, to Simon and Mary Seybold. He was baptized “Lawrence,” after a saint martyred by the Romans. He also had two sisters and four brothers – one of whom followed him into the Passionist order. Young Lawrence grew up on a farm without indoor plumbing, and his chores consisted of bringing horses and cows to the creek during the summer, or shoveling snow to make drinkable water during the winter. As he matured, his character began to fit his future religious name; indeed, he was element. Fellow students described him as modest, humble, and reserved; cheer-
ful, but never boisterous; enthusiastic, but never hasty, and even under the most trying conditions he remained calm. In all studies he applied himself with due diligence, always producing quality results regardless of the branch of work or science involved. His appearance befitted his temperament: standing 5’7”, he had wavy brown hair, a refined, studious countenance, and serious blue eyes that gazed contemplatively behind round glasses.\textsuperscript{112}

In 1915, at age nineteen, Lawrence Seybold graduated from St. Mary’s Academy – the school of St. Mary’s, Dunkirk, a parish operated by the Passionists – and enrolled in the Passionist Preparatory College in Baltimore.\textsuperscript{113} Three years later he entered the novitiate at St. Paul of the Cross in Pittsburgh, where he took his vows as a Passionist and accepted his religious name on September 17, 1918. His theological studies took him to Scranton, Pennsylvania, and West Hoboken, New Jersey, where he likely became a classmate of Godfrey Holbein. On September 18, 1921, two Maryknoll priests visited St. Michael’s Monastery Church in West Hoboken and conducted a mission appeal for China. Later that same day, a Columban missionary described work underway in Hunan. It is likely that both Godfrey Holbein and Clement Seybold attended the events and found inspiration for their vocation.\textsuperscript{114}

Soon after the event at St. Michael Church, Father Stanislaus Grennan requested volunteers for the Passionist Chinese missions to Hunan.\textsuperscript{115} Confrator Godfrey volunteered immediately, begging his superiors for the favor to make Christ known in pagan China. Confrator Clement returned home to Dunkirk to attend the funeral of his mother and returned in March 1922 with acute mastoiditis, an infection impacting bones behind the ear.\textsuperscript{116} Doctors performed surgery, leaving Clement deaf with little hope of recovering his hearing.\textsuperscript{117} He prayed that, if his hearing were restored, he would offer himself to the China missions. Soon after recovering, he followed through with his promise and submitted himself as a candidate.\textsuperscript{118}

In September of 1923, eight seminarians were chosen from St. Paul of the Cross Province to join the China missions – including both Confrators Clement Seybold and Godfrey Holbein. For the first time since the China missions began, Holy Cross, the Passionist province west of the Ohio River, contributed four priests. Father Cuthbert O’Gara, a professor at Holy Cross Preparatory College in Dunkirk, New York, also joined the band.\textsuperscript{119} Together they formed a company of thirteen men – the largest American mission band to set sail for Chinese shores.\textsuperscript{120} The departure of the “Lucky Thirteen” in May of 1924 was nothing short of grand: both the eastern St. Paul of the Cross Province and the western Holy Cross Province arranged a series of religious ceremonies that galvanized the public, gained support for the American mission effort, and heightened apostolic zeal for the newly ordained missionaries. Between May 18 and July 22, events honoring the Lucky Thirteen were held in at least ten cities, starting with Union City, New Jersey.\textsuperscript{121}}
Again, both Father Godfrey and Father Clement heard comparisons between China missionary work and martyrdom. During a departure ceremony at Boston, Massachusetts, Father Stanislaus Grennan gave a powerful and stirring sermon. He prophetically declared to the new missionaries, “All of you are going to work in China, and some of you are going to be martyrs.” Father William Westhoven, a confrere in the fourth band, recalled the statement sending a shock through him, bringing a profound realization of what lay ahead.126

**Father Godfrey and Father Clement Adapt to China**

The fourth missionary band arrived on August 12, 1924, after a twenty-one day journey across the Pacific. Fathers Godfrey, Clement, and their fellow missionaries arrived in Shanghai, disembarked from the *S.S. President Wilson*, and took their first steps upon Chinese soil.127 Upon reaching the main mission at Chenzhou, they learned the difficulties that their predecessors faced in establishing a Passionist presence in China. They looked upon these veterans with reverence.

As with Father Constantine, the new missionaries spent their first months at the main mission in Chenzhou engaged in language study. Father Anthony Maloney, a confrere of the fourth mission band, describes the experience:

> Most of the daylight hours were taken up with the study of Chinese…. For the language study all we had was the small primers used by Chinese children. Our teacher, a pagan and an opium smoker, knew no English. He would point to a Chinese character and utter a sound which we tried to imitate; if there was a drawing on the page we might guess the meaning of the sound. We learned most of our beginner’s Chinese from the children. We’d point to something and they’d give the name in Chinese. If our attempt at pronunciation was incorrect they let us know at once, particularly by loud laughter.128

Both Fathers Clement and Godfrey found the routine tedious and longed to adopt Father Constantine’s approach – leave Chenzhou and learn in the field. Father Clement found Chinese challenging and compared it to a new philosophy, though he never mentioned it as a burden. He considered the linguistic structure “backwards” from Western languages. After five weeks in Chenzhou, he signed his letters home in English and Chinese. Before long Confrator Mark Seybold – the brother who followed Father Clement into the Passionist order – received summaries on Chinese language and culture with the intention of preparing him for work in the China mission fields.129

In contrast, Father Godfrey experienced greater difficulty. Writing for *The Sign* in 1925, he describes himself “grappling with the barbaric language of Chinese.”130 In a letter to his sister, Sister Mary Hildegard of the Sisters of Mercy in Baltimore, he confessed to having “blue moments” because everything was “so strange here.” He had difficulty acclimating to Chinese cuisine, stating that he had little appetite for the food and often forced himself to eat. An iron deficiency made him break out in boils and prevented him from studying over the course of five months, which further hampered his progress.131 He begged his sister to “Pray! Pray! Pray!” for him. An inability to master the language would render him incapable of hearing confessions and performing pastoral duties in China.132

In July 1925, both Fathers Clement and Godfrey received permission to minister in China.133 Finally, at the beginning of August, Father Dominic Langenbacher, superior of the China missions, along with his mission council, decided that members of the fourth band were ready for the field. They assigned Father Clement Seybold to assist Father Quentin Olwell at Qianyang; Father Godfrey received an assignment to assist Father Flavian Mullins at Xupu.134

The response of both priests to their assignments and their lives as missionaries reveal a great deal about their character. Unlike Father Constantine they wrote sparingly for *The Sign*, but penned copious letters home.135 Their experience is easier to follow through personal correspondence.

By all accounts, Father Clement adapted quickly to missionary life. He felt safe in Qianyang. The mission had a thirty-foot wall complete with plated iron gates that were guarded by day and bolted at sunset. Frequently he referred to the mission compound as “the fort.” For Father Clement, an average day consisted of preparing a sermon in Chinese, dispensing medicine, feeding the poor, caring for orphans dropped off at the mission for adoption, enrolling Chinese children in school, explaining doctrine to catechumens, tending to a sick call, or balancing daily financial records.136 On occasion he received visits from fellow missionaries suffering with bouts of illness. In early 1926 he nursed Father Quentin Olwell back to health from smallpox.137

Father Clement managed the Qianyang mission in 1925, when Father Quentin departed to attend the installation of Father Dominic Langenbacher as prefect apostolic.138 Father Clement embraced the opportunity: it permitted him to preach in Chinese earlier than he had expected.139 By January 1926 he felt confident enough to regularly accept sole charge of the mission, permitting veteran missionaries more time for travel. Father Clement conveyed his sense of contentment to his brother Mark Seybold, stating that he was “alone, but not lonely; busy, but very happy.”140

When writing home, Father Clement tended to focus on events unfolding around him. Bandits were a recurring theme. Ominous portents of the future arose in 1925, when Father Kevin Murray was held by bandits and again in 1926 with the dramatic capture and release of Father Ernest Cunningham.141 In both cases the bandits demanded ransom for their prisoners and the Passionists refused to provide it. A similar incident occurred to several Protestant men and women who were captured on their way from Hankou to Chenzhou.142 Father Clement perceived the logic of refusing to pay ransom and supported it: if the bandits received payment, they would make a regular and lucrative business out of kidnapping missionaries. Fortunately for Father Kevin and Father Ernest, the bandits released their captives after failing to acquire
ransom, though Father Kevin’s brush with outlaws left him mentally unstrung, requiring rest in Hankou. The mission at Xupu was a red brick chapel with a skylight and four rooms, and six “out missions” demanded additional travel and attention. A half million people lived in the region. The missionaries were the only white men that they had ever seen. Shortly after arrival in Xupu, Father Flavian assigned Father Godfrey to an out mission in Qiaojiang. This meant that he saw Father Flavian only twice a month when he returned to the main mission. His duties included managing a dispensary and keeping detailed financial records. The solitude permitted him time for introspection that frequently gravitated toward an accounting of his perceived failures. Every one of our Fathers work themselves to the state of emaciation, and yet the results are so tiny. Many times we ask ourselves ‘What is wrong with China or ourselves?’ So many years and so few [C]hristians. May God convert this truly devil kingdom! Money, full stomach, opium, and big face is their only religion. As long as you give them rice and a bed they will come to Church. Equally frustrating was the concept of maintaining “face” – prestige or honor – for himself and the mission. Two incidents at Xupu bruised his confidence. In December of 1925 he received a sick call and catechism request for a Chinese woman 120 miles away who had a chapel in her home. Though overwhelmed by mission duties, he resolved to answer the call because the Passionists had purchased a large piece of property in her town. Chinese Christians employed at Xupu urged him not to go – most likely out of concern for his safety and health – but he subjected himself to a dangerous and enervating journey through bandit-ridden territory to uphold the honor of his mission. Interpreting their opposition as a lack of faith in his abilities, he felt deeply wounded. He confided to his sister:

I am awfully anxious for success, anxious to convert souls, to work with my whole soul, hungry for it, and when my little knowledge of the language, mentality and character of the [C]hinese ties my zeal I feel like an imprisoned criminal. Hence my desire and intention of leaving the mission … you can’t realize what a torture I suffer on account of my zeal.

Incidents at the dispensary discouraged him. In May 1926, he administered his first vaccination with trepidation. Running short on medications, he concluded that his patients required the skill of a surgeon, and when he refused to use a knife, he lamented that the mission “lost face.”

The missionaries weathered their first loss of a comrade with the death of Father Edmund Campbell, the Passionist procurator in Hankou, who suffered a heart attack. Father Clement noted the loss in a letter to his brother, but did not appear especially distressed. Death from natural causes was expected in China. The incident received more attention in the United States. It also served as a grim reminder that the Passionists had committed themselves to China for life.

Father Clement’s letters home and the air of serenity he projected for fellow missionaries indicated a soul unperturbed by the rigors of missionary life. However, Chinese Christians perceived that he cloaked the impact of hardships beneath a mantle of perpetual calm.

The missionaries assured Father Godfrey that he was selected for a tenuous, struggling missionary. In the early years, he behaved like a true Westerner struggling to acclimate, Father Godfrey developed a bleak opinion of Chinese culture. In December 1925, he candidly derided Fan Jiahu – rice Christians – Chinese who studied doctrine if the Passionists fed and housed them during famines, but never attended church and had no genuine interest in converting to Christianity. In his view, making even one good Christian was an arduous process, more trying for the missionary than the prospective Christian.

In the kaleidoscope of mission experience, Father Clement served as a grim reminder that the Passionists had committed themselves to China for life.
Paradoxically, fellow missionaries had a positive impression of Father Godfrey and his work. In March of 1926, veteran missionary Father Flavian Mullins reported to Father Stanislaus Grennan:

He [Father Godfrey] is in fine health and doing good work. He also has a good fundamental knowledge of the language and it is improving every day … best of all, he is grasping the Chinese mind and thus his work is much easier and more successful.\(^{157}\)

Father Flavian was not alone in his praise for Father Godfrey. In April 1926, Father Arthur Benson made a retreat to Xupu and commented that the junior missionary surprised him with his ability to handle the language so well when he preached the Sunday sermon.\(^{158}\)

Longing to return home, yet dissuaded by the necessity of getting permission from Apostolic Delegate Celso Costantini, religious Superior Dominic Langenbacher (now a monsignor), and Father Stanislaus Grennan, Father Godfrey felt trapped.\(^{159}\) When political tensions escalated and anti-foreign sentiment gripped China in 1927, his thoughts gravitated again to martyrdom. Death presented an attractive option: first, it promised release from the rigor of mission life, and secondly, the story of a faithful missionary giving his life for Christ might kindle a desire in American Passionists to follow in his footsteps, sowing the seed for Chinese conversions.\(^{160}\)

**Emergence of the United Front**

At the same time that Fathers Godfrey and Clement were struggling to adapt to China, the country was in a state of ferment. Coalitions of warlords vied for control of the country. At first, Guomindang leader Dr. Sun Yat-sen attempted to achieve national unity through the help of the warlords, but eventually concluded that success could never be achieved by depending upon such unstable elements. Meanwhile, the fledgling Communist Party under Mao Zedong, was struggling to enlarge its ranks. In 1923, it boasted only 432 members in the entire country.\(^{161}\)

From afar, Josef Stalin, director of the Communist International (Comintern) in Moscow, observed the failure of both parties to unite China.\(^{162}\) Dr. Sun Yat-sen’s movement enjoyed mass support, but suffered from weak organization. Mao Zedong’s Communist Party, on the other hand, was well-organized. Stalin arrived at a novel conclusion: the two parties had to join forces and defeat the warlords. Stalin brokered the uneasy peace through Soviet Comintern agent Michael M. Borodin and Adolf Joffe, a diplomat internationally recognized for negotiating the Brest-Litovsk Nonaggression Treaty with Germany at the end of World War I.\(^{163}\)

The alliance formed between the Guomindang and Communists is known as the First United Front.\(^{164}\) In the aftermath of Dr. Sun Yat-sen’s death on March 12, 1925, the unstable coalition united under his closest ally, Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek. The following year, Chiang carried out Dr. Sun’s long-postponed Northern Expedition, a campaign to conquer and defeat the warlords that plagued China.\(^{165}\) Even as they fought side by side, both parties pursued their own interests. The Guomindang sought to restrain Communism within its merged ranks, while the Communists used the opportunity to spread their revolution deeper into China.

**The Passionists Under the United Front**

By early 1927, the Passionists noted a marked increase in Communist presence throughout western Hunan, along with a dramatic rise in anti-foreign sentiment.\(^{166}\) Popular fury against foreigners had risen to a fever pitch after incidents in which British, French, and Portuguese forces fired upon Chinese students, cadets, and workers conducting demonstrations against their presence.\(^{167}\)

As the United Front drew closer, friends of the Passionists warned them of impending danger.\(^{168}\) Communist leader Mao Zedong was visiting the Changsha region of Hunan, creating a blueprint for his rural revolution.

Agitators come to a town … go about the streets preaching everywhere, enlisting the students in their crusade, brow beat every trade and every class of individuals of the town into a revolutionary society and then through these crush everything … the machinery is especially directed against the Missions. “Children need not obey their parents, citizens their rulers, daughters-in-law their mothers.” “Down with!” got to be the slogan for everything that stood for law and order. Down with the Catholics, Down with the Protestants, Down with the Foreigners. Down with the Military… In its wake (are) left deserted missions, deserted churches, vacant schools, hospitals hovels of dust.\(^{169}\)

By January of 1927, American Vice-Consul John Carter Vincent in Changsha perceived that the Northern Expedition would make Hunan intolerable for Americans.\(^{170}\) He ordered certain classes of missionaries to withdraw quietly from the province.

Exceptions may be made for those … stationed in localities, withdrawal from which would mean more danger than remaining; for those who feel that they are in no danger and to whom withdrawal would bring undue financial hardship; and for those who are certain that the Chinese in their localities could not [sic] be excited by local or outside disturbances.\(^{171}\)

Xupu, the mission of Fathers Godfrey and Flavian, was the first to be engulfed by the onslaught. An invasion army of Cantonese soldiers and two hundred Communist students swept the bandit pass behind the city and then flooded the streets. Fathers Godfrey and Flavian fled into the mountains for safety only with the Military. … In its wake (are) left deserted missions, deserted churches, vacant schools, hospitals hovels of dust.\(^{172}\)

Meanwhile, Msgr. Dominic assessed the chaos brewing outside the windows of the main mission at Chenzhou and concluded that war was at hand. Father Terence Connolly suffered a nervous breakdown. Communist propagandists burst into the mission and...
the priest fled in terror, screaming, “Chenzhoufu is hell!”174 Xupu was overrun by Communists. In Chenzhou, Father Cyprian Frank reported that a bullet had passed three feet in front of him and lodged in a wall.175

Msgr. Dominic decided to order all Passionist missionaries to evacuate as quickly as possible to the neighboring province of Gishou, where a progressive governor had blocked Communism by placing a strict guard on the borders.176 His terse order sent to flight seven missionaries stationed in the northern half of the Passionist prefecture—most of which had not yet observed any activity in their own missions: Fathers Agatho Purtill, Raphael Vance, Theophane Maguire, Anthony Maloney, Terrence Connolly, Basil Bauer, and Constantine Leech.177 The missionaries endured a grueling march that strained them to their mental and physical limits. Reduced to sustaining themselves upon rice, coarse tea, rotting vegetables, and bits of fly-specked meat, they suffered from bouts of dysentery. Inclement weather added to the misery: most of the journey found them soaked by unrelenting rain or from activities in their own missions: Fathers Agatho Purtill, Raphael Vance, Theophane Maguire, Anthony Maloney, Terrence Connolly, Basil Bauer, and Constantine Leech.177 The missionaries endured a grueling march that strained them to their mental and physical limits. Reduced to sustaining themselves upon rice, coarse tea, rotten vegetables, and bits of fly-specked meat, they suffered from bouts of dysentery. Inclement weather added to the misery: most of the journey found them soaked by unrelenting rain or from bouts of dysentery.

