

# Father Heindl Retires As Army Chaplain

Father Elmer W. Heindl, priest, war combat veteran and educator, has retired as chaplain of the 3,000-man Army Reserve 98th Training Division.

Father Heindl, pastor of St. Patrick's Church in Cato, has been chaplain of the division the last 12 years. That time is included in a distinguished military career spanning 28 years.

"It's something I'll miss," Father Heindl said. "The Army holds a lot of memories for me."

As a final tribute to his service in the 98th Division, the commanding general, Maj. Gen. Laddie L. Stahl, has recommended him for the Legion of Merit award, one of the Army's highest.

If the medal is awarded, it will sit alongside numerous citations presented Father Heindl during World War II when duties carried him to the front lines.

In the Solomon Islands in 1943, Father Heindl was called upon to assist in the burial of seven men from an engineer battalion. During the service, he was fired upon by Japanese snipers, but continued the ceremony without interruption.

Four days later, he was asked to perform burial services for a chaplain and a surgeon from an infantry unit in an area known to be infested with enemy snipers. He had just completed the funeral Mass when the enemy opened fire. Father Heindl was forced to leap into an open grave for cover.

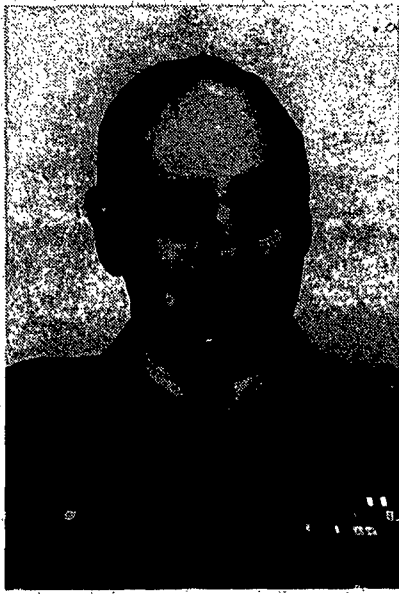
The next day, he was in the midst of another battle, helping a surgeon care for wounded men.

For this bravery, he was awarded the Bronze Star. It would not be his last honor. At Manila in 1945, he administered last rites to dying men at a Japanese prison camp despite warnings from prison guards that he not do so. For that, he won the Distinguished Service Cross for "extraordinary heroism."

Later in 1945, he was awarded the Silver Star for aiding wounded American soldiers in the Philippines while under heavy attack from Japanese.

Father Heindl, 60, directs the efforts of 13 chaplains in the 98th Division, which is headquartered at 2035 N. Goodman St. in Rochester. He personally recruited five of them.

In recommending Father Heindl for the Legion of Merit, Maj. Gen. Stahl cited the priest's "outstanding performance of duty. The exemplary duty performance of Chaplain



FATHER HEINDL

Heindl has been a source of inspiration to the personnel of this division and the Army Reserve. His accomplishments represent outstanding achievement in the finest traditions of the U.S. Army and reflect great credit upon himself and the military service," Stahl said.

As an Army Reserve division chaplain, he carried the rank of lieutenant colonel.

His reserve duties required that he assume responsibility for a "character guidance program" within the command. Father Heindl revised, tailored and modified this program to suit the Army Reserve environment and capability.

Shortly after his assignment as division chaplain in 1958, Father Heindl proposed a training program designed to train priests and ministers better for duties as Army chaplains. The program was eventually adopted for use by the entire First Army area.

Each summer, Father Heindl accompanied the men of the 98th Division to Ft. Dix, N.J. for their annual two weeks of active duty training. There, in addition to counseling his own men, he assisted in Masses with Regular Army chaplains.

The officers of the division recently honored Father Heindl at a banquet in his honor. Said Maj. Gen. Stahl: "He will be sorely missed."

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Until Aug. 28 they will combine two hours of classroom instruction daily with six hours of work at Xerox Square or at the manufacturing facilities in Webster and Henrietta. They will be paid for a normal work week.

Russell Brigandi, dean of students at Monroe High School, will be in charge.

Subjects that will be offered include electrical theory, welding, drafting, English, mathematics, office practice and speed writing.

## Last 'Cadet of Year'

Lt. Col. Nicholas G. Proia, son of Dr. and Mrs. Nicholas C. Proia of 74 Arcadia Pkwy. was selected by his classmates at Nazareth Hall Cadet School of Rochester as Cadet of the Year. Effective next year, Nazareth Hall will discontinue the Cadet Training Program.

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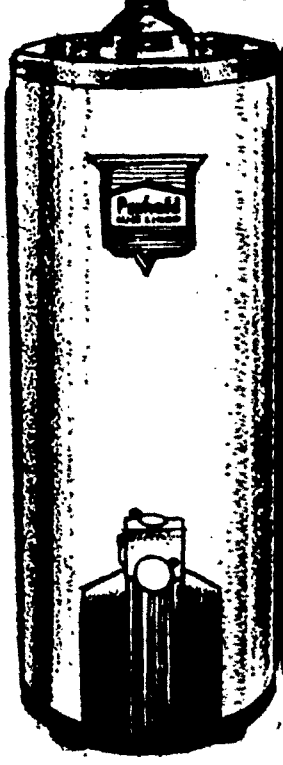
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