

Midwest Bits and Pieces

September 1, 1994



THOUGHTS ON LEAVING OFFICE

This is the last time I will be communicating to you as Provincial and would like to share a few reflections with you about leaving office. Ordinarily when we leave home for a long period of time, we check the doors, windows and water, put out the cat and turn down the heat. In this period of transition, I have had plenty of time to take care of these physical realities and I am comfortable in knowing that things are okay.

Much more important in the transition are the persons who will take your place and the folks who have been selected to fill the offices that have been a part of the provincial administration. Thanks to your having elected Bro. William Geenen, his selection of Bro. Donald Bailer and Bro. Donald Gibbs, and the election by the chapter of Bro. Richard Gilman and Bro. Robert Fillmore, I feel we have good leadership to carry us into the twenty-first century. I am comfortable knowing that all is well and find it possible to leave with ease.

With any job you have had for a considerable length of time, you are tempted to tell others how it is to be done. But if you look carefully, each person has his or her own style and it is not proper to insist that things be done as they have been done in the past. The temptation is all too great to discourage a new vision and new goals. However, it is time for the new and time to move ahead.

You have been thoughtful and kind in your words, cards and letters of thanks to Robert Siegel, Larry, Charles, Robert Fillmore, Richard, Paul and myself. We have benefitted from your willingness to be of service to the province and its mission and we have grown as a result of our service to you.

Members of the staff that have been assisting us will be staying on, along with Brother Philip Armstrong who has been added. As you know, Philip was a great help in taking Robert's place in planning for the chapter.

Wilbert Leveling began working in the archives thirteen years ago. The last twelve years, he has been archivist. The archives provide us with a personal as well as collective history of our province.

Michael Becker has been here eleven years. As you know, he is responsible for medical insurance claims and payments for province members. Recently he was asked to take responsibility for football ticket distribution.

Edward Courtney has given nine years of service to the provincial office. He has been responsible for mail pick-up and delivery under all kinds of weather, as well as specialized services requested from him from time to time.

Rex Hennel came on board nine years ago to be my personal secretary. He has been of great assistance in maintaining the consistency of the office of provincial when it was necessary for me to travel.

Raymond Papenfuss joined us after a serious attack of cerebral malaria in 1987 forced his leaving Ghana. After a year of college teaching, Raymond assumed responsibility for vocation promotion and Mission

Promoter for West Africa.

Sharon Kulesa came to work at the office as secretary for Brother Lawrence in 1982. Since 1987 she has been serving on a call basis for Brothers Don Gibbs and Raymond Papenfuss, permitting her to enjoy her family and garden.

Rene Gross has been with us for six years. It is she who most often greets you on the phone or at the door when you come to or call the provincial house. Rene is responsible for accounts receivable and many other important activities of the office.

Wanda Anderson has been responsible for cleaning the provincial house these last four years. She is as regular as a clock. Her regularity tells us the day of the week and the room she is cleaning the time of the day.

Madelyne Huffman joined the office staff as accounts payable clerk one and half years ago. She is Rene's mother and her assistant on the phone and other office duties.

John Kuhn became archivist within the last year. He is assisted by Brother Wilbert. John has attended workshops and visited archives around the country to update the methods of preservation of materials. Our archives is becoming acid free with the new methods of preservation.

Margaret Walsh is our newest staff member. She works closely with Brother Lawrence in the operation of the treasurer's office. Her presence assures the continuity of the smooth functioning of the treasurer's office. She is assisted by Michael, Rene and Madelyne.

Francis Englert has come to live at the provincial house as of last month. You may see him at the house or hear him on the phone. Francis will continue limited services at Holy Cross College as well as provide assistance for many needed things here at

the provincial house.

In mid-July we all had an opportunity to come together as a staff to celebrate Brother Charles Smith's moving on to his new ministry. Charles will live at River Grove High School and be employed by "The People's Music School." The school is sponsored by donations from benefactors who support the unusual talents of those who have limited income.

Brother Lawrence Skitzki will remain here through the fall and early winter to complete the transfer of administration. He is planning on a sabbatical and will be looking for a new ministry.

