
❖ The Passionist Heritage Newsletter ❖

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Passionist Fathers Walter Coveyou, Godfrey Holbein and Clement Seybold (1929-2009)

by Father Rob Carbonneau, C.P.

On April 24, 2009 the Passionist Historical Archives in Union City, New Jersey sponsored a free event from 1pm to 5pm where approximately 70 people gathered for the symposium: *Life, Death, Memory and Understanding: A memorial celebration on the 80th anniversary of the deaths of Passionist Fathers Clement Seybold, Godfrey Holbein and Walter Coveyou in west Hunan, China.*

Participants felt the historic meaning of the day in several ways. First, they learned the context. It was exactly 80 years to the day—April 24, 1929—that these priests had been murdered by bandits. Also, they were reminded that in 2004, local Yuanling, Hunan, China Catholics had been able to secure a more suitable burial site and memorial for these three priests as well as other deceased priests, sisters, and laity who had died in the service of bringing the message of the Gospel to China. Second, the participants had the opportunity to view the three painted portraits of these “missionary martyrs” which had been commissioned in the 1930s and hung on the wall of the former Passionist Monastery of St. Michael's in Union City. When the monastery closed in the 1980s, these inspiring portraits were moved to the Calvary Spiritual Center in Shrewsbury, Massachusetts. It was the recent decision by the Passionists to close that ministry site that prompted the portraits' return to Union City where they will once again find a home with the Passionist Historical Archives. Third, given the importance of the deaths of these three men in Passionist history, it was decided to have a panel symposium on the religious, historical and cultural impact of their deaths.

Father Rob Carbonneau, C.P., Ph.D. hosted the gathering and provided a short introduction to the day



From left: Rev. Marcil; Dr. McCord; Fr. Carbonneau; Dr. Lodwick; Dr. Lee; Dr. Kinkley

from 1:00pm to 1:30pm. This was followed by excellent, 15-minute presentations by each of the following speakers:

Dr. Jeffrey Kinkley, Ph.D. (Professor of History, Department of History, St. John's University, Queens, New York), spoke of his use of the Passionist China Collection in the mid-1970s for his biography of 20th century Chinese writer Shen Congwen. In particular, Dr. Kinkley remembered how his use of the archives led him to gain the insight of Passionist Father Theophane Maguire, who wrote the book *Hunan Harvest*. In the end, the audience was reminded that Passionist missionaries in 1920s west Hunan found themselves as part of the complex political and social upheaval at the end of the warlord era in China.

Dr. Joseph Lee, Ph.D. (Professor of History and Co-Director of East Asian Studies Program,

Passionist Fathers Walter Coveyou, Godfrey Holbein, and Clement Seybold (1929-2009) by Father Rob Carbonneau, C.P.

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Passionist History 1943 to 1949 in St. Paul of the Cross Province: A Summary of Events by Father Rob Carbonneau, C.P.

Department of History, Pace University, New York), reflected on how the Passionist China Collection teaches about the longstanding faith-life of local Catholics still to this day. He made special mention of the necessity to study the expression of devotional religion in the lives of Chinese Catholics and Christians both past and present.

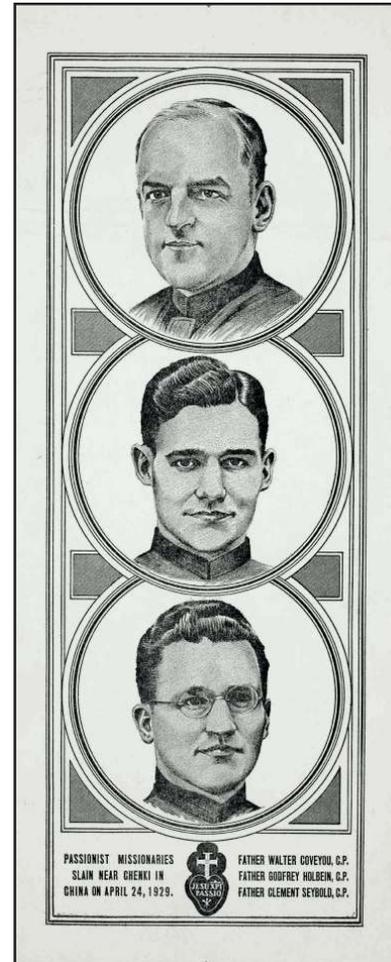
Dr. Kathleen Lodwick, Ph.D. (Professor of History, Department of History, Penn State University, Lehigh Valley, Center Valley, Pennsylvania), commented on the value of the Passionist China documentation as an impetus for greater shared scholarship into the future by scholars of Protestant and Catholic missionaries to China. Her comments are a clarion call to cultivate a new generation of scholars to study the American Catholic experience in 20th century China as found in Catholic missionary archives and the National Archives in College Park, Maryland.

Rev. Michel Marcil, S.J. (Executive Director, U. S. Catholic China Bureau, Seton Hall University, South Orange, New Jersey), spoke about the steady and dynamic growth as well as the challenges of the contemporary Chinese Catholic Church. Stressing their lived faith of prayer, participation in the sacramental life of the Church and their respect for the Pope, Rev. Marcil accentuated the climate of hope and reconciliation among Chinese Catholics, especially in light of their receiving a letter from Pope Benedict XVI in 2007.

