

# Discalced Carmelites Mark 50 Yrs.

By Mother Mary, OCD

The 50th anniversary of the arrival of the Discalced Carmelite Nuns to Rochester will be marked June 19. Bishop Thomas O'Hern went to the railway station to meet the six nuns who had come from Philadelphia to make the foundation, and personally accompanied them to the provisory monastery at 151 Saratoga Ave. which had been made ready with chapel, "grates," "turn" and other essentials of Carmelite life. The little band, was led by Mother Beatrix of the Holy Spirit, and included, among others, Mother Ignatius who was to guide the community for many years and the Out Sister, Sister Elizabeth, who outlived all the others, dying in 1973.

Bishop O'Hern felt he had "enriched our beloved diocese and given it a shrine where the irresistible current of contemplative prayer lifts and bears toward heaven the souls of men and women of every type and condition." His enthusiasm was contagious and aroused the interest of priests and laity alike, including many non-Catholics. For the whole week before the arrival of the nuns, long lines of people filed through the new "monastery" on Saratoga. The first solemn

novena before Our Lady of Mt. Carmel's feast, July 16, 1930, was estimated to have had a daily attendance of some 800 people, who filled the chapel, lawn, and street to overflowing. All were eager to show their good will and appreciation of Carmel's presence in the diocese.

Mother Beatrix, who guided the community with prudent watchfulness during its first nine years in Rochester, had entered Baltimore Carmel in 1868 where she had the privilege of living with nuns who had themselves lived with the first foundresses in the U.S. Three of these first American Carmelites were native Americans who had entered a Carmel, in what is now the Netherlands, which traced its descent from Blessed Anne of St. Bartholomew who, in her turn, had been St. Teresa's own beloved companion. The bond between St. Teresa and Mother Beatrix was thus unusually close and she was particularly able to hand on to her daughters the ideals and teaching of the saint.

Father Leo Mooney, at that time diocesan Director of the Propagation of the Faith and managing editor of the Catholic Courier, was Carmel's first chaplain, and remained a devoted and

steadfast friend until his death in 1964.

Before Bishop O'Hern died in May 1933, he had the happiness of seeing Carmel well established with three new members clothed in the Carmelite habit and other young women applying. This expansion demanded larger living quarters as well as a more secluded location as a help to the nuns' life of prayer; and in June, 1934, a move was made to 1530 East Ave., which had been remodelled to fit their needs by their architect friend Frank Quinlan. For many years this was their "enclosed garden," while their small chapel became a haven of peace and prayer for friends and neighbors.

When Mother Beatrix died in 1939, hundreds of letters testified to the sanctity and hidden influence of this "remarkable woman." Mother Ignatius continued her work in Carmel and from the beginning staunchly upheld the value of enclosed contemplative life.

She would often say that the world will always be in need of prayer and that in this electronic, luxury-loving age, there is an especial need of Carmel's way of sacrifice and love of God. Her charity knew no bounds and extended far

beyond the community and its friends to all with whom she had contact. During the dark days of World War II and the years immediately following it, she sent aid to about 50 Carmels throughout the world, and, assisted by friends of the monastery, was able to send food and clothing to scores of hungry, homeless families in Germany, France, Belgium, Italy and elsewhere.

Meanwhile, it was evident that the East Ave. property was not adequate as a permanent monastery. After a long search, suitable property was acquired on Jefferson Rd. (actually in Henrietta but with a Pittsford postal address) and on April 11, 1954, Bishop Kearney blessed and broke ground there for the new monastery. It was finished two years later; the generosity and interest of friends was amazing. The final effort for completing the work was a very successful fund-raising drive, spearheaded by Leo W. Waldert under the guidance of Msgr. John S. Randall and aided by an efficient committee of dedicated workers.

