

Midwest Bits and Pieces

OCTOBER 1, 1993

FATHER DUJARIE: HIS VISION CONTINUES

by Tom Maddix, CSC

A quote by Walter Brueggemann which I like very much says, "What God does first and best and most is to trust people with their moment in history. God trusts us to do what must be done for the sake of God's whole community." To me, James Dujarie was such a man.

Dujarie, a product of the French Revolution and the underground Church, spoke not through words and long circular letters but through concrete actions and decisions. Confronted with the task of rebuilding and rejuvenating the French Roman Catholic Church which had been stripped of its power, prestige and property, Dujarie responded to God's call with creativity, courage and trust in Providence..

In writing about the creativity of Dujarie in trying to find fresh ways to live the Gospel in rural France, James J. Trahey wrote that Dujarie invited people to help him with his various needs and that as a result of his exhortations, members of both sexes...joined together to relieve the spiritual and temporal necessities of their brethren." Strengthened by this experience, Dujarie began the Sisters of Providence, a group of women still living today in France whose earliest tasks were to educate young women and care for the sick. Due to Dujarie's success with the establishment of the Sisters of Providence, the priests of the diocese of Le Mans encouraged him to found in 1820 a group of brothers, the Brothers of St. Joseph.

With the establishment of the Brothers of St.

Joseph, Dujarie made some critical decisions which again demonstrated his creativity, courage, and trust in Providence. As a model for brotherhood, Dujarie chose the De La Salle Brothers as the place for Brother Andre Mottais to go learn not only the essence of religious life but also to understand the mission of the teaching brother.

The significance of Dujarie's choice focused the spirituality of the earliest brothers around Christ the teacher and transformer based upon the De La Salle model. In another defining decision, the Brothers of St. Joseph went out to teach and live the Gospel one by one versus living in communities of three or more brothers. By adopting this apostolic model of religious life, Dujarie courageously fostered a model of community centered upon significant events and rituals like the annual retreat for community building and strengthened the role of the Brother Visitor as spiritual guide and mentor for the brothers engaged in teaching.

While Dujarie's band of brothers never took the formal vows of religious life and many people entered and left, Dujarie set in motion a creative force of men trying to find creative ways to meet the needs of the Church in an undefined milieu. He showed that only concrete action and decision-making, rooted in a trust in Providence and a willingness to take risks opens one to the possibility of new life within the Church. Dujarie could have used traditional models of apostolic religious life, but he trusted that God would help during this unchartered period of life. While Dujarie provided leadership for the Brothers for only 15 years and delegated most of it to Brother Andre Mottais, Dujarie's gift to the Church and Holy Cross has continued to manifest itself in people like Brother Vincent

Pieau, one of the earliest brothers of Dujarie who served almost 40 years in the US, Brother Ephrem O'Dwyer, (US) and Brother Flavian in Bangladesh.

In Holy Cross today, the vision of Dujarie needs to be reawakened. As Bruce Lescher, CSC, (MW) recently said in an address to his fellow province members, "Basil Moreau, historians tell us, took the Brothers of St. Joseph and regularized their life, gave them stability they needed to survive as an organization. But, could our initial apostolic vision, our sense of mission, come more from Dujarie? It's an important question that needs to be resolved as we grapple with our destiny.

Dujarie continues to challenge us today to take decisions based upon that trust in Providence and seek concrete ways to live the Gospel despite obstacles, cultural indifference and hostility in a church and cultural environment with no clear road maps. Dujarie, thus, lived the challenge of our constitutions which say "For the Kingdom to come in this world, disciples must have the competence to see and the courage to act." (Con. 2:14)

THE DISCUSSION CONTINUES

2700 Dolfield Drive
Richmond, VA 23235

Sunday, August 15, 1993

Dear Tom,

Thanks for giving me a copy of Diarmuid O'Murchu's "Religious Life: A Prophetic Vision." This past week I spent 5 days on retreat and part of my retreat was reading and reflecting on that book. It's the best I can recall reading on the religious life at this present time.