Dr. Edward McCord, Ph.D. (Associate Professor of History and International Affairs, Director, Taiwan Educational and Research Program, Elliot School of International Affairs, George Washington University, Washington, D.C.), noted that the 1929 deaths of these three Passionist priests not only remind us of the historic dangers that were present for missionaries during this past century, but more importantly set before us the fact that there are still present dangers that face those committed to humanitarian services for the good of others. Clearly, the spirit of faith, service and sacrifice that motivated the Passionists of the 1920s can still teach us.

Indeed, the symposium was a success. All in attendance realized the cross-cultural significance of these 1929

deaths for contemporary society. Finally, all recognized the value of the Passionist Historical Archives, particularly the China Collection, for scholars and those interested with the ongoing issues of dialogue on Chinese history, culture and religion.



**May the lives and 1929
murders of Passionist Fathers
Walter Coveyou, Godfrey
Holbein and Clement Seybold
in Hunan, China inspire us
today to live our lives as
examples of world compassion,
understanding and peace.**

**Pray for China.
Pray for the Chinese Catholics.**

Semester Break at the Passionist Historical Archives for College Credit: A Personal Reflection

by Kerry Erlanger, University of Scranton - 2010

When asked about history, people often envision academics huddled around yellowing books filled with names and dates far too numerous to recall. When asked about archives, they think of libraries, the movie *Indiana Jones*, or, the worst option, they do not think of them at all. It might come as no surprise that a good many people do not actually know what an archives is or what its purpose is. Truthfully, I myself was not quite sure what to expect when I expressed my interest in the January 2009 semester break internship at the Passionist Historical Archives in Union City, New Jersey. But the prospect of having access to the types of things one might find in an archives was motivation enough. I wanted to look at some history. In the course of my internship I learned not only about the inner workings of an archive, but also a great deal about the Passionists who inspired by their faith, decades before I was even born, braved the relatively unknown land of China.

Passionist Father Rob Carbonneau, who was to direct my internship, greeted me on my first day. Rather than introduce me to the archives right away he first took me on a tour of the building, explaining the role of the Passionists as it is today. The building that houses the archives serves as one of the headquarters for the Passionists in the United States. It is home to several different offices and a Passionist residence that sat on the top floor for priests and brothers. During our tour Father Carbonneau stressed to me that the archives, though it certainly could not exist without the documents so often associated with it, depended very much on the people working in other departments to help keep it afloat.

History, Father Carbonneau said, is more than the old documents I was to be looking at. There is a living, breathing element; a humanity that draws it all together and gives life to the building we were in. The Passionist missionaries who risked their lives in China were much more than the diaries they kept or the letters that they wrote. They were real people, individuals with a story who gave up their lives with family and friends in order to traverse a foreign country in search of the greater good.

The history of the Passionists in China only lasted from



From left: Fr. Rob Carbonneau, Kerry Erlanger and Dr. Roy Domenico (Department of History, University of Scranton)

1921 to 1955, yet it encompasses a wide variety of events and incidents that make it no less important than the history of those who have worked their missions for far longer. The Passionists first came to China in 1921 with visions of extending the good news to the poor Chinese who had never been witness to it before. God was alive in the hearts of the Chinese it seemed, but they would need some guidance in coaxing Him out. I dove into the history of these missions, wanting to learn anything and everything I could. Had life been difficult for them to adjust to? How did they manage arriving not knowing the language? Were the Chinese people hospitable or hostile? These were all questions I was dying to have answered.

Photographs and Journals: After reading several papers that described the Passionist missions in more general terms, Father Carbonneau gave me a box of photographs to sort through. Many had been sent home from China by the missionaries and were later donated to the archives by family members. The photographs spanned from the 1920s to 1950s and encompassed a wide variety of subject matter. There were pictures of the priests, landscapes, Chinese people who lived in the area, and the mission itself, as well as many other things. Some of the photographs were labeled on the back, identifying the place and people in them. It was fascinating to begin to put faces to the names I had read in papers that had been written by Father Carbonneau.

My favorite thing by far was the opportunity to look at

the journals of Passionist Father William Westhoven and the scrapbook and journals of Passionist Father Leonard Amrhein. Westhoven's journals spanned from 1937 – 1941 while Amrhein's were written during the 1940s and 1950s. Both Passionist priests gave an interesting view into the daily lives of the missionaries sent over to China during that time. I was eventually able to compare Father Westhoven's journals with a audio tape interview Father Carbonneau did with him in 1974.

Father William Westhoven, C.P.: He was ordained on December 22, 1923; two years after the China missions began. He nervously volunteered to go to China in 1924 and was quickly sent to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. There, to help prepare for China, he took a first aid course that taught him, among other things, how to deliver babies. Westhoven and his thirteen companion priests were the largest that had been sent to China up to that point. They were sent on their journey with the chilling words “all of you are going to work and some of you are going to be martyrs.”

The journey to China was long, but after several stops Father Westhoven and the others eventually arrived in Hunan province, China. In both the journals and interviews he describes the difficulties of the language barrier as well as customs. When the Passionists arrived in China they had no knowledge of the language and were thus obliged to study with a tutor and learn the rest as they went. As for customs, no woman was ever to come alone to the mission and they never came to Church in sandals. Mass proved to be of some difficulty for the Chinese since it was said almost entirely in Latin, with the exception of prayers that were in Chinese. For the most part the Passionists did not suffer much opposition from the local Chinese. Only on occasion would they hear the words “foreign devil” uttered towards them.

