

## New Abbot Guides Monks In Quest For Sanctity

A new abbot presides over the rough-hewn abbey of Our Lady near Piffard, N.Y.

In Trappist silence, Dom Walter Helmstetter was greeted this past Tuesday by the seventy monks and the only words they spoke were a prayer for him. Trappists speak to God, not to men.

The Cistercian abbot, inherits the pioneering work begun by the late Rt. Rev. M. Gerard McGinley, founder and first abbot of the community which started in a farmhouse back in the hills and overlooking the Genesee River.

**ABBOTS ARE** men with a difficult task. They must direct fellow men who leave wealth, rank and luxury to become saints. Monks are trained to see through sham and trifles. They expect their abbots to be saints as if by profession.

"I didn't know people lived like that anymore," a visitor to the abbey remarked.

Monastic life has changed very little since St. Benedict and St. Bernard organized their communities at Monte Cassino and Citeaux.

**MONKS KEEP** rules written as early as the sixth century with revisions dating back to the 11th and 12th centuries.

Life in a monastery is a regimen of prayer and penance.

Each day begins at 2 a.m. with chanting of Office in the chapel.

Throughout the rest of the day, work is scheduled with periodic intervals for seven more "Office Hours" and solemn Mass. Priest monks also celebrate private Masses about dawn. Final chapel call is for Compline at about 7 p.m. to end the monk's typical day.

Work assignments include duties in the bakery, on the farm, construction work, care of the abbey buildings, as well as study and private devotions.

Meals are frugal. No meat. No dairy products. Just vegetables, fruits, coarse bread.

The abbot as superior of the community appoints the monks to their tasks and conducts business with outsiders.

An abbot is elected for a life term of office.

Monks of the community are free to elect any priest monk from any abbey. The Piffard community in choosing Dom Walter selected a monk from their mother abbey at Gethsemani in Kentucky.

**CHURCH LAW** ranks an abbot as "third man" in the diocese. Only the Bishop and a Vicar General precede him in ecclesiastical rank.

Abbots have the right to confer tonsure, a rite which constitutes a man as a cleric, and to give "minor orders" which are preliminary steps to the priesthood.

Abbots also may "pontificate" in monastic rites similar to ritual observed by a bishop.

**ST. BENEDICT** pictured a monastic community as "God's family." The monks are to revere their abbot as a father and as God's representative. Their obedience to the abbot is given as an act of submission to God Himself.

Solemn blessing of the new abbot will be given by His Excellency, Bishop James E. Kearney. The rite of the solemn blessing resembles the ceremony of consecrating a bishop but does not actually confer any sacramental character. An abbot may supervise all activities of the abbey even prior to the blessing, but church law requires that the blessing be given within a year of the abbot's election.

Every abbey is its own little



Newly installed Abbot Helmstetter will preside over seventy Trappist monks of Our Lady of the Genesee Abbey from chapter room "abbot's throne" shown above. Abbot's staff resembles bishop's crozier, is used in solemn rites in chapel. Large book contains prayers and chants of Divine Office which occupies eight hours of monks' day. (Thomas Casey Photo)

"kingdom" with full rights to administer its own discipline and government. Trappist abbots all follow the same basic rules and are associated for matters affecting the whole community under the Abbot General who resides at Citeaux in France.

Besides Trappist Cistercian abbots, monks of other Benedictine communities as also Eastern Rite monks observing the Rule of St. Basil are likewise governed by abbots.

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### Father Barrett, Author, Dies

New York—(NC)—A Requiem Mass for Father Alfred J. Barrett, S.J., 49, poet, editor and playwright, was offered in the Fordham University Church, Father Barrett died (November 9) after giving a day of recollection to the priests of the Paterson (N.J.) diocese.

One of nine children, six of whom entered religious life, Father Barrett joined the Jesuits in 1924. He served as professor of poetry at Canisius College, Buffalo, and as moderator of the Western New York Student's Sodality Conference from 1931 to 1934. He served on the staff of America, the Jesuit weekly in 1938. In 1939 he became editor of The Messenger of the Sacred Heart magazine.

### 1,000 Converts In Three Years

Taipei, Formosa—(NC)—Three years ago there was not a single Catholic in the town of Miao Li in the Taipei archdiocese. This year about 1,000 Catholics and another 1,000 catechumens participated there in a candlelight procession in honor of Our Lady of Fatima.

A statue of Our Lady was placed on a jeep decorated with flowers. A procession of Catholics with flickering candles in their hands escorted the statue through the streets to the grounds of the public school. There it was enthroned on a temporary altar.