I will be going to spend some time with my sister, Bonnie, in Colorado Springs. She has guaranteed that I will be back in shape in no time flat. While in the Springs, I will be looking for possibilities in ministry.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the staff and members of the province for these last nine years. They are nine years that I am not likely to forget.

It has been nine years of joy and suffering that have left their effects on me. There has been more joy than suffering, but in the process I have come to understand that this whole business of being provincial has nothing to do with my will. It's His will that guides a province and a community.



OPEN HEART SURGERY

A certain chilling terror would grip me if I were advised of a need for an operation to clear blockages in my heart's valves or arteries. Though such surgery has become relatively commonplace and the incidence of success virtually total, there would remain a gnawing doubt, a fear that in my case

something would go wrong, that I would not emerge from the operation alive; or if alive, so severely limited in activity that I might as well not have undergone the procedure. Yet the alternative could be equally frightening, probably wholly unacceptable. So I suppose I would submit in trusting confidence.

What I forget is that God has been performing open heart surgery on me repeatedly throughout the course of my life. What I mean, is that once I acknowledged the need, once I overcame the fear of the unknown and somewhat threatening outcome of God's divine action in my all too humanly weakened life, he has been using my willing openness to his presence to alter me, refashion me, convert me, change my heart (metanoia)--I would hope--into a more precise image of himself. God has been operating on me, clearing blockages that cause sinful obstinacy.

I have written before about the need for conversion. Our provincial chapter reiterated the assumption that personal and corporate conversion is an ongoing remedy against those barriers standing in the way of the accomplishment of our various goals over the next several years. Without the process of conversion continuously at work in our lives as religious, our identity, our fraternity, our apostolic effectiveness are compromised, even possibly rendered powerless. Our hearts must always be open. At every moment we have, so to speak, to be found lying on God's operating table awaiting his capable but sometimes painful intervention. Undergoing this type of operation may be no easier in mind or spirit than the dreaded physical procedure performed these days.

A few months ago, Br. Thomas Moser sent all of us copies of a collection of articles taken from *Human Development* by the Canadian Religious Conference and reprinted in a little book entitled, *Of Clogs and Stocking Feet: Reflections on the Future of the Religious Life*. Among the articles are two by Holy Cross Brother Joel Giallanza,

but the one to which I want to refer particularly here is by LaSalle Christian Brother Charles Reutemann, formerly long-time director of the Sangre de Cristo renewal program in New Mexico.

Charlie held the position of director more than seventeen years ago when I made the one hundred days of Sangre, and his uniquely enthusiastic spiritual wisdom and expressiveness have evolved even more influentially over the years as teacher and spiritual director. Charlie has an article called, *Religious Life Spirituality in the Year 2010*. You have probably read it already, either at its first appearance in *Human Development* a few years ago, or in the book you recently received. Appealing to me especially were two "strands" of the new "cable" connecting religious with God and apostolic effectiveness in the first years of the 21st century. These sections are *The Experience of God Strand: A Balance to the Holistic Strand*, and *The Conversion Strand*. Without repeating Charlie, I want to support his insights and his approach. These two brief sections are worth the cost of the book itself and demand our attention as religious attempting to face the uncertainties of moving creatively and life-givingly into the next century.

Both sections in fact treat of conversion, the first focusing more on the personal relationship with Jesus and the direct experiencing of his person in our lives that leads to the second, personal conversion enabling effective involvement in ministry. Reading these sections isolated from the context in which he places them might reduce their forcefulness, so I suggest his entire article be given a thoughtful reading. Still, each part reveals its own wise insights. Even if you have read it before, give it another look.

The "bottom line" for us is that conversion remains a constant in our lives, but that it always assumes a purpose beyond our personal salvation. It moves of necessity

into the framework of effective ministry, both within and beyond the community. If, as Br. Loyola Christoph wrote, religious never retire from being religious, that is, from giving of themselves apostolically, then the need for our ongoing conversion and its value to others is a fact of life not to be taken lightly, not to be considered by any means fully accomplished at any point in our lives. There is always more changing of our hearts required, more open heart surgery needed on us at the hands of the Divine Physician. Charlie Reutemann helps us, his fellow religious, to recognize, verbalize and accept the meaning of this ongoing conversion for ourselves. It is, as usual, up to us to accept the challenge, make it particularly our own agenda, especially in the light of our chapter deliberations, and stretch ourselves out trustingly on the operating table of the Lord.