Enclosed are some thoughts I have and

which I thought you might want to publish in Bits and Pieces in order to help stimulate discussion, although since I just received the September issue these remarks are a little late for that. Perhaps at a later time, like after all the September discussions have taken place. Perhaps then you will publish thoughts from many Brothers.

I find that the recent vision for the Province by Br. Philip is a hopeful one and one that I would like to see come about; but I find the vision by Br. Eligius more practical or realistic. Nevertheless, since hope dies hard, and mine isn't entirely gone, I have some ideas to help change and save (?) the Province, or at least help to save Holy Cross in the U. S.

First of all I suggest that we each ask the question which we asked ourselves a couple of years ago in Ghana: For the good of the whole, am I willing to change locations and apostolates? If we are not open to change, then our path leads to death.

Then let us pool ideas and discern, make choices and proceed on course. Some ideas: Fr. Dujarie sent Brothers out to needy parishes. Needy parishes can not afford to hire Brothers, so perhaps we need to learn to live less expensively. Can we work longer, say half-time from 60,-70, thereby being able to charge less money for our services? Can our retired Brothers work after 65 if their health is good? Then they could charge less for their services and work more directly with the poor. Do we need the most expensive health care?

Pres. Bush said that we should work for a new world order. Pope Paul VI said: "If you want peace, work for justice." Unless the new world order is just a world order we will end up with the same old world order of selfishness, greed, oppression and war. We need to reestablish our Social Justice Commission and to make social justice a high priority, not just for the Commission, but for our entire province. We've lost this

important emphasis and social justice with charity speaks to the heart of humankind and could be a rallying point for the Province.

We need to further cooperate with other provinces in new apostolates such as Adel, Georgia, thereby being able to help needy dioceses as well as needy people.

Perhaps we need to pull out of a more affluent school in order to better staff Holy Trinity or some other inner city school to serve the more needy on a lower rung of well being.

Since the Indiana Province seems to have the most success in the U.S. recruiting vocations, perhaps we should participate more in some of their endeavors. It won't hurt to cooperate with Priest provinces as well as with other Brother provinces.

It seems that we are at a crisis point. Business as usual means extinction for our province, not for Holy Cross. Do we have the creativity and the will to change? If not, let's say so and start planning our demise.

Prayers,

Brother William Mewes, C.S.C.

WHO WAS THAT MASKED MAN
by
Brother Philip Armstrong, CSC

I suspect the Lone Ranger affected the life of all of us when we were children. I can remember gathering with my brothers around the radio in the late afternoons, intently absorbed in the thrilling account of the mysterious lawman, his trusted companion Tonto, and their marvelous mounts, Silver and Scout. There was no frontier problem they could not solve--anonymously, gratuitously and for the most part non-violently. As they rode off into the sunset after bringing justice and peace to an honest but seemingly inept segment of frontier

society, someone would ring out the hearty cry, "Hiyo, Silver, away!" Great stuff. The world was right again. And supper was ready.

I suspect we in the religious life are waiting for some masked man to come riding into our lives. Because our prayerful sincerity has apparently not sufficed, we look for someone who can address our uneasiness, uncertainty and inability to make things work the way we would like. We need someone to bring back tranquility, justice, order and security to us. Our own efforts have proved futile. We feel as unsure of ourselves and our future as we did ten to fifteen years ago. We seem not to have the answer ourselves, but who does?

I have not seen any research literature suggesting the Lone Ranger perhaps as a biblical type of Jesus --the benevolent and potent saviour who appears, identity masked and aided by at least one devoted disciple--to rectify the wrongs of society. This thesis would provide an interesting academic exercise, somewhat along the line of *The Gospel According to Charlie Brown*. But don't we of the Midwest Province more or less yearn for the advent of an external salvific intervention to address our predicament? Aren't we actually waiting for the next provincial or the superior general or a sympathetic and effective facilitator--someone, anyone--to alight in our midst, speak the magic words, gesture mysteriously, sock the despicable black-hatted cad on the chin and make things right for us again? Our theme is: "*Somebody* ought to do something!"

