The Catholic Bishops of Western Pennsylvania

by John C. Bates, Esq.

Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you.
—Hebrews 13:7

On August 11, 1843, Pope Gregory XVI established the Diocese of Pittsburgh as the first diocese in the western part of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania with his issuance of the papal Brief Universi Dominici, which carved the new bishopric out of the Diocese of Philadelphia. The Brief of erection described the new diocese as consisting of "Western Pennsylvania" — containing an area of 21,300 square miles or almost one-half of the state. From the time of the creation of the see of Pittsburgh and in the more than 170 years that have followed, the Holy See has raised to the episcopate priests who would serve as ordinaries, administrators, coadjutors, and auxiliaries in the several sees that were created over time in Western Pennsylvania:

- Latin Rite (Pittsburgh, Erie, Allegheny, Altoona-Johnstown, and Greensburg), and
- Ruthenian (Byzantine) Rite (Pittsburgh/Munhall).

In the 19th century, these bishops were typically natives of Europe (Ireland, Austria-Hungary, and Spain). Some received their entire priestly formation in Europe before emigrating, while others received part or all of their training in the United States subsequent to immigration.

In the 20th century, the growing Catholic population in Western Pennsylvania produced native priests who were appointed bishops — and at times, natives of other parts of the United States came to serve as bishops in Western Pennsylvania. Reciprocally, natives of Western Pennsylvania were appointed to sees elsewhere in the United States (Latin Rite, Ruthenian Rite, Ukrainian Rite, and Romanian Rite) and overseas in missionary countries.

Also, there were others, both American and foreign, who came to Western Pennsylvania to receive some or all of their priestly education. The presence of the initial American headquarters of

- Benedictines at St. Vincent Archabbey in Latrobe,
- Franciscan Capuchins at St. Augustine Monastery in Pittsburgh,
- Holy Ghost Fathers at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh,
- Franciscans of the Third Order Regular (Most Holy Name Province) at St. Francis in Loretto,
- Franciscans of the Third Order Regular (Immaculate Conception Province) in Hollidaysburg, and
- Passionists at St. Paul of the Cross Monastery in Pittsburgh

introduced non-Western Pennsylvanians into seminaries, colleges, and universities in this area as part of seminarian and post-ordination education programs. In addition, the Redemptorists operated St. Mary's Seminary and College in North East Township in Erie County (east of the City of Erie) beginning in 1881, and the Society of the Divine Word operated Sacred Heart Seminary in Girard Township, also in Erie County (west of the City of Erie).

In the case of the Eastern Rites, Pittsburgh served as the initial episcopal see of the Greek Catholic (also denominated as Byzantine or Ruthenian) Rite with jurisdiction over the entire United States; its Seminary of SS. Cyril and Methodius in Pittsburgh drew students from throughout the United States and Europe. The Ukrainian Rite headquartered in Philadelphia drew seminary students from Western Pennsylvania. As a result, priests in the Ruthenian and Ukrainian Rites who were natives of Western Pennsylvania or who had studied in this area later were promoted to bishoprics from the East to West coasts. While the Romanian Rite had a numerically small presence in Western Pennsylvania, a priest who staffed his parishes in Western Pennsylvania would enter the episcopate.

The extensive missionary work undertaken by the Capuchins in the American Mid-West and in New Guinea, the Holy Ghost Fathers in Africa, the Franciscans of the Third Order in South America, the Society of the Divine Word in New Guinea, the Redemptorists in the Caribbean and in Asia, and the Benedictines in German-speaking areas throughout the United States and in China/Taiwan also broadened the opportunity for members of those orders to reside, if only for a transitional period, in Western Pennsylvania before their service elsewhere in this country or the world. A number of these religious were later elevated to the episcopate, both within the United States and overseas.

Finally, some natives of Western Pennsylvania also joined other religious orders, such the Jesuits and the Holy Cross Fathers that did not maintain schools in this area, and ultimately became bishops in the United States or in overseas territories.

The most recent development, which reflects the phenomenal growth of the Catholic Church in Africa, is the promotion of African priests who came to Western Pennsylvania for graduate studies, and returned home to serve as bishops in Africa.