Withered and gaunt, they stumbled into the city of Guiyang on May 21, 1927, where the Paris Foreign Mission Society received them hospitably.179 Father Agatho was extremely ill, and Father Constantine remained at his side day and night, nursing him back to health.180 Eventually they regrouped with Msgr. Dominic in Chongqing, and once again, Father Constantine worked tirelessly to heal another religious gripped by illness: Sister Clarissa Statmiller, a Sister of St. Joseph who worked alongside the Passionists in Hunan.181 To the great sorrow of the missionaries, she passed away from malaria on July 21.182 After her funeral, Fathers Constantine and Agatho followed Msgr. Dominic to Shanghai, where the Passionists would remain for five months.183

Msgr. Dominic also sent evacuation orders to missions in the southern half of the prefecture. A postscript followed those orders, one that would create controversy for years to come. At most, be informed them, they could delay a little and wait for the arrival of the military.184 At the mission in Yuanzhou, Fathers Timothy McDermott and Gregory McEttrick were living in peace. The same held true for Fathers Clement Seybold and Ernest Cunningham who were both in Qienyang. They accepted Msgr. Dominic’s postscript as a sign that they could exercise discretion. Moreover, they considered his decision to abandon Hunan a rash action, since they technically could not leave their prefecture without permission from Rome.185

Father Clement wrote home, reporting that efforts to stir the population against the foreigners were unsuccessful. Even as violence escalated in larger cities and the American consul urged evacuation, Father Clement felt that leaving the missions was tantamount to shirking duty, since the Christians needed spiritual guidance now more than ever. Aware of potential danger, his thoughts gravitated to the possibility of martyrdom:

All the trouble is due to the advance Southern army who are Bolsheviks and are known over here as ‘Reds’… The poor Chinese deserve pity. They will soon learn to their sorrow that they ever started out with Russia. They will have to pay dearly. But wouldn’t it be great if we could die martyrs and go straight to Heaven! But I feel unworthy to ask such an immense grace from God. However pray that His will be done.186

Late February brought a rise in political tensions in Qianyang. On February 25, a proclamation was posted on the streets instructing Chinese citizens not to harm the foreigners and treat them with respect. The cauldron had begun to boil by April, when the Communists organized student demonstrations outside the mission, chanting propaganda that had already become familiar. Posters referred to the missionaries as “foreign dogs” and mission workers as “slaves of foreign dogs.” Students threw rocks at night, but the Catholic mission was protected by iron gates. Father Clement felt safe within “the fort.” Sympathetic Christians leaked plans for more violence, affording time for Father Quentin Olwell to request protection from military authorities. Soldiers from the neighboring province of Gishou defended the missionaries in Qienyang and Yuanzhou until the political situation stabilized later that year. Father Clement and his fellow three missionaries in the south never did evacuate, and their decision to remain incited controversy that would sunder the Passionists in China.187 By June 15, Father Clement reported to his family:

> In the Ch’ien-yang [Qianyang] area Kweichow [Gizhou] soldiers and allies of Chiang-Kai-shih [sic] are beating and slaughtering the Reds everywhere. think that we shall soon be rid of Bolshevism, but it will be a long time before China gets back to normal[, if there ever was such a norm in China, for the Bolshevists have sown their evil seed.188

Unlike his confrere Father Clement Seybold, Father Godfrey considered the evacuation an appropriate response to the political chaos of 1927. The strain of events had taken their toll: in June he was beset by palsy, which made writing extremely difficult.189 Despite lingering instability in the region, his fellow missionary Father Flavian returned to Hunan. Father Godfrey remained behind. Always praying for martyrdom, he wrote his sister:

> [If our Fathers and Sisters are killed, I think I shall lose my mind. For while their death strictly speaking would not be martyrdom in the theological sense, still in the sight of God it would be... Think of it, I have missed the one big opportunity[,] Pray that Our Lord’s holy Will be done.190

It was plain to him that death resulting from political turmoil did not fit the strict definition of martyrdom, yet he felt that a death suffered in the line of religious duty still merited consideration. Father Godfrey remained in Shanghai and acted as chaplain to British soldiers until November 1927, when a cable summoned
him to return to Chenzhou. At this point fellow missioner Father Terrence Connolly had returned to the States – even without seeking the necessary Provincial permission – and the depleted and harried Father Godfrey verged upon finally doing the same. The June 15 issue in China; Father Clement Seybold With Party of Missionaries included him in the group of evacuees: "Dunkirk Priests Missing", the secular paper from Father Clement’s Dunkirk Evening Observer their brethren, and the Baltimore Catholic Review, the local Catholic audience aware of the missionaries, along with a larger Catholic audience aware of news coverage of foreign missionaries was as familiar to Americans, he assured the China missionaries, were aware of their sufferings. He ordered prayers and penances throughout the American province on their behalf. Using the same verve that kindled them during the departure ceremonies, he exhorted the exiles in China to put their trust in God. Unable to post personal articles from the missionaries, The Sign posted excerpts from the letters they sent back to the States.

Chiang Kai-shek’s Northern Expedition put foreign interests in jeopardy, and for many months, his military movements along the Yangtze River created situations that placed China on the front page for Catholic and secular periodicals. Friends and family of the missionaries, along with a larger Catholic audience aware of the China missions, absorbed news of the chaos and read about their persecution by Communists from afar. In Father Constantine’s hometown of Pittsburgh, headlines from The Pittsburgh Catholic announced the exodus of missionaries in April. Readers learned their plight from headlines such as “China Missions Seized, Priests Forced to Flee” and “Grave Fears Felt For Safety Of Pittsburgh Priests and Sisters Assigned to Interior of China; Passionist Fathers and St. Joseph Sisters Who Left Here Last August for China, Are In Flight For Their Lives.” Similar headlines flashed across the front page of The Catholic Telegraph in Cincinnati, where Passionists from the western Holy Cross Province followed their brethren, and the Baltimore Catholic Review, the local Catholic periodical of Father Godfrey’s hometown. On May 14, the Dunkirk Evening Observer, the secular paper from Father Clement’s hometown, reported the priest missing in action and mistakenly included him in the group of evacuees: “Dunkirk Priests Missing in China; Father Clement Seybold With Party of Missionaries in Hunan Who Fled From Looted Missions.” The June 15 issue included an article that reported him as safe. During the crisis, it was common to see syndicated stories gleaned from the wires of the National Catholic News Service or the Associated Press. Thus, news coverage of foreign missionaries was as familiar to American readers as battles with the Ku Klux Klan, visits by bishops, outings by the Knights of Columbus, and promotion of Catholic truths. Events occurring with the Passionists in China had reached the mainstream consciousness of American Catholics.

Disunion After the United Front
In the aftermath of the 1927 exodus from Hunan, the Passionists, like China, were bitterly divided. The missionaries who obeyed Msgr. Dominic’s order to evacuate returned to find lapsed Chinese Catholics who had succumbed to the fury of Communist propaganda and abandoned religious practices. During their absence, churches, mission houses, and catechumenates had been wrecked. Missionaries who defied the order and remained at their missions enjoyed full churches and catechumenates. For them, progress had continued without disruption. Adding salt to the wound, Apostolic Delegate Celso Costantini supported their decision to remain at home.

Passionist superiors in the United States detected the deep division in Hunan. Father Stanislaus Grennan swiftly convened a council, resulting in a decision to send Father Sebastian Ochsreiter to China. He granted Father Sebastian authority to hear the grievances of Passionists in Hunan, evaluate progress at each mission, and recommend actions to restore unity.

The trip lasted between June 1 and November 15, 1928. His visit with Father Constantine occurred in Longshan on August 26, shortly after the priest sauntered in fresh from a 125-mile mule ride. He called on Father Clement at Yuanzhou on September 20. While both men struck him as laconic, and Father Clement appeared thin and older than his years suggested, he found them both contented, capable missionaries.

By the time of Father Sebastian’s visit, Father Godfrey’s angst reached its nadir. The previous fall Father Godfrey had sent a letter to Father Stanislaus Grennan and admitted to suffering a nervous breakdown. At last, in 1928, he requested to come home, stating the disunion of his brethren as the source of restless-ness. In light of this, Father Sebastian’s observations of Father Godfrey are of particular interest. His personal notes include the following statement:

Father Godfrey’s health is not good. He told me he had wrote [sic] to your Paternity some time ago, and asked to be allowed to come home, on account of his nervous condition. He describes his condition by saying he is always in mortal dread of something going to happen to him. Not bandits or anything big, but some indefinable something is always hanging over his head… I feel the superiors at home considering Father Godfrey’s honest disposition would act unwisely, if they refused or showed any hesitation in cheerfully granting the request, should it be made, that he return to America.

Father Stanislaus swiftly sent a letter to Msgr. Dominic allowing permission for Father Godfrey’s return, concluding that he would rather have only a few missionaries in the field who were zealous, obedient, docile, and charitable, than a large number of malcontents lacking in those virtues. Once again, the monsignor
exhibited an inability to act decisively. He responded to Father Godfrey’s crisis by attempting to rekindle his interest in China, and at the same time, giving consent to leave. Piety outweighed common sense. Msgr. Dominic did not enforce the decision for the anxious missionary to return home, and Father Godfrey, leaving the decision in his hands out of obedience, remained in China. This paralysis amid monumental decisions riled fellow missionaries. After Father Sebastian confronted him over the matter, the monsignor submitted his resignation as superior of the China missions.

While Father Godfrey spent the last months of his life vacillating between renewed optimism and melancholy, one of his final letters demonstrates his despair toward the end:

[Do you think it] strange, that I should feel so much out of place after [sic] being here almost five years? If I could put my whole heart into the work. Not only does this discontent frighten me; but what is worse, my life has become so hopeless and wearisome, that not only my missionary, priestly and religious vocation; but even my faith seems wavering. You have no idea what it is like to live in a country where God is unknown ... devil worship and materialism.... Remaining here seems hopeless and leaving here seems as devoid of hope.

Aside from evaluating the Passionists in Hunan and resolving their strife, one of Father Sebastian’s duties in China involved welcoming a sixth band of Passionist missionaries who had just arrived in Hankou. The three new selectees hailed from the western Holy Cross Province in America. The last was Father Walter Coveyou.

Part IV:
Fourth Martyr in Desire: Father Walter Coveyou

Father Walter Coveyou yearned to be a China missionary from the beginning. Ordained to the priesthood on May 29, 1920, Father Walter learned that the Passionists of St. Paul of the Cross Province intended to send a band of missionaries to the pagan land and volunteered at once. However, his heart’s desire would remain unfulfilled until 1928. He belonged to the Holy Cross Province west of the Ohio River, and in the early 1920s his superiors were not yet prepared to contribute missionaries. Instead of supporting the Passionists within China, Father Walter devoted his energy to supporting their cause in the American heartland. Thus, in the kaleidoscope of American mission experience, Father Walter conveys the story of the “homefront missionary.” Short in stature, he stood only 5’3½”, but he was a dynamic man with hazel eyes and dark brown hair that had thinned by the time he departed for China at age thirty-four.

Walter Vincent Coveyou was born at Petoskey, Michigan on October 17, 1894. He was the fifth of eight children, and his parents, William M. Coveyou and Flora Draper, were pioneers of the region. Friends and family described him as a “loveable, good-natured, optimistic lad.” The Coveyou’s lived in an area with a long and rich Catholic history, and the members of the devout family were all well-known, active members of their parish, St. Francis Xavier.

St. Francis was a Franciscan church. Unlike Fathers Constantine Leech, Clement Seybold, and Godfrey Holbein, all of whom grew up in parishes operated by the Passionists, Walter learned of the congregation by coincidence. While visiting his cousin Ms. Seneca Coveyou in Saint Ignace, Michigan, he attended a parish mission conducted by Passionist Father Henry Miller and during a sermon, he heard his call to join the priesthood. Walter entered the Passionist Preparatory School in Cincinnati, Ohio, at Holy Cross Monastery, Mt. Adams, on July 1, 1910. On February 13, 1912, when he professed as a Passionist, he adopted his baptismal name “Walter” as his religious one. His studies would take him to Sacred Heart Retreat House in Louisville, Immaculate Conception Monastery in Chicago, and Mother of Good Counsel Monastery in Normandy, Missouri outside St. Louis. On May 29, 1920, at Holy Name Cathedral, he was ordained by Archbishop George Mundelein of Chicago.

After being rejected for the China mission in 1920, Father Walter worked in Cincinnati, where he became a charismatic preacher who frequently promoted the cause of foreign missionary work. In the process, he brought the mission experience to church pews, clubs, and sodalities, and reinforced the awareness of missionary activity already planted in mainstream consciousness by periodicals of the day. Catholic life in Cincinnati was vibrant. People throughout the city participated in Passionist-sponsored devotions. This afforded Father Walter ample opportunity to make connections and advocate on behalf of his brethren in the Far East.
For six years he stinted neither time nor energy to aid in a financial way the missions he longed to serve in person. He organized and directed various social activities for the raising of funds for the missions. His willingness to do more than his share of the work, his jovial disposition which won him countless friends among the clergy and the laity, the ability to smooth over the difficulties connected with the work, crowned his efforts in this regard with incredible success. No Catholic charity of its kind could compete with the returns he secured.221

Also during this time period, Cincinnati served as home base for the Catholic Student Mission Crusade (CSMC), which sought to promote mission education in schools affiliated with the organization. It capitalized on local involvement in Catholic parishes and schools in order to foster international mission awareness, and served as a pillar of home support for foreign missions.222 Father Walter was a member of the CSMC education committee, representing the Passionists.223

As a reader of the Cincinnati-based Catholic Telegraph, Father Walter likely noted headlines such as, “Newly Ordained Priest is Assigned to China” – an article on Father Godfrey Holbein – and “U.S. Demands Protection For Passionists in China,” which described Chinese troops firing upon two missionaries and shooting at the American flag.244 Headlines announcing the departure of the “Lucky Thirteen” likely struck him as bittersweet. The fourth mission band had included the first selectees from Holy Cross Province. Once again, Father Walter had eagerly volunteered for China, and once again, he had been denied.

I thought for a while that I had a chance of going to China. The Provincial asked for volunteers but of the many who offered themselves only four were chosen, I was one of the disappointed ones but I’m on the list and have hopes of getting there some day…. There is talk of keeping me at this [fundraising] work instead of letting me go to China. But who knows.225

Beatrice Henshaw, niece of Father Walter, always remembered him as a jovial, sensitive, and idealistic person – all qualities that made him successful at fundraising in Cincinnati.226

In 1926, Father Walter had a change in venue: he transferred to the Immaculate Conception Monastery in Chicago to promote The Sign and manage circulation of the magazine in the western province.227 Previously, he had supported foreign missionary work in general. This sharpened his focus to promoting the Passionist cause in China – the very mission field he longed to serve himself. He continued efforts to support the Catholic Student Mission Crusade from his new home base.228

Father Walter’s fortunes changed in April 1927. That month, during a meeting of the Elder Council of the Knights of Columbus, Father John Hickey announced that Father Walter’s long-desired wish to join his fellow Passionists as a missionary in China would soon become reality.229 Father Walter received a standing ovation from the ebullient crowd. He was set to join the sixth mission band to Hunan, departing in September 1928.

Anticipation built throughout the spring and summer of 1928. At the same time that Father Sebastian Ochsenreiter sought to analyze and heal the strife that divided Passionist missionaries in Hunan, Father Walter, along with fellow selectees Father Francis Flaherty and Father Nicholas Schneider, attended medical courses at Georgetown University. That year, training of missionaries had been lengthened from two weeks to six. With a class of thirty-two students representing nine different religious orders, the 1928 class was the largest to attend the course.230 As a demonstration of homefront support, on June 23, Father Walter’s supporters in Mt. Adams, Cincinnati, held a card party to raise funds and defray the cost of sending his mission band to China in September.231

In the September 6, 1928 issue of The Catholic Telegraph, the periodical where Father Walter had followed the departure of five other Passionist mission bands to China, at last he could read headlines announcing his own. “Three Priests To Leave for China Missions Sunday” graced the cover.232 Also making the cover, an article about Father Walter himself: “Popular Priest Going to China.”233 A legion of supporters and Passionists from Cincinnati to Chicago knew that his departure was a loss to financial aid efforts on the home front, yet they rejoiced with him, knowing that his dream of becoming a missionary was finally being fulfilled.

On September 21, 1928, the S.S. President Polk carried the sixth mission band to Chinese shores.234 At last, on November 19, Father Walter reached the main mission of Chenzhou.235 Mid-February 1929 found him immersed in Chinese language study. Frequently working from morning to midnight, pausing only for religious duties and meals, he concluded that the devil must have invented the language. In letters home, he reported that he had succeeded in learning about 300 words or characters.236 The vast change in environment, coupled with an intense study schedule, brought on an attack of shingles.

Though bedridden by the affliction from March 9 to 21, fellow missionaries found him cheerful and ready to engage in conversation.237 His lighthearted nature buoyed Passionists who visited Chenzhou to meet the new arrivals. In his resilient cheer, they saw enormous potential and an ability to withstand the vicissitudes of missionary work.238 A letter reveals Father Walter’s hope for the life that awaited him:

I have come to the rainbow’s end, and if there be here a pot of gold it surely is mixed with a lot of dross. Underneath the dirt there is something more precious than gold—treasures bought by the sufferings and death of Our Lord: treasures that can be salvaged for the Kingdom of Heaven only by the sacrifices of missionaries at home and abroad. This surely is a great field. The work is slow and discouragement is what all seem to experience sometime or other. Pray for us and for our work.239

Part V:
The Fateful Month of April 1929
During his visit to China, Father Sebastian Ochsenreiter observed
that missionaries in the northern and southern parts of the Passionist prefecture were estranged because they had never become acquainted. He proposed a series of retreats at the main mission in Chenzhou. Gradually over time, each missionary would meet all of his brethren, fostering the unity that had eluded them.\textsuperscript{240}

The Passionists instituted this new rule in April 1929. On Sunday, April 7, eighteen missionaries gathered at Chenzhou, including Fathers Clement Seybold and Godfrey Holbein. As new arrivals, Father Walter and his confreres from the sixth band were concluding language studies at Chenzhou, and thus they attended as well.\textsuperscript{241}

The event mixed retreat conferences with free time for acquaintance. The gathering conducted several orders of business, including the announcement of a new division of authority. Msgr. Dominic resigned as superior of the China missions, but would continue fulfilling the role of prefect apostolic. Father William Westhoven assumed the role of mission superior. As his first act, he declared furlough mandatory for all missionaries and permitted Fathers Raphael Vance and Timothy McDermott several months’ leave for rest in the United States. He also permitted Father Quentin Owell to visit Shanghai for medical attention. Their departure leave for rest in the United States. He also permitted Father Quen-tin Owell to visit Shanghai for medical attention. Their departure temporarily left several missions unstaffed, which necessitated transfers of other missionaries to take their place. His list of new assignments included the following:
- Father Clement Seybold, Yuanzhou, missionary in charge
- Father Godfrey Holbein, Qianyang, missionary in charge
- Father Walter Coveyou, Qianyang, assistant.\textsuperscript{242}

On Friday, April 19, the retreat ended and several Passionists departed for their missions, including Father Clement. Still recovering from shingles, Father Walter postponed his departure and Father Godfrey remained with him.\textsuperscript{243} Father Godfrey’s obsession with martyrdom surfaced again during the retreat. He spoke of death during the gathering. Upon departing the mission with Father Walter on April 22, he told his compatriots at Chenzhou that he did not expect to see them again.\textsuperscript{244}

**Father Constantine Falls Ill**

On Friday, April 19, 1929, Father Constantine awoke at his mission in Longshan feeling ill.\textsuperscript{245} He ate very little for breakfast that day and was unable to retain it. At first, he attributed the lack of vitality to stress – the burdens of mission life, coupled with the death of his mother, Mary A. Leech, on January 2, 1929.\textsuperscript{246} He expected to awake the following morning feeling refreshed, but instead felt worse. After Mass he returned to bed. Mulling over his condition had deteriorated even further: he could scarcely stand, nor could he keep down a cup of tea. It was the first time since ordination that sickness prevented him from saying Mass. Too ill to travel by mule, he departed from the mission on a sedan chair. The coolies carried him down winding stone stairs carved from the steep cliffs of Longshan. Burning with fever, scorched by thirst, and wracked by excruciating headaches, he endured the agony of being jostled about as the coolies negotiated their way down the cold, slippery stairs.

**The Fateful Journey of Fathers Godfrey Holbein, Clement Seybold, and Walter Coveyou**

On the evening of Monday, April 22, as Father Constantine endured an agonizing trek to Yongshun, Fathers Walter and Godfrey departed from the main mission in Chenzhou and arrived in Chenxi, a riverside town with thronging streets, bustling boatmen, and sharp, eager tradesmen. It was also the location of a mission run by Father Anthony Maloney.\textsuperscript{248} They caught up with Father Clement Seybold and five other Passionists on route to their missions, making an unplanned gathering of nine priests. The uncertainty of the roads beyond Chenxi had given them pause, and they hoped to collect information before moving on. Father Clement was headed for the mission in Yuanzhou. Fathers Godfrey and Walter were traveling to the mission at Qianyang. Both lay southwest of Chenxi. The three priests decided to travel together.

After supper, Father Anthony gathered intelligence from police and merchants on the road. After assessing bandit activity, the three missionaries chose to head south by mule toward Hualhua, where they would find an encampment of soldiers and obtain a military escort. The trip required at least two days of travel, and thus they would need a safe haven where they could spend the night. They judged Huaia to be an ideal stopover.\textsuperscript{249} Their trip coincided with the village market day, when locals bustled about, buying wares from farmers. Bandits usually remained hidden during market days for fear of being observed, identified, and reported to police.

