



# The NEWSETTE

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## DEATH AT AGE 52 ENDS GREAT CAREER OF BROTHER THEOPHANE SCHMITT

The death of Brother Theophane Schmitt in Liberia, West Africa, on July 25 stunned the Midwest province and the entire Congregation. Six weeks before he had returned to the Brothers' school in Monrovia after a two months' visit to the United States during which he spent most of the time promoting the cause of the African school among his many friends and acquaintances.



Brother Theophane Schmitt, C.S.C.

While returning from an appointment on July 10 at Firestone Hospital in Harbel, some forty miles distant from Monrovia, Brother Theophane, driving alone, was struck by another car. He was able to climb from the completely demolished vehicle and asked a motorist to take him back to the hospital. His glasses were found unbroken several yards from the scene of the accident. Passengers in the other car involved were treated at the hospital and released within hours. Brother Theophane's apparent injuries were broken ribs and severe head lacerations.

After hospital care for nearly two weeks, during which his injuries seemed to be healing, Brother Theophane expected to be released within a week or ten days, and this news was relayed to the Provincial. A day later, July 24, a cable arrived from Bishop Francis Carroll, of Monrovia, stating: "Regret no hope for Theophane. Death expected momentarily." The following morning another cable arrived from the Bishop, informing the Provincial that Brother Theophane died at eight o'clock in the evening, July 25.

### Body Returned to States

Because of a national holiday being celebrated in Liberia at the time, as well as the difficulty in reaching people by cable there, it was a formidable task for Brother Donatus Schmitz, the Provincial, to make arrangements for the body to be returned as soon as pos-

sible to the United States, but through the help of the State Department and of Father Hesburgh, president of Notre Dame, the obstacles — too many to enumerate — were cleared.

Office of the Dead was sung on July 31 at Sacred Heart Church, Notre Dame, and this included three nocturnes, as required for Local Superiors. Rev. Christopher J. O'Toole, C.S.C., whose term as Superior General of the Congregation ended last year and under whom Brother Theophane served as General Treasurer and Steward, presided at the Office of the Dead. The lessons, for the most part, were sung by young Holy Cross priests who had been studying in Rome during Brother Theophane's years there.

### Rites at Home Parish

In Decatur, Indiana, the deceased's home town, the pastor of St. Mary's Parish, Monsignor Simeon Schmitt, who is one of Brother Theophane's six surviving brothers, scheduled a Solemn High Mass for the repose of his soul on July 30, two days preceding the forcibly delayed arrival of the body in this country. The Monsignor was celebrant of this Mass; another brother of the deceased, Father Dennis Schmitt, S.J., was deacon; and Monsignor Dirkin, pastor of the cathedral in Fort Wayne, a cousin, was subdeacon. Bishop Leo A. Pursley, of Fort Wayne-South Bend, presided from the episcopal throne and delivered a eulogy, paying tribute to Brother's generosity and kindness.

About twenty priests attended the Mass, along with many Sisters of St. Agnes, Victory Noll Sisters, relatives of the family, and parishioners. Representing Holy Cross were five Brothers who came from Notre Dame and another who was vacationing in Decatur.

### Burial Mass

A Requiem High Mass was sung by Father Dennis Schmitt at Columba Hall at six o'clock on the morning of Brother Theophane's funeral. The burial Mass began at nine o'clock at Sacred Heart Church, Notre Dame, and many of the deceased's relatives and friends came from Decatur, Chicago, and Cleveland to attend.

Pallbearers were Brothers Borromeo Malley, Paulus McGory, Raphael Wilson, Francis Johnson, Albert Kern, Barry Lambour, Alfonso Comeau, and Gonzaga Day.

Rev. William Craddick, C.S.C., Assistant Provincial, led the procession from the church door to the altar. Monsignor Schmitt celebrated the Solemn High Mass of Requiem, assisted by his brother, Father Dennis, and by Father Roland Simonitsch, C.S.C., the deceased's cousin. Monsignor Dirkin of Fort Wayne was present in the sanctuary along with other diocesan priests and those of the Congregation. The Mother General of the Cincinnati Sisters of Charity, with two of her Sisters, attended the Mass and remarked afterwards that she felt obliged to come because Brother Theophane had been so good to her Community at Villa Nazareth in Rome. The Franciscan Sisters from South Bend, the Victory Noll Sisters, many Holy Cross Sisters, came to the funeral as well.