The following is a list of these 143 prelates, who constitute approximately ten percent of the almost 1,400 bishops in the history of the United States. These 143 bishops may be divided into nine groups. Four of these groups are comprised of those prelates who served within the United States. Two groups are comprised of those prelates who served outside the United States. An additional group consists of members of religious orders who served as bishops. The two final groups are comprised of those who became archbishops, and those who were created cardinals. The article concludes with biographical information on all 143 prelates and information on four others who are pertinent to this list.
I. Bishops who served in Western Pennsylvania

Of the 143 prelates, the largest group, numbering 50, served as bishops in Western Pennsylvania in five Latin-Rite dioceses and one Eastern-Rite diocese. Forty-two were ordinaries and the rest were auxiliary bishops:

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II. Natives of Western Pennsylvania who served in other American dioceses

Thirty-two bishops who were natives of Western Pennsylvania served in 45 episcopal appointments in 38 American dioceses beyond Western Pennsylvania:

- Amarillo (Lawrence DeFalco), Belmont Abbey (Leo Haid), Cincinnati (Nicholas Elko), Cleveland (John Hagan), Columbus (Leo Watterson), Covington (Richard Ackerman), Davenport (Ralph Hayes), Detroit (Adam Maida), El Paso (Anthony Schuler), Galveston-Houston (Daniel DiNardo), Gary (Norbert Gaughan), Gaylord (Bernard Hebda), Green Bay (Adam Maida, and David Zubik), Harrisburg (Nicholas Dattilo), Helena (Ralph Hayes), Juneau (Edward Burns), Kalamazoo (Paul Bradley), Miami (Coleman Carroll), Military Ordinariate (William McCarty), Milwaukee (Rembert Weakland), Newark (Thomas Walsh, Bernard Hebda), Parma-Ruthenian (George Kuzma, John Kudrick, and Emil Mihalik), Parma-Ukrainian (Robert Moskal), Passaic-Ruthenian (Thomas Dolinay), Philadelphia-Ukrainian (Robert Moskal, Joseph Schmondiuk), Providence (Thomas Tobin), Rapid City (William McCarty, and Harold Dimmerling), Saint Thomas-AVI (Eliot Thomas), Salina (Cyril Vogel), San Diego (Richard Ackerman), Savannah (Thomas Becker), Scranton (Jerome Hannan), Sioux City (Daniel DiNardo), Stamford-Ukrainian (Joseph Schmondiuk), Trenton (Thomas Walsh), Van Nuys-Ruthenian (Thomas Dolinay, and George Kuzma), Wilmington (Thomas Becker), Youngstown (Thomas Tobin).

III. Non-natives of Western Pennsylvania — educated as seminarians or in post-ordination studies in Western Pennsylvania — who later served as bishops in American dioceses beyond Western Pennsylvania

Twenty-eight bishops, who were not natives of Western Pennsylvania but were educated as seminarians or in post-ordination studies in this area, served as bishops in 34 American dioceses beyond Western Pennsylvania:

- Alexandria (Daniel Desmond), Boston (Sean O’Malley), Brooklyn (George Mundelein), Chicago (George Mundelein), Cleveland (Richard Gilmour, Joseph Schrembs), Columbus (Edward Hettinger, Michael Ready), Corpus Christi (Paul Nussbaum, René Gracida), Denver (Charles Chaput), Fall River (Sean O’Malley), Fort Wayne (Joseph Rademacher), Grand Rapids (Joseph Schrembs), Harrisburg (Lawrence Schott), Indianapolis (James Ryan), Leavenworth/Kansas City (Michael Fink), Miami (René Gracida), Monterey-Fresno (Aloysius Willinger), Nashville (Joseph Rademacher), New Orleans (Joseph Rummel), New York (James McManus), Northern Minnesota (Rupert Seidenbusch), Omaha (James O’Connor, Joseph Rummel, James Ryan), Palm Beach (Sean O’Malley), Parma-Ruthenian (Andrew Petak), Passaic-Ruthenian (Michael Dudick), Pensacola-Tallahassee (René Gracida), Philadelphia (Charles Chaput, John McIntyre), Rapid City (Charles Chaput), St. Cloud (James Trobec), Saint Thomas-AVI (Edward Harper, Sean O’Malley), Sault Saint-Marie and Marquette (Paul Nussbaum), Toledo (Joseph Schrembs), Trenton (James McFaul, George Ahr), Van Nuys (Gerald Dino), and Winona (Joseph Cotter).
The Catholic Bishops of Western Pennsylvania (continued)

IV. Non-natives of Western Pennsylvania — assigned as priests or bishops in Western Pennsylvania — who later served as bishops in American dioceses beyond Western Pennsylvania

Fifteen bishops, who were not natives of Western Pennsylvania but were assigned to this area as priests or bishops, later served as bishops in 12 American sees beyond Western Pennsylvania: Baltimore (Francis Kenrick), Bardstown (Benedict Flaget), Canton-Romanian (Vasile Puscas), Chicago-Ukrainian (Innocent Lotocky, Richard Seminack), Covington (George Carrell), Dallas (Thomas Brennan), Detroit (John Dearden), Hartford (John Wheelan), New York (John Hughes), Passaic-Ruthenian (Stephen Kocisko, Kurt Burnette), Philadelphia (Michael Egan, Francis Kenrick, John Neumann), and St. Louis (Peter Kenrick).