Their plans made, Father Godfrey and Father Clement stayed up late, singing and chatting with their brethren, discussing the future. The rigors of life in China made large gatherings rare, so they enjoyed each other’s company to the fullest. Aware that Father Walter was both new to missionary life and recovering from illness, Father Godfrey prevailed upon him to retire early. After the crowd dispersed, Father Godfrey departed to the chapel and conducted a daily rite of meditating upon the Stations of the Cross.\textsuperscript{250} Noting his exhaustion, one of the fathers begged him to go to bed and rest, but Father Godfrey insisted, “I have to make the stations.”\textsuperscript{251} Upon reflection, Father Francis Flaherty interpreted this as a sign that he expected to die.\textsuperscript{252}

Father Anthony roused Fathers Godfrey, Clement, and Walter at 3:00 A.M. on Tuesday, April 23. The three priests said an early Mass and hastened through breakfast while Father Anthony organized the travel party: head porter Mr. Su Pisen; five carriers for baggage; Mr. Liao, a Qianyang horseman; Chenxi horseman Mr. Shia; two Mass servers “Peter” Hwang Tien I (Father Godfrey’s
The effort proved futile. When the boy knocked upon the door of the inn, to the chief of the Home Guard to present their name cards. The innkeeper with her husband. Fathers Clement and Godfrey implored the people of Huajiao would suffer as a result. Treaties between the U.S. and China charged Chinese officials with the protection of American lives. Madame Nie retracted her alarming remarks and offered no explanation. Shortly after the suspicious exchange, two armed men entered the inn and ordered the Passionist fathers and their party to identify themselves. This also was a customary practice in China when foreigners stayed at a Chinese village protected by a Home Guard. The armed men conducted a cursory examination of their luggage and inquired about their travel plans. After the priests calmly answered each question, they departed. The fathers asked Madame Nie who the men were. “They belong to the Home Guard,” she informed them. Her answer dispelled their fears for the moment. Investigators later concluded that Madame Nie had lied. The armed men were Chinese partisans and their leader, Captain Nie Lian Chang, was a member of her family.

One hour later at 11:00 P.M., their suspicions were aroused again when they heard two gunshots being fired into the night. The priests, two of their carriers, and the three Chinese boys leapt to their feet, thoroughly alarmed. Madame Nie once again attempted to allay their fears, telling the party that the gunshots were a fang tao – signal of safety – by the Home Guard. In reality, the shots were a signal beckoning to bandits lurking in the area.

Her explanation failed to assure Fathers Clement and Godfrey, the seasoned missionaries of the band. The party was apprehensive. Speaking in a gentle, but clear voice, Father Godfrey warned her that, if foreigners came to harm in her house, her family and the people of Huajiao would suffer as a result. Treaties between the U.S. and China charged Chinese officials with the protection of American lives. Madame Nie fled into the night and returned with her husband. Fathers Clement and Godfrey implored the Nies to call the Home Guard for their protection. The innkeeper and his wife refused several times, but at last consented when the priests offered to send Peter, Father Godfrey's Chinese Mass server, to the chief of the Home Guard to present their name cards. The effort proved futile. When the boy knocked upon the door of the chief’s residence, members of the household claimed that he was not at home. The chief had refused to assist. He knew what the bandits intended and feared the repercussions of interfering with their plans.

Fathers Clement and Godfrey perceived that they had fallen into a trap. Bandits lurked outside, making escape impossible. They hoped to slip out of town in the gray morning hours and make haste for Huaihua, where they could secure a military escort.

The Deaths of Fathers Godfrey Holbein, Clement Seybold, and Walter Coveyou
At first light on Wednesday, April 24 – the fourth day of the fourth week of the fourth month – the ill-fated party made a stealthy departure from the inn at Huajiao. Hoping to evade the bandits who hunted them, the convoy made its way along paths that twisted around hilly terrain. They had barely traveled one li (one-third of a mile) before a sharp voice ordered them to halt. A gang of sixteen or seventeen armed men emerged from a grassy bend in the road ahead. They threatened to shoot if the fathers moved an inch.

Father Walter was a novice in Chinese, and despite his years in China, Father Godfrey remained uncomfortable with the language. Father Clement spoke for the missionaries. Ever serene, even in the darkest of circumstances, he approached the bandits, requested the name of their honorable commander, and suggested that they lead the convoy to him. The bandits identified themselves as the men of Captain Nie Lian Chang. After conducting a thorough examination of the priests’ baggage, the bandits began leading the group in haste along a path far from the road, weaving through open fields, steep mountains, and ominous stretches of brushland spiked with thorns. The journey was arduous. Captain Nie’s men flogged the Chinese carriers and Christian boys with sticks and beat them with the butt ends of their rifles. Unnerved by the hostility of these men and shaken by a conviction that his life would end in violence, Father Godfrey sensed that his hour of martyrdom had come. He recited a rosary in preparation. During an ascent up a rugged mountain, when the way became so steep that the priests were forced to dismount from their mules, he gently instructed the Christian boys to make an act of perfect contrition and say an Our Father and a Hail Mary. A bandit moved to silence them, but Father Clement’s mule intervened, kicking the man in the face with its hind hooves. Father Godfrey seized the opportunity to absolve the boys of their sins.

After a grueling march of about five miles, the bandits drove their captives to an unplanted rice field with a spring of refreshing mountain water. They permitted the Chinese carriers to drink their fill, but forbade the three missionaries and Christian boys from quenching their thirst. Thoroughly parched, the priests and their followers could only stare at the cool stream with longing. The mules were tied, and over the course of a half hour, the bandits ransacked through their belongings a second time.

Finally, prodding Fathers Clement, Godfrey, and Walter at gunpoint, the bandits clambered up to a high plateau surrounded on
three sides by higher hills. Peter and Cosmas, the Mass servers, followed on their own volition. Once the procession reached the plateau, the bandits demanded that the three Passionists remove their clothes. Father Clement divined their intentions: they wanted to see if the priests were armed. He assured them that they were merely propagators of religion, and did not carry guns or ammunition. The bandits refused to take his word, however, and the missionaries began removing their shirts, trousers, socks, and shoes as ordered.

At this moment the bandit commander, Captain Nie Lian Chang, emerged to observe the priests. He was a diminutive man with a long scar that trailed along the right side of his face down to the back of his ear — evidently, the remains of a sword wound. Watching Father Clement remove his riding shirt, he caught sight of a round dollar tumbling from his pocket. Snatching up the coin, he turned to Father Walter and asked if he, too, had money, making a gesture with his thumb and forefinger indicating coinage. Unfamiliar with the Chinese words, Father Walter frowned in confusion. He was further bewildered by the man speaking a dialect used only by natives of Huajiao. He answered honestly, "Budong — I don't understand."

Captain Nie drew out a Maqiang — horse pistol — an automatic weapon used by the Chinese military. Father Anthony Maloney’s account in The Sipg describes what occurred next:

Hardly had Father Walter uttered these words than the same bandit [Captain Nie Lian Chang] fired a shot right through his head, entering on the left side of the face and coming out of the opposite side in the back of the head. His body fell heavily in the tall grass. Death must have been instantaneous. Father Clement, meanwhile, was in a stooped position, as if in the act of removing his shoes when the bandit came behind him and shot him.... Father Clement’s forehead was found to be split open, the tearing exit of the bullet making a large fissure.

In the meantime the boy Hwang Tien I (Peter) noticed Father Godfrey’s hand raised, as it were, in form for Absolution the while he wept bitterly at the sight of the mangled bodies of his fellow priests. Father Godfrey’s own turn came quickly. Two shots were fired in quick succession at him. The boy Peter says that after Father Clement’s body fell to the ground he had become so disturbed in mind that he could recall only that the shots were directed at Father Godfrey. He did not dare look to see Father Godfrey’s body fall. This Peter was most devoted to Father Godfrey, having been his altar-boy and servant for more than a year. The instant they escaped captivity in Ngan Shang, the boys and the carriers made plans to inform the Passionists of the day’s horrors. Cosmas, Father Clement’s Mass server, and Zhou Paul, the seminarian, fled at once to Father Timothy McDermott’s mission in Yuanzhou. Meanwhile carrier Su Pisen and Peter, Father Godfrey’s Mass server, headed back to Chenxi to inform Father Anthony Maloney of the tragedy.

The grim task of recovering the murdered Passionists fell upon Fathers Anthony Maloney and Miles McEttrick. They departed Chenxi at dawn on Friday, April 26. An armed escort of ninety soldiers accompanied them. By nightfall the search party succeeded in locating the execution site. Quickly they surmised why the bandits had marched their victims to this desolate location: at the rear of the clearing, searchers discovered an abandoned copper mine shaft — the ideal place to conceal murder victims. The pit stretched a mere three feet in diameter and ran 60 feet deep. The depth prevented them from getting a clear view of the bottom, but without question, they had found their murdered brethren. Blood stained the mouth of the pit. A bush sagged beneath the weight of human brain fragments.

For a few dollars, two men of Huajiao agreed to descend into the pit. The following morning, Saturday, April 27, they descended via ropes and extracted the remains of the murdered priests one by one — first Father Clement, then Father Godfrey, and at last Father Walter. The bodies had swollen in the water that pooled at the bottom of the pit, and wounds marred their flesh. The search party deduced that the bandits had used pikes or swords to thrust their victims into the mine shaft. By 3:00 P.M. that afternoon, the recovered bodies were wrapped in blankets and carried down the hill on bamboo poles. Soldiers called upon carpenters and ordered them to prepare caskets for the dead. Wood was apparently in short supply, for the soldiers stripped siding from local houses to acquire the necessary materials.

As the echo of gunshots faded into silence, the bandits blew a bugle. It was a signal: the murders they had set out to perform were complete. Stunned by the traumatic scene they had just witnessed, the Christian boys were bound by one hand and dragged on another hike. The carriers gathered up the missionaries’ luggage — now ill-gotten bounty — and at the behest of their captors they hauled it three miles to the temple of Chang Kuang Miao in the village of Ngan Shang. The bandits released the carriers, but the men refused to leave until they also liberated the two Mass servers. At first, the bandits refused to set the boys free until they paid ransom — one hundred dollars each. The carriers pled for their lives, arguing that the boys received only a few dollars as salary for assisting during Mass. After making the boys promise that they would not work for “foreign devils” and be “slaves of foreigners” — phrases commonly used by Chinese Bolshevists — Captain Nie and his men released the boys at 5:30 P.M.

Recovery of the Remains

News of the murders first reached Chenxi at 3:30 P.M. on Thursday, April 25. Carrier Su Pisen stumbled into the mission and spilled out the story in a torrent of grief. Peter arrived an hour later. Beside themselves with sorrow, the Chenxi priests sent telegrams to all missions. Official letters were written to the Magistrate of Chenxi and the chief military officer. That night, sixty soldiers from the Chenxi Home Guard marched on Huajiao.
The next day they would deliver the coffins to the main mission at Chenzhou. Depleted by horror and grief, they plucked up a telegram that had arrived during their absence. The two exhausted missionaries squinted at a line of text. They recoiled, as if physically struck, and shared a stare of disbelief. Their shoulders slumped in devastation. The telegram read:

The Death of Father Constantine
Father Constantine had arrived in Yongshun at 2:00 P.M. on Tuesday, April 23, just as Fathers Godfrey, Clement, and Walter set out from Chenxi.277 The main priest of the Yongshun mission, Father Agatho Purtill, was absent. He had attended the recent retreat at the central mission in Chenzhou, and eventually arrived four hours later at 6:00 P.M.278 Father Caspar Conley managed the mission in his absence. As soon as coolies set Father Constantine’s chair upon the ground, Father Caspar scrambled to make the dying missionary as comfortable as possible. At first Father Constantine staunchly refused to deprive one of his brethren of a bed and demanded to use a simple folding cot. He finally capitulated – only after being asked to do so as a favor – and accepted the bed of a local priest.

A few hours of rest seemed to restore Father Constantine’s strength, but in the early hours of Wednesday, April 24, just as Fathers Godfrey, Clement, and Walter were embarking upon their ill-fated journey from the inn at Huajiao, Father Constantine awoke in a state of agitation, pleaded for Father Agatho, and insisted upon going to confession.279 He feared he was losing his mind. At times he was certain that death was imminent. Sickness had stripped away the joyful nonchalance that characterized him in the eyes of fellow Passionists. Puzzled by his symptoms, Fathers Agatho and Caspar struggled to give him peace by accepting his original diagnosis of cholera and applying the necessary remedies. A Chinese boy devoted to the ailing missionary offered to watch him. After an hour or two, he fell back into a restless sleep.

The morning brought a welcome change in Father Constantine. At breakfast, he ate milk toast and tea with delight – a sign that encouraged Fathers Caspar and Agatho – and he managed to retain it. As the afternoon wore on, Father Constantine considered leaving for Chenzhou in a few days. He hoped to participate in a retreat scheduled for missionaries who had been unable to attend the first one. The murders of Fathers Godfrey, Clement, and Walter had occurred by this point, but the Passionists had yet to receive news of it.

The positive change in Father Constantine was short-lived. By Wednesday evening his temperature shot up to a raging 105°. The Chinese boy held vigil by his bedside. Once again, at 1:30 A.M. on Thursday, Father Constantine shook awake and pleaded for Father Agatho. By the time that the priest rushed into the room, Father Constantine’s mind had slid into delirium. Father Caspar hastened to the church, returned with holy oils, and Father Agatho proceeded to give their dying comrade last rites. His high fever, hazy mental state, twitching hands, and bouts of intense anxiety compelled them to arrive at a new diagnosis for their patient: typhoid fever.280 The realization grieved them, for they lacked the proper remedies at Yongshun to treat his disease. It was impossible to get so much as a piece of ice to reduce his fever. Powerless to alleviate his suffering, they held vigil at his bedside, pondered reflections of Christ’s Passion in his ashen, wincing face, and waited for the end.

About 1:30 A.M. on Friday – Father Constantine’s favorite day of the week – his restlessness ceased and he began breathing regularly and quietly.281 Fathers Agatho and Caspar brightened in hope that the disease was finally relenting. However, at 2:00 A.M., Father Constantine released a faint sigh and his head dropped slightly to the side. In desperation, the two priests administered CPR and rubbed his extremities to restore blood flow, but to no avail. He had passed away.

Fathers Agatho and Caspar clothed him in the Passionist habit, gently wrapped a stole around his neck, and eased a crucifix into his hand. On Saturday, April 27, Father Agatho bore his remains to the central mission in Chenzhou.282 That same evening, a runner from a nearby mission arrived breathless at Yongshun, and revealed the capture and murder of Fathers Godfrey, Clement, and Walter to Father Caspar. Yongshun lacked a telegraph connection, and thus Father Caspar was among the last to learn of the Passionists’ catastrophic loss. Like his brethren, he was devastated.

Part VI: Conclusion
Father Constantine’s casket arrived in Chenzhou on Monday, April 29.283 Over six days, four coffins lay in state in St. Augustine Church at Chenzhou.284 On Saturday, May 4, as a white Oriental sun cast penetrating rays over the winding streets and mud-tiled rooftops of the ancient city, a funeral cortège emerged from the Catholic Mission. The inhabitants of Chenzhou had never seen such a large procession. Chinese Catholics near and far had gathered to mourn the fallen priests. Along with Chinese aspirants to the priesthood, orphans from the mission school and infants from the nursery accompanied the Passionists and their mission staff.285

In addition, the procession included nuns from America who had joined the Passionists in their efforts to convert pagan China. The sudden deaths sobered the missionaries. As they carried their brethren to their final resting place, they realized that moving forward demanded an end to the disunion that had plagued them. Grief had forever united them.286

News of the deaths swiftly spread from western Hunan. China missionary and Passionist Procurator Father Arthur Benson cabled the home province on April 27, three days after the murders of Fathers Godfrey, Clement, and Walter had taken place.287 At the same time, Father William Westhoven sent a letter to American Provincial Father Stanislaus Grennan enclosing the original report by Father Anthony Maloney. Calling this “our hour of heavy sorrow,” he urged his superior in America to contact the families of all other missionaries and assure them of their safety.288

Also on April 27, Francis P. Lockhart, the United States diplomat assigned to Hankou, cabled Washington, D.C., and informed the
Secretary of State that three Passionist missionaries “were killed by bandits at Chenki [Chenzh] Hunan, on April 24. Have take the matter up with the Chinese authorities.”289 In turn, the Secretary of State communicated the news to Father Stanislaus Grennan, who had already learned of the murders from cable telegrams. American diplomats in China – John Van A. MacMurray, Francis P. Lockhart, and the chargé d’affaires at Changsha, Hunan – all demanded the capture and punishment of the guilty parties. Chinese diplomats urged stringent punitive action.290

Chinese general He Jian of Changsha was contacted during a civil ceremony in which Chiang Kai-shek was investing him as the military governor of Hunan.291 Within hours he dispatched a full regiment of suppression troops to Huajiao. In addition, he sent two judges to conduct trials. After an investigation by Chinese authorities, Madame Nie, wife of the innkeeper who acted so mysteriously the night before the murders, was summarily executed, along with the chief of the Huajiao Home Guard who refused to protect the priests. Accomplices were also given death penalties.292 Although Captain Nie performed the murders, Chinese officials identified brigand leaders Chen Zemin and Mao Qiying as the architects of the plot to kill the priests. The two men were partisans – professional soldiers who lived in the rugged Yuan River Loop. Their primary occupation was recruiting and training guerillas from the Home Guard militias in small towns.293 The search to apprehend them would last two years and end without success.

Although the Passionists had a right to seek indemnity for the murders, they refused to do so. This decision was supported by Apostolic Delegate Celso Costantini.294 On behalf of the Passionists, Father William Westhoven asked only that justice prevail, but the prolonged investigation and failure to apprehend the murderers made his grief deepen into anger.

I feel like taking a gun myself and go out ‘Wild West fashion’ to kill the bandits[,] for [the Chinese authorities] were moving all the wheels possible over here, but a mighty PUSH is necessary from Washington.295

While prayers eased the heart, all missionaries suffered a crippling sense of sorrow and disbelief. In his memoir Hunan Harvest, Father Theophane Maguire included the murders as the climax of his book. Upon hearing the news, he felt dazed, his heart “struggling against the truth.”296 Father Jordan Black, a member of the Apostolic Delegate Celso Costantini.294

News of Father Clement Seybold’s death hit hard for his brother, Confrator Mark Seybold. Stephen Paul Kenney, a confrere attending the seminary with him in Baltimore, recalls religious superiors drawing him aside and informing him of the murder before revealing the story to their religious community. At first, Mark was stunned, incapable of speaking. Over time, resignation set in, followed by deep pride.297 In Father Clement’s hometown of Dunkirk, native Joe Klinn grew up with a picture of the missionary in his home because “he was revered ... he was a martyr ... killed because of his belief in Christ.” For a short time Klinn attended the Passionist seminary in Dunkirk, where a portrait of Father Clement adorned the school entrance.298

Sister James Ellen Woolsey recalls that “the parish wept” when news of Father Walter’s death reached his hometown of Petoskey, Michigan on April 30, 1929. A nine-year-old girl at the time, she had been sitting with the St. Francis Xavier choir when an announcement was made from the pulpit. “There was such an awe in the church that day ... one of our boys that belonged to the parish was murdered.” Her family and the school proclaimed Father Walter a martyr.299 Beatrice Henshaw, Father Walter’s niece, was so moved by the murder that she used China as the theme of her Valedictorian speech at the 1929 Petoskey High School graduation. When Seneca Coveyou, Walter’s mentor since he was a child, heard he was killed, she was brokenhearted.300

In Cincinnati, friends and acquaintances who vividly remembered his herculean efforts to raise funds for the China missions honored his memory by establishing a “Father Walter Guild.”301 Founded after his death in 1929, the Guild continued his “home-front mission” to collect funding for missionary activity in China. The Guild hosted annual card parties and dances for the purpose, and continued to operate throughout the 1930s and 1940s.302 Members of the Father Walter Guild even enjoyed a visit from Cuthbert O’Gara in 1935.303 By that point, the Passionist missionary had been installed as bishop of the new Yuanling diocese in China.304

**Motives for Murder**

Historians have posited different theories on motives for the murders of Fathers Godfrey Holbein, Clement Seybold, and Walter Coveyou. It is possible that the bandits were simply acting alone. However, it is equally probable that they were actors playing minor roles in a larger political agenda. Utilizing U.S. State Department documentation and reflecting upon his own experiences as a missionary in Republican China, Father Caspar Caulfield believes that the killings were part of a Chinese Communist strategy to shift the balance of power from Nationalist control.305

In 1929, the Communist movement was still in its infancy. While
The deaths of the four Passionist Fathers made front page news in Pittsburgh and around the world.