During the Sino-Japanese War in China (1937 to 1945), many of the Passionist missions took in refugees who were escaping the Japanese. They came to Hunan in the thousands, both orphans and families. Each mission was allowed by Passionist Bishop Cuthbert O’Gara to house one thousand refugees. They were given \$3.00 per person to buy rice, cloth, tobacco, and other things to sell cheap to the Chinese refugees when prices at the market were too high for them to afford. Westhoven says that he was bothered by the immensity of the missionary’s task. They seemed to be “engaged in something that would never be done.” Religion was not pushed upon the Chinese unless they asked at this time

because the priests found themselves too busy trying to maintain the missions. Eventually, at his mission site Westhoven opened a school to teach doctrine, which was attended by many Chinese interested in converting to the Christian faith.

Father Leonard Amrhein, C.P.: His journals and scrapbook gave an interesting insight into the unique experiences of those priests who had the misfortune of being imprisoned by the Japanese during World War II (1941 to 1945). Prior to this, the journals describe life at the missions underneath the looming threat of the Japanese. Entries that describe the numerous air raid threats they were forced to endure are also tinged with amusing anecdotes of the teasing Fr. Amrhein fell victim of because of his height. In a letter saved from his journey to China a friend already in Hunan jokes that the Chinese are scrambling to find a bed that will long enough to fit the over six foot tall priest.

The raids continued and Father Amrhein describes his frustrations with maintaining the mission and all its refugees. Every now and then an entry is written to mark an important event in the war outside of Hunan. An announcement of France’s invasion by Germany in 1944 sits in between entries that describe conversions to Catholicism by the Chinese and the troubles of feeding so many people. It is an interesting contrast.

The mission Father Amrhein is in charge of is far from the main city and so many of the alarms only produce one plane, if any at all. Eventually there is less mention of air raids as his concerns were gravitating more towards that of the daily life of the mission. I noticed that for several days the almost daily entries stop, but then Amrhein’s small script soon returns with horrifying news. The mission had been destroyed in an air raid. Afterwards his concerns gravitate towards the rebuilding of the mission and all the difficulties that come with it. There is also mention of even further escalating tension between the Chinese and Japanese. Finally, the entries stop again, but this time for years. We find out from later letters that Amrhein has been imprisoned by the Japanese; a fate that he is luckily able to survive after several years.

A scrapbook, compiled by his family back home, contains many trinkets and pamphlets that Father Amrhein had sent with his letters. He saved every single one of the menus from the ships he traveled on both to and from China. There are also postcards, a ticket from the Rose Bowl he attended on his way to China and

(See “Reflection” continued on page 10)

Passionist History 1943 to 1949 in St. Paul of the Cross Province: A Summary of Events

by Father Rob Carbonneau, C.P.

Introduction:

Last August 2008, I was with Passionist Father John McMillan at St. Paul of the Cross Monastery, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Sitting in the common recreation room, he spoke to me. Since I just completed my year of teaching in Chongqing, China (2007-2008), he asked me what projects I was working on. Rather than reciting a list of projects ahead of me, I decided that it might be helpful to hear if there were any projects that *he* thought to suggest. With concentrated and reflective excitement, Father McMillan suggested that I write a history of St. Paul of the Cross province in the United States in the way that I have tried to study the missions in China.

While I was gratified to hear this challenge, at the same time it reminded me that completing such a project would involve numerous intellectual hurdles. First and foremost would be the recapitulation of historical events of Passionist history from diversified primary and secondary sources that span the almost 160 years since the first Passionists arrived in Pittsburgh in 1852. In this issue, I turn to the eastern province history from 1943 to 1949 gleaned from the Holy Cross Province (western U.S. region) publication *The C.P. Bulletin* (1943 to 1944), which became the *Passionist Bulletin* (1944 to 1966), then reborn in 1975 as *The Passionist*.

Hopefully, such summaries as these will allow Passionists and their friends to recall and be inspired today as to the diversified history of this past era. In addition, it is the aim of the Passionist Historical Archives to encourage new researchers and scholars to visit and probe these topics in greater detail. When all is said and done, maybe ongoing publishing of such summaries will be the impetus for that history asked for by Father McMillan.

The editor

In July 1943, news was published that due to World War II, correspondence between Passionist leadership in Rome with their members in the United States was “becoming increasingly difficult; consequently little news.” The only received news from 1942 into July 1943 was “a list of deceased members” of the Passionists in foreign countries. By September 14, 1943, another list of deceased foreign Passionists was received from Rome.

China Missions:

Given that both the Passionist Provinces based in Chicago and Union City joined in sending men from the United States to the west Hunan, China, news was always arriving by mail or cable.

Passionist Father Harold Travers, on January 15, 1943, “suffered from a severe rheumatic fever that affected his heart. He was working in his mission at Paotsing [Baojing] when illness over came him.” Reports stated “his condition is gradually improving.” In November 1943, Travers was still struggling with rheumatic fever and “was granted a furlough, but it is not known whether he will take his well deserved rest in India or come all the way [back to the United States]”. By February 1944, Travers was on his way to the United States via India. Passionist Father Ernest Cunningham was suffering from TB and was so bad he could not travel or he would have returned home with Travers.

