

ON THE RIGHT SIDE



Fr. Paul J. Cuddy

On to Piffard, with a short stop in Isham Street, Avon, to greet Latinist Miss Mary McCarthy, who was on our Courier Rome-Ireland pilgrimage. At 6:45 the Trappist Abbey loomed forth, and I was hoping Compline would be at 7. I flagged down a car just leaving the abbey. "Do you know when Vespers is?" The driver replied: "No. We're strangers here, and don't know where anything is." He thought Vespers was a place.

What to do? Trappist monasteries are eerie places, to outsiders; and who knows what is where or when within? So I drove to the retreat residence, Bethlehem, a mile up the road. No retreatants there, but three Family Brothers were. One asked: "Will you have a cup of coffee?" "Do you have banka?" "Yes." "Fine." So we had an interesting hour together, discussing religious life. What are Family Brothers? Hard to define. But they are men — mostly young — who live and work at the abbey: as mechanics, builders, farmers, cleaners, cooks, etc. They are kind of part of the monastic community, without vows. They share in the liturgy, are frequently prayerful and seeking perfection in God. They can leave at any time; and many do. One I had met a year ago was still there to my surprise. "Why, I didn't expect to find you still here!" He laughed: "Why not?" "I don't know. But your background just doesn't seem to fit with this life." One brother explained the Family Brotherhood thus: "The Monks are like the planets; and we are like little stars, admiring the planets and grateful to share in their great work."

The Syl McGinleys who also were on our Courier pilgrimage live just down the road, so a stop there for a short visit. Mrs. McG had an album of beautiful pictures of the Rome-Ireland pilgrimage which were great. Phoned nurse Dorothea Butch, Mrs. McG's sister, who was also a pilgrim.

Then onward, south through Groveland to Dansville. "Haven't seen Fr. Dick O'Connell or Fr. Bill Darling in a while." So stopped at St. Mary's. It was 9 p.m. Both priests were out but the housekeeper, Mrs. Alice Haskel, was in. She used a cane from an automobile accident. As we talked she recalled: "You stopped at Highland Hospital, Rochester a year ago when I had surgery on my leg." When I visit hospitals I frequently stop in on people who live in a vicinity where I have served. With five years service at Mercy Hospital at Hornell, and through the Legion of Mary I got to know many Dansville-Wayland-Perkinsville people.

Mrs. Haskel is from Nunda, and I told her of a most edifying incident which I experienced while visiting Father Heisel there with classmates Fathers Lane and the late Francic Hester in 1957. She listened and said: "That must have been Grandmother Sommers. She was a saint." And indeed Mrs. H. guessed right. It was Grandmother Sommers. Mrs. H. also commented: "I've been housekeeper here for three years, and have loved every day of it." "Well, a cheerful and contented housekeeper is a blessing not only to the priests but to the whole parish. So may the Lord bless you doubly."

At 10 p.m. the car chugged down Erie Street in Hornell and stopped at the sisters of Father Richard Mattie and his twin brother David, who was so tragically killed along with Father Joseph Merkel in a car accident in 1969. During my Hornell tour of

duty their home was "a home away from home" for me. So despite the late hour, I stopped in. A good welcome was there, and a great bowl of fresh raspberries from their own garden.

So after lugging the luggage, including several Bp. Sheen tapes, several copies of The Catholic Catechism by Fr. John Hardon, SJ, and a disgraceful extra 50 pounds of lard on my bones, up to the room reserved for Father Sturmer on week-ends, and after a few weary night prayers I plopped into bed, having first left a note on the stairs. "Father Lewis Brown: I should like to say the 5:30 afternoon Mass, and sleep in late in the morning." And so it happened.

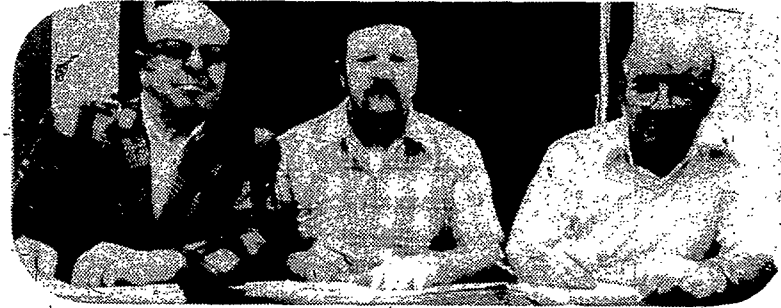
Nursing School Reunion Set

The 1964 graduating class of Saint Joseph's Hospital School of Nursing in Syracuse is planning a reunion here.

A family picnic will be held on Saturday, Aug. 23 at 1 p.m. in Perinton Park, near Rochester. Further information may be obtained from Susan Collins Roberts at 377-6777.

COUNTRY FAIR

The 22nd annual Country Fair Aug. 23 and 24 at St. Pius X will feature a ham dinner, pony rides and jeep rides. Dinner time is 5-7 p.m. Saturday and 4-7 Sunday, with Mary Ann Schott in charge.



National Meeting

Rochester Court 10 of the Knights of Equity will be host to the 80th national convention at the Downtown Holiday Inn Oct. 23-25. The Knights of Equity is an Irish organization founded in 1895 to promote Irish culture and help the cause of freedom for all. Various committees are working under chairman Thomas R. Coughlin. Planning the convention, above, are Martin Scahill, James Scahill, Al Bennett.

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