Source: Pittsburgh Catholic, May 2, 1929
Mao Zedong fomented revolution amid the Chinese peasantry, Li Lisan, another early party leader, sought to follow the Russian model and win the hearts and minds of the industrial proletariat. In partnership with new Communist convert He Long – the Communist sympathizer who obstructed Father Constantine’s efforts at evangelization in Longshan – they sought to capture the vast worker base of Wuhan, one of the most populous cities in Central China. The Communists knew that, when foreigners were captured, their enemy, the Nationalists, sent troops as a response. According to Caulfield’s thesis, the murders served as a diversion that would draw Nationalist troops away from Wuhan and prevent a swift response to Communist attack. Possibly, He Long – a man known for resorting to assassination in the past – doubted that a mere capture-and-ransom routine would have enough impact to achieve the desired effect, and independently concluded that murder was necessary. Chen Zemin and Mao Qiying engineered the killings at He Long’s behest. Indeed, the murders succeeded in drawing Nationalist troops to Huaihao, but the gambit to capture Wuhan failed. Li Lisan’s uprising of the industrial proletariat never materialized. Mao Zedong ordered Communist forces in Wuhan to regroup. The Comintern called Li Lisan to trial in Russia, resulting in his downfall. Mao rose to the forefront of Communist leadership in China and committed himself to galvanizing the Chinese peasantry.

Passionist historian Father Robert Carbonneau advances a different theory for the murders. Oral tradition in western Hunan holds that the murders were conducted to wrest control of the area from Chinese general Chen Quzhen, a friend of the Passionist missionaries who frequently supported their efforts. Chen Quzhen enjoyed such a degree of military and political power in Hunan that locals referred to him as the “King of West Hunan.” Based in the city of Fenghuang, he operated independently of the Nationalists, the Communists, and even He Long. In the early 1920s he was a reformer. He founded schools in Hunan, acted as a local political modernizer, and built up modern communications in his region. At the same time he inspired troops under his command by fostering traditional values: he was artless, simple, and chivalrous, with a disdain for luxury. Like He Long, instead of extracting revenue from peasants, he acquired it by taxing opium convoys that traveled through his area. According to Caulfield’s thesis, the murders served as a diversion that would draw Nationalist troops away from Wuhan and prevent a swift response to Communist attack. Possibly, He Long – a man known for resorting to assassination in the past – doubted that a mere capture-and-ransom routine would have enough impact to achieve the desired effect, and independently concluded that murder was necessary. Chen Zemin and Mao Qiying engineered the killings at He Long’s behest.

In 1927 the Guomindang government tacitly recognized his control over the region by assigning him as deputy to the governing committee of the province, and making him commander of the Thirty-Fourth Division of the national army (granting him control over his own troops). After being installed by Chiang Kai-shek as the military governor of Hunan for the Guomindang, General He Jian may have wanted to solidify his own control of the region. Moreover, the prospect of ousting Chen Quzhen and taxing the opium convoys was an attractive way of gaining revenue. The slaying of foreigners in Chen Quzhen’s domain would have a twofold effect: first, it would demand the infiltration of Guomindang troops into the territory, shifting the balance of power in favor of the Nationalists, and it would cause the King of West Hunan to “lose face,” undermining his control.

**Apostles in Act, Martyrs in Desire**

As the Passionists struggled to gather information about the slaying of their brethren, news of the murders shot through the secular press, and by Sunday, April 28, headlines announcing the deaths of Fathers Godfrey, Clement, and Walter began flashing on the front pages of newspapers – both secular and Catholic – around the world. News of the murders first appeared in the June 1929 issue of *The Sign*. An editorial by Father Harold Purcell set the tone for coverage. While tacitly acknowledging that the deaths of Fathers Godfrey, Clement, and Walter did not fit the traditional definition of martyrdom, he adopted language that satisfied the audience’s perception of martyrdom:

> In the passing of these saintly young missionaries we have a blessing in disguise. Instead of harboring resentment against their murderers we should thank God that these American Passionists were worthy of the vocation wherein they were called: that they unflinchingly bore witness to their Crucified Lord: that as they were Apostles in Act they were Martyrs in Desire, at least: and that the blood of Martyrs is the seed of Christians.

Reports on the murders and obituaries of the deceased priests appeared in the June, July, August, and September 1929 issues of *The Sign*. Pictures of the inn at Huaihao and other locations relevant to the story continued to appear amid content in the October issue. A letter by missionary Father Basil Bauer also appeared in the October issue. After the funeral, he had been appointed the sorrowful task of closing Father Constantine’s former mission at Longshan.

For editors of *The Sign*, the passing of Father Constantine Leech complicated coverage. While editorial content mainly focused upon the three murders, photos of the funeral made it plain that four deaths had occurred. Although Father Constantine’s demise was less sensational, they felt obligated to grant equal validation of his work as a missionary. The January 1930 issue rectified this dilemma with a feature article on Father Constantine Leech, calling him a “Martyr to Duty” who died from the rigors of “mission exposure.” Editors of *The Pittsburgh Press* – a secular newspaper from Father Constantine’s hometown – accepted this interpretation. The April 25, 1931 issue included an article titled, “Dying Priest Travels Mountain Trail Three Days. Notes Left by Martyred Pittsburgh Missionary Tell of Every-Day Life in China.” Of all four deaths in April 1929, Father Constantine’s was least compatible with traditional martyrdom. This may demonstrate the influence of *The Sign* in the publications of the day.

After the deaths of Fathers Constantine Leech, Godfrey Holbein, Clement Seybold, and Walter Coveyou, missionary work in western Hunan continued until the rise of Communism forced the Passionists to depart China. Six endured jail sentences at the hands of the Communists, and seven suffered house arrest.
two missionaries were expelled in 1955. Between 1925 and 1950, a total of thirteen American missionaries died in their efforts to convert pagan China. They were accompanied by two native Chinese who joined the Sisters of Charity, and three other missionaries who hailed from Ireland, Canada, and Germany. Buried in a Catholic missionary graveyard in Yuanling (formerly Chenzhou), their remains were relocated in 2004 to a new cemetery outside the city. Despite tectonic shifts in the political landscape of China in the twentieth century, the diocese that the Passionists founded in Yuanling continues to grow from the hardy roots that these missionaries planted nearly a century ago, and consecrated with blood and holy faith. May they all rest in peace.

Endnotes:
The author would like to thank Father Robert Carbonneau, C.P., for the wealth of information provided in support of this article; his area of study focuses on the American Passionist experience in China. This article presents the story of four priests who were members of the Congregation of the Passion (abbreviated C.P.). Readers may assume that the priests and bishops mentioned hereinafter are Passionists, with the exception of James Cardinal Gibbons; Archbishops Celso Costantini and George Michael V. Mundelein; Bishops Hugh C. Boyle, Angel Diego y Carbajal, and Michael O’Connor; and Father John F. Hickey. Accordingly, the abbreviation “C.P.” will typically not appear in text or endnotes unless necessary.

5 American Passionist missionary Father William Westhoven, who was part of the same missionary band as Fathers Godfrey Holbein and Clement Seybold, stated during an interview with Father Robert Carbonneau: “Here’s where it was.... Here’s where you lay it down. We all expected to die in China [emphasis in original]. No question! No question!” Robert E. Carbonneau, C.P., “Life, Death, and Memory: Three Passionists in Hunan, China and the Shaping of an American Mission Perspective in the 1920s” (PhD diss., Georgetown University, 1992), 277.
6 A listing of Provincials of St. Paul of the Cross Province appears at the website: “Passionist Historical Archives,” Acts of the Twentieth Provincial Chapter of the Province of St. Paul of the Cross, from August 20th to August 28th, 1920, appears at “Passionist History, Celebrating 150 Years, 1920.”
9 Holy Cross Province, the sister province of St. Paul of the Cross west of the Ohio River, was apparently not prepared to send priests to join the mission band at this early stage. Freshly ordained to the priesthood in May 1929, Father Walter Coveyoun expressed interest in joining the missions, but as a member of Holy Cross Province, his request was denied. Father Francis Flaherty, “Fr. Walter Coveyoun, C.P.,” The Sign 9, no. 1 (August 1929), 51-52.
14 Republic of China (1912–1949), Wikipedia, last modified August 28,
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33 Comparisons between the first Italian missionaries to the United States and the American missionaries headed to China are underscored by an interview with Father Stephen Paul Kenney, recorded by Father Robert Carbonneau in 1988. “Chinese missionaries were portrayed as similar to the early missionaries that came to America … and what a tremendous adventure this was.” Carbonneau, “Life, Death, and Memory,” 59.

34 As mentioned by Father Robert Carbonneau in “Life, Death, and Memory,” it is worth noting that the China missions were not the only method of outreach by American Passionists at this time. Attention was being paid to preaching in Canada. The Archconfraternity of the Passion was being created to promote understanding of the Passion and bring the laity into a closer relationship with the Passionists. Efforts were also underway for outreach to immigrants in the United States. Parish mission preaching was also a priority. Ibid., 51-52.

35 The first mission band consisted of five priests and one brother: Fathers Timothy McDermott from Pittsburgh, PA; Celestine Roddan from Randolph, MA, the superior of the mission; Agatho Purtill from West Hoboken, NJ; Flavian Mulhins from Athens, PA; Raphael Vance of Philadelphia, PA; and Dr. Lambert Budde from Holland. Caspar Caulfield, C.P., Only a Beginning: The Passionists in China, 1921-1931 (Union City, NJ: Passionist Press, 1990), 3.

36 The Second Departure Ceremony of Passionist Missionaries for China,” The Sign 2, no. 4 (November 1922), 171. The second band consisted of three missionaries: Fathers Paul Joseph Ubinger of Pittsburgh, PA; Kevin Murray of Providence, RI; and Father Dominic Langenbacher of Pittsburgh, PA. Caulfield, Only a Beginning, 47.

37 Ibid., 73.


39 “China Calls,” The Sign 1, no. 4 (November 1921), 21-23.

40 Caulfield, Only a Beginning, 42.

41 Father Celestine Roddan, “With the Passionists in China: Hankow [Hankou] to Changteh [Changde],” The Sign 1, no. 11 (June 1922), 36-39.

42 Carbonneau, Life, Death and Memory, 94.

43 Caulfield, Only a Beginning, 132.

44 Father Nicholas Schneider, “Father Constantine Leech, C.P., A Martyr to Duty,” The Sign 9, no. 6 (January 1930), 370.


46 Father Harold Purcell, “Off for the High Romance!,” The Sign 3, no. 1 (August 1923), 12.

47 The following Passionists comprised the third mission band: Fathers Edmund Campbell of Wilkes-Barre, PA, the superior of the band; Arthur Benson, a native of Darlington, England who immigrated with his family to Pittsburgh at the tender age of five; Dunstan Thomas of Melrose, MA; and Quintin Olwell of Brooklyn, NY. Ibid. The name of the ship carrying the third band to China is found in “The Latest Arrivals,” The Sign 3, no. 4 (November 1923), 172.

48 The description of Father Constantine Leech is found on his 1923 passport application under the name “Constantine J. Leech,” appearing at the website: https://www.ancestry.com.


50 A single headstone marks the grave sites of Father Constantine Leech’s mother, Mary A. Leech, and his father, John F. Leech. A brother, John H. Leech, is also buried here. No birth dates are noted for the Leech family members, only death dates. John F. Leech’s date of death is recorded as November 2, 1892. The headstone can be found at the website: Find A Grave, accessed August 29, 2018, https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/109651756.

51 An explanation of the spelling of Chinese names is necessary. There are two systems for transliterating Mandarin Chinese characters to the Roman alphabet: (1) Wade-Giles (1859, modified 1892), which would have been used during the time of the Passionist China missions, and (2) pinyin, which was developed by the Chinese government and approved as the standard in 1958. In still other cases, the missionaries used their own versions of Chinese names. This article uses the pinyin system. If primary sources use Wade-Giles or missionary terms in direct quotes of material, the standardized pinyin version follows in brackets.


53 Ibid., 400. The name of the town of Yuanzhou was later changed to Zhijiang.


55 Maguire, Hunan Harvest, 113.

56 Caulfield, Only a Beginning, 132.


58 Father Constantine Leech, “Exalting the Cross in Lungshan [Longshan],” The Sign 6, no. 1 (August 1926), 52.

59 Father Constantine’s methods of dealing with travel through known bandit activity are evident in ibid., 51-54, and “Lungshan [Longshan],” The Sign 8, no. 8 (March 1929), 501.


63 Father Constantine Leech, “At Yungshunfu [Yongshun],” The Sign 3, no. 8 (March 1924), 349-350.

64 Ibid.

65 Letter from Father Agatho Purtill to Father Sebastian Oechsenreiter, November 26, 1922, Passionist Historical Archives Collection, Weinberg Memorial Library, The University of Scranton, Scranton, PA [hereinafter PHAC].

66 Letter from Father Celestine Roddan to Provincial, November 13, 1923, PHAC.

67 Letter from Father Dominic Langenbacher to Provincial, November 29, 1926, PHAC.

68 Caulfield, Only a Beginning, 45.

69 Ibid., 42.

70 Hunan has a subtropical climate characterized by dry, chilly winters and hot, humid summers. See “Climate” appearing at the website: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Climate_of_Hunan. The difficulties of climate are also discussed in Caulfield, Only a Beginning, 45.

71 Caulfield, Only a Beginning, 48-49.

72 The Passionists decided to wear Chinese garb on the street, or any occasion when wearing Passionist habits might invite criticism or disunion from fellow missionaries laboring in China. Ibid., 63.


77 In China during the 1920s, the ratio of medical doctors to people was 1 in 100,000. Maguire, Hunan Harvest, 65. Passionist medical training in Pittsburgh is stated by two sources. See Carbonneau, “Life, Death, and Memory,” 63, and Caulfield, Only a Beginning, 88.

78 Father Constantine Leech, “Paotung [Baoting] and Yungshunfu [Yongshun],” The Sign 4, no. 11 (June 1925), 479.

79 Father Agatho Purtill, “Soldier or Bandit,” The Sign 3, no. 10 (May 1924), 438.
Father Constantine Leech, “Sick Calls in China,” The Sign 3, No. 12 (July 1924), 528.


Ibid.

Leech, “Paotseing [Baojing] and Yungshunfu [Yongshun].” 478-480.


Caulfield, Only a Beginning, 133.


Leech, “Exalting the Cross in Lungshan [Longshan],” 53.

Father Constantine Leech, “Lungshan [Longshan]: The Crimson Menace,” The Sign 6, No. 5 (December 1926), 310.


Caulfield, Only a Beginning, 133.

Father Cuthbert O’Gara was a member of the fourth band to arrive in China in 1924.


Father Robert Carboneau, taped interview with Stephen Paul Kenny, West Hartford, CT (June 2, 1988), Carboneau Personal Archives [hereinafter CPA].


Letter from Confrator Godfrey Holbein to Gertrude Holbein, West Hoboken, NJ, 1922, Hol/1929, PHAC.


Ibid. A detailed overview of the Holbein family is provided by Father Robert Carboneau in Life, Death, and Memory, 17.

Father Godfrey Holbein’s description is found in his 1924 passport application under the baptismal name “Claude A. Holbein [Godfrey Holbein],” appearing at the website: https://www.ancestry.com.

Claude Holbein’s sister Margaret joined the Sisters of the Good Shepherd in Philadelphia as Sister Mary Hycanthe. Her sisters Genevieve and Teresa joined the Sisters of Mercy in Baltimore as Sister Mary Clothilde and Sister Mary Hildegard, respectively. A fourth sister, Mary, intended to join the Sisters of the Good Shepherd in Philadelphia, but died at age 23 on May 13, 1906. “Family of Fr. Godfrey,” HOL/1929, PHAC.

Ibid.


Father Clement Seybold’s description is found in his 1924 passport application under his baptismal name “Lawrence J. Seybold,” appearing at the website: https://www.ancestry.com.


Ibid., 54.

Langenbacher, “Fr. Clement Seybold, C.P.,” 120.


On Father Clement’s passport application, under “defining marks” he mentions a scar behind his right ear, presumably for surgery. The infection may have specifically been on his right ear.


Father Cuthbert O’Gara initially traveled to China as a missionary for the purpose of becoming vicar apostolic of the new prefecture in China. Once he arrived in China, the plans for him to occupy this position collapsed due to indecision by Father Dominic Langenbacher, superior of the missions in China. Later on, once the Passionists had their own Diocese of Yuanling, Father Cuthbert was ordained Bishop Cuthbert Martin O’Gara. Information appears at David M. Cheney, “Cuthbert Martin O’Gara,” Catholic-Hierarchy, accessed August 29, 2018, http://www.catholic-hierarchy.org/bishop/bogara.html. The history of Father Cuthbert’s original plans to become vicar apostolic are found in Caulfield, Only a Beginning, 88-90.

Ibid., 88-89. The assertion of this band being the largest in American history is reported in the article, “Thirteen Mission Workers for China,” The Scranton Republican, June 6, 1924, 12. The fourth mission band to China included the following priests from St. Paul of the Cross Province: Fathers Theophore Maguire from Wayne, PA; Basil Bauer from Sharon, PA; Terence Connolly from Woburn, MA; Jeremiah Namara from Philadelphia, PA; Rupert Langenbacher from Pittsburgh, PA; Clement Seybold from Dunkirk, NY; Ernest Cunningham from Boston, MA; and Godfrey Holbein from Baltimore, MD. Holy Cross Province contributed the following priests: Fathers Anthony Maloney from Louisville, KY; Cyprian Frank from Mt. Carmel, IL; William Westhoven from Boston, MA; and Gregory McEttrick from Ripon, WI. Father Cuthbert O’Gara, professor of English at Holy Cross Preparatory College at Dunkirk, NY, was the last priest to join the “Lucky Thirteen” mission band.

city. In cases where the Wade-Giles Romanization is used, it appears as “Changte.”

122 Passionist medical training in Pittsburgh is stated in two sources: (1) Father Robert Carbonneau’s interview with missionary Father William Westhoven, who was in the same mission band as Fathers Godfrey Holbein and Clement Seybold, and (2) Caspar Caulfield’s statement that the missionaries attending classes in first aid at a Catholic hospital in Pittsburgh. There is no mention of which hospital offered the classes. See Carbonneau, “Life, Death, and Memory,” 63, and Caulfield, Only a Beginning, 88.

123 Letter from Godfrey Holbein to Provincial, Pittsburgh, PA (October 21, 1923), File/Holbein MC/1923, PHAC.


125 The 1924 departure ceremonies were held in Union City, NJ, on May 18; Boston, MA, on May 25; Baltimore, MD, in early June; Scranton, PA, on June 8; Dunkirk, NY, in mid-June; Pittsburgh, PA, on June 15; Cincinnati, OH, on June 19; Louisville, KY, on June 29; St. Louis, MO, on July 3; and finally in San Francisco, CA, on July 22, when the missionaries departed for China. See Carbonneau, “Life, Death, and Memory,” 63-72.

126 Father Robert Carbonneau, taped interview with Father William Westhoven, Detroit, MI (July 24, 1976), CPA.

127 Caulfield, Only a Beginning, 89.

128 Father Anthony Maloney, “Maloney Document,” (July 26, 1973), PHAC.

129 Letter from Father Clement Seybold to Mark Seybold, Chenzhou, China (September 27, 1924), Seybold: Folder “Father Clement Seybold C.P.” — Letters (From China) to his brother Conf[rat]e [Mark Francis [Seybold]]” INC 1929 [hereinafter CSMF], PHAC. Greater detail on Father Clement Seybold’s efforts to prepare Mark for missionary work in China appears in Carbonneau, “Life, Death, and Memory,” 156.


