

Midwest Bits and Pieces

NOVEMBER 1, 1991

SESQUICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION IN NEW YORK

On September 13th, Brothers Paul Kelly, Robert Siegel and I were privileged to be on the Atlantic Coast in New York. The day was sunny, warm and pleasant. The tide was out and only a little wave action moved the sea grass gently. The tidal pools were filled with star fish, clams and small crabs. It was the very same American shore that welcomed our Brothers Vincent, Anselm, Francis Xavier, Joachim, Edmond and Gatien one hundred and fifty years ago today.

The walk from the "Iowa" to their lodging with the Beyerleys and on to the church was but a few blocks. Manhattan reveals little today to help us recreate the landscape of 1841. The one clue is St. Peter's Church. The present church was constructed in 1835, replacing the original one, making it the oldest parish in New York.

St. Peter's is surrounded by the financial district and is dwarfed by the World Trade Center. In its day, however, this Greek styled building must have stood out as the pride of Catholicism. Mother Seton and many other missionaries passed this same way to found Catholicism in America.

The interior of the church is a simple box structure with a balcony across the back giving full view from any vantage point. Your eyes are attracted to a large oil painting above the main altar of St. Peter's crucifixion. Plaques and other mementoes around the Church help to tell the history of the parish. Those who have just crossed the ocean and arrived in a foreign land could easily feel that he was truly at home in St. Peter's.

ARCHBISHOP AMISSAH REMEMBERED

CSC members in the Notre Dame area gathered to observe a memorial liturgy for Archbishop John Kodwo Amissah, Archbishop of Cape Coast, Ghana, on October 4. Father Ken Grabner presided at the liturgy and Brother Rex Hennel, one of the three founding pioneer Brothers, gave the eulogy. Archbishop Amissah was killed in an auto accident in Ghana on Sunday, September 29. Brother Anthony Dadzie, a Ghanaian Brother who is presently in residence at the Brothers' Center, was among the participants at the liturgy.

In his remarks, Brother Rex included his own experiences with Archbishop Amissah. He noted that the Archbishop was the first black African to be made a bishop in West Africa. Recalling events he had experienced, Brother Rex pointed out the strength and example Archbishop Amissah evidenced as head of the Church in Ghana and stressed the support and assistance the Archbishop had always given to the Brothers of Holy Cross in their ministry in Ghana.

HE HAD WHAT IT TOOK TO BE A BROTHER

My sister had a brat for a brother, and since there were only two children in the family, you have a pretty good idea who that was. I used to torture her unmercifully. Our job after dinner was to wash the dishes. Evelyn would wash and I would dry.

That's the way it was supposed to be, but I started teasing Evelyn as soon as my parents became engrossed in a radio program.

It didn't matter what tease I used, she would get mad. In fact, she would get so angry that she would chase me out of the kitchen and finish the dishes herself.

Every night my mother would tell me to go back into the kitchen to help and Evelyn would insist that she finish alone.

When I think back on those days, I guess it was because I didn't have a brother to wrestle around with or be close to. I think I spent my early years looking for the brother I never had.

I found my brother in high school. If you saw one of us, the other was around somewhere. We were good students and we ran a little scam on the good sisters at St. Mary of Redford so we'd have more time to do the important things, like shoot pool in my basement or go to hockey games at the Olympia.

We'd take turns with homework. He'd do English, history and math homework one night and I'd take religion, chemistry and something else. We'd switch the next night so that each of us was up on all of our classes.

We were separated after high school. I went into the Marine Corps and he started college after failing a physical for the draft.

We took up where we left off after my service days and he was to be a part of our wedding party in 1949. I'll never forget the day he told me he couldn't be at the wedding.

We were taking a walk through a wooded area behind the house when he said he couldn't make the wedding.

"Why not?", I shouted.

He spoke quietly: "I never mentioned anything about this to you, but I've been thinking about it for a long time. I'm joining Holy Cross. I'm going to be a brother."

Three days later he was at Notre Dame, learning whatever it is that brothers have to learn to be effective messengers of the word.

He comes home every other year from Ghana where he teaches mathematics to high school boys. His visit this year was shortened because he was recovering from malaria and a bout with typhoid fever and had to spend a lot of time with doctors in South Bend.

Usually we take in a Detroit Tigers game, shoot a little pool and go out to dinner a couple of times, but not this summer.

We spent a day talking about Ghana and how an effort to recruit Ghanaian brothers has been exceptionally successful, or else we talked about what my eight kids or our high school classmates were doing.

We also recalled some of our youthful excursions and he mentioned the dishes episode.

Fred McGlynn has been in Ghana for maybe 30 years and the only correspondence has been a Christmas card once in a while. Even though we don't write, we are as close as we were when we were in high school.