After the Absolution the body was led in procession to the Community cemetery at Notre Dame, where the final absolution was given by Monsignor Schmitt. The rites closed with the Brothers' Dujarie Choir singing an English version of *In Paradisum*.

## TESTIMONIALS

Many tributes have come to the Provincial and to members of the family about Brother Theophane since his death. These show, at least in part, the kind of man he was and the loss his death has meant to the Community.

### From Brother Majella Hegarty

With shock and grief I heard today that Brother Theophane is called to heaven suddenly just this Thursday!

This tragedy brings to an abrupt close one of the most illustrious lives I've known in the Community — both for brilliant achievement in every work for God he was given to do and for inner holiness and greatness of soul.

To live with him was an inspiration, a true Community man who seemed to serve with natural ease, for all having the happiness to know him, as a model of religious strength and sincerity and of generosity in serving the good of others.

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# FOUR IN PROVINCE OBSERVE ANNIVERSARY OF PROFESSION

During the past school year four province members celebrated their silver jubilee of religious profession: Brothers Duncan Briggmann, Roland Driscoll, Alfred Grilli, Elias Ryan, and Brother Nevin Thoms of South-West Province. At the place of residence, each was suitably honored and feted.

## Brother Duncan

Born and reared in Philadelphia, Brother Duncan has been throughout his twenty-five years in Holy Cross the embodiment of kindness toward others, thus a literally true son of the City of Brotherly Love. At Columba Hall, where he has lived since profession, everybody knows that asking him for help means getting it. Invariably he spends most of Saturday afternoon washing and repairing discarded clothing, which he then supplies on request or eventually turns over to the mission procurator. He steps along briskly from chore to chore, place to place, and is one of those generous ones not afraid to do the extra, the unassigned, little job that adds to the well-being of all.



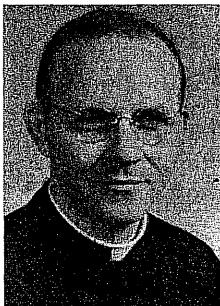
Brother Duncan

Work in the bookkeeping office of the Ave Maria Press at Notre Dame has been Brother Duncan's single formal obedience all along. Bustling, apparently undiminished energy seems to be characteristic with him, as do thoughtfulness for others' welfare and willingness to do the unseen and the unsung little favors that, done so regularly for so long, would to anyone with less heart be burdensome.

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## Brother Roland Driscoll

A Southern gentleman from Knoxville, Tennessee — complete with drawl and manner, Brother Roland can look back at this jubilee time upon a score of years spent in the classroom. He earned his undergraduate and graduate degrees at Notre Dame, the first in full-time study and the second during summer schools, and majored in history.



Brother Roland

Taunton, Massachusetts, for an eight-

year stint. In 1950 he taught in South Bend for a year, then went to Indianapolis for three. Following, he landed in "home country" when he went to Biloxi, Mississippi, where three years later an obedience came that took him once more to Indianapolis. At several of the schools Brother Roland served as athletic director, a taxing job he accomplished with quiet dispatch and without incursion into the requirements of scheduled religious exercises.

At a summer camp for boys, operated by the province until recently in southern Michigan, Brother Roland served as counselor for several seasons, then as director. Serving God runs in his family, for one of his brothers is a priest. Acquaintances of Brother Roland must perforce doubt that this soft-voiced Tennessean could ever have "blown his stack," to use a phrase, or hurled an angry shout at some lagging high-school athlete or recalcitrant pupil. In short, Brother Roland is one of those quiet men whose silences speak and whose unruffled mien and thoughtful ways indicate total dedication to values worth living and dying for.

## Brother Alfred Grilli

Like most native Chicagoans, Brother Alfred extols the big city now and again, though as a young man he



Brother Alfred

left it to enter Holy Cross. Still, his first teaching assignment after completing undergraduate studies at Notre Dame took him back to town for a seven-year teaching stint at Holy Trinity High School. After that he went to New Orleans, then six years later returned to the Chicago school, where he has been teaching since. Summers during the interim he earned a master's degree at Vandercook School of Music and took sundry other courses at Catholic University and at De Paul.