Inflation in China was a problem in 1943. A February 27, 1943 report noted by Passionist Bishop Cuthbert O’Gara of Yuanling, Hunan stated that \$6000.00 was paid for a new coat: “Inflation has skyrocketed the market and now the simplest commodities sell for exorbitant prices.” Other examples were a pack of Chesterfield cigarettes for \$800.00, and a pack and Luckies for a bit higher. One Gillette razor blade cost \$24.00. The exchange rate was 20-1. In November 1943, news was sent that Hunan “living costs are still mounting: one green pear \$11.00, shelled rice \$700.00 a bushel.” Passionist Father Cyprian Frank stated in a November 1, 1943 letter that rice was \$100,000 a bushel.

Other China news was received in a March 22, 1943

letter sent by Passionist Father Nicholas Schneider in Lungtan, China, writing how a theft took place in his mission and he lost his American citizen or naturalization papers, which meant he could not prove he was an American citizen nor get any passport or visa, whether American or Chinese. By September 1943, it was reported that Father Schneider had successfully completed negotiations with the United States government officials and it was stated that the American Consul in China could issue the “papers requested.”

Also in 1943, Passionist Father Francis Flaherty was appointed director of the Seminary in west Hunan. In February 1944 it was stated that he also conducted the annual Passionist retreat in west Hunan. Finally, February 1944 made known that Passionist Father Cormac Shanahan was editor of a Catholic paper in Chungking, China. This Chongqing paper was the short-lived *China Correspondent*.

Bishop Cuthbert O’Gara and Chinese Seminarians Peng and Nien:

On October 21, 1943, Bishop Cuthbert O’Gara arrived at the Chicago, Illinois monastery with two Chinese seminarians, Noah Peng and John Nien, both from west Hunan, China. They were on their way to St. Mary’s Seminary in Baltimore, Maryland to continue their studies. Peng was in First Theology and Nien in Second Philosophy. Peng later sent a letter to the *C.P. Bulletin* which summarized that “both are well and happy in their new surroundings, and anxious to make the most of these precious years in the order to be as holy and learned [as] possible when the great day comes, and, as priests of God, they return to China to enkindle the flame of Faith in the hearts of their own people.” All three had come to San Francisco by boat from India by way of Australia. They then came by bus to Chicago where the writer in Chicago wrote that “the Bishop rang the front door-bell, and took us by surprise. No one had known definitely if or when he was coming. It is not the Bishop’s way. He doesn’t like anybody to make a fuss over him.” From Chicago they proceeded on to Union City, New Jersey.

Later, O’Gara returned to the Passionist Monastery in Chicago over the Christmas holidays in late 1943. During the visit, Bishop O’Gara and his secretary, Passionist Father Arthur Benson, talked about “China and War.” Benson then went on to recount his travels in the United States with seminarians Noah Peng and John Nien. Father Benson brought the two men to Baltimore via train from New York City. As they made their way to the train station, the two Chinese students wanted to

see an autocafo, or what was known as an automat, where “machines make the meals.” Benson “was chagrined to see them going from one “canteen to another as tho curiois [sic] to see everything they had.” Taking a nickel, they decided to buy rice pudding. When the men arrived in Baltimore, “the students were mistaken for Japs.” They had left the train before Benson knew it, and “when he found them a Yankee Lieutenant had them throttled. It required the services of an FBI man and two MP to loose the zealous Lieutenant from the suspected prey.” Looking back in 2009, the description of these events indicate the cultural curiosity of the two Chinese men even as they dealt with culture shock in the United States. More poignant is the racism they encountered where they were identified categorically as Japanese. It simply indicates the tense world which Asians had to live in during the World War II era. In the oral tradition of the east coast Passionists, it was the racism experienced by Peng which proved to be one of the deciding factors for him to eventually leave the seminary. Nien did however go on to be ordained as a priest in the diocese of Yuanling, Hunan where he eventually died under duress from the Communists in the mid 1950s.

Also, on January 6, 1944, Bishop O’Gara and his secretary, Father Arthur Benson, arrived at the Passionist Monastery, Detroit, Michigan. On December 19, 1943 O’Gara ordained a west coast province priest.

Preaching:

Passionist Father Charles Gaskin and two other Passionists from the eastern province preached “a remarkably successful mission” at Fort Knox, Kentucky in 1942. Between May and July 1943, he was back again in the Midwest to stop at the Passionist monastery in Chicago for a visit after giving a clergy retreat for the Milwaukee, Wisconsin diocese. Then, in the early days of fall 1943, Gaskin gave a retreat to the Louisville, Kentucky clergy at Gethsemani Abbey. It was also reported that in the spring of 1943 he had conducted the Passionist community monastery retreats in Detroit, Michigan and Chicago, Illinois.

It was common for east coast Passionists to give the community retreats to Passionists living in the Midwest and vice versa. East coast Passionist Fathers conducting community retreats in 1944 were Father Maurice Kanzleiter in Cincinnati, Ohio from January 30 to February 6 and in Louisville, Kentucky from February 13 to 20; while Father Alfred Duffy preached in Detroit from January 30 to February 6 and in Chicago from February 13 to February 20.