I told my wife some anecdote about Fred this spring. There was no reason for my talking about him---the thought came to me out of the blue. It turns out that it was about the time he was taken to the hospital with the malaria and typhoid fever.

They call him Brother Frederick in Ghana and at Notre Dame, but he was a brother long before he took any Holy Cross vows. (The Michigan Catholic, September 13, 1991)

ST. EDWARD'S GETS NEW CAMPUS MINISTRY DIRECTOR

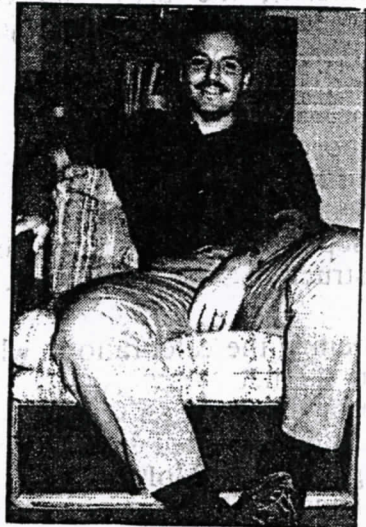
Brother Joe Barry is the new director of the campus ministry at St. Edward's University.

The campus ministry program at St. Edward's has undergone recent change, Barry said. Barry, who came to St. Edward's in 1987 as assistant director of the Holy Cross program, is the first brother to hold the director's position. He became assistant director of the ministry in 1989.

The Rev. George Temme, former campus ministry director, who is now director of his order's candidate program, will continue to celebrate sacraments. Sister Pauline Espinoza is also a member of the ministry.

"I'm excited (about being director)", Barry said. "I've gotten a lot of support from different areas of the SEU community, and that's been a good experience."

Barry, from Cleveland, joined the Brothers of Holy Cross while attending Notre Dame University. He earned a bachelor's degree in theology from Notre Dame in 1983. Before coming to St. Edward's, Barry was associate director of the youth ministry for the Archdiocese of Anchorage, a position he held for four years. (Austin American Statesman, "Neighbor" Section, p. 4)



MEMORIAL MASS AT ST. PETER'S CHURCH

The Superior General, Father Claude Grou, presided at the liturgy for the Holy Cross community gathered to observe the sesquicentennial anniversary of Holy Cross presence in the United States. The location of the liturgy was Saint Peter's Church, the same place where eight Holy Cross religious offered their prayers of thanksgiving upon their arrival in the United States some hundred and fifty years ago. The church, because of its location in lower Manhattan, was a frequent welcoming place for many Catholic immigrants of the 19th Century. Also of note, this was the first Catholic parish in the State of New York. Guests were welcomed by the Eastern Provincials, Rev. David Farrell and Brother John Gleason. Ministers at the liturgy were members of the Eastern provinces.

Holy Cross religious from both Societies and all of the United States provinces were present for the celebration. Among over three hundred guests were former members of the community, alumni from Holy Cross educational apostolates and their parents, benefactors and friends. A reception followed the liturgy. It was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to remember and celebrate a significant moment in Holy Cross history.

Included in the liturgy as a post-communion meditation was a litany of remembrance. Each of the seven founders was announced by the reader, Brother Joseph Santo, and followed with a prayer response by the congregation. Included were Pere Edouard Sorin; Freres Vincent, Joachim, Laurent, Francois Xavier, Anselme and Gatien.

Annually, the provincial councils of the three Brothers' provinces have a joint meeting. Because of this very special occasion, this year's assembly was hosted by the Eastern Province in New Rochelle, New York. This provided the opportunity for all of the councilors of the brothers' provinces to attend the celebration. Living accommodations were provided at the St. Joseph Infirmary of the Brothers of Christian Instruction at New Rochelle.

Opening the celebrations, which are scheduled for this jubilee year, was a meaningful memorial liturgy at St. Peter's Church. To be present at a location that had such a significant place in the beginnings of Holy Cross in our country was very moving. What if that had not happened? What would that mean for each of us today, one hundred and fifty years later? Other celebrations are scheduled to help each of us remember our beginnings. My vocation today has resulted from what has happened before. Let us rejoice and offer thanksgiving for that and for those who were our predecessors.

Brother Robert Siegel, CSC

FAMILY TALK

"Memory Techniques"

By Brother James Greteman, C.S.C.

