

Admiral Who Says Mass Each Morning Visits Capital

WASHINGTON (NC)—An admiral who sails the seas in command of warships, but says Mass every morning, has just visited Washington.

He is Rear Admiral Georges Thierry d'Argonne, High Commissioner of the Fighting French for

Pacific Possessions. He arrived here from the West coast on a day of a trip to the headquarters of General De Gaulle, leader of the Fighting French.

A quiet, serious man, he spoke fondly of the trials under which the French people labor in this war.

Admiral d'Argonne is a picturesque figure. The most interesting point in his entire career, which includes distinguished service and heroism, is how he became an admiral while still a priest of the Carmelite Order.

In World War I, he found himself, as a graduate of the French Naval Academy in command of a French submarine. With the war over, he turned toward the Church, found he had a vocation, and entered the Carmelite Order. He even became a Provincial.

When World War II began, Father d'Argonne was called back to the French naval service. There he again received rank as an officer.

He took an active part in the defense of the Cherbourg Naval Base in 1940, and there was made prisoner. While he was being conducted to an internment camp in Germany, he escaped and made his way to the Channel coast, from which he reached England in the garb of a French peasant.

Still in the armed service of his country he found himself with General De Gaulle and was soon in action again. At Dakar, he headed a mission sent to parley with the Governor. There was firing and Father d'Argonne was gravely wounded. General De Gaulle cited him in dispatches on Sept. 23, 1940. The citation commended him because "he succeeded by his coolness and decision in bringing back the whole official mission under violent machine gun fire." He remained in command of two launches despite the fact he was badly wounded, the citation says, and "gave to all the finest example of courage and self-sacrifice."

After his recovery, he served in Free French Africa, and in Aug. 5, 1941, he was appointed High Commissioner for French Pacific Possessions and promoted to the rank of Rear Admiral.

It was revealed during Admiral d'Argonne's visit in Washington that he says Mass every day and otherwise performs his priestly duties to the extent possible.

The story of the priest-admiral recalls that many French priests were called to serve in France's army and navy in World Wars I and II. Several were later advanced to the hierarchy of the Church. His Eminence Cardinal Gerlier was one of these.

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Priest, Hero of Navy Battle At Casablanca, Returning Men Reveal

BOSTON (NC)—Sailors and Marines returning from French North Africa report that one of the heroes of Casablanca was the Rev. Joseph N. Moody, of New York, chaplain aboard one of the American warships.

Private Robert Whitaker, 20-year-old Marine from Scituate, Mass., witnessed the battle from start to finish from his station at a deck anti-aircraft gun.

"For a few seconds, I wished I was home again," he said, smiling. "After the first few shots, we were too busy to worry about anything else."

"One thing I'll never forget is Father Moody. He's a wonderful man. He was all over the place and he didn't seem to care how much he was exposed to danger. If it were all right for 'his boys' to be out there it was all right for him, he said. He stopped at our gun a dozen times just to see if we were all right."

Father Moody's part in reassuring the crew before the operations opened on Nov. 8 was related by Lawrence J. Thornton, naval gun pointer from Jamaica Plain, Mass.

"Father Moody talked to us," he recounted. "We had a lot of faith in him. He held Mass every day. The crew didn't realize the seriousness of our undertaking, and the attendance was rather small, but it grew every day, and long before we moved into action everybody attended. Later on he found all battle stations encouraging and in-