

MIDWEST PROVINCE NEWS ITEMS

June 1998

Br. Sixtus Perzynski died on May 26 at the age of 83 at Dujarie House after an illness. He suffered from arthritis for some time, but only in recent years did he begin to experience the heart problems that eventually resulted in bypass surgery and, only weeks ago, the implantation of a pacemaker.

A farmer by profession, Br. Sixtus served for more than half a century as an exemplary model for others, especially the novices at Silver Lake Farm, Rolling Prairie. His indefatigable energy belied his diminutive, lean and rugged build. He was intensely dedicated to prayer and community activities, his twinkling eyes symbolic of the ever-cheerful and optimistic personality that contributed to the well being of every local community in which he lived.

Beginning about 1989 his arthritis suggested he seek a warmer climate during cold weather, and he spent winters at Sherman Oaks, California, where he helped tend the grounds of the brothers' house at Notre Dame High School, especially the flower beds.

His death completes one more chapter in the impressive chronicles of those brothers who served the community loyally and tirelessly for more than a century as farmers and gardeners.

At a dinner on April 4 marking the 25th anniversary of the founding of the Senior Friendship Centers of America, Inc., **Br. William Geenen** was honored with the organization's prestigious *Flame Award* for his role in establishing and developing the Centers. This event marked only the sixth time the award had been presented by the Board. The members of the provincial council, in Sarasota for meetings, were present for the occasion, as were several other Midwest Province members. **Fr. Robert Morin**, assistant general, represented the general administration.

The survey sent out by **Mr. Frank Macknick** of The Holy Cross Village information office and **Br. John May** of the Planning Office is stirring up significant interest. Of the over 5,600 surveys sent to responsive readers of *BROTHERS*, the official newsletter of the Midwest Province Development Office, some 450 surveys had been completed and returned as of late May and more were coming in and the data being entered into the computer.

At a special Mass of Celebration and Thanksgiving at Monroe St. Mary Catholic Central High School, **Br. Robert Livernois** was honored for both his silver anniversary of religious profession and his years of effective service as president of the school. Bob will replace retiring **Br. James Bluma** as Dean of Student Activities at Holy Cross College, Notre Dame.

Br. Kenneth Haders, president of Archbishop Hoban High School, Akron, reports he has received word that the school is to receive the *President's Blue Ribbon Award for Schools* for the academic year just completed. More details will follow. Congratulations to Br. Ken and the administration, faculty and students at Hoban!

Brs. Carroll Posey and **Eduardo Michalik** journeyed to Montreal, Canada in May to pick up a statue of **Blessed Br. Andre Bessette** that will occupy a prominent place in the Andre

Chapel at the St. Joseph Care Center-West, where Carroll is employed. An open house will be announced once all the renovations are completed. The SJCCW is operated by the health system sponsored by the Sisters of the Holy Cross, serving Alzheimer patients as well as others who need total care because of age or infirmity.

Br. Bennet Nettleton, long time teacher at St. Edward High School, Lakewood, Ohio, was honored on May 14 by the school for 45 years of service, the longest for any faculty member.

Br. James Spooner, president, noted that Br. Bennet has served under every principal in the school's history, has seen duty in almost every corner of the building, and is legendary for his care and concern for students.

Br. Bennet originally came to St. Edward as director of the cafeteria. Today he is a World History teacher and the curator of his own classroom museum, which he reminds people is his "hobby out of control." The museum displays are not simply artifacts to be viewed, but are circulated as pieces of history to be touched and examined.

Brother frequently attends athletic and fine arts events and watches intently and with satisfaction the achievement of the student-athletes.

Br. Bennet was born in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and was taught by the Brothers of the Sacred Heart. He was honored previously by the school's alumni for his 50 years of service in the classroom.

Br. James also reported that **Mr. James Nieberding** of the St. Edward faculty, was honored by John Carroll University as the recipient of its *Alumni Educator Award*. Jim joined the St. Edward faculty in 1955 as a social studies teacher and has remained there ever since.

The periodic publication of the *Franciscan Outreach Association*, an Illinois non-profit corporation for which **Br. Donald Fleischhacker** does volunteer work, featured an article by Br. Don about his activities, which center around helping guests of the facility as a case manager. His responsibilities include office visits, telephone calls, and assisting clients to find shelter or housing, work or job opportunities, food, clothing, furniture, legal assistance, substance abuse programs, and AIDS assistance. Don admits being humbled by the trusting nature of the clients, and values being able to share on a deep level with many of the clients and show human compassion for them.

Your prayers are requested for the complete recovery of **Br. Peter Graham** of Archbishop Hoban High School, Akron, from gall bladder surgery on May 12. Because of contraindications, the surgeons could not avail themselves of the less invasive method of surgery commonly practiced these days.

Please remember also in your prayers **Fr. Benjamin Labbe, C.S.C. (CP)**, who died in Bangladesh at the age of 74 of complications resulting from a motorbike accident on May 17 near Barisal where the novitiate for the congregation is located; **Br. Wilbert Leveling's** brother, **Fr. Carl Leveling**, who died in Fort Madison, Iowa, on May 25; **Br. Jonas Moran's** sister, **Mrs. Mary O'Donnell**, who died in early May in Cleveland; and **Br. Ripon Gomes's** father, who died in Bangladesh suddenly and unexpectedly on the family farm on May 13.