Publications:

In 1943, Passionist Father Sydney Turner published a "supplement" to the Passionist Book of Privileges of which this second part deals with Indulgences. It was stated: "It should be handy," since in the years previous to 1943 there had been changes in the Catholic notion of indulgences, especially as it applied to the Passionist common life. Also, *The Sign* published a new devotional pamphlet entitled "St. Gabriel" by Father Aloysius McDonough and there were hopes that he would in the future publish a pamphlet on St. Paul of the Cross.

Other News:

In September 1943, it was noted that Passionist Father Theophane Maguire, former missionary to China and editor of *The Sign*, was appointed Director of the Layman's Retreat Center at St. Paul's Monastery, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. It was reported in November that Passionist Father Sydney Turner was appointed official chronicler for St. Paul of the Cross Province and "launched a 30 volume collection of pictures in this line and the [l]anguage of his chronicles is that of the recreation room, with a sincere attempt to preserve for posterity that we really were, not a collection of obituaries in the morgue state."

In February 1944, it was announced that St. Paul of the Cross Province had 49 priests serving as chaplains in the Army, Navy and Marines. Also, it was learned that Passionist Father Mark Moeslein had retired from work with negroes in North Carolina to move to the Passionist Monastery in Baltimore, Maryland where he would be "as fervent as ever for the welfare of the negro."

World War II ends, 1945:

News of relief and optimism was the mood in the United States and world wide. East coast generated American Passionist ministries was anything but complacent. Even as a rigorous horarium or schedule of common life and prayer and community life existed among the Passionist priests and brothers and seminary students, this real and so-called restrictive life behind the cloister wall of the Passionist monasteries did not prevent, as some might think would be the case, the development of Passionist ministry with a strong public face on many fronts.

Military Chaplains:

Fifty-five Passionist military chaplains were serving in military in 1944. The province gained a continual sense of world events as they received word of the exploits of these chaplains. In 1945, Passionist Father Fabian Flynn was being honored for his work in Italy with the Catholic Relief Service.

Veronica's Veil Passion Play:

Awaiting the end of World War II, it was common for large numbers of people to come to Passionist staffed parishes of St. Joseph's, Union City, New Jersey or St. Michael's in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania to see the staged parish play "Veronica's Veil" during the Lenten season.

Union City, New Jersey:

In 1945, an annex was added on to St. Michael's Monastery in Union City, New Jersey to house the Provincial Offices. Echoing the Cold War America mentality, this wing housing the Passionist leadership became known, tongue in cheek, as "The Kremlin." Cost for the construction project was about \$80,000. Then, when news was received of the Japanese surrender on August 14, 1945 at St. Michael's, Catholics of the area instinctively made their way to the church to give thanks. The large church was filled. Also in 1945, the basement church of St. Michael's Monastery Parish in Union City was being completed.

Passionist Leadership:

Generally, since the American Passionist experience divided into two provinces in 1906, they had respectfully gone their separate ways. However, on November 14, 1947, the Provincial Curia, or leadership, of the Eastern and Western provinces met in Union City to confer on matters of mutual interest. In 1948, Argentine Passionist and then Superior General Albert Deane visited St. Paul of the Cross province from Rome. World War II had curtailed the ability for international communication between Passionists throughout the world, so this was an important event. Deane preached at the feast of St. Ann on July 26 in Scranton where attendance was estimated at 100,000. He also attended the vestition and profession of Passionists in Pittsburgh on August 14 and 15, 1948.

Publishing:

Pamphlets, books or articles written by Passionist priests promoted understanding of the Passionist past history to a religious and lay Catholic culture of the era. For example, The Passionist owned Sign Press, based in Union City, published *Saint Paul of the Cross: Founder of the Passionists* by Father Aloysius McDonough, while Father Alfred Weaver published a vocational pamphlet on the Passionists in 1944. Stephen Sweeney published *Whisperings to God* (1945). In 1945, the Paulist Press, New York, published a booklet by Father Kenan Carey on Passionist Dominic Barberi of England entitled *The Apostle of the Second Spring*. In 1949, Father Gerard Rooney published *Preface to the Bible* with the Bruce Publishing Company, Milwaukee,

Wisconsin, which dealt with scriptural controversies of the day. Also, the Catholic Book Publishing Company of New York published *The Gem of Christ, The Story of St. Gemma of Lucca 1878-1903* by Francis Shea.

Scranton, Pennsylvania:

In 1944, Passionist Father Fidelis Rice was a popular preacher in the Scranton diocese. In 1949, at the 25th anniversary of the St. Ann's Novena, the closing crowd was said to be over 75,000. That same year, The Fatima Statue continued its travels, coming to St. Ann's Monastery, and Father Patrick Peyton, C.S.C. of the Family Rosary Crusade, was a speaker.

Shelter Island, New York:

In 1944, a new wooden chapel was being erected at Shelter Island. On July 1, 1945 the chapel was blessed.

China:

In 1944, Noah Peng, a seminarian from Hunan, China had completed studies at St. Mary's Seminary in Baltimore, Maryland and was accepted into the Passionist novitiate. (Eventually, culture shock on the part of the Passionists and Mr. Peng led him to leave prior to final vows. Years later, in the 1980s, Noah Peng and the Passionists were able to joyfully make contact once again when he was living in the United States). In 1944, Father Ronald Norris served on the staff of The Institute of Chinese Culture at Washington, D.C.