Among band directors in province schools Brother Alfred has the edge in experience, and ranks second to none in ability. His Italian extraction has at

least a little to do with his unwaning enthusiasm for good music, a subject he has been devoted to since childhood when from bowing acquaintance with the violin he became its devotee. The strings, woodwinds, brass, and percussion — all are familiar to this music man of many years' standing, as the current crop of players at Trinity, along with the school band alumni, must agree.

While some people tend to see the dark side of things first, Brother Alfred characteristically does the opposite, countering this or that bit of criticism he might hear either with silence or with some sunnier observation that shows things are never so bad as they seem.

## Brother Elias Ryan

For the past quarter century Brother Elias has been doing his assigned work with scarcely an interruption or change of steady pace. He came to the Community from Buffalo, New York, and after the formation training went to work in the accounting offices at Notre Dame. Four years later obedience took him to Washington, D.C., to work in the mail room of the Community's foreign mission magazine. Since 1946, however, he has been part of the bookkeeping staff of the Ave Maria Press along with his good friend Brother Duncan.



Brother Elias

A religious of most conscientious regularity, Brother Elias seems one of the inseparable denizens of that Hall, the most populous of the province. He enjoys *Post* magazine articles and keeps abreast of the latest acquisitions in the house library. The writer believes that Brother Elias is that rare Irishman who tends to jump rather less than most on the Irish bandwagon, judged at least by verbal flow when matters of Gaelic lineage are up for conversational grabs. This is not to say he lacks the usual Irish love for the Ould Sod, but *rara avis*, he has little to say of it.

The man who minds his own business and lets others mind theirs is always good for a religious house, and this Brother Elias does to eminent degree. Devotion to duty, to work, to prayer — the path laid out years ago during religious formation: on this path he began his Holy Cross years and on this path he continues, whatever wind blows or wherever storms rage.

### Brother Nevin Thoms South-West Province

South-West province member Brother Nevin has been teaching at Holy Trinity High School, Chicago, for the past ten years, and observes his 25th jubilee of profession this year.

He came to Holy Cross from North Dakota, where he taught school for several years before entering the Community. After postgraduate studies at Notre Dame he began an unbroken span of years in the classroom, ranging in locale from New York to Biloxi.

Brother Nevin has talent for all sorts of things — musical, culinary, horticultural, and otherwise. Any house he lives in benefits almost unnoticed from these because what he does is done so unobtrusively that the rank and file simply cannot keep track.

With all these unheralded accomplishments behind and more to come, Brother Nevin lives the religious life with utmost devotion. He indeed is a man of prayer and silence whom others of noisier soul cannot but admire, if not emulate. No wonder — with Brother Nevin's command of language, his intensity, his air of steely nerves would about some charged core — that through the years pupils in his classes got away, not with "murder," but with an education.

### OBITUARY

Brother Eugene Le Feuvre, C.S.C.  
Brother Theophane Schmitt, C.S.C.

Father of Bro. Donatus Schmitz  
Brother of Bro. Theogene Merline  
Grandmother of Bros. Joseph and Roger Berg  
Mother of Bro. James Madigan  
Father of Bro. Martin Abell  
Mother of Bro. Ives Kilroy  
Mother of Bro. James Sullivan  
Mother of Bro. Aloysius Glombowski  
Father of Bro. John Ptaszek  
Grandmother of Bro. James Bagans  
Aunt of Bro. John Dobrogowski

### TESTIMONIALS

(continued from page 1)

He was all heart, and he was all hard work. You got the impression that no matter how long he would live, it would never be enough time for the big, busy, prayerful soul of him.

We will never know by how many he will be missed, grievously. It is some consolation to remember that he was back in the States so recently — for what was to prove to be now our long farewell to him.

Brother Theophane's life is a proof that a heaven must be; for such a life

as his could never be rewarded in this world.

