

MIDWEST PROVINCE NEWS ITEMS

June 1999

Shortly after the publication of the May *News Items* that announced **Br. Ralph Baird's** return to the hospital in Fort Wayne for treatment connected with his heart transplant, he encountered major rejection symptoms. Though he returned to Notre Dame a few days after his visit to Lutheran Hospital, less than a week later, May 12, he was rushed back by ambulance. Some nine hours later he died, only weeks short of his 61st birthday.

Boysville's only vocation to the brothers, Br. Ralph acknowledged the immense influence that **Brs. William Healy** (then Br. Romain) and **Gregoire Bleau** had on him during his formative years at that school.

Yet, from the numerous responses received from far and wide following the news of his death, it is clear he himself became in influence of no less magnitude in Bangladesh among the students he taught and counseled. **Br. Hobart Pieper**, long a missionary in Bangladesh, remarked that he often advised Br. Ralph to let up on the pressure he imposed on both himself and his students, but it seemed Br. Ralph felt compelled to demand much if positive results were to be achieved both then and later. From remarks pouring in from former colleagues and students, he was right. **Br. James Newberry**, superior at Columba Hall when Br. Ralph underwent the heart transplant, gave a moving eulogy at the funeral in which he catalogued the reflections of community members and others about Br. Ralph and his influence on them. The large crowd at the funeral, including many of Br. Ralph's relatives, attested to the impact he had been on them.

Br. George Klawitter, English teacher at St. Edward's University in Austin, Texas, has announced that his book on **Br. Vincent Pieau** has been published. Br. Vincent was one of the first brothers to arrive in the United States from France, the one after whom both Vincent Hall in Austin and St. Vincent Scholasticate at Notre Dame (the east wing of Columba Hall in the early 1950's) were named.

Anyone who wishes may request a copy of the book from Br. George in Austin. There is no charge for the book.

On June 5 from noon till one o'clock **Br. Philip Armstrong** presided at a book table in the new Hammes Bookstore at the Eck Center, Notre Dame. The table featured his book on Br. Ephrem published in 1995, *A More Perfect Legacy*, as well as *Adapted to the Lake*, a translation and editing of letters from early brothers to Fr. Sorin published by **Br. George Klawitter**, *Priceless Spirit* by **Sr. Georgia Costin, C.S.C.**, of St. Mary's, which treats of **Fr. Edward Sorin's** relationship with the early Holy Cross Sisters and their development at Notre Dame, and **Fr. James Connelly's** edition of Fr. Sorin's *Chronicles of Notre Dame du Lac*.

These four volumes were highlighted as "inside historical data" from members of the whole Holy Cross family about little known details of the development of Notre Dame in its earlier years. Though on the market already for four or five years, these books remain relevant as historical sources of interest.

Br. Gerald Muller (SW) of St. Edward's University spent a week in early May at the

Holy Cross Village at Notre Dame doing research on **Br. Ernest Ryan** and the Dujarie Press. Br. Gerald has since completed the manuscript of his monograph on Br. Ernest and looks forward to its early publication. Br. Gerald is remembered as **Br. Roberto**, who wrote many of the youth oriented books on saints or famous and influential individuals in history for Dujarie Press in the fifties and sixties, his most prominent work being a life of **Fr. Miguel Augustin Pro, S.J.**, a Mexican martyr. **Brs. Sigismund Danielski** and **Flavius Ellison** were among staff members of the Press during part of that era.

Br. Berchmans Gibbons (SW) died at Dujarie House at the age of 90 on the evening of May 31. He had been professed almost 67 years. A funeral mass was celebrated in the Dujarie House chapel on June 3. **Br. Richard Critz**, SouthWest provincial, gave the eulogy.

Br. Charles Beck's brother, **Robert Beck**, died at the age of 81 on May 12 in Cold Spring, Kentucky. Br. Charles has been at LeMans Academy for many years. Please remember the repose of the soul of Robert in your prayers.

Larry Condren, former brother, died on May 31 at the age of 51 in Chicago, where he worked. A wake service was held there on June 2, then in Monroe, Michigan, on June 3, followed by mass and burial in Carleton, Michigan.

Brs. Albert Rimlinger and **John Harris** of Columba Hall recently underwent surgery in South Bend and are recuperating at Dujarie House. They request your prayers.

At a retirement party for five staff members of Holy Cross High School in River Grove, **Br. Thomas Corcoran** reminisced about the long term contributions made by these five men to the welfare of the school. Those honored were **Brs. Marius Wittner** and **Maynard Rabidoux** along with **Marty Mullarkey**, **Ed Jakubczak**, and **Bob Koleno**. Ed Jakubczak worked with the brothers at both Holy Trinity High School and Holy Cross in River Grove. Br. Thomas noted Br. Marius's influence on his vocation, having taught him chemistry at Cathedral High School in Indianapolis.

Br. Thomas concluded by saying, "Had not all these men been part of my administration and my life, I can assure you that many good things would not have gotten done. They were men on whom I depended on many occasions and I am most grateful for just having the privilege to have spent the 80s with all of them."

At the Holy Cross History Conference in New Orleans (June 18-20), **Br. Philip Armstrong** will present a progress report on the nature and content of the brief history of the District of West Africa on which he has been working. At this stage a first draft is complete except for minor additions of data. A problem lies more in what to omit than in what to include, as such a tremendous volume of archival material has been gathered and organized, especially by **Br. Raymond Papenfuss**, Mission Promoter.