In 1945, Passionist Bishop Cuthbert O'Gara of Yuanling, Hunan, China was back in the United States on furlough. Earlier, in 1941, he had been captured and almost executed by the Japanese while visiting Hong Kong. During World War II in China, the Passionist mission there was stretched to its limits in service to the Chinese people and refugees. After 1945, all in China looked forward to post-war prosperity. Cardinal Thomas Tien of Peking, China visited Passionists at St. Mary's, Dunkirk, NY in 1945. In 1946, a departure ceremony for new Passionists assigned to the China mission was held at Immaculate Conception Monastery, Jamaica, New York. Among those honored was Passionist Father Ernest Hotz. On September 8, 1946, former Passionist missionary to China Father Cormac Shanahan spoke at the Mission Rally at St. Gabriel's Monastery in Brighton, Massachusetts. Also in 1946, Passionist Father Theophane Maguire's book *Hunan Harvest* was published by Bruce Publishers of Milwaukee.

Baltimore:

By the mid 1940s, old ties to the Passionist ministries of the early 20th century were fading away. Father Denis Murmann died in 1944. This Passionist had served as a

chaplain at St. Mary's Industrial School in Baltimore. He instructed and had baptized Babe Ruth during his time there. In 1945, Passionist Father Herbert Young was chaplain at St. Agnes Hospital in Baltimore.

West Hartford, Connecticut:

In 1945, the Passionist West Springfield Retreat house was being directed by Father Joe Leo Flynn. Progressing nicely, the Hartford diocese, which was sending 500 men to make annual retreats, desired a retreat house of their own.

The Sign Magazine:

In 1945, then "Woman to Woman" columnist Katherine Burton of *Sign Magazine* wrote *No Shadow of Turning*: the life of James Kent Stone (Father Fidelis of the Cross). It was published by Longmans Green and Company.

Preaching:

Passionist priests from St. Paul of the Cross Province were popular in America. In 1945, over 96 Passionist preachers were at work during the Lenten Season. In 1946, 70 Passionist missionaries were preaching Lenten missions. In 1947, Lenten work amounted to 155 assignments. Passionists preached as well at various religious rallies; some of the Passionist ministry sites sent participants to the Eucharistic Congress in Buffalo from September 22 to 26, 1947. In 1948, Passionist Fathers Louis Maillet and Lucian Morel conducted French speaking missions in Montreal, Canada. In 1948, the Pilgrim Virgin statue of Fatima was at the Jamaica Monastery, and in November of the following year, the statue was in Union City. As the '40s were concluding, United States and world Catholic culture was becoming ever more strongly influenced by Marian devotion. One of the aspects was its strong appeal as a force against the impending forces of world-wide Communism.

North Carolina:

Father Ernest Welch was pastor at the Passionist parish in Washington, North Carolina. Father Maurice Tew was assigned to the Passionist parish in Greenville, while Father Dominic Cohee was also in Washington. Other Passionists worked in New Bern. The Passionist mission was generally called "the Colored Mission" because of its historic attention and care towards black Catholics. At the end of World War II, the Passionists hoped to expand their ministerial efforts in the region. In 1946, Father Julian Endler was pastor of the Negro mission at New Bern. That same year, St. Joseph's, their parish high school, was given recognition by the state. Finally, Father Leo Brynes was sent to New Bern

and Father Adrian Poletti to Greenville. On October 19, 1947, Julian Endler of St. Joseph's Mission in New Bern was honored as "Catholic Personality of the Week" by WHOT Radio station, South Bend, Indiana for his work among the Negroes. On September 24, 1948, a new parish church was dedicated in Washington. The cost of the church building was \$31,000.

Education:

Passionist Father Luke Missett joined the Faculty of The Catholic University of America (CUA), Washington D.C. School of Oratory in 1944. The Passionist residence on Chillum Road in Hyattsville, Maryland (a suburb of Washington, D.C.) was home to numerous Passionist priests involved in graduate work at CUA. The Passionists had acquired the facility in 1932. In 1945, Father Alban Lynch graduated from CUA with a Masters in English Literature; Fathers Ralph Balzer and Nicholas Gill received Doctorates in Canon Law; Father Augustine Paul Hennessy received a Doctorate in Sacred Theology; and Father Aquanis Sweeney received a Masters Degree in Chemistry. In 1949, Passionist priests sent to study in Rome included Fathers Silvan Rouse and Columkille Regan.

In 1946, The Holy See and Passionist General Curia in Rome promulgated that Lectors (those priests who taught in the internal Passionist seminary program) had to receive post-graduate degrees at Catholic institutions. As seen above, given the fact that the Washington D.C. house was full, Father Malachy McGill was sent to Laval University, in Quebec, Canada to study theology and Father Richard Leary was sent to study Canon Law. In 1946, then Passionist Father and seminary professor Fergus MacDonald wrote *The Catholic Church and the Secret Societies in the United States*, published by the United States Catholic Historical Society, New York. In 1947, Father Tom Berry was one of four Passionists who completed studies at CUA. He received his doctorate in history. That same year it was decided to close the House of Studies located near CUA given the fact that students could go to other Catholic universities other than CUA. In 1947, Fathers Benedict Mawn and Jeremiah Kennedy were fellows at Notre Dame while Father Marcellus McFarland was studying at Fordham. Beginning in 1948, Rome became the preferred destination to send priests for graduate studies. In 1948, Passionist Father Richard Kugelman presented a paper at the Catholic Biblical Association meeting in Denver, and Augustine Paul Hennessy was secretary of the Catholic Theological Society of America.