### From Bishop Francis Carroll

(Bishop Carroll is Apostolic Inter-nuncio in Monrovia, Liberia, and wrote the following to Monsignor Schmitt, brother of the deceased, about a month before the fatal accident.)

Thank you very much for the Mass stipends which you sent us through the good Brother Theophane. They have been discharged.

We would appreciate it even more if your good parents had two or three more sons like Brother Theophane. What a very wonderful person he is, so zealous, competent and generous! His presence on this mission field gives me a sense of security that very few priests could give me. Everyone knows him in Monrovia, and he is the friend of all. Our mission needs him very much, and I just don't know how we ever got on without him. I am beginning to suspect there must be a wee drop of Irish blood in his veins. It is the only explanation that I can give for his popularity!

The Brothers are doing a wonderful job, and St. Patrick's High School is fast gaining a fine reputation. They have created a magnificent spiritual atmosphere, and I can foresee many good young Catholic gentlemen marching out of that institution who will adorn the Church in Liberia. That was my hope when I begged Holy Cross to come here, and it looks as if my hope is going to be speedily fulfilled.

### From Mother Agnes of Jesus Des Plaines, Ill.

Our Blessed Lord has called our dear Brother Theophane to Himself, into the warm depths of that divine Love that will be his reward, his joy, his home forever. How can we help but rejoice when we know that dear Brother is no longer measured by Faith, but by the fullness of infinite charity.

Yet the death of one so fine and good and dear as Brother Theophane is surely a deep sorrow to you and all his loved ones, and we pray that our Sorrowful Mother will gather all of you close to her loving heart during these days of mourning, knowing that her comfort and consolation will be your strength and peace.

God has His own plans for His chosen ones and for His missions too, and they are wise and beautiful beyond the comprehension of our human minds. Brother Theophane has accomplished many good things for Our Lord, and we feel proud to think that God found him ready for Heaven so early in life. . . .

### From Brother Bonaventure Foley, Rome, Italy

. . . Brother spent his life in various areas of activity, but here in Rome we will ever be mindful of his work as Assistant General and General Steward, for everything Holy Cross has here in Rome is due greatly to his efforts. . . .

It is needless to say that in the death of Brother Theophane the Congregation of Holy Cross has lost a very loyal member, and although it is hard to believe that God has called him to his eternal reward, yet we are proud he died working in the apostolate of the missions, which was very dear to him.

### From Rev. Christopher J. O'Toole, Former Superior General

. . . At the same time you have so many beautiful and consoling memories of the wonderful life Brother Theophane lived as a Religious of Holy Cross and of the splendid things he was able to accomplish for the Church and for the Congregation during his lifetime. God had given him many talents indeed, and he used them thoroughly and conscientiously in whatever work he was engaged.

Had he lived I am sure the project in Monrovia would have developed beautifully, because Brother seemed to have the right sense of what was to be done and the right time to do it. He gave himself to this difficult work completely and now he has really offered his life for it. We can be sure that God will now make the work prosper doubly on account of the generosity of Brother Theophane; and the Brothers who are there will take new courage and be inspired and stimulated by the splendid example he has given them.

For the many, many fine and kindly things Brother Theophane did for me personally, I will be grateful always. And I will try to repay him by a continual, daily remembrance in my Masses and prayers. . . .

### YOUNG MAN PONDERES BEFORE ENTERING RELIGIOUS LIFE AS HOLY CROSS BROTHER

A young man leaves home to become a Brother of the Congregation of Holy Cross. For him suddenly begins a totally unfamiliar kind of life inside the juniorate for two or three months. Then comes time to enter the novitiate.

What are his impressions?

One aspirant wrote about them this way:

"In nine days we leave for the novitiate at Rolling Prairie, Indiana, and most of us go with mixed feelings.

"We look forward to the change of

(continued on page four)

## OLDEST PROVINCE MEMBER DIES IN EAST PAKISTAN MISSION



L. to r. Rev. Christopher J. O'Toole, C.S.C., former Superior General; Brother Eugene Le Feuvre; and Brother Jude Costello, former Religious Superior, East Pakistan Vicariate.

