

On the Right Side

By Father Paul J. Cuddy

Denmark: A Religious Puzzle

To Sister Lauretta, OSF Villa of Our Lady of the Poconos

"Thank you for your welcoming letter. I cleared with Mrs. Mary Smith in Elmira, and all is set for the retreat at your Villa, May 18-20, sponsored by the Elmira-Corning Southern Tier Retreat Fr. Cuddy League. You may recall my beloved brother Joe died suddenly in Auburn last year, just before that retreat began. I have just returned from the Holy Land with a group of pilgrims, under the auspices of our Courier-Journal, a good preparation for our coming retreat.

Travel is instructive, but our short time in Denmark was startling. We landed there about 7 a.m. Denmark time, and were to leave for Israel at 10:30. It was Sunday, so I said to my confrere, Father Morgan, 'We have time to get to a church, concelebrate Mass for our people, and be back in time for take-off.' It was not that simple.

Not one person at the airport knew where a Catholic Church was! A fleet of cabs was in front so we explained: 'We want to go to the nearest Catholic Church.' The coordinator seemed to understand as he directed the cabbies. We 14 piled in to four cabs, took off and got separated. Two of the four cabs got to St. Ann's Redemptorist Church a couple miles away.

It was 8:15 a.m. Two Polish sisters were taking care of the preparations for the parish Mass at 8:30. Since neither Father Morgan nor I has much proficiency in Danish we could hardly concelebrate. There were several priests there: one Dane, one Irish missionary who cares for many scattered Philipinos, one Pole who cares for a local Polish group. The pastor came and had sister take us to a beautiful chapel adjoining the church where

Father Morgan and I concelebrated in English for our six.

In all Denmark there are 5 million souls, and only 25,000 Catholics, good, bad and indifferent. There are Catholic schools, and the government pays 85 per cent of the costs of the schools. The U.S. is almost the only non-Communist country in the West which denies a just share of the school tax to non-public schools. The Catholic schools are taught mostly by lay teachers. About two-thirds of the pupils are not Catholics.

Since our plane would leave at 10:30, we got cabs and returned just under the wire. The other two cabs came at the same time, with our pilgrims ready to explode.

'First the cab drivers took us to a Lutheran church! Then all over the city! Finally to a Catholic Church, but no Mass! And They charged us \$17!'

That night while I was settling group things in our Jerusalem hotel, Father Morgan celebrated Mass for them in our hotel room.

On our return from Israel, we stayed overnight at the Admiral Hotel in Copenhagen. It was past midnight Monday. Our parting instructions were, 'You have only a continental breakfast, and the bus leaves promptly at 10:30.'

We had an hour before leaving so I asked at the desk, 'Where is the Catholic Cathedral from here?' There was great discussion among seven clerks and porters, but no one knew. Finally the head porter found in a Copenhagen guide book that it was only five minutes by cab. So Father Morgan and I took a cab, and met the tall, somber, but cordial Vicar General, Msgr. Anderson.

He invited us to his quarters, confirmed the information that we got from St. Anne's, and invited us to return to visit him if we came back to Denmark.

The Courier-Journal has scheduled a Scandinavian tour for May 28-June 11, and if it materializes, I certainly will accept his invitation.

Religious Education Workshop April 21

The Office of Religious Education will sponsor a workshop for teachers and parents involved in the religious education of mentally handicapped children, April 21, 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Pastoral Center on Buffalo Road.

The workshop will feature talks on the religious education of those with handicaps, sessions on sacrament preparation and discussions about parent involvement.

Workshop leaders are Mrs. Marie Stengel and the Rev. Mr. Bill Willis from the diocese of Buffalo. Mrs.

Stengel is chairperson of the Diocesan Council for Handicapped Persons, a member of the National Association with Mentally Retarded Persons Board and member of the NAMRP Parent Council. Rev. Mr. Willis is a parent of a mentally retarded child and chairperson of one of the special education centers in Buffalo.

Parents of handicapped children or persons interested in becoming involved in a religious education program for the handicapped are welcome to attend. Information and registration forms may be obtained by calling 328-3210.

Sister Jamesine Re-elected SSJ Superior General

Sister Jamesine Riley has been elected to a second term as superior general of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Rochester.

Following the announcement of her election, Sister Jamesine said, "I feel very privileged the congregation chose me. I hope to serve the sisters and the congregation in the Gospel path."

The election occurred following a Mass celebrated on April 1 by Bishop Joseph L. Hogan, apostolic administrator of the diocese. Although reporters were sequestered during the balloting and tabulation of votes, it was later learned that Sister Jamesine received 42 of 45 votes.



SISTER JAMESINE

The diocesan spokesman who revealed the voting results observed, "It demonstrates a great affirmation of her leadership."

The elections are part of a general chapter being con-

ducted this year by the sisters.

The delegates also elected a team of sisters to the congregation's central administration. Those elected are: Sister Mary-Jean Smith, principal of Nazareth Academy and president of the Diocesan Sisters Council; Sister Elizabeth Anne LeValley, presently on central administration; Sister Louise Weber, presently on central administration; Sister Ruth Agnes Kesselring, an administrative assistant at St. Ann's Home.

Sister Jamesine holds degrees from both Nazareth College and the University of Rochester. Besides her administrative duties for the congregation, she also works at St. Thomas More Church.

Father Lavery Breaks Wrists, Hospitalized

Father Charles Lavery, the president of St. John Fisher College is back in the hospital.

It seems that the Basilian priest, recuperating from a leg broken during the holiday season, suffered another fall a week ago, this time breaking both wrists.

Father Lavery is back in St. Mary's Hospital following the accident, which occurred when he tried to maneuver a flight of stairs with his crutches.

A school spokesman said that Father Lavery's leg cast is expected to be removed this week, but that his arm casts are going to be with him for a while.

The spokesman also said that the college expects its president back on the job shortly, certainly "by commencement time."

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