Two groups are comprised of bishops who served outside the United States:

V. Natives of Western Pennsylvania who served as bishops outside the United States

Seven bishops, who were natives of Western Pennsylvania, served outside the United States in eight dioceses in five different countries: Bhagalpur (Urban McGarry), Borba (Adrian Veigle), Dacca (Lawrence Graner), Kimbe (William Fey), Mendhi (Donald Lippert), Mount Hagen (George Bernarding), Toronto-Slovak (Michael Rusnak), and Toronto-Ukrainian (Michael Rusnak). The five countries were: Canada, Brazil, India, Pakistan, and Papua New Guinea.

One bishop, who was a native of Western Pennsylvania, served outside the United States in episcopal diplomatic assignments in eight countries: Ambrose DePaoli. The eight countries were: Sri Lanka, South Africa, Swaziland, Namibia, Botswana, Japan, and Australia.

VI. Non-natives of Western Pennsylvania — who were educated or served in Western Pennsylvania — who served as bishops outside the United States

Twenty-four prelates, who were not natives of Western Pennsylvania but were educated or served in this area, served outside the United States as residential bishops in 16 countries: Brazil (Adrian Veigle, Bernard Nolker), Canada (John Corriuex, Michael Rusnak), China (Cuthbert O’Gara), Dominica (Edward Gilbert), Dominican Republic (Ronald Connors, Thomas Reilly), Ghana (Peter Atuahene, John Kwofie), Great Britain (Augustine Hornyak), Mauritius (John Murphy), New Guinea (Leo Arkfeld, Stephen Reichert, William Fey, Donald Lippert, Firmin Schmidt), Pakistan (Lawrence Graner), Paraguay (Jerome Pechillo), Philippines (Charles Olwell), Puerto Rico (Aloysius Willinger, James McManus), Tanzania (Amadeus Msarikie), Trinidad and Tobago (Edward Gilbert), and Zanzibar (Augustine Shao).

One prelate, who had served in Western Pennsylvania, later served outside the United States in episcopal diplomatic assignments in seven countries: Giuseppe De Andra. The seven countries were: Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.

Almost one-third of these 143 bishops were members of religious orders, and these comprise the seventh group:

VII. Members of religious orders who became bishops

Forty-nine members of 15 different religious orders served as bishops — and these include four who transferred from their orders to become diocesan priests prior to episcopal ordination, and one bishop who became a member of a religious order after episcopal ordination:

Basilian (O.S.B.M.): Augustine Hornyak, Innocent Lotocky

Benedictine (O.S.B.): Michael Fink, Leo Haid, Rupert Seidenbusch, Rembert Weakland

Capuchin (O.F.M. Cap.): Charles Chaput, John Corriuex, William Fey, Donald Lippert, Sean O’Malle, Stephen Reichert, Firmin Schmidt

Franciscan (O.F.M.): Michael Egan, Basil Schott

Franciscan Third Order Regular (T.O.R.): John Boccella, Urban McGarry, Jerome Pechillo, Adrian Veigle

Holy Cross (C.S.C.): Lawrence Graner

Holy Ghost (C.S.Sp.): John Murphy, Richard Ackerman, Augustine Shao, John Kwofie

Missionary (C.F.): Paul Nussbaum, Cuthbert O’Gara, Quentin Otwell


Society of Divine Word (S.V.D.): Leo Arkfeld, George Bernarding

Society of Jesus (S.J.): George Carrell, Anthony Schuler

Society of St. Sulpice (S.S.): Benedict Flaget

Vincentian (C.M.): Michael Domenech

Four members of religious orders became diocesan priests prior to episcopal ordination:

Benedictine (O.S.B.): René Grazica

Byzantine Franciscan (O.F.M.Cap.): William Skurla

Consolata (I.M.C.): Giuseppe De Andra

Franciscan Third Order Regular (T.O.R.): John Kudrick

One bishop joined a religious order after episcopal ordination:

Jesuit (S.J.): Michael O’Connor

The final two groups are comprised of those elevated to the respective ranks of archbishop and cardinal:

VIII. Bishops who were elevated to the rank of archbishop

Thirty-eight prelates were archbishops:

IX. Bishops and archbishops who were created cardinals

Eight of these bishops were created cardinals: Anthony Bevilacqua, John Dearden, Daniel DiNardo, Adam Maida, George Mundelein, Sean O'Malley, John Wright, and Donald Wuerl. As the United States has produced 53 Cardinals, Western Pennsylvania's percentage of the total number is 15%. All of these *eminenzas* are connected to the Diocese of Pittsburgh.

The biographical information for each of these 143 prelates, and 4 others (a bishop who is buried in Pittsburgh, a bishop who died in Pittsburgh, a priest who declined episcopal appointment on the eve of his ordination as a bishop, and a priest who exercised episcopal functions as a missionary in China), appears both in a separate Supplement to this issue of *Gathered Fragments* and on the website of The Catholic Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania — [http://catholichistorywpa.org](http://catholichistorywpa.org/).