

# Chaplain Defy Death In Aiding Injured

By Richard T. Baker

**A 14TH AIR FORCE BASE, China (RNS)—**Captain Albert J. Buckley, of the Chaplains' Corps, attached to the 14th U. S. Army Air Force in China, has just been awarded the soldier's medal for "heroism shown at the voluntary risk of his life" in connection with the removal of injured and administration of last rites at the scene of a bomber crash here in southwest China last December.

Captain Buckley, a priest of the Chicago Archdiocese, is chaplain to the pilots at an important air-base in China. He was the first to enter the burning ship after it crashed, and took the lead not only in spiritual ministrations but in saving the lives of all men who were trapped in the plane and still alive.

The accident occurred when a B-24 loaded with high octane gasoline crashed at the takeoff. Chaplain Buckley rushed to the scene, found the plane swimming in gasoline and one of the engines already afire. An inferno threatened at any moment. Disregarding the line of military police guarding the area, the chaplain rushed into the plane, gave general absolution, and started the rescue operations at the same time. Other men came to his aid, and all who were still alive were removed.

### His Own Lives

Another clergyman-hero at this air-base is Captain John E. Albert, base chaplain. Twice in the last month and a half Captain Albert has answered "crash" call on his field and in the face of exploding bullets and threatening flames given general absolution and last rites to the victims of the fallen aircraft. On both occasions he was

among the first to reach the wreckage and performed both spiritual and rescue duties at great risk to his own life.

When a transport plane with a cargo of incendiary and fragmentation bombs crashed into a Chinese house shortly after taking off, Chaplain Albert helped search for bodies and administered last rites. With other U. S. officers and men he then pitched in to extricate three Chinese persons trapped in the wrecked house. After the rescue was completed and the chaplain had walked about fifty yards from the scene, the big bombs went off.

Some time later a B-24 bomber crashed at the takeoff, and Chaplain Albert and a volunteer enlisted man with exploding bullets whistling around their ears went to the scene, approached the burning plane, and anointed the pilots and crew who had been scattered about the plane by the crash. All members of the crew but one were killed.

This 34-year-old Catholic priest from Baltimore takes seriously his responsibility for the religious needs of the U. S. airmen at his field. He spends his days visiting them, sharing their pleasures, and helping them as they need him. In dangerous moments Chaplain Albert is always on hand to help in any way necessary, and when death strikes, his jeep can always be seen streaking off across the field to the scene.

# Final Rites for Nun, 61 Years a Teacher

**Sister M. Pancratia Messner**—Funeral services for Sister M. Pancratia Messner who spent most of her 61 years in the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph as a teacher were conducted in Holy Family Chapel, Nazareth Convent, East Ave. on Friday, August 25.

Sister Pancratia died Tuesday morning, August 22, 1944 as she was leaving St. Stephen's Church, Geneva after the 8 a. m. Mass. The Rev. Raymond P. Nolan, principal of DeSales High School administered the last rites to Sister before her death. She had been attended by Dr. J. B. Coveri who happened to be on a call in the neighborhood at the time.

Sister Messner was assisted by the Rev. William H. McPadden of St. Stephen's Church, Geneva assisted by the Rev. Raymond P. Nolan as deacon and the Rev. Edward K. Ball, Subdeacon; the Rev. John E. Maney, Master of Ceremonies and the Rev. Joseph DeVaney and the Rev. John A. Guy, Acolytes.

In the Sanctuary were the Rt. Rev. Msgr. William M. Hart, V.G.; the Rt. Rev. Msgr. George V. Burns, the Rev. Thomas F. Connors, the Rev. Joseph H. Gefeil, the Rev. Louis Edelman, the Rev. Raymond M. Lynd, the Rev. Elmer F. McNamara, the Rev. William J. O'Brien, the Rev. John A. Morgan, the Rev. Frank W. Mason, the Rev. Francis W. Luddy, the Rev. Francis J. Taylor, the Rev. Arthur Wilson, S.J., and the Rev. John J. Leary.

Interment was in the Sisters Plot of Holy Sepulchre cemetery where the final blessing was imparted by Monsignor Hart assisted by Fathers McPadden, Nolan, Ball, Maney, DeVaney, Guy, and McNamara.

Daughter of the late George Messner, organist of St. Michael's and Holy Redeemer churches, Rochester, Sister Pancratia had served at St. Francis Xavier's, Holy Apostles Schools and Nazareth Academy in Rochester, St. Joseph's, Wayland and St. Ephremus in Auburn.

She had acted in capacity of principal of St. Stephen's School upon arrival in Geneva in 1912 and was connected with St. Stephen's School for a period of 21 years.

During the past several years, Sister Pancratia taught science and German in DeSales High School. She composed several musical selections and organized and conducted the St. Stephen's Boys' Choir.

Sister is survived by four brothers, Frank, Frederick, John and Leo Messner and one sister, Mrs. Theresa Frank, all of Rochester.