The reason why the Passionists had so many men in

advanced studies to teach in their seminary system was because membership was on the rise. For example, on August 14, 1945, 17 men entered the Passionist novitiate and 10 men professed their vows on August 15.

Religious Women and the Passionist Charism:

On September 3, 1945, The Sisters of Jesus Crucified, who were closely linked to Passionist spirituality, had their new foundation blessed in Brockton, Massachusetts. This new motherhouse replaced the old one which had been in Elmhurst, Pennsylvania.

Germany:

The defeat of Germany in 1945 meant that once again the Passionists could send priests to the German/Austria mission they had established in the 1920s. In 1945, a mission rally was held on the grounds of the Brighton monastery. Father Walter Mickel left his assignment in the Baltimore parish to minister at that location. Also, Father Leopold Snyder was given a departure ceremony on his way to Germany. On November 10, 1947 Father Columban [John Patrick] Moore was one of another group of missionaries sent to Germany. This mission rally of September 7, 1947 in Brighton was broadcast over radio station WNAC.

Passionist Retreat Houses:

In 1945, over 7,000 men made retreats at the Boston, Springfield, Jamaica and Pittsburgh retreat houses. Springfield had the highest total: 2,500 retreatants. On October 22, 1945, CUA sociologist Father Paul Hanley Furfey was invited to speak at the 10th testimonial dinner at the Passionist Retreat House in Jamaica, New York. The dinner was held at the Hotel St. George in Brooklyn. Passionist Father Cosmas Shaughnessy was director of the Jamaica retreat house and Mr. David Askin was president of the Laymen's Retreat League. In 1948, St Paul's Retreat in Pittsburgh was enlarged and renovated. To accomplish this, the novitiate was moved to Union City. In 1948, over 59 United States Air Force men made a retreat at the Jamaica, New York retreat. In 1949, plans were being drawn up for a \$300,000 new wing to be built at St. Gabriel's Retreat in Brighton, Massachusetts which would add 52 rooms so as to make a total of 100. The project was to mean a new dining room, a private Eucharistic chapel and the monastery choir would be enlarged. On January 18, 1950, the new wing of St. Gabriel retreat house in Brighton was blessed.

Dunkirk, New York:

In 1945, St. Mary's Monastery Church in Dunkirk was renovated. In 1946, Holy Cross Prep Seminary in

(See "History" continued on page 10)

("Reflection" continued from page 4)

pamphlets from the Jesuit school in Peking he attended to learn Chinese. Most interesting are the souvenirs, if they can even be called that, from his time as a Japanese prisoner. There are meal cards and lists that detail the duties of each prisoner in the camp. I found the inclusion of a red sash, worn by Father Amrhein himself to denote him as a prisoner, to be the most chilling.

Joannes Zheng: Along with the audio recording of Father Westhoven's interview, I was also able to listen to a recorded interview conducted by Father Carbonneau with Joannes Zheng, a Chinese man who had grown up in the Hunan missions. The interview was conducted on May 10, 1989 during one of Father Carbonneau's trips to China. Zheng, whose English was quite good, described from a Chinese perspective what it was like to live and work in the community around the missions. He talks favorably of the Passionist priests and his conversion to Christianity. In his mind the priests were very well liked for the most part and only faced opposition from bandits who did not care whether they were American or Chinese. I found this sentiment of his is echoed many times in the priests' journals. Zheng is asked by Fr. Carbonneau to pray the Our Father in Chinese and he recalls the words with ease. I found this part of the interview to be particularly remarkable as Father Westhoven is also asked in his interview if he can pray in Chinese, which he does. The impact of the missions is still greatly important to both these men decades after the Passionists were forced to leave Hunan by the Communist government.

Conclusion: The Passionists' expulsion from China in 1955 was bittersweet. On the one hand it allowed the priests to return to their friends and families back in America, but they were also forced to leave the new family they had gained in China. Many of them had never entertained the idea of returning home. Indeed, they expected to die in China. When the United States Government had urged the priests to leave at the onset of World War II they had ignored them in favor of continuing the work that God had sent them to do.

Father Westhoven echoes a common sentiment among the priests in his 1974 audio interview when he admits that he never regrets his time in China. Life was difficult for the Passionists who were sent home after having adjusted to mission life. It must have been terribly upsetting to leave. Still, they returned home knowing their efforts had not been in vain. Second generation Christians had been born and were able to enter the seminary, sowing the seeds for a Chinese clergy. They

themselves were also forever changed by their experiences. Studying your religion in another language, said Westhoven to Carbonneau in their interview, has a way of enhancing your understanding of it. The Chinese Catholic Christians in Hunan are still there today, continuing the work that the Passionists began decades ago.