Crowds of silent pagans lined the streets as the Catholics, chanting Marian hymns, marched through the town.

### Tulsa Information Center Expanded

Tulsa, Okla.—(NC)—The Downtown Catholic Information Bureau was formally opened and blessed by Bishop Eugene J. McGuinness of Oklahoma City and Tulsa.

An Information Bureau was opened several years ago in a building formerly used by the Immaculate Conception Church. The bureau expanded so rapidly that the move to a downtown location was made necessary, according to the director, Father Charles M. Stathara.

A separate office will be occupied by a Tulsa priest daily to give information and counseling.

### Ford Fund Aids Chicago College

Chicago—(NC)—A grant of \$170,000 from the Funds for the Advancement of Education, established by the Ford Foundation, has been made to St. Xavier College for Women here. It has been announced.

The Chicago Chancery office described the grant as one of the largest made to a Catholic college.

His Eminence Samuel Cardinal Stritch, Archbishop of Chicago, said that the college will use the money exclusively for a newly projected liberal arts course.

**Assured Equal Rights**—(NC)—The Chief Minister of East Bengal, Abu Hossain Sarkar, has assured minority communities in Pakistan that they shall have equal rights with Moslems.

### Parents Offer Guide For Mercy High Girls

(Continued from Page 1) though getting home hours had been suggested "many parents would do well to establish earlier curfew hours for their daughters."

Main problem seems to be when several couples are driving together from a social affair, a great deal of time is often required to drop each one at his own home. Parents agreed that allowances would have to be made where greater distances were traveled and the curfew hour pre-arranged accordingly.

It is planned that the guidebook will be reviewed and discussed and a revision published before the next school year, according to Father Torney.

**PROBLEMS COVERED** in the 16 page booklet include: Parties In General; Special Parties, including "Pajama Parties," "House Parties"; Parties Held in Your Own Home; Parties and Dances Held in the School; Getting Home at Night—Curfew; Dating; Drinking; Use of Automobiles; The Part-Time Job.

In the chapter on "Dating," the parents have encouraged group dating, that is three or four couples going together to a specific party or social outing.

The lack of wisdom in "steady" dating was given the following reasons: "It deprives a girl of many enjoyable friendships, it cripples her personality growth in the years when she needs a variety of experiences and acquaintances for full social development. It causes moods and day-dreams which injure family har-

mony. Interfere with school work. It makes readjustment to normal social life difficult when the "going steady" experience breaks up."

"It increases dangers of moral temptations, sin and shame through increasing familiarity. It teaches her false ideas of 'love' based on physical attractions only. It prematurely intensifies her desire for marriage."

It was suggested by the committee that in the booklet's revision, encouragement should be given to entertain teenagers in their homes before and after outside social events rather than in a commercial place.

The booklet was sent on publication to 830 families representing Mercy's 890 students, according to Father Torney. Within a week, thirty percent of the parents returned a postcard signed by themselves and the students acknowledging their acceptance of the guidebook.

### Papal Nuncio Opens Portuguese Seminary

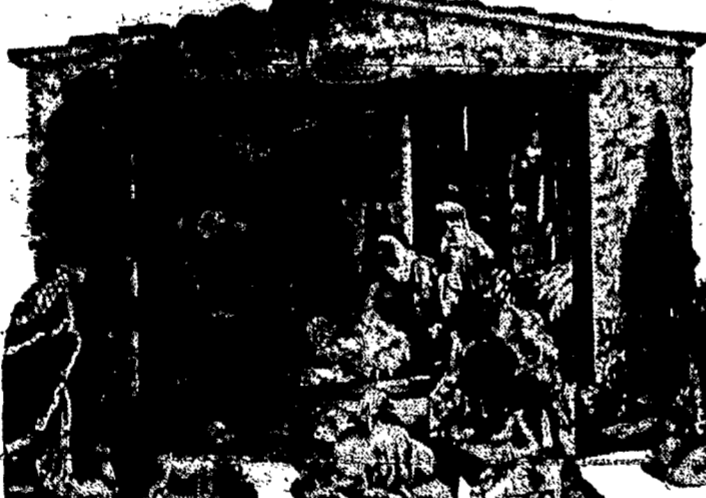
Portalegre—(NC)—Delegates from all the parishes of Portalegre diocese came with gifts of money and kind for the opening of the new seminary here which will accommodate 230 students.

They presented their gifts during the Offertory of a Solemn Mass sung by Archbishop Fernando Cento, Papal Nuncio to Portugal, who afterwards blessed the seminary chapel. The high altar there was donated by His Holiness Pope Pius XII.

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