--Br. Philip Armstrong, C.S.C.



THE WONDERS OF THE TELEPHONE

By Bro. Edward Courtney, CSC

The telephone! What a wonderful machine! Outstanding improvements have been accomplished since the days of the 4-party system that I was acquainted with in the 20's and 30's. The universal telephone system is very expensive in its continued development. It is also quite complex in the various functions; a system we cannot do without. For liberty rests not only on clearly defined lines but also on a two-way communication system. It is irreplaceable. The modern telephone network is a miracle and its global reach boggles the mind.

The networks, now inter-connecting the

continents, is by far the largest system in the world and is indispensable. Modern life would be inconceivable without it. In 1900, the Bell company started a campaign to democratize the telephone so that every man, woman and child would have access to the telephone, not just the wealthy.

The telephone was invented by Mr. Alexander Graham Bell (1847-1922) on March 7, 1876. Mr. Bell was a Scottish-American scientist and was born in Edinburgh, Scotland. The family migrated to Brantford, Ontario, Canada in 1870. Eventually the family moved across the border to Boston where Mr. Bell taught "Visible Speech" to instructors of the deaf and continued his experiments in the development of the telephone.

During this period he met Miss Mabel Hubbard, who was one of the deaf students. They eventually fell in love and were married in 1876. She was his inspiration through years of exhausting hours on several inventions.

The word telephone comes from the Greek word tele, meaning "far" and phone, meaning "sound" and was first used to describe any apparatus for conveying sound to a distant place. The very basis of the telephone consists of a wire connecting 2 or more people in a dialogue anywhere in the world.

A caller can dial to more than 100 million homes in the United States and to more than 200 nations. North America has 49% of the telephone market, Europe has 33% of the market, and Asia has 11% of the remaining market. It has been estimated that 95% of American homes enjoy the benefits of the telephone and the average American home makes approximately 120 calls per month. "I've got to hang up now because" must be one of the most frequently used lines during the busy time of the day.

The telephone and, I might add, the transistor radio, have had a profound effect

in the development of global communities. A good example for the telephone would be the HOT LINE between Moscow and the United States in case of an emergency. The late dictator, Joseph Stalin vetoed Leon Trotsky's efforts to establish a telephone in the Kremlin. Stalin feared that the telephone would foster counter-revolution or conspiracy.

On January 25, 1925, the first official trans-continent call was made between Mr. Bell in New York and Thomas A Watson in San Francisco, using a replica of the first telephone. Mr. Bell said, "Mr. Watson, come here. I want you."

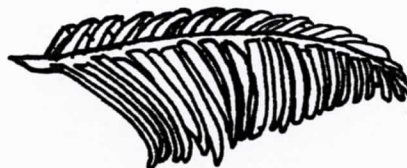
The telephone has become a friend, a companion and an additional person in the home in a very disjointed and disconnected society. It continues to be a life-line for the lonely, the depressed, the suicidal, the lost, the confused and the bewildered. It is the instrument for the emergency illness victim who needs an ambulance, a doctor or a policeman or policewoman, or for whatever need may arise.

It is interesting from a historical point of view that in the early days of the telephone the operators were usually young boys; they were eventually replaced by women because the boys were rude to the customers and found delight in playing tricks with the wire on the customers. In the words of one of the early women operators, "The boys were complete failures." The introduction of women operators supplied women with much needed employment and has played a major role in their economic development.

The use of the telephone by very young children is quite common today and they can be taught telephone etiquette at almost any age and to dial the operator in case of an emergency. There are on record many instances where children have performed marvelously in an emergency and they are quick to learn. The home or the first grade would be the appropriate time and place to

teach children telephone etiquette just as we teach them to tell the time of day, tie their shoe laces, brush their teeth and the like. I can remember Mr. Sinclair, my civics teacher, teaching us telephone etiquette in conjunction with our course in civics; that was over 60 years go and still today I am very conscious of telephone etiquette.