Following announcement of Sister Pancratia's death on Tuesday morning last week, Rev. Joseph DeVaney of Rochester, formerly of Geneva, celebrated a Requiem Mass in St. Stephen's Church. Father DeVaney together with other visiting priests happened to be in the church for the usual services. They participated in the Mass with Rev. Raymond P. Nolan, acting as assistant to Fr. DeVaney. Present for the Mass were: Rev. William H. McPadden, pastor of St. Stephen's Church; Rev. Felix White of the Maryknoll Order, Buffalo; Rev. Edward Tancy of Kansas City, and Rev. Robert Fennessy of St. Stephen's parish.

## Cross at Birth Site Of Brother Andre

**MONTREAL**—The centenary of the birth of the late Brother Andre, who was porter of the Holy Cross community and founder of the world-famous shrine of St. Joseph's Oratory here, has been observed with erection of a great granite cross at the site of his birth at St. Gregory le Grand.

The cross stands about 25 feet high on a special stone platform, about which there are electric lights, in the form of altar lamps, to illuminate the cross at night.

## Hidden Merits Help

In reality, the success of the apostolic labours of missionaries, priests, preachers, men and women who work for others, is due even more than we imagine to the hidden merits of some poor unknown sufferer. The passing of the merits of one person to another is a wonderful thing.—Louis Peyrot.

# Soldier-Son Also Finds Way Back To God Through Book Given Mother

**WASHINGTON (NC)**—A poignant, true story of mother love which overcame the sorrows of war and reached heights of happiness through a rekindled faith was made the topic of an essay submitted by a nun at the summer school sessions of the Catholic University of America here.

The essay by Sister M. Frederick, O.S.F., recounted how a nun in an Eastern city was approached by a woman as she returned from a Forty Hours devotion, and asked to pray for the woman's son, who was in the Army overseas. The nun spoke gently and gradually the woman revealed that she had lapsed from her faith, but she promised to return to the Church. The nun reminded her that something more was required than the mere bringing of petitions to God. As the two parted, the nun pressed into the woman's hand a copy of Father Russell's "Chats With Jesus."

Months later, the story continued, the woman appeared at the convent and sought out the nun who had given her the book. She happily announced that she had re-entered the Church. She told how she had been deeply impressed by the book and had sent it to her son. She showed the nun a letter she had received from her son. The letter read:

his swell Mom. But the words in that book sort of said it for me, Mom, and I could say it to Jesus and I think He understood. Now it's a habit I have—talking things over with Him. We're getting to be pals.

"Some time ago when I was on a landing barge (I can't say where or when, Mom, but I'm O.K., so don't worry) I was reading it, and the soldier next to me asked to see it. I didn't know him, and I wasn't sure whether he'd just laugh (I'd have punched him if he did), but I slipped it over and I'm glad that I did. He read it for some time. He slipped it back just before we landed and patted my shoulder and said: 'Hold tight, Jesus; here we come.' And Mom, when he jumped over the side of that barge he was shot to pieces. I don't know who he was. I had never seen him before, but I guess he must have been a pal of Jesus, too. He sure went straight to Jesus that time.

"Anyways, Mom, since then I've walked with Jesus side by side, step by step. Someday His steps may lead me home to you. I sincerely hope that this may be. But if they should lead me into eternity, Mom, I'll be waiting there with Him, and when you come, it will be just as if we had not been apart."

"Thanks for the book, Mom. It was swell. But it took me all this time to find it out. It didn't seem much in my line at the time you sent it, so I stuck it away. One night long ago I missed you and I was reading over some of your letters and I found the book. I pegged through it, and before I knew it I was reading it and liking it! Funny, for a guy like me to get stuck on a book like that. But I was, Mom. I kept it in my pocket and read a little every time I got a chance. And I'll tell you why.

"There are things that a fellow can't say to his buddies or even to

# 'We'll go Back to Guam' Promise Fulfilled by Missioner Now Chaplain

**CHICAGO**—"Don't worry, we'll go back to Guam." Thus shouted Father Paul Bordenet to American Marine prisoners whom he saw as he was being led down a street in Kobe, Japan, as a captured missionary, shortly after Pearl Harbor.

Now, reports, William McGaffin in a copyrighted dispatch to the Chicago Daily News, Father Bordenet fulfilled his promise by being one of the first men ashore in the Guam invasion.

McGaffin met Father Bordenet on a muddy road to Guam just after the priest had finished Mass for the natives. Father Bordenet, who holds the rank of Lieutenant in the Navy Chaplains Corps, said that this was his fourth landing. He had previously been at Perry

Island, Engebi, and the Lesser Marshalls with our assault troops. Father Bordenet's home is in Terre Haute, Ind. He was serving in the Maryknoll Korean mission at the time of Pearl Harbor and was imprisoned and later repatriated. Once home he received permission to become chaplain of the Marines in their struggle back across the Pacific.

## Franciscan Fancy

May God be kind to capture the Who dwell in little boys and wish

To swim and run, and have no mind Of what has happened in the mess. —Father Feary, S.J.



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