131 Letter from Father Godfrey Holbein to Sister Mary Hildegard, Chenzhou, China, July 5, 1925, File/Letters to his sister, S.M. Chenxi, April 8, 1926, File/Benson MC/1926, PHAC.

132 Letter from Father Godfrey Holbein to Sister Mary Hildegard, Chenzhou, China, October 20, 1924, GHSH, PHAC.


134 Caulfield, Only a Beginning, 121.

135 Father Constantine Leech composed at least twelve articles for The Sign. Father Clement authored only four, and Father Godfrey only three.


137 Letter from Father Clement Seybold to Mark Seybold, Yanzhou, China, February 17, 1926, CSMF, PHAC.

138 Father Dominic Langenbacher’s installation as prefect apostolic is documented in Caulfield, Only a Beginning, 123-126. At this point Father Dominic received the title of “Monsignor.”

139 Letter from Father Clement Seybold to Mark Seybold, Qianyang, China, November 5, 1925, CSMF, PHAC.

140 Letter from Father Clement Seybold to Mark Seybold, Qianyang, China, January 6, 1926, CSMF, PHAC.

141 Father Clement mentioned the incident with Father Kevin Murray in a letter home. Letter from Father Clement Seybold to My Sister and All, Chenzhou, March 2, 1925. The dramatic incident with Father Ernest Cunningham is well-documented in an issue of The Sign: Father Arthur Benson, “Fr. Ernest Cunningham: The Story of His Capture and Release,” The Sign 6, No.3 (October 1926), 177-181.

142 Letter from Father Clement Seybold to My Sister, Qianyang, China, October 17, 1926, In File/Letters To From China to his family MC/1929 [hereinafter CSF], PHAC.
Memorandum from John Carter Vincent, Chenzhou, China, January 12, 1927. A copy of this letter exists in the Passionist Historical Archives in File/Mission Management MC/1927, PHAC.


The consul complained to Father Flavian that Msgr. Dominic Langenbacher had not returned his telegrams. This was due in part, Father Flavian thought, because Msgr. Dominic did not have “much knowledge of Chinese politics.” Father Flavian, in fact, was in agreement with the bishop of Changsha who said Dominic “is as a child in China,” adding, “I am afraid the Passionists have acquired a name for either imprudence or ignorance in this affair.” [emphasis in the original]. Letter from Father Flavian Mullins, C.P., to Provincial Stanislaus Grennan, C.P., Changsha, China, February 8, 1927, File/Mullins MC/1927, PHAC.

Caulfield, Only a Beginning, 169.

Ibid., 145.

Maguire, Hunan Harvest, 114.

Caulfield, Only a Beginning, 148.

Maguire, Hunan Harvest, 110.

Caulfield, Only a Beginning, 162.


Sister Clarissa Stattmiller would also be recognized as a “Martyr in Desire” in The Sign after the deaths of Fathers Godfrey, Clement, Walter, and Constantine. Caulfield, Only a Beginning, 170-171.

Ibid.

Ibid., 148.

The four missionaries wrote a letter to Msgr. Dominic, prefect apostolic, and Father Cuthbert O’Gara, prefect delegate, explaining their stance on remaining at their posts. Ibid., 159.

Letter from Father Clement Seybold to sister and brothers, Qianyang, China, January 28, 1927, CSF, PHAC.


Letter from Father Clement Seybold to Sister [no location], June 7, 1927, CSF, PHAC.

Letter from Father Godfrey Holbein to Sister Clarissa Stattmiller, Shanghai, China, October 27, 1927, GHSH, PHAC.

Letter from Father Godfrey Holbein to Sister Hildgard, Hankou, China, February 26, 1927, GHSH, PHAC.

The existence of this cable is found in a letter written by Father Constantine Leech. “Our Rt. Reverend Prefect [Msgr. Dominic] has called Father Godfrey and myself to return to Shenchow [Chenzhou] to-gether with the Sisters of Charity,...” Letter from Father Constantine Leech to Provincial Father Stanislaus Grennan, Hankou, China (December 6, 1927), File/Leech MC/1927, PHAC. The order is also confirmed by another letter from Father Anthony Maloney to Provincial Father Stanislaus Grennan, Wangcun, China, December 30, 1927, File/Maloney MC/1927, PHAC.

Evidence of Father Terence Connelly returning home without permission is found in a letter from Father Stanislaus Grennan to Msgr. Dominick Langenbacher [Union City], December 17, 1927, File/Mission Management MC/1927, PHAC.

Letter from Father Stanislaus Grennan to the “Heroic Prefect and Missioners — Priests, Brother, and Sisters working in China,” [Union City], March 12, 1927, File/Mission Management MC/1927, PHAC.


The Pittsburgh Catholic, April 7, 1927, 1.

The Pittsburgh Catholic, May 19, 1927, 1.


Caulfield, Only a Beginning, 179.

Father Caspar Caulfield devotes an entire chapter to the visitation of Father Sebastian Ochsenreiter to Hunan. Contents include individual meetings with each missionary, discussions of financial control of money, whether to obey the Apostolic Delegate or religious superior, and lastly Father Ochsenreiter’s meeting with Apostolic Delegate Constantini. Ibid., 185-205.

Ibid., 196.


Letter from Father Stanislaus Grennan to Msgr. Dominic Langenbacher, Union City, December 17, 1927, PHAC.

Letter from Father Stanislaus Grennan to Msgr. Dominick Langenbacher, December 17, 1927, PHAC.

Msgr. Dominic Langenbacher to Father Stanislaus Grennan, Xupu, China, March 17, 1928, File/D. Langenbacher MC/1928, PHAC.

Caulfield, Only a Beginning, 205.

Letter from Father Godfrey Holbein to Sister Hildgard, Chenzhou, China, December 17, 1928, GHSH, PHAC.

In the interim between the fourth and sixth bands, a fifth band of Passionists had departed San Francisco on September 4, 1926, on the S.S. President Wilson. This included four missionaries: Fathers Jordan Black, Miles McCarthy, Cormac Shanahan, and Caspar Conley. The mission band dubbed itself “The Four Horsemen.” Caulfield, Only a Beginning, 139.

The sixth band of Passionist missionaries consisted of three priests from Holy Cross Province: Father Walter Coveyou from Petoskey, Michigan; Father Nicholas Schneiders, originally from Holland but a naturalized citizen of the United States; and Father Francis Flaherty from Cincinnati, Ohio. Ibid., 205.

Father Walter’s height and physical details are found on his World War I draft registration card, available under the name “Walter Coveyou” appearing at the website: https://www.ancestry.com.


The State of Michigan defines a pioneer as “a person who took up residence in an area within the first twenty years of its settlement.” Walter’s parents came from Canada and settled in Bear Creek Township, Emmet County (which later became Petoskey), in 1874. Carboneau, “Life, Death, and Memory,” 83-84.


Flaherty, “Fr. Walter Coveyou, C.P.,” 51. Father Walter was given the baptismal name “Walter” and thus did not change his name when he became a Passionist. His name is confirmed by the 1900 census for Emmet County, Bear Creek Township, District 0083, in Michigan, appearing at the website: https://www.ancestry.com.


220 Father Robert Carbonneau, taped interview with Father Conleth Overman, C.P., Detroit, MI (June 25, 1989), CPA.
225 Carbonneau, “Life, Death, and Memory,” 95. Father Walter authored the letter, though no specifics on the date or the recipient are provided. It originated from a quote sent by Father Roger Mercurio, Passionist historian and former Provincial of Holy Cross Province, to Father Carbonneau.
226 Father Robert Carbonneau, taped interview with Beatrice Henshaw, Petoskey, MI (July 6, 1989), CPA.
228 Father Walter is listed as one of the clergy members who attended a meeting to organize a massive CSMC crusade rally at St. Xavier College in Chicago. He represented the Passionist congregation. “Details Arranged by Clergy for Crusade Rally and Mass at St. Xavier Campus,” The Cincinnati Enquirer, April 27, 1927, 26.
233 Ibid.
236 Letter from Father Walter Coveyou to Ray & Mamie Coveyou, Chenzhou, China, February 13, 1929, Coveyou Family Archives.
239 Father Silvan Latour, C.P., “At the Rainbow’s End Where the Treasures Are More Precious Than Gold,” The Sign 8, no. 11 (June 1929), 672c.
240 Father Ochsenreiter proposed two retreats per year. The first event would involve senior missionaries of the north and south. Next year, the seniors of the north and juniors of the south would meet, followed by the juniors of the north and the seniors of the south. Within the course of two years, each father would meet each of his brethren in the field. Caulfield, Only a Beginning, 207.
241 Ibid.
242 Ibid., 209.
243 Ibid.
244 Father Dunstan Thomas, “Liu Lin Ts’a,” The Sign 9, no. 1 (August 1929), 57.
248 Caulfield, Only a Beginning, 210.
249 Primary sources identify the name of this village as “Hwa Chiao.”
250 Father Theophane Maguire, “From Chenki [Chenxi] They Went to Death,” The Sign 10, no. 9 (April 1931), 570-571.
252 Letter from Father Francis Flaherty to Mrs. Quinn, Chenzhou, China (June 2, 1929), Scrapbook of Sister M. Hildegard, in possession of Mary and Margaret Quinn, Cockeysville, Maryland [hereinafter Scrapbook H].
253 Caulfield, Only a Beginning, 210. A detailed description of the party is provided by Father Anthony Maloney, "Our Three American Martyrs," The Sign 8, no. 12 (July 1929), 758.
255 As to the name of the proprietors of the inn, primary sources use the Wade-Giles spelling “Nieh.”
256 Caulfield, Only a Beginning, 211.
258 Ibid.
259 Caulfield, Only a Beginning, 211.
261 Caulfield, Only a Beginning, 212.
263 Ibid., 757-758.
264 Ibid. In primary sources, the name of the bandit leader is listed in Wade-Giles notation, “Nieh Lien Chang.” He is related to Madame Nie, wife of the innkeeper at Huajiao.
265 Thomas, “Liu Lin Ts’a.”
266 Maloney, “Our Three American Martyrs,” 760.
267 Caulfield, Only a Beginning, 213.
268 The distance between Huajiao and the location of the murders is stated by Maloney, “Our Three American Martyrs,” 756.
269 Caulfield, Only a Beginning, 216.
270 This account of the murders of Fathers Walter, Clement, and Godfrey was learned from eyewitness “Peter” Hwang Tien I. Maloney, “Our Three American Martyrs,” 759.
271 Ibid.
272 Ibid., 760.
273 Ibid.
274 Caulfield, Only a Beginning, 215.
276 Fr. Theophane Maguire, “From Chenki [Chenxi] They Went to Death,” op. cit, 571. The telegram was likely authored by Fr. Agatho Purtill. Another source — Caulfield’s book, Only a Beginning, 216 — reports a slightly different message by Agatho Purtill: "CONSTANTINE DYING OF TYPHOID AT YONGSHUN — AGATHO."
278 Schneiders, “One Thing After Another,” The Sign 9, no. 2 (September 1929), 123.
288 Letter from Father William Westhoven to Father Stanislaus Grennan, Chenzhou, China, April 27, 1929, Condolences, PHAC.
289 Francis P. Lockhart to Secretary of State, April 27, 1929, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C., Record Group


313 Carbonneau provides a detailed explanation for this theory in “Life, Death, and Memory,” 295-298.


315 Jeffrey C. Kinkley, The Odyssey of Shen Congwen (Stanford, CA: Stanford University, 1987), 62-64.


318 Father Harold Purcell, “In His Steps,” The Sign 8, no. 11 (June 1929), 642.


324 The seventeen missionaries buried in Yuanling, China are as follows: • Nine Passionist priests from the USA: Father Edmund Campbell (April 13, 1925); Fathers Walter Coveyou, Godfrey Holbein, and Clement Seybold (all April 24, 1929); Father Constantine Leech (April 25, 1929); Father Edward Joseph McCarthy (August 12, 1939); Father Justin Moore (May 10, 1936); Father Flavian Mullins (June 18, 1939); and Father Denis Mary Fogarty (June 12, 1944). • Two Sisters of Charity from China: Sister Mary Joseph Chang, S.C. (April 25, 1939), and Sister Marie Therese Tuan, S.C. (May 18, 1944). • Three Sisters of Charity from the USA: Sister Marie Devolta Ross, S.C. (July 29, 1932); Sister Maria Electa McDermott, S.C. (March 12, 1941), and Sister Catherine Gabriel Whitaker, S.C. (July 8, 1941). • Also buried here are Sister Marie Sebastian Curley, S.C. (from Ireland) (August 8, 1950); Sister Mary Daniel O’Connor, C.S.I.C. (from Canada) (July 10, 1943), and Miss Ilse R. Luder, M.D., from Germany (August 1933). Carbonneau, “Resurrecting the Dead,” 21. Not included in this listing is American Sister of St. Joseph of Baden Sister Clarissa Stattmiller, S.S.J., who died of malaria on July 21, 1926.

325 In 2004, Yuanling town officials decided to build a new road through the old Catholic missionary graveyard, prompting the reburyal of their remains. Carbonneau, “Resurrecting the Dead,” 1-2.

326 Celebrating 150 Years of Passionist Ministry, 39.
The Legacy of Monsignor Andrew Arnold Lambing 1842-1918

Ever Faithful to GOD and His Diocese May He Rest In Peace
Epitaph from Monsignor Lambing’s Tombstone

Rev. Aleksandr J. Schrenk

To reflect upon the life and legacy of Monsignor Lambing inspires a sense of providence. He lived and worked at a crucial time for the preservation of the history of the Church in Pennsylvania. Writing in the late 1800s and through the turn of the ensuing century, he had access to documents and testimony which would have passed into oblivion had his passion and erudition not inspired such a concerted effort to preserve them. As such, he forms a crucial link in the living chain that connects us to the earliest days of Catholicity in this part of the world.

It is also a provision of divine providence that his link was such a strong one. “Posterity can make no excuse for us if we fail to transmit a detailed history,” he wrote, and the rigorous standards of his work, however colored by the style and methods of his age, live up to that noble task even today.

Monsignor Lambing’s legacy lives on through the work of this Society, its members, and all those who participate in the mission that defined his life – to gather up the fragments that remain, lest they be lost (Jn 6:12). The fragments that he gathered have, indeed, remained – and more than that, multiplied. His efforts will always form the bedrock of our research into the Catholic history of this region of the United States, and for that legacy we are profoundly grateful.

It is, perhaps, a cliché among historians to observe that we stand on the shoulders of giants – but the phrase is no less true for being overused. Among all scientific disciplines, history is unique for its reliance on the testimony of the written word. We must listen to the voice of our predecessors attentively, and as such, the success of our efforts is determined in large part by the diligence of former generations.

When it comes to the Catholic history of Western Pennsylvania, the one giant whose shoulders we all stand upon is Monsignor Andrew Arnold Lambing. As we mark the centenary of Monsignor Lambing’s passing in December 1918, we recall our great debt to his life’s work, which was the preservation of Catholic history. Lambing, as one of the first academically-trained historians in Western Pennsylvania and the first to document the beginnings of the Catholic Church in our region, is an indispensable resource. The value of his writing cannot be overstated.
We are deeply grateful to the following donors for their generosity and support of The Catholic Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania and its publication *Gathered Fragments*. We would like to acknowledge the generosity of all donors who made gifts in 2018.

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On a Monday evening in June 1940, over 500 people came together at Mount Mercy College to join in the establishment of the Catholic Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania. At this gathering, the Society’s founders laid out the purposes of this new organization as the study of American Catholic history in Western Pennsylvania and “publish the result thereof from time to time.”

The concept of a Catholic historical society was not a new idea. In 1885, Pittsburgh priest-historian Father Andrew A. Lambing (1842-1918) launched the Ohio Valley Catholic Historical Society of Pittsburg in order to advance research and discussion of the history of Catholicism in Western Pennsylvania. While this early organization survived just over a year, the seed was planted and Lambing’s vision was finally realized in that June 1940 meeting of the new Society.

From those early days in 1940 through the 1960s, the Society promoted history through lectures, publications, microfilming the Pittsburgh Catholic, tours, radio interviews, exhibits, and other activities. The 1960s saw the Society enter a period of dormancy, from which it emerged in 1984 and lives on today.

Having recently marked its 75th anniversary, the Society continues to advance research and interest in Catholic history, including the history of the Society itself. In a forthcoming book, The Catholic Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania: Its Origins, Establishment, Decline, and Resurrection, author John C. Bates, the Society’s former president, details the organization's history from its roots in Lambing's vision through to the status of the Society in 2018. A comprehensive biography of Lambing is also included. Throughout the pages of this work, Bates demonstrates that the history of the Society is not just that of the organization but is also a direct reflection of the evolution of the Catholic Church in Western Pennsylvania. This book is to be published in 2019.
THE NEW EVANGELIZATION: ROLE OF THE LAY APOSTOLATES IN THE DIOCESE OF PITTSBURGH

Very Rev. Joseph M. Mele, Ph.D.

Practically every Catholic boy in the 1960s will remember attending his local parish annual Holy Name Society Communion breakfast with his dad. I still remember those rows of tables in the church basement or the school cafeteria covered with long rolls of white paper tablecloths, the wooden folding chairs, and a centerpiece on every table holding an image of the young Jesus’s face. My dad was proud to bring his four sons along with him to Mass and then to the Communion breakfest. On Saturday before the Communion breakfast, we would go to Confession, dad would give us a haircut, we would polish our “Sunday” shoes, lay out our suit, shirt and tie for the next day, and make sure we were ready for the big day when we would pledge our reverence for the Sacred Names of God and Jesus Christ and obedience and loyalty to the Magisterium of the Church. Although I was the youngest of my brothers, I understood the purpose of that Sunday morning was for the sake of personal sanctification and holiness of every man and boy in that room.

It was always an impressive sight to see so many fathers and their sons contributing in this way to the evangelization mission of the Church. We would recommit to the Temporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy as a way of spreading the Faith at the local level of our parish through the Holy Name Society apostolate. Many present would become the right arm of our pastor.

In his document Guiding Principles of the Lay Apostle (1957), Pope Pius XII wrote: “The consecratio mundi (consecration of the world) is essentially the work of the laypeople themselves, of men and women who are intimately a part of economic and social life.” This is why we see the Holy Spirit prompting more and more laity to participate in Lay Apostolates and parish ministries to further this work of the salvation of the world that Pope Pius XII wrote about so long ago.

Today we think of this activity as the New Evangelization. The Church is dynamically On Mission for the Church Alive through the contribution of the Lay Apostolates!

I am delighted that the Catholic Historical Society’s journal, Gathered Fragments, continues to include articles on the histories of Lay Apostolates. It pleases me that this edition will cover the exciting missions of The Flame of Love, Family Eucharistic Hour, Oakland Prayer Group, Stephen Ministry, Martha and Mary Ministry, and Catholic Daughters of the Americas. These featured Lay Apostolates and ministries are excellent representatives of so many others that will be covered in subsequent editions of Gathered Fragments.

The Lay Apostolates are truly a leaven to the world reflecting the fresh stirrings of the Holy Spirit!

I want to personally thank the staff of Gathered Fragments for the documentation of the history of the Catholic Church in southwestern Pennsylvania. We are so blessed by your faithful service to the rich heritage of our Catholic community.

The encyclical is available at the website: http://www.papalencyclicals.net/ pius12/p12layap.htm.
Catholic Daughters of the Americas

Peggy Witas couldn't imagine what was in the soft, oversized envelope sent from the unknown Maryland address. As she recounts the story of unwrapping the surprise package addressed to her in her title as State Regent of the Catholic Daughters of the Americas (CDA), her eyes well up with tears.