Indeed. But who is that *somebody*? Who is our very own masked man? Frankly, there ain't no such critter. The fact is that we are our own masked men, our own somebodies.

The frontier towns in which the Lone Ranger rendered justice were beset with all the weaknesses of humanity: the greed, selfishness, violence, lust, revenge, and

injustice that afflict every age and every locale. Among the townspeople were the good and the less good, the achievers and the non-achievers, the leaders and the followers. Sometimes the delicate balance among these folks was upset, perhaps by a malevolent interloper, maybe by one of their own. The things needed to be set right but there was no one on the scene who could manage it. Bad things happened to good people until someone could.

If we want to develop clarity in moving ourselves as a province toward the future--that glorious 21st century whose appearance on the calendar is somehow magically supposed to resolve all the ills of the 20th--we had better peel off our masks, peer in the mirror of our souls and recognize ourselves for who we are: the Lone Rangers of today.

Simply put, we are the ones with the answers to our own questions and the solutions to our own problems. No one is going to materialize from outside and "set things right," whatever "right" is in our imagination. We control our own future. Our decisions and actions today determine who and what we will be in the future--or if we will be.

I understand the perspective of those who believe we brothers are a dying breed. After all, they are looking at history and at current figures and projections. We don't need a sophisticated computer program to tell us how things are. What I don't accept is the death wish, the plug-pulling mentality which robs us of any initiative, any creativity, any vitality at all out of which to challenge the present situation and respond to it as men seeking life rather than death. I think Deuteronomy 11 is just as valid for us today as for the chosen people. We have a choice before us: a blessing or a curse, death or life. God counsels the choice of life. Every incident and value in scripture is reflective of this mind set. What stronger hint do we need? The headnote for Chapter 8 of Diarmuid O'Murchu's book on the religious

life, *Religious Life: A Prophetic Vision*, is from Gerald Arbuckle who clearly states that whatever the perceived situation, even if God should apparently will the eventual dissolution of a religious congregation, it is unacceptable for religious to commit mass suicide by acceding to and facilitating the slow diminishment and death of their way of life. I not only agree with Arbuckle, I feel that his even having to formulate such a statement is regrettable because it presumes the existence of an opposing mortalitarian tendency, one which I believe should never have existed in the first place.

Ironically titled, the so-called "living will" document treats of an ethically unnecessary prolongation of life. At chapter we must not legislate such a direction for our province; rather, I believe we must resurrect among ourselves not a *living will* but a *will to live*. Our provincial chapter should reflect our choice of life in every facet of its deliberations, statements and decisions. Pessimism should be banned from the floor, not by parliamentary or procedural fiat, but by our own irreversible determination always to seek life rather than death.

The Lone Ranger embodied the virtue of hope. He had hope in the innate goodness of men and women and for the triumph of justice in the social structures of a largely ungoverned wilderness. And it was people who made it happen. He sought out those who would take initiative and left them heartened by his intervention, determined to seize the future and control its development for the good of all. He left them with the heart to face the future.

Often one hears the question today, "Do we have the heart to carry on?" With negative and pessimistic indicators on all sides, it is easy not to have heart, to be discouraged, depressed, disillusioned, apathetic. As in the days symbolized in the Lone Ranger accounts, seizing the present and staging the future are not easy and never have been. That is not the question--whether it is

easy or not. Rather, do we corporately have the heart to take the necessary decisions now and to stake our hope and invest our remaining energy on an uncertain future? Familiar books on the religious life assert that indeed there are members of religious congregations who personify this courageous motivation. They also admit that there are religious who do not and never will. The solution? If corporate consensus cannot be reached on directions for life in the future, then those who do have the vision, the courage, the motivation ought not to be hindered from exercising their right to stage the future.

I believe that at our forthcoming chapter we must make room for the vision, the motivation, the urgent determination to live and to enrich life for ourselves and others as brothers, as members of the Congregation of Holy Cross. At the end of a chapter that accomplishes this we ought not to have to ask the question, "Who was that masked man?" because we will recognize him in the Spirit of Jesus and in ourselves. If we believe in the Spirit's intervention in our lives, then we too can determine to seize the future and control its development. He will not leave us, but go forward with us and provide us with the heart to face the future. We will hear not the far-away cry of "Hiyo, Silver, away!" as we leave Loyola University and the shores of Lake Michigan, but the loud ringing in our ears of the hoofbeats and the heartbeats of our own inspiration. And in our hands we will carry a blueprint laying out a viable vision of the structure of our new city of hope and life.