There was a certain amount of excitement with the barnyard animals, for Carson, the donkey, was going to one of the neighboring barnyards to give his first workshop. Link, the chief pig, had practiced with Carson the previous week, and Link felt that Carson needed to get his feet wet by giving a workshop. Carson was giving the workshop on how to improve your memory, and these were the four points he hoped to get across to the animals in the neighboring barnyard:

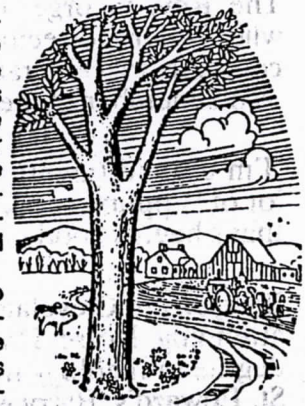
1. Practice concentrating on the situation at hand. Be as observant as possible. Examine the details of your surroundings - the scenery, the walkways, the shrubbery, the trees, and so on.

2. When you go into a new barnyard, observe some landmarks that help you remember your location. This active focusing can save you some frustrating minutes of aimless wondering later.

3. After learning an animal's name, repeat it to yourself a few times. Then recall it again 30 minutes later.

4. Use association games. If you are introduced to an animal called Bill, for example, imagine dollar "bills" taped to his ears. Then the next time you see him the "bills" should help you remember his name.

Carson was wondering if humans would be open to his workshop, for he enjoyed the attention humans gave him?



JOHN BENESH WRITES FROM PERU

12th August, 1991

Dear Tom,

I rushed back to Peru after the Provincial Chapter because I was sure the teachers' strike had ended during my absence. The strike, which began on May 8, **hadn't** ended and **still** is in progress! Our employer, the Peruvian Government, did little or nothing to resolve the situation during May and June and now has moved into a "heavy handed mode" and is threatening to fire all teachers who do not return to work on Wednesday, 14th August. I have no idea what will happen, but I hope we get back to school soon.

On Saturday, we Holy Cross people were shocked to hear of the killing of two Polish Franciscan priests who have been working in the Diocese of Chimbote for two years. They were in a remote agricultural town called PARIACOTO and on Friday night, August 9, at 7:00 p.m., an armed band of the group SENDORO LUMINOSO came into town, took the two priests and the mayor and one of the nuns. Somehow the nun escaped or was let go and the priests, the mayor of PARIACOTO and the mayor of a nearby smaller town were killed. Today, the victims were buried in PARIACOTO. The priests who were killed were in their 30's, and had been ordained about five years. This assassination follows the murder of an Australian nun in May in Huasahuasi, east of Lima in the mountains, by the same terrorist group, Sendero Luminoso. In the same period, the same group had killed three Japanese agricultural engineers in a rural area near Huacho which is between Lima and Chimbote.

In the past there had been threats of death against religious and priests, but these two killings, and that of a Peruvian nun last year, have been the only deliberate killings of Catholic priests and religious in the ten years of "armed struggle" of Sendero Luminoso in Peru. Those priests and religious who are working in remote rural and mountain areas are vulnerable since there is no effective police protection in most of those areas. Those of us in the cities aren't immune from this kind of treatment but such incidents are less likely to occur in the cities than in the country. It remains to be seen if Sendero Luminoso has begun a campaign directed at Catholic Church workers, especially those of foreign origin.

26th August, 1991

Classes began today, Monday, after three and one half months of a teachers' strike. We'll now work on Saturdays and holidays until the end of January, with "paper work" extending into the first two weeks of February.

The murder of another foreign priest in the Chimbote Diocese shocked everyone again, and even more strongly this time. Bill Persia, CSC, is alone in the parish house in Chimbote and two Holy Cross Sisters live five minutes away, and all are vulnerable, especially in the evenings or nights when the police do not enter the areas where they live. It is likely that Bill Persia and the two CSC Sisters will move to Lima (Canto Grande, where I am now) and will remain here for an indefinite time.

31 August, 1991

Bill Persia, CSC, arrived here this morning and the two Chimbote sisters are due to arrive next week, I believe.

We've all read the NEWSWEEK article on Peru in the international English version. The article is based on fact but is written in a "shock everyone" style. As I recall, the article spoke of "civil war" but it is not at that level. The map they included makes it appear that Sendero Luminoso has taken over Lima, but they haven't done that and are not likely to do so. They cause blackouts by blowing up high tension towers, they burn buses of the Government bus line, including one recently one-half block from our postulant residence in a "nice" (lower middle class) neighborhood, they put charges of dynamite in front of banks, they kill policemen, but they cannot stand up to the army.

The weakness of the government and corruption in many levels of the government, the police, the armed forces and the judiciary, make it possible for madmen like Sendero to exist and grow in numbers (5,000 plus members in a country of 22,000,000.)

For most people in the country, the major problem is not Sendero Luminoso, but the economy. Trying to put enough food on the table, trying to maintain a house or to build one with simple materials, trying to get an education or to educate children, and trying to "make it" from one day to the next are the big problems.

Keep us in your prayers,

John Benesh

BLESSED ARE THEY WHO
HEAR THE WORD OF GOD
AND KEEP IT+