Packed inside was a tattered, checkerboard knit blanket, handmade decades before by a member of the Duquesne, Pennsylvania Court of the CDA. The blanket was part of a care package, one of the many sent overseas during World War II to comfort American soldiers. Back then, assembling and sending these blankets was a project of that particular Court, as the local groups are known. The blanket still contained an attached fabric corner tag, identifying “Catholic Daughters of the Americas, Duquesne Court #871” along with the name of the CDA member who knitted it.

The blanket was mailed by a woman whose father served in World War II. Now decades later, the former soldier and his wife had both died, and the daughter was returning it, in the hope of reuniting the treasured item with the same CDA Court that had provided it for her dad as a young G.I. in need. The woman's accompanying letter offered simply and sincerely, “We wish to return it to the Catholic Daughters with our thanks.”

Responding to the needs of the time – whether sending knit blankets to WWII soldiers or today, writing letters to Congressional representatives on immigration and end of life issues – this is what the Daughters do. Begun in 1903 by the Knights of Columbus, the CDA offers “updated programs to serve the current needs of church and country.” The Daughters have a broad perspective in their projects, always aligned with the church and obedient to the bishops whom they serve.

“We’re always in support of the church,” says Ms. Witas, “one, under the Holy See. What's important to us as a Catholic community or on a moral level.” Whatever the mission, she says, “there's always a vision.”

This vision includes a devotion to the work of their bishops. As an international apostolate, the Daughters sponsor both local and global projects, serving in courts of 25 or more women. Rather than operating independently, “We’re much more tied into a national organization,” says Carol Brosnahan, a member from Washington, Pennsylvania, for close to twenty years.

On a national level, the Daughters send birthing kits to Haiti for expectant mothers. On a state level, they raise and send funds to each Pennsylvania bishop for pro-life projects: sponsoring pro-life ads on billboards and benches, and helping fund the January “March for Life” bus trips.

In Pittsburgh, the CDA hosts a luncheon each September to support diocesan seminarians. Monies raised are presented to the bishop for use at his discretion. The funds come close to $3,000 each year after being matched by the First Catholic Ladies Slovak Association. One year, funds were used to buy the uniform blazers that the seminarians wear for official occasions. Several of the young men attend the luncheon, and each local Court of the Daughters is matched with a seminarian to sponsor. “This way,” says Ms. Witas, “our ladies pray for seminarians and they establish a relationship.”

In Pennsylvania there are 60 Courts, with nine active throughout the Diocese of Pittsburgh. The Daughters also have a branch for young members – the Junior Daughters – which is how Ms. Witas become involved as a teen. Her mother was a CDA member in Court Allegheny in the North Side, the oldest in Pittsburgh.

“It's like the Girl Scouts
but with faith,” says Ms. Witas, who, along with her sisters, and her mother before her, all began as Junior Daughters. At the time, she says, “Parents wanted something (religious) for their daughters, and there wasn’t something else.” Service was core – whether visiting nursing homes and the elderly, or supplying food banks or items for the homeless – followed by faith formation and leadership. “Anything that would help build a better character and build the world around them,” was the goal, says Ms. Witas. The group helped “form both (the adult) leaders and the girls themselves,” she says, recalling her own experiences.

With an eye to CDA’s future, Ms. Witas encourages members to always move forward. “I say: ‘Don’t be afraid to try something new to give to the church.’” The fruits may not be known until years later – like the returned blanket – or at all. Still, she says, “I’m a seed planter. I may never get to see the garden” that comes from the “sowing” but, she adds, “so many times women feel that way. We’re in the trenches, plowing and planting. It’s our connection to our long history.” The returned blanket affirms this. “This is just something they did that’s now full circle. We’re a living, breathing organization. I always remind the women of that.”

Ms. Brosnahan knew nothing about the apostolate when a parish acquaintance asked her to attend a meeting. “It was not megaphoned,” the former DRE and Youth Minister says, but adds, “I felt such an obligation, (that) once I’m not working, something would draw me. CDA was it!”

Among many worthy apostolates for women, Ms. Brosnahan says “we’re not in competition,” and she expresses interest in forming a Junior Daughters group in Washington. With the opportunity for leadership and faith formation, she hopes the young women may learn and live the CDA motto of “unity and charity.” To her, CDA exemplifies church people supporting one another through their works. “We are women helping women. Instead of tearing down, at CDA we build each other up.”

To learn more about the Catholic Daughters of the Americas, visit the website www.catholicdaughters.org.
Stephen Ministry

While our clergy serve as “First Responders” for the immediate needs of their flocks, Stephen Ministers are those trained laypeople who come in afterwards offering ongoing care and prayers. It’s why Stephen Ministers are known as “the After People” – trained, equipped, and ready to be the healing presence of Christ to those hurting – after the funeral, after the divorce papers arrive, after the job loss.

Stephen Ministry may be new to our Catholic sensibilities, but it’s been around since 1975, when Dr. Kenneth Haugk, a newly ordained Lutheran pastor and trained psychologist, quickly realized he couldn’t sufficiently care for all those in his congregation. Rather than let those hurting go without the care and love of Christ so needed, he trained nine parishioners to minister in his place. Thus the first Stephen Ministers were formed, named for St. Stephen, first deacon of the church.

“I’m a cradle Catholic,” says Carol Caruso who helped bring Stephen Ministry to St. John Neumann Parish two years ago, but “this is a little bit of a foreign idea.” Always very active in parish work with her husband, Deacon Rick Caruso, she adds, “I don’t remember even having a one-to-one ministry like this.”

Ms. Caruso first learned of Stephen Ministry from a Pittsburgh Catholic article a few years ago. “It really struck me,” she says, and she told her husband about it. Ms. Caruso is used to hands-on care as a bedside nurse at UPMC Passavant Hospital in North Hills. “Many times I would be caring for a person who would be a caregiver,” she says, and recalls one patient in particular, a man diagnosed with lung cancer who was inattentive to his own medical needs. When she questioned him, he replied, “All I can think about is my wife who needs me.” Ms. Caruso thought to herself, “Who cares for the caregiver? Who supports them?” In my job, I see so many that are caring for others.”

“I saw the need in my profession and that article came at the right time,” continues Ms. Caruso. Inspired to bring the ministry to St. John Neumann Parish, the Carusos approached their pastor, Father Albin McGinnis. “Fr. Al was very trusting. He is very lay-empowering,” she says. According to Father McGinnis, Stephen Ministry “has been a way to ready people in the parish to minister to each other. As our population ages and has become more mobile, it seems that more and more people are being left to deal with problems by themselves. Often times family are living somewhere else and they have no one... Stephen Ministry has filled that gap within our parish.”

With their pastor’s encouragement and support, the Carusos approached the parish at large. Ms. Caruso recalls that on one designated weekend “We spoke at all Masses. Our parishioners embraced it, though they’d never heard of it. They took a chance and it was quite a commitment (on their part).” That was in May 2016.

St. John Neumann is now one of the 12,000+ Stephen Ministry congregations worldwide. The apostolate is found mostly in mainline Protestant churches, yet some Catholic dioceses host and promote it in their parishes: St. Louis, Omaha, Nebraska and Fairbanks each have active Stephen Ministry. In Pittsburgh, this caring apostolate has taken root in a few parishes: St. Bernard, St. John Neumann, and St. Richard.

Stephen Ministry can fill a great need in parishes as laypersons are encouraged to more fully respond to their baptismal call to serve. The apostolate not only brings needed care, it helps the pastor by providing high-quality Christian ministering. “There’s only going to be less and less,” says Ms. Caruso about clergy, and adds “Stephen Ministry helps out the pastor. Father Al saw this right away. [He] was really trusting. We have care receivers from St. Teresa of Avila Parish, and a Stephen Minister from St. Alphonsus, so we have a real presence in the area.”

“Parishioners are ministering to one another and the love of Christ is being shown in a visible way,” says Father McGinnis. “Many people want to talk, know they are being heard and being held in prayer. That was never just the priests’ ministry, but the ministry of all Christians. The training sessions equip a good number of people in our parish to better listen and show the love of Christ. It has been good for the parish, parishioners, and the Stephen Ministers.”

Ms. Caruso agrees. “It’s a success,” she says, sharing that at St. John Neumann they have 13 active Stephen Ministers who have completed the training. “I’m so grateful that God sent us our ministers. They’re unreal. They’re so faithful. They carve out time for meeting that hour each week (with the care receiver). We were sent wonderful people to train. It’s a beautiful ministry all around – for our faith community, for our group of Stephen Ministers. Even when they have their own struggles, their own issues, they are faithful,” says Ms. Caruso. “We just have fantastic ministers.”

With the grouping of St. John Neumann with Assumption and Sacred Heart parishes, Ms. Caruso sees the potential to grow the ministry and therefore grow the care. About the future for Stephen Ministry in the new grouping she says: “We’re pretty excited about it. I don’t know, but if God’s behind it, it can only grow. I think it’s great. I don’t know why there’s not more of it.”

For more information about Stephen Ministry, contact Deacon Rick or Carol Caruso at St. John Neumann Parish in Franklin Park, or Pastoral Associate Tisha Bridges at St. Bernard Parish in Mt. Lebanon.
Martha and Mary Ministry for Catholic Women

Donna Canovali’s devotion to those in religious life stems from deep family roots. Her mother was one of eight children, four of whom heeded the call to religious life. “There weren’t many cousins,” she jokes, and then adds, “My aunts and uncle were the foundation of my faith formation – my models in the faith.”

Three aunts entered the Sisters of St. Francis of Millvale, and an uncle became a priest. As a result, she says, “I spent a lot of time in the rectory and convents.”

Describing a childhood “steeped” in the church, she recalls receiving gifts of rosaries, religious books, and statues with each holiday and birthday. “It was second nature to know the church calendar, devotions, feast days, and saints,” she says. Of her aunts’ and uncle’s witness of vocation, “They really equipped me,” she says, adding, “but we have to own it (for ourselves), and see how the Lord acts in our individual lives through all circumstances.”

“I saw myself so busy and equated that with Martha – children, family obligations, juggling parties, and life occasions.” She observed other women, too, similarly consumed with serving and activities. “I realized we have to slow down. Women make time for so many things in their schedules,” citing social events, classes, parties. After the Rome pilgrimage, these seemed trivial to her.

“Do we make time to pray?”

Coming to “own” or discern her personal journey helped Ms. Canovali form the Martha and Mary Ministry, a women’s prayer apostolate devoted to the needs of the church – particularly priestly vocations – in the spirit of Martha and Mary of Bethany. The apostolate was borne out of Ms. Canovali’s powerful conversion experience in Jubilee Year 2000. She recalls entering that time with great joy and, inspired by Pope John Paul II, she traveled to Rome for World Youth Day. While there she experienced an encounter with the Risen Christ which stirred her to reexamine her life and her pursuits.

“Paraphrasing Martha’s grumbling to her sister – “You were in the living room while I was in the kitchen!” – Ms. Canovali points to Mary’s peacefulness in her presence of the Risen Christ which have been me,” she says, adding that “There’s never prayer time or Holy Hour without fellowship.” Membership in the apostolate is exclusive to women, although men are welcome to come and pray.

The commitment by the members is remarkable. The group has met every month for fifteen years, with the exception of January 2015 when the temperature on that day was zero. Though most of the members were willing to meet that evening, the hostess cancelled, not wanting anyone to risk coming out in the cold. Although this was the safe call, the women were disappointed to miss.

Different members host each month, on a date often coinciding with major feast days. Ms. Canovali facilitates every meeting, and spiritual director Father Nick Argentieri occasionally drops in. For the feast of St. Martha in July, the meeting is usually a Eucharistic Holy Hour; in June, members attend the diocesan priestly ordinations. The apostolate’s signature symbols are the Martha and Mary apron, and a silver alabaster jar pendant.

When asked about next steps, Ms. Canovali shares that while she’s “always seeking approval with the diocese,” one year ago she requested specific help with discernment. She’d received an inquiry from a parish administrator in California, and wondered if the ministry was meant to grow beyond the Pittsburgh diocese or remain local. She relies on the monthly meetings for inspiration, and continues to hope to introduce the apostolate to young mothers so they may bring fruits back to their families.

But no matter the age, nor whether a Martha or Mary type, Ms. Canovali knows, “Women of faith will always welcome the Lord because of the constancy of Jesus Christ. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever.”

To find out more about Martha and Mary Ministry, visit its website at marthaandmaryministry.com.
FOUNDATION OF JESUS
THE DIVINE MERCY

An event that blends families, the Eucharist, and a prayerful Holy Hour devotion is certain to be a powerful combination for children to grow in their Catholic faith. Pat Polachek, co-founder of the Foundation of Jesus The Divine Mercy, recognized immediately the like missions of the Family Eucharistic Holy Hour and her organization, and through it, she’s worked to champion the apostolate and bring it to local schools and parishes.

The Holy Hour fills a void she saw missing in children’s faith formation: teaching them to pray the Chaplet of Divine Mercy. Citing the revelations from the diary of St. Faustina, Ms. Polachek is sure and direct, insisting, “Jesus says to pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet. It’s not so-and-so – but Jesus and his mother, and we need to listen!”

Tailoring the chaplet devotion to young ones was already an inspiration of Renna Music, a Catholic music ministry of the Renna family of Birmingham, Alabama. Ms. Polachek came across their bilingual “Kids Sing Divine Mercy” and was inspired to promote it under her Jesus The Divine Mercy foundation. She had long sensed a need to evangelize children with devotions like the chaplet and the rosary, and the Renna format inspired her to continue. “I knew there would be a need to form children,” she says about promoting the chaplet. “God can work in a second, in a millisecond through their hearts,” she says, and adds “we want to put them in a situation to be inspired by God’s promptings.”

Thanks to the work and prayers of many, there is a format for the Family Eucharistic Holy Hour for schools and Religious Education programs to use. The hour-long occasion becomes an activity of praying and singing the chaplet in motion, appealing to the young ones’ tactile impulses. “Their entire beings are being lifted up,” she says, noting that “reverent motion is a key part.” Along with the recitation of the Divine Mercy Chaplet, the Holy Hour includes a Eucharistic procession with clergy, color banners and flowers.

Father Joseph Mele, Vicar for Leadership Development and Evangelization for the Diocese of Pittsburgh, presided at the October 13, 2017 Holy Hour at Holy Trinity Parish in Robinson with over 400 children worshipping.

“What touched me most of all was the procession around the church that was filled with school children while we carried the Blessed Sacrament and the beautiful statue of Our Lady” said Father Mele. “I will never forget being moved by the apostolic spirit of the children. They had just prayed the Rosary not only for their own families but for children and families throughout the entire world. As the procession continued, I could see in their eyes and feel in my heart that our children understood their responsibility to pray for the salvation of the whole world. That was a remarkable moment!”

The event came to Holy Trinity thanks in part to the eagerness of school Principal Kimberly Stevenson. “Let’s have one right away!” Ms. Polachek recalls the principal’s response when she approached Ms. Stevenson about hosting the Holy Hour. “The reverence and awe I saw in the children as they prayed, sang, and participated in the hand motions touched my heart,” says Ms. Stevenson – her words captured on the foundation’s website. She adds that, “For days after this spiritual event, the children talked about how much they enjoyed their time with Jesus.”

Ms. Polachek’s next step in growing the apostolate is to provide a manual as a resource guide to help parish schools and Religious Education programs to host the Holy Hour. “This is what we’ve been given to do,” she says about spreading the chaplet, and the Holy Hour in particular, for children. “As they grow up in the presence of Jesus, it brings them there so they’ll be closer to Christ,” she says, noting also the evangelizing witness to their own families. “When they sing and pray, that melody stays with them. They go home singing this and the parents ask them, ‘What’s this?’”

To bring the Family Eucharistic Holy Hour to your parish, visit the website jesusthedivinemercy.com.
When Linda Rhein speaks about the Flame of Love, she shares her great faith and conviction about a movement that’s become a mission for her. Calling it both her “work and her charity,” she points to its urgency for our times: “You can see why I call this the sequel to Fatima.”

Flame of Love is both a movement and a name of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The title was revealed to Elizabeth Kindelmann (1913-1985), a Hungarian woman who received locations from Jesus and Mary between 1961 and 1982. Ms. Kindelmann’s diary recounts the private messages urging repentance, prayer, and sacrifice through devotion to the Flame of Love of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

By now the movement has spread throughout the world and has reached the status of a Private Association of the Faithful. Its statutes are canonically approved, and several church leaders have given their imprimatur to the diocesan’s text, among them Archbishop Charles Chaput of Philadelphia and Hungarian Cardinal Peter Erdő, who called the messages “a gift from God,” says Ms. Rhein. “People need to know it’s approved,” she says, and adds, the devotion is a “very universal call. The Flame of Love is a universal call offering the grace that’s known as signal grace. This is the grace that abounds even more” and is much needed for our times, she says.

According to the apostolate’s website, the devotion is much like Divine Mercy. Flame of Love serves to make the faithful “aware of a new fire coming from Mary’s heart. Divine Mercy comes from the diary of St. Faustina. Flame of Love comes from the diary of Elizabeth Kindelmann.”

Ms. Rhein’s introduction to the movement came in 2016 while she was searching for a place to make her annual retreat. She discovered the apostolate’s conference scheduled that September in Philadelphia. Though unaware of the topic – Flame of Love – she recalls God’s providence in directing her there. The dates turned out to be the only ones she had open for getting away. Of all the retreats she saw, she remembers thinking, “This is my last chance for a retreat this year. So I got off work, I went, and I got handed this book.” The book was The Flame of Love.

“I was just drawn to it immediately,” Ms. Rhein says, recalling its appeal and its power. She read the entire 120-page volume within 24 hours. Since then, she has prayerfully worked to foster devotion to the apostolate in the Pittsburgh diocese through her own book ministry, giving away, by her estimate, over 200 copies of The Flame of Love.

“You’ll be surprised who will cross your path, who needs them (the books),” she says, adding, “What pushed me, what gave me the impetus was that Mary wanted me to keep going.” Ms. Rhein has handed out books while waiting in a doctor’s office, in a restaurant, and in churches – one time very intentionally to Auxiliary Bishop William Waltersheid.

Ms. Rhein was attending Mass at Epiphany Parish during the church’s hosting of the pilgrim statue of Our Lady of Fatima. Bishop Waltersheid’s homily alluded to Marian apparitions, and suggested “the hearts of Mary and Jesus are one” says Ms. Rhein, recalling his inspiring words. Always toting copies in her car or purse (“Never travel without them. I should get a bigger purse!” she jokes.) and encouraged by prayers to Our Lady, Ms. Rhein gave The Flame of Love to the bishop after Mass that day. He very kindly accepted it, which, to her was “an indication that Mary wanted me to keep going. She wanted me to keep giving them away.”

That was August 2017, and Ms. Rhein was eager to launch Flame of Love cenacle groups. Bishop Waltersheid suggested she contact Rev. Joseph Mele, Episcopal Vicar for Leadership Development and Evangelization. From him, Ms. Rhein learned of the Lay Apostolate Network (LAN) that had recently formed. Representing the Flame of Love, she attended a subsequent LAN meeting that enabled her to spread the apostolate with others in the diocese.

Ms. Rhein is excited for On Mission changes that will help expand devotion to the Flame of Love.

“These new groupings will create larger churches, more people to pray, more people to come together in cenacle,” she says. She believes that parishes are where the apostolate will flourish, whether directed by laity or clergy, but always with the consent of pastors.

“Mary says we need the community. There’s much peace and joy in praying as a community, not to mention support. The communities make it stay. Anyone can start a cenacle,” she says, and “Everyone can practice it. The promise is for families, parishes, individuals – the whole world.”

To order books or to learn more about Flame of Love, visit the website www.flameoflove.us.
Oakland Prayer Group

It was Spring 2015, just after the initiative *On Mission for the Church Alive!* was announced. Parishes throughout the diocese were hosting worship evenings inviting the faithful “to pray for the Holy Spirit to guide the *On Mission!* process,” as the official timeline describes. After one such gathering at St. Paul Cathedral in Oakland, a small group of attendees felt urged to continue to pray and intercede. That night the seed for the apostolate *Oakland Prayer Group* (OPG) took root.