Editor's note: *During the January 2009 semester, The Passionist Historical Archives was pleased to cooperate with University of Scranton Professor of History Roy Palmer Domenico, Ph.D. and provide a college credit study internship for Ms. Kerry Erlanger. In preparation for her experience, she was sent some literature on the wide variety of material in the historical collection. Upon her arrival she decided to investigate the Passionist mission to China. We are proud to publish a slightly edited version of her reflection paper written for Dr. Domenico.*

("History" continued from page 9)

Dunkirk was recognized as a junior college by New York state. Post-war expansion was desired. To be completed in 1947 were a new dining room, new classrooms and science rooms, a gym and extensive dormitories. However, it wasn't until April 28, 1948 that the new additions were dedicated. *The Apostolic Sign* was being published in 1949 by the prep seminary students at Dunkirk.

Mexico:

In 1946, Passionist Father Francis Xavier Butler and Anthony Joseph Nealon were sent by the province to assist Passionists in Mexico.

Canada:

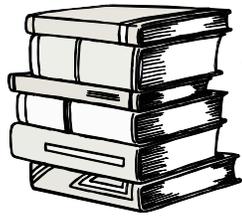
In 1946, the province re-opened their residence in Toronto, Canada. Father Felix Hackett was appointed superior. It had been closed due to the World War.

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania:

St. Michael's Parish in south side Pittsburgh celebrated its centenary in 1948. Passionists had been working there for 75 out of the total 100 years.

Jamaica, New York:

By 1949, Passionist Father Andrew Ansboro's Catholic Center Club (CCC), which had been established in Jamaica, New York, was thriving. Also in 1949, Immaculate Conception parish in Jamaica celebrated its 25th anniversary with a dinner at the Hotel St. George, which was attended by over 1,200 parishioners.



Archives

Notes

Fr. Rob's Recent Talks:

- July 12, 2009: Attended the closing liturgy of Passionist Ministries at St. Gabriel's Spiritual Center, Shelter Island, NY; On July 29, had closing ritual service for staff members of St. Gabriel's on their last day of employment; On September 19, returned to Shelter Island to gather and transfer all relevant historical documentation and religious artifacts to the province archives at Union City.
- September 8, 2009: Noon talk on China at the Senior Tea, Village Learning Place, 2521 Saint Paul Street, Baltimore, Maryland.
- September 18, 2009: Meeting of the New Jersey Catholic Historical Commission at Seton Hall University, South Orange, New Jersey.
- September 26, 2009: Attended the memorial celebration for Father Thomas Berry, C.P. at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, New York City.
- October 1, 2009: Gave lecture "China Today-More than Tea and Olympics" at the University of Scranton, Scranton, Pennsylvania, sponsored by the History Department and Catholic Studies.
- October 2, 2009: Presided at two taped liturgies for Passionist Media in Scranton to be broadcast November 20 and 23, 2009.
- October 3, 2009: Spoke at the Passionist Mission Fulfillment Enrichment Day at St. Ann's Monastery, Scranton on "The history of St. Ann's Passionist Monastery and the St. Ann's Novena."
- October 8, 2009: Spoke at St Paul of the Cross Retreat Center, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania on "The Catholic Church in China Today: How the Past Has Shaped Present Realities."

- October 26, 2009: Mary A. Dooley Lecture Series "Let China Love You: Understanding China and the Catholic Church in China," College of Our Lady of the Elms, Chicopee, Massachusetts.
- October 28, 2009: Lecture, "Eating from the Same Rice Bowl: Understanding the Catholic Church in China from the 20th Century to the Present Day," Assumption College, Worcester, Massachusetts.

Fr. Rob's Recent Publications:

- "We have been thrown into the Vicariate". Passionists in West Hunan: The Struggle to bring to life a Chinese Voice of Faith, 1922-1926." Silent Force: Native Converts in the China Catholic Mission (Leuven Chinese Studies XX, Ferdinand Verbiest Institute, 2009): 389-408.
- "The Changing Passionist Image of China" The New Perspectives (Summer 2009): 3-5.
- "Murder, Memory and Inspiration in Hunan, China: Passionist Fathers Godfrey Holbein, Clement Seybold and Walter Coveyou, 1929 to 2009" The Passionists Compassion No 88 (Winter 2009): 3-7; and Passionist International Bulletin No 19 New Series (March/April 2009): 24-25.
- "Social Issues: Just Like Bamboo: 2009 Chinese Voices Speak" China Church Quarterly (Spring 2009): 5. Published by the United States Catholic China Bureau, Seton Hall University, South Orange, New Jersey.
- "The 1965 Intersession Travel of Passionist Barnabas Ahern, Peritus at Vatican II" Josephinum Journal of Theology, Volume 16, No 1 (Winter/Spring 2009): 50-71.



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It is the intention of the Commission to present material that will be both interesting and informative. We want to make better known the story of our Congregation and especially of our own Province; the Passionists, lay people and benefactors who made it, the immense labors they undertook in proclaiming the Gospel of Christ's Passion, and their successes and failures. We also want to look at the present situation of the Province through the eyes of Faith to try to ascertain what lessons, if any, history may be able to teach us as we try to understand our present moment and the future.

We hope to make this an **international** newsletter and so we welcome contributions from our readers of **any** Province. If you have any interesting stories or reflections or even questions that you are willing to share with us, we beg you to do so.

The Passionist Heritage Newsletter

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