1993 GRANT DISTRIBUTION

On June 15, 1993, Basic Grants totaling \$21,684,828 were distributed to 619 congregations representing 52,999 religious age 60 and above. The Midwest Province received \$47,293.76. This is an annual collection taken up in all dioceses to assist older religious for whom there was no retirement plan during their active years of ministry.

HOLY CROSS NOVITIATE BEGINS NEW YEAR

On August 10, 1993, eight men arrived at Cascade to begin their novitiate year. They are:

Thomas Cumming, (IP)
Stanislao Esposito, (EB)
Leonard Foley, (EP)
Kevin Gary, (IP)
Kevin Heffernan, (IP)
Stephen Kempinger, (IP)
Patrick Vezina (Can. Priest's Pr.)
Patrick Weber, (SP)

BROTHER THOMAS C. HENNING

Brother Thomas Henning is enrolled in a new program, *The Lay Ministry Program*, at St. Meinrad Seminary and College, St. Meinrad, Indiana. Tom began the program in July of this year and will complete the program in the summer of 1994. Tom has received a ministry grant of \$2200 for the present school year.

FRANK ROTSAERT WRITES

"Bob Livernois asked me to give a talk at the Day of recollection/retreat day for the faculty of Monroe St. Mary Catholic Central High School to begin the school year. I agreed and did so on August 23. The talk was about teaching in a community of faith and I

made most of my points by reading a short story of mine that was about teaching. Our semester at Siena started Monday and it is hectic, hectic from now on. Hope things are going well for you. My pig collection grows."

99TH BIRTHDAY

On September 9th, 1993, Brother Vitus Schwartz celebrated his ninety-ninth birthday. Vitus is a resident of Dujarie House.

BOYSVILLE 45TH ANNIVERSARY

The following article is taken from the Adrian, Michigan, *Daily Telegram* of August 30, 1993.

Father Flanagan probably had a big smile on his face Sunday. About 700 gathered yesterday at the Clinton campus of Boysville, Inc. to celebrate the agency's 45th anniversary. The day's festivities included an awards presentation to those who have helped Boysville over the years, entertainment, tours of the large campus and liturgy.

Boysville currently provides rehabilitation services to 1,000 children and their families at 17 campuses across Michigan and Ohio. The Clinton site, 8744 Clinton-Macon Rd., was the first, founded in 1948.

"We're probably the state's largest social service agency," said Suzanne Truskowski, media relations manager for Boysville.

Brother Chester Freel, Boysville regional director at Clinton, said the organization began as a place for boys who had no where else to live. In the 1970's, Boysville began working with youth who were having trouble getting along at home. Today, all boys referred to the Clinton campus are sent by the court system. Freel said those working at Boysville, which is run by the Holy

Cross Brothers at Notre Dame, work with the entire family.

"If we can improve the way a family works together -- the environment -- the family will benefit. We hope families stay together, and work with one another," explained Freel, who started with Boysville 23 years ago.

According to a release, programs for the youth are designed to improve self confidence and self worth, install moral and personal values, and give the children and their families the skills and support necessary to successfully meet challenges. Through counseling and classes, students can earn general equivalency diplomas and get vocational training.

"We teach them independence and help them stand on their own two feet," Truskowski said.

The Clinton campus serves about 120 boys aged 10-17. The site includes two dormitories, a chapel, health and family center, dining hall, vo-tech building, school building, recreation hall, two administration buildings, gymnasium and two brothers' houses.

Brother Francis Boylan Sunday thanked the 70,000 members of the Knights of Columbus, who raise funds and work personally with families where they can. He said he also appreciated the backing of the Catholic bishops and parishes of Michigan and Ohio for helping the Boysville program.