“A group of us, after the very first Festival of Praise at the cathedral, we were just standing around talking, and we ended up praying together. And what came out of that prayer afterward was just a powerful, beautiful prayer,” says Alicia Hartle, one of those who gathered that night.

“We kept meeting, sometimes two times a week, sometimes once a week throughout the summer,” says Ms. Hartle. The gatherings consisted of a loose association of members from various *Life in the Spirit* and other Spirit-led worship groups from around the diocese. The common thread was Father Joe Freedy, she says, who, while living at the cathedral, was also organizing worship events throughout the diocese. At Father Freedy’s suggestion, the group that formed from that first *On Mission!* evening of worship became more closely associated with the Cathedral parish. Ms. Hartle describes approaching Father Kris Stubna, the cathedral rector, who said yes to the apostolate becoming a ministry there. That’s when it formally became OPG. The first gathering was held in October 2015 and it was huge, says Ms. Hartle, estimating some 130 people in attendance.

Since then the OPG has blossomed into a regular gathering of song, praise, and small group discussion that continues on the third Monday of each month at the cathedral’s Synod Hall. Frequent attendees are many folks from the cathedral community and also young adults from throughout the diocese.

The *Oakland Prayer Group* is open to everyone. As Ms. Hartle says, the event is “perfect for mission – being a missionary disciple. You can go Salsa dancing (for example) and invite someone to come and be a part of that. There’s some interaction, so they’re not just observing, but encountering the Body of Christ. That’s just been beautiful, just seeing people who’ve never set foot in the church come,” says Ms. Hartle.

“We’ve also seen people return to the church,” she adds, and shares a story about two frequent attendees who’d been baptized but, she says, “weren’t really practicing.” The two later entered into full communion in the Church, along with six from Protestant backgrounds who became Catholic in this past year. “It’s beautiful to see a lot of the people from a megachurch background and just seeing it’s okay to be expressive and worship, and see the richness of the Roman Catholic faith.”

One of those who came in was Erik Pintar of Oakland. “I became Catholic about a year ago from an Evangelical background and *Oakland Prayer Group* is where I realized the depth and richness of the charismatic tradition in the Catholic Church, which I was not expecting!” says Mr. Pintar. “I never realized as an Evangelical Christian that modern Catholics would have such a community alive and unafraid of charismatic spiritual gifts – tongues, prophecy, and healing, for example. All these gifts we see in the New Testament as expected and helpful in the Church, but in the modern day they are often misunderstood or missing in church communities. Being a part of *Oakland Prayer Group* has given me a community where charismatic spiritual gifts can be celebrated in a helpful and holistic way in alignment.”

To some the name *Oakland Prayer Group* might sound generic, but Ms. Hartle points again to the missionary dimension of the apostolate, calling the title “perfect.” “It’s definitely been part of the call that this is the territory of our parish, to go out and pray, (where) prayer walks, and inviting people to come in and just really taking that to heart.” The apostolate is not exclusive – and the name signals that, without mentioning denomination or creed or indeed anything but prayer. “Just come and pray,” invites Ms. Hartle. “This is for everyone who wants to pray. Prayer is for everyone.”

All are welcome at the *Oakland Prayer Group*, which meets at 7:00 P.M. on the third Monday of each month at Synod Hall, St. Paul Cathedral Parish.
Father Michael R. Ackerman is Director of the Office of Priestly Vocations of the Diocese of Pittsburgh. He holds a B.A. in History (2005) and an M.A. in Education (2007), both from Duquesne University. After graduation, he taught history and economics at Riverview High School in Oakmont before entering the seminary. He obtained an M.A. in Philosophy (Duquesne, 2010), and M.Div. and S.T.B. (both, Catholic University of America, 2014). He was ordained a priest of the Diocese of Pittsburgh in 2014.

Sara B. Baron is university librarian at Duquesne University, having assumed that position on September 1, 2015. She holds a bachelor’s and master’s degree in speech communication from Texas State University and an M.S. in library science from the University of North Texas. She obtained a doctorate in higher education administration from the University of Massachusetts in 2010. Dr. Baron is a past president of the Catholic Library Association 2013-2015. She serves on the executive boards of Catholic Research Resources Alliance (CRRA) and Pennsylvania Academic Library Consortium, Inc. (PALCI). She has published in Reference Librarian, the Journal of Library Management, and Catholic Library World.

John C. Bates, Esq., is a graduate of Duquesne University (B.A., M.A., and J.D.). He is the retired Chief Counsel of the Pittsburgh Office of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and former president and secretary of the Catholic Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania. He is the author of the Society’s history, which is being prepared for publication.

Katherine Koch is a Renaissance woman from Vienna, Ohio – a member of Phi Beta Kappa and a summa cum laude graduate of Kent State University with a B.S. in computer science. By day she is a professional web developer, digital marketing specialist, and graphic designer. By night she is an independent scholar, historian, and novelist. She is captivated by stories of the Passionist missionaries in her family, all of whom had a peculiar knack for tumbling into harm’s way during history’s most fascinating time periods.

Bridget Malley graduated from Seton Hill University in 2017, a proud fourth-generation Setonian. During her time at Seton Hill she worked in the university archives and spent a year as Director of Operations for the award-winning Eye Contact art and literary magazine. She is the current intern for the Archives of the Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill and a student in the Master of Library and Information Science (MLIS) program at the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee.

Father Joseph M. Mele is Episcopal Vicar for Leadership Development and Evangelization in the Diocese of Pittsburgh. He holds an M.Div. (St. Francis University), M.A. in Formative Spirituality and Ph.D. in Communications and Rhetoric (both, Duquesne University). In 1998, he was

**Sister Mary Mark Mullen, C.S.J.**, (1892-1972) was a member of the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Baden. Prior to entering the community in 1924, she had worked as a stenographer. From 1925 to 1932 and 1948 to 1972, she taught in various schools in the Dioceses of Pittsburgh and Altoona-Johnstown and served as principal of St. Titus School in Aliquippa for five years and St. Mary School in Freeport for six years. Sister Mary Mark served as a missionary in China from 1933 to 1945 and again from 1946 to 1948. She died in 1972.

**Michael T. Rizzi** is Director of Student Services and Adjunct Professor at the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public and International Affairs. He holds a Doctor of Education and an M.A. in Political Science from the University of Pittsburgh, and a B.S. in Foreign Service from Georgetown University. He is a Pittsburgh native and a graduate of Canevin High School. His articles have appeared in the *Pittsburgh Catholic*, *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, the *Journal of Catholic Education*, and the *Journal of Catholic Higher Education*.

**Father Aleksandr J. Schrenk** is a priest of the Diocese of Pittsburgh, currently assigned as parochial vicar at SS. Simon and Jude, St. Margaret of Scotland, and St. Elizabeth Ann Seton parishes south of the city of Pittsburgh. In June 2018 he completed five years of study in Rome, where he obtained a Bachelors in Sacred Theology from the Pontifical Gregorian University and a License in Sacred Theology from the Patristic Institute *Augustinianum* of the Pontifical Lateran University.

**Sharon Serratore** earned a Master of Theology from Duquesne University and a combined Bachelor’s degree in Communications and Economics from the University of Pittsburgh. Her ministry work includes Stephen Ministry, vocations, Pro-Life, and Unbound. Her articles have appeared in the *Pittsburgh Catholic*, *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, and *Pittsburgh Tribune Review*, and on Catholic websites. Her strong sense of mission has driven her in business, non-profit, and now in the New Evangelization.

**Kathleen M. Washy** is Archivist for the Sisters of St. Joseph of Baden, a position she has held since 2013. Prior to that, she served as Archivist for Mercy Hospital/UPMC Mercy for more than twenty years. Since 1991, she has been a member of the Board of Directors of the Catholic Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania, holding many offices, including her current one of Treasurer. She has also served as Consulting Archivist for Mercy Behavioral Health. She holds a B.A. in History and Anthropology from Gannon University, an M.A. in History and Archival Administration, with a Certificate in Museum Studies, from Case Western Reserve University.
PASSING


PERSONS

Society Board Member Dennis P. Wodzinski authored a November 30, 2017 article in The Catholic Accent on Pittsburgh’s first diocesan historian, Monsignor Andrew A. Lambing, and his connection to the Society. On January 17, 2018, Dennis became Director of the Archives and Records Center of the Diocese of Pittsburgh, succeeding Kenneth A. White, who retired. On September 10, 2018, Dennis was elected Secretary of the Society, succeeding John C. Bates who had served in that position since 2013.


Kate Lukaszewicz, curator of the Father Suitbert G. Mollinger Museum, delivered a lecture on “The Life of Father Suitbert Mollinger” at the Cranberry Public Library on May 16, 2018. Mollinger (1828-1892) established St. Anthony Chapel in Pittsburgh’s Troy Hill neighborhood and was an internationally known healer, drawing thousands every week to his chapel. The museum, located on the second floor of the gift shop houses items of religious and cultural significance and is open Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays, and Sundays from 1 to 4 P.M.

Charles T. Strauss, Ph.D., assistant professor of history at Mount St. Mary’s University in Maryland, has been selected as the new Executive Secretary-Treasurer of the American Catholic Historical Association. The appointment was announced on August 3, 2018. Strauss delivered a lecture for the Society on “Rev. John Hugo and Suburban Parish Life in Cold War Pittsburgh” in April 2014.

Father Aleksandr J. Schrenk, the Society’s “Rome Correspondent,” received his S.T.L. from the Patristic Institute Augustinianum in June 2018, and subsequently returned to the Diocese of Pittsburgh. He joined the Society’s board of directors on September 10, 2018.
Gathered Fragments | Fall 2018

Katherine Koch, a frequent contributor to Gathered Fragments, was one of three finalists in the historical fiction category of the American Christian Fiction Writers’ Genesis Contest for new writers. This was announced at the ACFW’s annual conference in Nashville, Tennessee, in September 2018. Ms. Koch’s submitted manuscript was The Sower of Black Field—a historical fiction novel about Fr. Viktor Koch, C.P., her great-grand-uncle who founded a Passionist Province in 1930s Nazi Germany, survived WWII behind enemy lines, and saved the Bavarian town of Schwarzenfeld from American army reprisals.

EVENTS

On October 29, 2017, Bishop Mark Barchak of Altoona-Johnstown blessed the new parish center for the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament in Altoona. Located next to the parish rectory, the building houses offices, classrooms, and archival and genealogy rooms. The bell hanging in the tower atop the building had been located in the spire of the convent where the Sisters of Charity from Cincinnati established their first foundation in Western Pennsylvania in 1870 at the request of Pittsburgh Bishop Michael Domenec. The cathedral now sits on the site of that first convent. The parish is the oldest in the city of Altoona and originally was named St. John. Father John Tuigg was the first pastor (1853-1876) and became the third bishop of Pittsburgh in 1876. Construction of the present cathedral began in 1924 but was not completed until 1960. The Sisters of Charity opened a new motherhouse in Greensburg in 1889.

A granite monument honoring both St. Francis Medical Center and Christian Housing Inc. was dedicated on the grounds of St. Augustine Plaza in Lawreceville on November 5, 2017. The Sisters of St. Francis of Millvale operated the now-closed hospital 1865-2002 and were instrumental in forming the non-profit housing corporation which developed over two dozen low-income elderly housing projects in Western Pennsylvania between the 1970s and early 2000s.

On November 17, 2017, St. Nicholas Croatian Church in Millvale witnessed the second annual Applaud the Light, sponsored by the non-profit Society to Preserve the Millvale Murals of Maxo Vanka. The evening included singers (including soprano Amy Stetten, a great-niece of Vanka), poetry by historian Charles McCollester, and an update on mural conservation progress. New lighting was unveiled for four of Vanka’s 1941 murals – Christ on the Battlefield, Mary on the Battlefield, The Capitalist, and Simple Family Meal.

The Diocese of Erie celebrated the 125th anniversary of historic St. Peter Cathedral with Masses at the cathedral celebrated by Bishop Lawrence Persico in 2017 and 2018. Each Mass was followed by a tour of “the mother church” of the diocese and presentation of the history of the cathedral. Famed architect Patrick Keely designed the stone Gothic Revival structure. St. Peter’s foundation consists of stone from the closed Erie Canal. The cathedral’s central bell tower stands 265 feet tall, with accompanying twin towers at 150 feet. Bishop Tobias Mullen (1818-1900) – who had served as pastor of St. Peter Church in Allegheny [today, Pittsburgh’s North Side] (1854-1868) prior to his elevation to episcopate – was the driving force behind the cathedral’s construction, which lasted 1875-1893. The cathedral was originally dubbed “Mullen’s Folly” because of its enormous size. Mullen is buried in the Bishops’ Crypt beneath the high altar. In January 2018, the cathedral began a four-year $4.7 million dollar renovation.

The feast of the Immaculate Conception on December 8, 2017 marked the dedication of the “crowning jewel” of the National Shrine of the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C., by Donald Cardinal Wuerl, former bishop of Pittsburgh. The gold Trinity Dome above the front central section of the Upper Church includes depictions of more than a dozen saints connected to the United States, including Bishop John Neumann and Mother Katharine Drexel who both served in Pittsburgh. The dome mosaic is composed of more than 14 million pieces of Venetian glass covering more than 18,300 square feet. The mosaic was done in Italy and shipped in 30,000 sections weighing 24 tons. It marks the final step in completion of the Upper Church that began in 1955. James Cardinal Gibbons blessed the shrine’s cornerstone in 1920.

Journalist Richard Gazarik delivered a lecture for the Lawrenceville Historical Society on July 18, 2018 in the Carnegie Library in Law-
The October 14, 2018 canonization of Archbishop Óscar Arnulfo Romero y Galdámez (1917-1980) of El Salvador, recalled his assassination on March 24, 1980 in a hospital chapel. His funeral Mass was attended by three representatives of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops including Greensburg Bishop William G. Connare (1911-1995). Some 250,000 people attended the prelate’s funeral celebrated outside the Metropolitan Cathedral. During the ceremony, gunfire and smoke bombs erupted in the cathedral square. Thousands, including Connare, sought safety inside the cathedral. Romero’s casket was brought into the church and hurriedly buried in the crypt. A massacre ensued over several hours. Claims that government security forces threw bombs into the crowd and army sharpshooters posing as civilians fired into the crowd from the National Palace were never proved. A chilling account of the funeral was printed in the Greensburg diocesan newspaper, The Catholic Accent, available at: http://issues.catholic-accent.org/publication/index.php?i=275097&m=0&d=&p=5&prev={“page”:4,”issue_id”:275097}.

TOURS, PILGRIMAGES, AND EXHIBITS

The year 2018 witnessed several church tours: (1) St. Bernard in Mt. Lebanon, where Father Thomas Wilson gave presentations on the murals of Jan Henryk de Rosen (February 25) and the stained glass windows (March 18); (2) Sacred Heart in Shadyside, where the focus was on carved statuary and stained glass windows (March 4); (3) Ascension in Ingram, which is a converted trolley car barn (March 5); (4) St. Philip in Crafton where the parish dates back to 1839 (March 11); (5) Holy Family in Latrobe, which recently restored its church designed by architect John T. Comès (April 7 and May 12); (6) St. Joseph Church in New Kensington, which participated in the city’s third annual church tour (April 22); (7) Sacred Heart in Shadyside with a tour and lecture on “George Sotter, Glassman, Painter and Storyteller – The Spectacular American Gothic Stained-Glass Windows of Sacred Heart Church” (May 20); and (8) St. James Church in Wilkinsburg as part of the “Sacred Spaces”

Artist Jan Henryk de Rosen

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News from the Catholic Historical Society

Fr. Thomas Wilson’s lecture tour at St. Bernard Church
Source: Kathleen M. Washy

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tour of that community’s historic churches (October 13).

The Heritage Center of the Diocese of Greensburg opened an exhibit “Foundations of Faith” on June 21, 2018 – a historical timeline of the Catholic Church in Southwestern Pennsylvania. An auxiliary component of the exhibit was “St. John the Baptist” featuring photographs of parishes in Scottsdale and Perryopolis, along with baptismal fonts. The exhibit “All of the Saints” opened on September 22.

Doors Open Pittsburgh conducted its annual architectural tour of Pittsburgh buildings October 6-7, 2018, including St. Mary of Mercy Church downtown (designed by architect William P. Hutchins and opened in 1936) and Central Catholic High School (designed by architect Edward J. Weber and opened in 1927).

St. Vincent College hosted the Seventh Biennial Catholic Arts Competition and Exhibit from October 30 to December 2, 2018. Jordan Hainsey, a seminarian of the Diocese of Covington, was exhibit manager and Dr. Elizabeth Lev of Duquesne University was juror.

The late Benedictine Brother Nathan Cochran (d. 2014) established the series.

OTHER

March 17, 2018 marked the 255th celebration of the first St. Patrick’s Day celebration in Pittsburgh. Captain Simeon Ecuyer, Swiss-born commandant of Fort Pitt, wrote on March 19, 1763 to Colonel Henry Bouquet: “We had St. Patrick’s fetes in every manner, so that [trader George] Croghan could not write by this express.” Historian Martin I. J. Griffin reported this event in *The American Catholic Historical Researches*, Vol. XXI, No. 4 (October 1904), 178.

June 2018 witnessed the departure of the last Sister of Charity from Sacred Heart Parish in Shadyside. The order staffed the elementary school 1874-2018 and the high school 1913-1989. On September 16, a shrine with a statue of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton (who founded the Sisters of Charity) with children was dedicated on the lawn across from the school to commemorate the sisters’ service.

The Archdiocese of Philadelphia announced on June 4, 2018, that the tomb containing the remains of St. Katharine Drexel (1858-1955) would be transferred from the crypt shrine beneath the mother-

The former St. Helen (Slovak) Church in East Pittsburgh, which was closed in 2014, has been repurposed into storage for high-end cars: The Holy Grail Garage and Car Club. The adjacent rectory was transformed into a social playhouse for the car club. The stone church, complete with gargoyles, was built 1929-1931. The buildings were sold in November 2017. The new owners also purchased the former Holy Innocents Church complex in Sheraden in December 2017.
house chapel of the Sisters of the
Blessed Sacrament in Bensalem,
Bucks County, to the Cathedral
Basilica of SS. Peter and Paul in
Philadelphia. The saint’s remains
were moved in August. The re-
assembled shrine opened to the
public in September, with formal
dedication set for November. The
new tomb is at a side altar at the
rear of the cathedral. Relocation
was necessitated by the planned
sale of the 44-acre motherhouse.
The young Drexel performed her
novitiate with the Sisters of Mer-
cy in Pittsburgh and taught at St.
Brigid School in the Hill District.
She was canonized in 2000 and her
feast day is March 3. The commu-
nity’s archives were relocated to the
Catholic Historical Research Center
of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia
in June 2017.

On June 20, 2018, the Sisters
of St. Francis of the Neumann
Communities announced that the
25-acre Mount Alvernia would be
sold to RNS Realty LLC of New
York by the end of the year. The
former Motherhouse of the Sisters
of St. Francis of Millvale, built in
1900 with 333 rooms and a chapel
that accommodated 300, is to be
replaced by a personal care and as-
sisted living facility. The remaining
sisters are slated to move to The
Waters of Wexford senior living
community in Warrendale.

The Diocese of Erie ended
publication of its bi-weekly Faith-
Life newspaper on June 24, 2018.
The diocese’s first newspaper, The
Lake Shore Visitor was established
in 1874 and delivered weekly to
people’s homes. It was replaced
in 2005 by the compact FaithLife
publication, which was originally
a news bulletin and evolved into a
broadsheet newspaper.

