FAREWELL, FATHER JIM GARVEY

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS bids fond farewell to Fr. Jim Garvey who has been actively involved with the Catholic Historical Society of Western Pa. for more than 17 years. Father Garvey was ordained to the priesthood in 1976 and served as parochial vicar and pastor in a number of parishes in the Diocese of Pittsburgh. He was also the Coordinator of Programs for the Homeless and the Director of St. Joseph's House of Hospitality. Currently Fr. Jim is the Senior Parochial Vicar at St. Margaret Mary Parish, Moon Township.

Fr. Jim was elected for two terms as President, and two terms as Secretary to the Board of the Catholic Historical Society. Twice he was asked to give the Annual Lambling Lecture to the membership. For several years he edited and frequently contributed articles to this publication: Gathered Fragments. He also wrote the histories of many parishes in the Diocese of Pittsburgh: St. Joseph (Manchester, North Side), St. Francis de Sales (McKees Rocks), Immaculate Conception (Carnegie), Epiphany Parish (downtown), the first two St. Paul Cathedrals (located at the corner of Fifth and Grant Streets, downtown), and St. Margaret Mary Parish (Moon Twp). Father Jim also took many of the photographs which appeared in these books.

In addition to these histories, he wrote a memoir about street cars, had several poems published, and contributed a number of articles to the Pittsburgh Catholic. He worked with the Centennial Committee and wrote a chapter for the recently published book marking the one hundredth anniversary of St. Paul Cathedral Parish in Oakland. Fr. Jim was always willing to lend copies of books and historical materials from his personal library to those who were researching and writing articles about history in Western Pennsylvania and especially in the Diocese of Pittsburgh. He actively collected the histories of parishes and Catholic institutions, and donated them and some artifacts to the Diocesan Archives, the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania, and the Pennsylvania Department at the Oakland branch of the Carnegie Library, Pittsburgh.

Fr. Jim encouraged others to write histories marking significant anniversaries (25, 50 and 100 years) in the lives of their parishes. He also edited the writings of others, especially those which focused on local history. We will miss his leadership, the accurate and detailed minutes Fr. Jim wrote for Board Meetings, and his thoughtful and creative efforts to promote local Catholic history. Thank you Fr. Garvey. May God bless you.

Continued from page 12 during the sesquicentennial year of the Pittsburgh Diocese, 1992, and the articles were included in the NPM newsletters at that time; and fourth, some interesting information, limited in scope, was on file in the Diocesan Archives and Records Center from the time of Father Rossini. Finally, in the mid-1980s, the Bishop’s Office was cleaning out their files and had a box of correspondence and materials dating from the early 1900s. The Bishop’s Office at that time contacted the Diocesan Music Office, and asked if the Music Office wanted the material. If not, the material would be thrown in the trash. Fortunately, the Diocesan Music Coordinator accepted the material, which included priceless gems such as an original carbon copy from 1902 establishing the first Diocesan Music Commission and a copy of a hand-written 1908 letter from Bishop Canevin to the Vatican Secretary of State requesting that he ask the Pope if women were allowed to sing in church choirs. The actual letter from the Vatican Secretary (answered in the negative) is included in this material from the Bishop’s Office as well – material that could have met its fate in the trash bin.

Father Chepponis, an accomplished composer and musician, is Director of the Diocesan Office for Music and pastor of Saint John Capistran Parish.