And finally, the Bell company has on request a brochure that instructs us how to handle harassing, obscene or threatening telephone calls. Calls of this type include threats to one's life and property, bomb threats, robbery, threats of kidnapping, bodily harm or injury to you or a member of your family. The brochure advises that if you receive such a call, HANG UP IMMEDIATELY and note the time of day and the date; then call the POLICE IMMEDIATELY and follow their instructions. We are further advised not to dialogue with such a caller. If you do, the harassment will continue with further calls.



CATHOLIC ORDERS FACE RETIREMENT FUND CRISIS

Roman Catholic religious orders have postponed retirement for some nuns and priests and may have to cut back on charitable work because they're more than \$6 billion short of what they need to take care of members in their old age.

Inflation, rising health care costs and graying membership sent the retirement liability for 103,000 men and women in the U.S. Catholic orders soaring from \$1.4 billion to \$6.37 billion since 1991, according to a 1994 survey of 825 orders.

The financial crisis has forced some orders to postpone retirement for nuns, priests and brothers and demand higher salaries from dioceses for work once done for a pittance.

In addition, orders must decide whether as many nuns and priests can continue to do charitable work -- in soup kitchens and homeless shelters, for instance -- instead of seeking higher-paying teaching and administrative jobs.

"[The issue] in the local order is who's going to work in mission, and who's going to work in something that...has something to do with mission, but also brings in money," Dale Kent, a partner in the Arthur Anderson accounting firm who led the survey team, said Monday.

In building the Catholic Church into the largest, nuns and priests from religious orders typically worked up to 80 hours a week in schools, parishes and hospitals.

In return they were given minimal compensation, relying on an informal pension system in which younger members of the order supported older priests and nuns, but the number of people entering religious orders has dropped sharply since the 1960s, and orders in the '90s are graying rapidly.

The survey administered by the church's Tri-Conference Retirement Office found that 3 percent of nuns were under age 39, compared with 8 percent as recently as 1985. The percentage of members ages 80 and above increased from 14 percent to 22 percent since 1985.

Many orders have put in place retirement planning programs, but fewer than 10 percent of the orders have adequate retirement funding, the survey found.

The \$150 million contributed in special collections at catholic Masses in recent years has been of only limited help in closing the deficit.

Kent said congregations have to go beyond traditional fund-raising to methods such as lobbying dioceses to pay nuns and priests from religious orders the same salaries they pay for lay workers.

Sister Margaret Cafferty, executive director of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious, said bishops and dioceses have been slower than expected to respond with higher wages.

In a 1993 survey, only 31 of 156 dioceses responding said they gave men and women from religious orders the same salaries they paid lay people. (Taken from July 18, 1994 Chicago Tribune.)



LOCAL VOCATIONS RETREAT AIMS TO HELP DISCERN INDIVIDUAL CALLING TO FAITH

By Barbara Ballenger

A year ago, Sandy Pedone, 51, was looking for some honest talk about religious life.

She had entertained the idea of becoming a nun off and on since she was in grade school. But she married instead, had five kids, and later divorced.

The idea of joining the convent resurfaced a few years ago, as her youngest child was nearing her 20s. But Pedone made her final decision last year on a retreat sponsored by the local Serra clubs and the diocesan Vocations Office.

Then she listened to sisters, brothers and priests tell their stories of religious life -- the good and bad. "You saw them as real people rather than these people on pedestals," she said.

The parishioner of St. Martha in Akron also found she had much in common with fellow participants, most of whom were between the age of 30 and 50.

Now Pedone, a secretary at Ohio Edison, is in the process of joining the Humility Mary Sisters.

The Vocations Office estimates 40 to 50 people will attend the second annual "Where are You Going Retreat" July 22-24 at the Center for Pastoral Leadership. last year's weekend drew 73 women and men from 60 parishes, according to the Vocations Office.

In today's culture it's sometimes difficult to hear what God might be saying -- especially if it's a call to become a sister, brother or priest, said Sister Mary Rose Kocab, SIW, co-director of the Vocations Office.

The Where are You Going Retreat is designed to clear some space and time to listen a little closer, she said.

"Bishop (Anthony) Pilla had asked our Serrans to think about doing something for our older candidates to help them explore the vowed and ordained way of life" Sister Kocan said.