The following updates information
as to two previously listed prelates:

Medil Sacay Aseo
Born: June 28, 1954 in Maniki, Municipal-
ity of Kapalong, Province of Davao del
Norte, Island of Mindanao, Philippines
(Territorial Prelature of Davao). Ordained
priest of the Territorial Prelature of
Tagum: April 4, 1979 by Bishop Joseph W.
Regan, M.M., Prelate Nullius of Tagum,
in San Isidro Labrador Church, Maniki
(home parish). Served in the International
Priest Program in the Diocese of Greens-
burg, Pennsylvania, at St. Mary in Kittan-
ning and St. Mary in Yastesboro (Arm-
strong County): September 2017-April
2018. Appointed bishop of Tagum, Phil-
ippines: April 7, 2018. Ordained bishop
and installed: June 20, 2018 by Archbish-
op Romulo G. Valles of Davao in the Ca-
thedral of Christ the King, Tagum.

John Dennis Corriveau, O.F.M. Cap.
Retired: February 13, 2018 as Bishop of
Nelson, British Columbia, Canada

Donald William Wuerl
Retired: October 12, 2018 as Archbishop
of Washington, D.C.
BOOK REVIEWS

John C. Bates, Esq.


A retired reporter for the *Tribune Review* has authored a biography of famed Pittsburgh priest Father James Cox (1886-1951). The pastor of St. Patrick Parish in the Strip District, who created a shantytown around his church, was the voice of the poor and jobless during the Great Depression. Cox led one of the first mass marches – 25,000 unemployed who were dubbed Cox’s Army – on the nation’s capital in 1932, confronting President Herbert Hoover in a White House meeting. Cox later ran for president on the Jobless Party ticket. His humanitarian reputation was sullied after he was charged with mail fraud for running a rigged fundraising contest.


An emeritus professor of history at Manhattanville College has authored the definitive biography of Constantine Bohachevsky (1884-1961), who was appointed in 1924 as the first bishop of Ukrainian Catholics in the United States. Based upon recently opened archives in Italy, Ukraine, and the United States, the author traces the Ukrainian rite’s history in Europe as a prelude to detailing the massive Ukrainian immigration to the United States and the developing ecclesiastical life in the New World. The new bishop’s strong leadership overcame a multitude of challenges and resulted in a network of parishes that included a number in Western Pennsylvania. In 1954, Bohachevsky was named the first metropolitan archbishop of his see in Philadelphia.


This is the first history of St. Bernard Parish in Mt. Lebanon since Father Thomas Wilson published his architectural history of the church in 1995 and marks the centenary of the “Cathedral of the South Hills.” Roddy is a journalist and parishioner. This volume is a popular account of the parish, its pastors, and its school.


Des Moines, Iowa is approximately 800 miles from Pittsburgh, yet the Catholic history of the two sees is joined through the work of several priests who served in both jurisdictions. The newly published centennial history of the Diocese of Des Moines highlights the importance of Father John Francis Brazill (1827-1885), a priest of the Diocese of Pittsburgh, whose desire for missionary work took him to Iowa, where he was instrumental in the development of two dioceses in that state. This volume also highlights the role of another Pittsburgh priest, Bishop Ralph Hayes (1884-1970), who served as bishop of Davenport, from which territory the Diocese of Des Moines was created. The author of this exceptionally well-written history is a famed Jesuit professor of history at Marquette University.


The latest publication by Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation (PHLF) is a lavishly illustrated guidebook to Pittsburgh’s Downtown architecture. Some 180 photographs illustrate 48 sites and districts, including St. Mary of the Point Church, designed by architect William P. Hutchins and constructed in 1936. The history of the Union Trust Building notes the legend of its rooftop “chapel” stemming from the property’s previous use as St. Paul Cathedral. The text is drawn from major PHLF works published over the years. This volume updates the 2011 guidebook, *Whirlwind Walk: Architecture and Urban Spaces in Downtown Pittsburgh*.


Pittsburgh was the initial foundation of the Passionists in the New World. One of the order’s most famous priests was Father Fabian Flynn (1905-1973), who served as a U.S. Army chaplain in World War II, took part in the invasions of Sicily and Normandy, acted as confessor to Nazi war criminals during the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg, and assisted Hungarian revolutionaries in Budapest. As an official of Catholic Relief Services, Flynn helped refugees during the Cold War. This biography encompasses the complex political, economic and social history of Europe in the struggle against Fascism and Communism. The author is an associate professor of history at the University of Scranton.


This intriguing story of the search for the bones of St. Peter, first bishop of Rome, begins with the story of a Pittsburgh priest, Monsignor Walter S. Carroll. A native of Holy Rosary Parish in Homewood and one of three priest-brothers (Bishop Howard Carroll of Altoona-Johnstown and Archbishop Coleman F. Carroll of Miami), the young priest served both Monsignor Giovanni Montini (the future Pope Paul VI) and Pope Pius XII. Walter Carroll was entrusted with the delicate task of soliciting funds from a wealthy Texas oilman, George Strake, for a search for the long-lost burial place and bones of the Apostle Peter below St. Peter’s Basilica. The author’s recounting of the decades-long search and its key players makes for an absorbing read. The author is an attorney and noted author.


A prolific Jesuit historian, 90-year-old John O’Malley, has produced a study of the bitter controversy over papal infallibility at the First Vatican Council (1869-1870). This work addresses the role of Pittsburgh Bishop Michael Domenec who opposed such a decree on the basis that it “would be a great obstacle to conversions in the United States and spell disaster there.” Despite fears of a schism, the Council promulgated the decree *Pastor Aeternus* on papal primacy and infallibility. The church became more pope-centered; in the terminology of that period, it became *ultramontane*. The author is a native of the Steubenville, Ohio area.

Matteo Binasco (Kathleen S. Cummings, ed.), *Roman Sources for the History of American Catholicism 1763-1939* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2018), hardcover, table of
contents, notes, bibliography, index, 196 pp.
This comprehensive reference volume is the product of an idea expressed at a 2014 seminar in Rome, hosted by the University of Notre Dame’s Cushwa Center for the Study of American Catholicism—the need for a guide to the 59 principal archives and libraries in the Eternal City that hold the greatest potential for researchers studying American Catholic history. The author researched and wrote this book during his tenure as the Cushwa Center’s postdoctoral fellow in Rome from 2014 to 2017. Detailed profiles describe each Roman repository. The volume’s introduction reviews the relationship between the Holy See and the Catholic Church in America since the Treaty of Paris of 1763. This work confirms that Roman sources are crucial to understanding this shared history. Pittsburgh’s first bishop, Michael O’Connor, figures prominently in the presentation of Roman archival sources.

Black Pittsburgh is known as the setting for August Wilson’s famed plays about noble but doomed working-class folks. But the Pittsburgh black community once rivaled the larger black worlds of New York and Chicago. It was the center of a black Renaissance in culture, music, sports, business, and journalism. The former managing editor of CNN Worldwide presents in this work the masterfully told stories of black men and women in the midst of the city’s thick soot and smog days. Catholicism—in the form of Holy Trinity Church, Central Catholic High School, and Catholic Charities—is embedded in this story of a world unknown to most Pittsburghers.

Archbishop John Hughes is acknowledged to be one of the most significant, controversial, and effective prelates that the American Catholic Church has ever seen. Originally a priest of the then-Diocese of Philadelphia, he was assigned to Western Pennsylvania to do missionary work in the 1820s. This well-researched and provocative biography astutely analyzes Hughes’s life in the political, social, and ecclesiastical context of his times. While the archbishop was feisty, this work is a fair appraisal of a determined ecclesiastic who was labeled “Dagger John” by his enemies. This is a richly informative and wide-ranging examination of not only the defender of Catholic famine immigrants and the builder of St. Patrick’s Cathedral, but also of nineteenth century American Catholic life.

Through photographs, the art director for Pittsburgh Magazine has documented the Steel City’s forgotten industrial and community sites where “beauty in decay” still exists. Churches built by devout Eastern European immigrants in the 19th and early 20th centuries appear among the many visual reminders of how Pittsburgh earned its name as the “Steel City.” The lens is focused on dark forgotten buildings where haunting beauty still exists.

This ecumenical presentation of the lives and work of “clergywomen” in several Christian denominations and nondenominational churches includes a long chapter on the Ladies of Bethany, a Dutch order of sisters who were invited to Pittsburgh by Bishop John Wright in the early 1960s. The women established The Vineyard at North View Heights public housing project on Pittsburgh’s North Side. After the project became 99% black, the sisters concluded that black leadership was warranted. The six sisters then established The Ark and The Dove ecumenical retreat center in the North Hills. Some sisters became involved with various ministries in metropolitan Pittsburgh. The sisters candidly acknowledged that religious communities would likely assume a different model in the future. Of the two Ladies of Bethany interviewed for their chapter in this volume, Michelle Van Voorst died on July 13, 2018 at age 96. Only Monique Dietz, L.B., survives locally; the order numbers only 24 worldwide. The author is a professor emerita at Virginia Tech.

St. Anthony’s Chapel in Pittsburgh’s Troy Hill neighborhood contains one of the world’s largest collections of relics. The author of this work tells the stories of twenty of the saints whose relics rest in the chapel. Mike Aquilina provides the Foreword.

The title of this volume comes from Father Jean-Pierre Medaille, S.J., who brought together the first Sisters of St. Joseph in LePuy, France in 1650. Jeanne (Mother St. John) Fontbonne reestablished the congregation in 1807 after the bloodletting of the French Revolution. The order arrived in the United States in 1836 at Carondolet, Missouri. Sister Agnes Spencer entered the Diocese of Erie in 1850, assuming direction of St. Ann’s Academy in Corsica (Jefferson County). Sisters Austin Kean (a native of Loretto), Hortense Tello and Xavier Phelan entered the Diocese of Pittsburgh in 1869, establishing a convent in Ebensburg (Cambria County) and opening Mount Gallitzin Seminary for boys just five days after their arrival. In 1901, the sisters relocated to Baden (Beaver County), where they constructed a new motherhouse and Mt. Gallitzin Academy. This volume traces growth of the order 1836-1920. A planned second volume will present the unsung contributions of women religious in the United States from 1912 onward, with a particular focus on the Sisters of St. Joseph. The author is a Sister of St. Joseph from Denver who holds a Ph.D. in Historical Theology from St. Louis University.

The Church actively recruited tens of thousands of young women into religious orders primarily to serve as teachers. This volume focuses on the recruitment methods, persuasion tactics, school settings, suitability of girls, and the role of parents. The stages of religious formation are examined. The numbers grew steadily, peaking in 1965, the same year that Catholic school enrollment reached a pinnacle. The author’s use of archival records, memoirs, oral history and religious publications provides a window into the little-known aspects of American convent life in the mid-twentieth century. Included are passages dealing with several local orders of women religious: Sisters of St. Joseph of Baden, Sisters of the Humility of Mary, Sisters of Mercy, School Sisters of Notre Dame, and Sisters of St. Francis of Millvale. Duquesne University and some local Catholic personages appear. Succinctly, this work is built around a quotation of Sister Mary Isabel Concannon, C.S.J.: “Let every teacher in every grade be a vocation recruiter.”

This sesquicentennial history of the Diocese of Rochester, New York, is done in the classic tradition of the French publisher – thoroughly researched text and lavish illustrations. For Western Pennsylvanians, this volume presents the current state of the several parish churches in the Rochester diocese that were designed by famed Pittsburgh architect John Theodore Comès a century ago. Appropriately, this volume is dedicated to Father Robert F. McNamara, the recently deceased historian of the Rochester diocese, whose earlier histories documented the importance of Comès to the architectural development of the Rochester diocese.


Five years of intensive preparatory work preceded publication of this history commemorating the 150th anniversary of establishment of the Diocese of Green Bay, Wisconsin (1868). While that see city is perhaps best known to Pittsburghers for its professional football team (the Packers), Catholics recall that Bishop David A. Zubik served as 11th bishop of Green Bay before his return to Western Pennsylvania as 12th and current bishop of Pittsburgh. The diocesan story, episcopal biographies, and histories of parishes, religious orders and institutions make this volume a delightful introduction to Catholic life in northeastern Wisconsin.


This recent addition to Arcadia’s Images of America series traces the immigration of Poles to Pittsburgh and surrounding areas in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and the remnants of that heritage today. The book is built on the four pillars of Polish life: home, church, fraternal organizations, and Polish newspapers. Polish Hill (Polski Gory) is a focal point of local Polish history. The work concludes with an examination of Pittsburgh Polonia today.


The Klan of the 1920s was a national phenomenon, with Pennsylvania being a particular center of the group’s activities. The KKK terrorized Catholics, Jews, immigrants, and blacks. This volume recounts the infamous KKK march and accompanying riot in Carnegie (Allegheny County) that targeted a heavily Catholic multi-ethnic community, where thousands turned out to resist the marchers. The author, a history professor at NYU, explains how and why the KKK roared to social and political power in the post-World War I period. In her recounting of that history, she offers some chilling comparisons to the present day.


This is the latest edition of a classic work by the founder of the International Poetry Forum and professor emeritus at Duquesne University. The author, in a series of essays, presents the soul of the city of Pittsburgh and its people. The work includes commentary on the demolition of the famed St. Peter the Apostle (Italian) Church in the Lower Hill District at the inception of the city's urban renewal program, and the efforts of Epiphany's pastor to ensure that his church did not succumb to the wrecker's ball. This is an entertaining memoir.


Contrary to the prevailing view that mandatory Protestant Scripture studies and Protestant schools explain American literacy, a professor emerita at the University of Louisville has written convincingly that Catholic women were important educators of American women through convent academies and schools with developed pedagogical curricula. Pittsburgh’s long-forgotten Poor Clares and the Sisters of Charity were among these early pioneers. The detailed chronology of early convent schools is of particular value in evidencing the geographical scope of educational work by women religious in the early nineteenth century.


This is the fifth edition of the author’s examination of American ecclesiastical architecture. It contains an alphabetical listing of architects, artists, and artisans during the 60-year period beginning in 1860. Biographical sketches complement photographs and images. Churches included are not limited to Western Pennsylvania. The towers of St. Augustine Church in Lawrenceville are displayed on the book’s cover. The author is a Pittsburgh area resident and maintains a website at http://www.josephsibolofny.com.


During World War II, some 51,000 Italian prisoners of war were sent to the United States, with more than 1,200 of them housed at the Letterkenny Army Depot near Chambersburg in Franklin County, Pennsylvania. After Italy changed sides in the war, they experienced more freedom than German POWs, and received support from Italian-Americans in Pennsylvania especially those in Western Pennsylvania. The individual stories of POWs, captors, and American supporters provide a glimpse of wartime life that is only now being told some 70 years after conclusion of the war.


This is the story of a young woman from Butler – baptized at St. Paul Church and schooled at St. Peter School by the Millvale Franciscans – who at age 17 entered the Ursulines on Long Island, New York. This book candidly presents the author’s evolution toward independence. Her increasing awareness of the order’s constraints led to her departure from the convent. The author’s retrospective examination has not answered the “why” for her actions with respect to her religious vocation. After leaving the convent, the author married and became a teacher and writer. Her stories and plays for children have become popular on Amazon.com.


This is the biography of Polish-born artist Jan Henryk de Rosen (1891-1982), famed for his execution of murals in St. Bernard Church in Mt. Lebanon. Recruited by the pastor, Father Joseph Lonergan, de Rosen’s murals were done in durable wax tempera (a mixture of pigment and beeswax liquefied by Dutch beer). A convert to Calvinism, de Rosen’s ancestors were Jews who had converted to Catholicism. He painted the private chapel of Pope Pius XI at Castel
Gandolfo. Trapped in the U.S. at the beginning of World War II, the painter became professor of church art at Catholic University of America. Among his works are the great mosaic of Christ in Majesty in the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C., and the largest mosaic in the world at the Cathedral Basilica in St. Louis, Missouri. Locally, his works included the crypt of St. Vincent Archabbey Basilica in Latrobe, St. Genevieve Church in Canonsburg, Blessed Sacrament Chapel in Sacred Heart Church in Shadyside, and Holy Family Church in Lawrenceville. After the closing of Holy Family, the great mural Poland Ever Faithful was moved to the National Shrine of Our Lady of Czestochowa in Doylestown, Pennsylvania.


Catholic Relief Services was formed in 1943 to address the refugee crisis during World War II. The organization's history and success owe much to two Pittsburghers, Vatican diplomat Monsignor Walter S. Carroll and his brother Monsignor Howard Carroll, who was then assistant general secretary of the National Catholic Welfare Conference (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, today). Included in this volume is the story of Walter Carroll's near death experience with Italian partisans who mistook his motorcar for that of "escaping fascist politicos."


This is the story of a Pittsburgher who grew up in Homewood, attended Catholic elementary school, became an aspirant at Mount Alvernia with the Sisters of St. Francis of Millvale, attended the Sisters of St. Joseph of Baden, and became an elementary school teacher. She left in 1968 and subsequently entered the Nashville Road Church of Christ in Hendersonville, Tennessee. Howe authored several Protestant texts (including a refutation of the Baltimore Catachism) and appeared in numerous television and radio interviews in Europe, Africa, and Asia preaching "gospel truth." She died in February 2016 at age 80. The facts in her autobiography have been altered for evangelical purposes: the Franciscan period is dismissed given the lack of a photograph of her in that order's religious garb; the years of St. Joseph service were 1953-1969, not 1949-1968. An informed Catholic reader will easily detect other errors.

Francis W. Kervick, Patrick Charles Keely, Architect: A Record of His Life and Work (South Bend, IN, 1953), softcover, footnotes, appendices, illus., 68 pp.

This slender work, unavailable for decades, has been reprinted. The subject is a native of County Tipperary, Ireland, who immigrated to the United States and became the most prolific architect of Catholic churches and institutions in American history. Some 16 cathedrals and approximately 700 churches and buildings are attributed to him. St. Peter Cathedral in Erie and Immaculate Conception Church in Brookville (Jefferson County) are among Keely's memorials in Western Pennsylvania. The author was a professor of architecture at the University of Notre Dame. A definitive biography of Keely has yet to be written, and a complete listing of his hundreds of ecclesiastical buildings has yet to be compiled. Regrettably, too many of Keely's Gothic churches have been destroyed by fire, closed, or demolished.


This long-forgotten work is worthy of note. Authored by Father Thomas Bryson while he was chaplain at Mt. Gallitzin Academy in Baden, this is a boys' novel in the vein of the famed Tom Brown's School Days of the late 19th century. Bryson was a teacher and particularly interested in the educational development of Catholic youth, given the expansion of parish and boarding schools and academies in the early 20th century. Explored in this volume are the pangs of separation from family, peer pressure (bullying in today's terminology), and adult responsibilities. Bryson's clear intent was to inspire in young readers a lifelong love of literature and reading. He was a prolific writer and contributor to the Pittsburgh Catholic, served as ecclesiastical superior of the Sisters of St. Joseph, diocesan director of the Holy Name Society, member of both the diocesan Board of Examiners and the Music Commission, and earned a doctorate in philosophy. After 15 years at Baden, Bryson was assigned to found St. Bernard Parish in Mt. Lebanon in 1919, where he initiated construction of the huge parish complex. He died in March 1943. The book was initially marketed at a mere .85 cents; today, the same volume commands a $50 price!

ARTICLES

Mark Newman, “The Catholic Diocese of Miami and African American Desegregation, 1958-1977,” The Florida Historical Quarterly, Vol. 90, No. 1 (Summer 2011), 61-84. This article analyzes the efforts of Pittsburgh native Coleman F. Carroll, first bishop and first archbishop of Miami (1958-1977), to desegregate Catholic parishes and schools in south Florida during his 19-year administration. Carroll's initiatives stood in stark contrast to the inaction of two other bishops with jurisdiction in Florida, who viewed desegregation as a Communist plot. Yet the result was the elimination of vibrant black Catholic parishes and the departure of black parishioners to other denominations given both white resistance by natives and transplanted Northerners and developing black cultural identity. Carroll's work laid the groundwork for the subsequent integration of hundreds of thousands of Cuban refugees, many of whom were black or of mixed race.

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