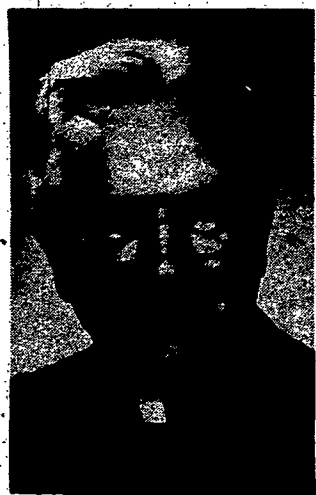
The nuns were able to move in on June 29, 1956, but not before some 15,000 persons had inspected the

monastery, touring the entire building.

Now the 50th milestone has been reached and Rochester's Carmel is still a community of prayer, begging God's blessings for the diocese and the world, ever mindful of the words of Pope John Paul II to cloistered contemplatives:

"In a world that is losing the sense of the divine, in the light of the overestimation of material things, you who are committed to be living witnesses of supernatural values from within your cloisters, be witnesses to the Lord and with your prayer instill a new breath of life into the Church and into modern man."

On the Solemnity of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, July 16, there will be a concelebrated Mass at 8:30 a.m. in the monastery chapel, 1931 W. Jefferson Rd., with Bishop Matthew H. Clark as principal celebrant, in order to thank God for His graces of these 50 years and to ask His special blessing for the needs and intentions of the many friends, living and dead, whose generous help has played a vital role in Carmel's life in Rochester from the beginning.



## Acting President

Father Joseph B. Dorsey, CSB, former dean of St. John Fisher College, will act as interim president of the institution while the search committee continues its work to find a successor to Father Charles J. Lavery. Father Lavery resigned the post of president earlier this year. He will take up the duties of the school's chancellor on Aug. 1.

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## Missioners Celebrate Anniversaries

Two Maryknoll Missioners from the diocese will celebrate their 25th anniversary of ordination this month.

Father Walter J. Gleason, a lecturer in Ethics and Moral Theology in the major seminary of the Missionary Congregation of the Apostles of Jesus in Nairobi, Kenya, will celebrate a Mass of Thanksgiving in his home

parish of St. Francis in Phelps on June 22. A reception will follow Father Gleason's Mass.

Father James Weckesser, secretary general of the Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers, will celebrate a Mass of Thanksgiving June 22 at 4 p.m. at St. Augustine's Church in Rochester.

Father Gleason was

assigned work in Musoma, Tanzania, shortly after his ordination in 1955. Later he served in the Archdiocese of Dar es Salaam as director of religious education in high schools, and also directed a boy's hostel.

He was named to the Kenya post in 1979.

Father Weckesser, who has worked 23 years in Chile, has also served as research and planning coordinator of mission efforts in that country. In January 1978, he

was named regional superior of the Maryknollers there. His election as secretary general of the group came during a General Chapter meeting later that same year.

## Local Sports Figures To be Honored Sept. 13

A committee of 20 local sports celebrities has been selected to choose the 10 best living and the 10 best non-living sports figures from the Rochester area. The winners will be announced at the Baseball-Basketball Oldtimers Reunion on Saturday, Sept. 13, at the Mapledale Party House.

To be eligible, a candidate must have had to been born here, gone to grade school or lived in the county for 10 years. The selection will be made from 1885 to the present.

The public is invited to nominate choices. List selections for the 10 best living and the 10 best non-living and mail to John

## St. Michael's Feast Noted

The apparition of St. Michael the Archangel was celebrated recently by the Congrega San Michele Arcangelo with the highlight a Mass by Father Richard J. Shatzel of Mother of Sorrows.

Allan Cassetti talked about the part of St. Michael in his background at a dinner for the "congrega" members, friends and relatives in D'Andrea's.

All enjoyed traditional Italian songs and the Donna Dancing School entertained.

Herring, 131 Wilbur Ave., Rochester, N.Y. 14606.

Proceeds from the reunion, at which many national sports luminaries will appear, go to benefit the national baseball and basketball halls of fame. For further information, call 227-3969 or 467-2017.

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