The local Serra Club promotes vocations in the diocese.

Several participants from last year's retreat have since contacted religious communities or attended other programs run by the Vocations Office, said Father Michael Woost, the office's other co-director.

"When we're talking about vocations in the religious and ordained life, we're not talking about ministry," Father Woost said. "We're

not talking about what you do, but who you are. For a lot of people today it's a hard concept to understand."

The retreat features talks by several local nuns, brothers and priests on topics such as discernment, prayer, and personal experiences. Participants also have a chance to discuss vocations with Bishop Pila.

Behind the scenes, about 250 Serrans from throughout the diocese have been visiting parishes to promote the event. They've also raised the \$6,000 necessary to offer it free of charge, said John Power, who chaired last year's retreat.

Power had suggested the local clubs adapt a vocations retreat developed by Serrans in Houston, which he had heard of through his work with Serra International.

"It proves Serrans can collaborate with the vocations director and really accomplish something worthwhile," he said of the retreat. "It's all based on teamwork."

During the weekend, Serra Club members will provide hospitality, serve meals, give directions and clean up, Power said.

"That's where we get our satisfaction, seeing that everything is first class," he said.

Serra Club members also helped interview people interested in attending the retreat.

Retreat planners wanted to make sure candidates were interested in religious life and already had some involvement in a parish, Sister Kocab said.

If someone's going to commit themselves to full-time ministry, it's important that it's already an important part of their life," she said.

Men and women attend the retreat together, which is reflective of the collaboration among sisters, brothers and priests in church life,

she said.

The weekend also gives people considering a religious vocation a sense that they are not alone at a time when numbers in vocations are decreasing.

Probably one of the best experiences is finding out there were so many people thinking about the religious way of life," Father Woost said. (Taken from Catholic Universe Bulletin of July 15, 1994. Sent in by Bro. Barry Lambour who is active with the Serra Club in Ohio.)



A MORE PERFECT LEGACY

A Portrait of Brother Ephrem O'Dwyer,
C.S.C., 1888-1978
Brother Philip Armstrong, CSC

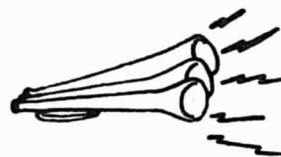
In this first in-depth biography of Brother Ephrem O'Dwyer, who was unarguably the most influential brother in the history of the U.S. Province of Holy Cross, Brother Philip Armstrong focuses on Ephrem's pioneering efforts to clarify the brothers' role in a province that sometimes took for granted or ignored their contributions. As this book illustrates, Ephrem emerged as a natural leader of the brothers, one who guided them toward the firm establishment of the place in the congregation at a time when their original mission was in danger of being lost.

Armstrong begins with a brief look at Ephrem's youth in Ireland, his emigration to the United States, his novitiate and eventual profession of vows in 1913, and his early career as a high school teacher and administrator. Armstrong then focuses on the period of 1931 - 1956, during part of which time Ephrem served as treasurer for

both the Holy Cross province and University of Notre Dame and as a member of the provincial and general councils. In these positions he honed his exceptional administrative skills and sharpened his determination to defend the rights of the brothers, which led to his integral involvement in the juridical division of the province of priests and brothers to autonomous provinces in 1945. Ephrem was then elected the first provincial superior of the brothers in the United States, and in 1956, when a general chapter mandated the reorganization of the brothers' province into three geographical units, he agreed to lead the new vice-province in West Haven, CT for a six-year term. At the age of 84 he returned to Notre Dame where he died in 1978

Throughout this work Armstrong portrays Ephrem honestly, discussing not only his strengths but also his very human struggles. Ephrem's life story is enhanced with over 40 written and oral remembrances of him, recounted by those who knew him personally and professionally.

A More Perfect Legacy will appeal to all those associated with the apostolates of Holy Cross, those interested in the history of the congregation, and those studying the place of religious brothers in the Church. (Taken from the Ave Maria's listing of new fall publications. The book is due out in February of 1995.)



THE FAX AND NOTHING BUT THE FAXS.

Brother Donald Bailor asked that his fax number be placed in the directory. Until then you may wish to contact him for business or pleasure at his California Office: 818 - 501 - 2310.