Brother Eugene Le Feuvre, 89 years old, and a Brother of Holy Cross for sixty-nine years, died in Dacca, East Pakistan, on April 15, 1963.

He was born in Dacca of French-Indian parents who had moved there from a French colony near Madras, India. His birth date, as registered in Holy Cross Cathedral, Dacca, is September 7, 1873. He was baptized one month later by the Most Rev. Peter Dufal, C.S.C., Vicar Apostolic of Dacca. This same Bishop later became Father Moreau's successor and second Superior General of the Congregation of Holy Cross.

When St. Gregory High School opened in 1889, Brother Eugene and his three brothers were the first children enrolled.

After finishing school, he joined the Congregation and received the religious Habit on April 25, 1894. Brother Eugene often told the young American missionaries about his early days in the Community. Because he was the first and only novice at the time, there was no real novitiate. He used to say that he made his novitiate in a river boat, accompanying the Bishop around the diocese. Many of his stories concerned Bishop Hurth, founder of St. Edward's University in Austin, Texas, and re-builder of the diocese of Dacca after the terrible earthquake of 1898.

During Brother Eugene's long career as a teacher, he was assigned to schools in Dacca, Chittagong, Toomiliah, Bandura, Gournadi, Solepore and Tejgao.

Many of these years he spent at his alma mater, St. Gregory's, where he taught classes and directed a kind of National Guard unit organized in India schools early in this century. Among Brother's most treasured belongings was the silver Kaisar-i-Hind medal, awarded him by King Edward VII for his long and devoted service in the military unit.

Brother's last assignment was as headmaster of the primary school at Tejgao, a village adjoining Dacca. He was sixty-seven years old when he took this post and remained actively in charge of the school until 1954, when age and illness forced him into semi-retirement. He continued working about the school and church until the end of the school year in 1961, when he moved to St. Joseph's Industrial School in Dacca.

The following June he fell and broke his hip as he was leaving the recreation room. At the hospital the injury was repaired, but Brother Eugene had neither will nor energy to learn to walk again. Age, arthritis — which he suffered for many years, and other ailments brought him finally to a stop.

Immediate cause of death was a kidney infection which steadily grew worse. Brother was in a coma all during Holy Week and died quietly in his sleep on Easter Monday morning.

Among those who came to the wake was an elderly man who knelt by Brother Eugene's coffin and said the rosary. On leaving, he said Brother had taught him at St. Gregory's in 1903, but he still remembered — sixty years after — a good Brother Eugene with respect and affection.

Brother Eugene was buried in front of the church at Tejgao, where he had served his last and longest assignment.

## YOUNG MAN

(continued from page 3)

scenery, but we'll miss the Brothers here and the surroundings grown familiar to us during our three months as aspirants in the Holy Cross Brothers' juniorate. We welcome the new challenge but at the same time are rather leery of it because we know it will be rough at times.

"The novitiate year is a challenge — a stern one — and to think of it any other way would be, in all probability, an irreparable error.

"Our juniorate period has had its rugged aspects, too. After all, you don't pick a couple of dozen men of different ages and backgrounds, bring them together, and then tell them that they are men of God and henceforth expected to behave as such. For although avowed service to God is a requisite for one's presence here at all, performance seldom equals intention, at least initially.

"Most difficult, perhaps, has been the necessary transition from materialistic outlooks to spiritual ones, from proud self-determination to humble obedience.

"Here at the juniorate we've been taught some of the fundamentals of religious life, not the least of which is rising before dawn and going to bed before Gunsmoke. If we didn't already know them, we've learned the joys and genuinely tangible rewards of daily Mass and Holy Communion. We've learned to examine our consciences more fully, to pray better, to speak to and of our fellow aspirants with kindness and charity rather than spite or pettiness. In short, we've taken the first steps toward knowing, loving, and serving God in the religious life.

"But that's all it has been, a first step. At the novitiate a great deal more will be expected of us. We've been given the tools, been shown the path, and now it's up to us to progress. Without progress in the spiritual life, a religious vocation must almost inevitably wither and die.

"If it is God's will, we will persevere. We pray it is His will!"

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BROTHER LAWRENCE MILLER, C.S.C.  
Notre Dame, Indiana  
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