

SPECIAL
GOLDEN
JUBILEE
ISSUE

Columbans mark 50th year

'I am sorry, dear mother'

Before sailing for China in 1912, Father Edward Galvin wrote to his mother in Ireland that he wouldn't be coming home. The words came hard for this devoted son who was to become the first Columban: "I am sorry, dear mother, to have to write this letter, but God's will be done. God has called and I had to obey. I am going as a missionary to China. "God knows my heart is broken for you whom I love above all the world.

"Mother, you know this had always been on my mind. But I thought it would pass away as I grew older. But it never passed, never, never, never. I feel like a man going to the scaffold.

"I am leaving this morning, February 28, for China. Oh, I hate that name. But I am going to save souls that are dearer to Him than all the world. Good-bye, Mother."



Founder of Columban Fathers Society, Bishop Edward J. Galvin, uses coffee cup in baptizing Chinese infant. Expelled from China by Communists, Columbans operate missions in seven Asian and Latin American countries. 1968 marks fiftieth year of service.

This year St. Columban's Foreign Mission Society celebrates its fiftieth anniversary. Popularly known as the Columban Fathers, the international society now numbers 1200 members devoted exclusively to missionary work.

It all started, half a century ago, as the dream of a strong-willed Irishman who couldn't turn his back on the horizons of faith.

Filipino students help bring Christ back into schools

A student group, organized by Columbans in the Philippines, has grown into one of the big and important movements in Asia.

Student Catholic Action, with more than 100,000 members, is the largest student organization in the world. Its positive goals contrast sharply with negative attitudes often associated with today's young people.

SCA tries to sanctify the individual and through him to sanctify others. Because this work is conducted on a huge scale, it has changed the atmosphere in many secular high schools and universities.

"SCA got started after the war," Father Ted Cafferelli of Buffalo, N. Y., explained. "It began when Father Ed McCarthy started meeting with groups of students. He'd question some of the things they were being taught by free-thinking professors. The student groups grew larger and SCA was on its way," he said.

Despite its size, SCA is keyed to individual action. A member may work on conversions, organizing retreats, counseling—in short, lay missionary work, guided and encouraged by their Columban leaders.

Since boyhood, Father Edward J. Galvin had felt the call to carry God's word to the poor and suffering in the far places of the world. During a three-year parish assignment in Brooklyn, N.Y., the idea of going as a missionary to China grew strong in him.

Faith and fate conspire

Faith and fate conspired and, late in 1912, Father Galvin stepped ashore at Shanghai. He was one of four English-speaking priests among the 400 million people of China.

As he began his lonely service, Father Galvin launched a one-man campaign to enlist more priests to serve in China. He bombarded his friends with letters; some volunteers responded, but Galvin soon saw the only real answer was to set up a society that would insure a steady flow of missionaries.

Father Galvin carried his battle for the missions back to Ireland in 1916. He sold his idea at Maynooth Seminary, his alma mater, and recruited among the best minds in Ireland. Inevitably, the Society of St. Columban was born in 1918. After the initial foundation in Ireland, another was made in America at St. Columbans, Nebraska, near Omaha. A third unit was later established in Australia, and a house of studies was opened in Rome.

Back To China

Leaving the administration and desk work to his associates in Ireland and America, Galvin himself returned to his beloved China in 1920, leading a little army of 16 Columban Fathers on their first march to Christ's missions.

In 1927 Father Galvin became Bishop Galvin. He remained in China until 1952, when he was expelled by the Communists. He returned to Ireland where he died four years later.

Man digs sermon on weeding souls

"The soul is like a garden," Columban Father John Doohan told a congregation of Filipino farmers. "For virtue to grow, vices must be rooted out. Man must tend his soul as the good farmer tends his fields."

Later he was greeted with enthusiasm by one man. He said "Congratulations, Father. Your sermon is a message I've been trying to get across to these people for years!"

The man worked for the Department of Agriculture.

Local celebrations highlight jubilee

Local celebrations at each of the Columban Fathers' 14 U.S. houses are scheduled during

this golden jubilee year of the Society. Fiftieth anniversary ceremonies coming up this year include:

Omaha, Nebr., at Boys Town Oct. 13. Guest speaker: Cardinal John P. Cody.

Milton, Mass. (near-Boston), Oct. 20. Guest speaker: Cardinal Landazuri-Ricketts of Lima, Peru.

The Lima Cardinal will also appear during Columban celebrations at **Bristol, R.I.** (near Providence) on Oct. 23; **Bay-Side, N. Y.** (St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City), Oct. 27; **San Francisco, Calif.**, Oct. 29; **Los Angeles, Calif.**, Oct. 30, and **Chicago, Ill.**, Nov. 3.

Bishop Sheen will be featured speaker during the event at **Silver Creek, N.Y.** (near Buffalo) on Nov. 10.

West Chester, Pa. (near Philadelphia), Nov. 24. Guest speaker: Bishop Joseph Daley.

Guest speaker at the **Houston, Tex.**, banquet Dec. 15 has not been announced.

Celebrations at **San Diego, Calif.**, **St. Paul, Minn.**, **Denver, Colo.**, and **Oconomowoc, Wisc.**, were held earlier this year.

Care for 30 million

Columban Missionaries care for over 30 million souls and have nearly 25,000 persons under instruction at their missions in Korea, Japan, the Philippines, Burma, the Fiji Islands, Chile and Peru. Results from the missions show that a total of 95,977 were baptized by Columban missionaries during 1967.

Globe-trotting missionary boosts Legion of Mary

Columban Father Aedan McGrath is a world-wide roving ambassador for the Legion of Mary, and something of an authority on sacrifice for the Catholic laymen's organization.

Because of his work as a Legion promoter, he was ousted by the Japanese from his China mission post during World War II. He returned only to be imprisoned by the Communists—and spent 25 months of his three-year sentence in solitary!

Father McGrath started his first Legion of Mary group in China to attract volunteer workers. He had attracted more than 100 missionary helpers when the Japanese invaded in 1939.

"When they found out what a thorn in their side the Legion

was, they exiled me for 2½ years, which I spent under house arrest with Bishop Galvin in Hanyang," Father McGrath said.

In 1948 Father McGrath began establishing Legion groups throughout China. It was a race against Communism.

"The Reds caught up with me in 1950," he said. "They jailed me for leading an imperialist spy organization—the Legion of Mary!"

After his release and expulsion from China, Father McGrath spent 10 years as a Legion promoter in England. He tackled this continent in 1965. Living out of a suitcase, he has carried his appeal throughout Canada, Mexico and the U. S. He's still at it.



Continued on Page 3