Father 'Mitch' Gets Surprise

Penn Yan — Father William Michatek, the recently named pastor of St. Michael's Church, got an unexpected gift recently.

As he looked over his congregation gathered for the 11 a.m. Mass, he discovered 70 firemen and their wives from the Gates-Chili Fire Dept. Co. 3 had traveled to Penn Yan to pay him a call.

A fire department spokesman later said, "Although Father 'Mitch' was only assistant pastor and member of our department for a year, he is respected as a fine gentleman and dedicated firemen.

"In his many transfers to different parishes, he has accumulated nearly 18 years as a volunteer fireman. In the Rochester area, he has served the North Greece VFD, Webster VFD, Union Hill VFD, Bushnells Basin VFD and the Gates-Chili VFD."

Father Michatek, who has been in Penn Yan since June, is an active member of the Penn Yan VFD.

Cenacle Sets Prayer Days

The Cenacle Renewal Center has scheduled two Days of Prayer for Thursday, Nov. 18, and Tuesday, Nov. 23. Father John Walchars, SJ, will speak at both events. His theme will be "Christ Speaks to Me; Friendship, Prayer," and "Do I Believe in My Own Healing Powers?"

A bag lunch is required for both days and beverages will be provided. There will be an offering of $4. Contact the Cenacle Ministry Office at 271-8755, for reservations.

Fr. Paul J. Cuddy

On the Right Side

Some Very Interesting Questions

On Oct. 6, Holy Family Church, Auburn, sponsored a day of recollection and invited me to conduct the exercises. For convenience it was held at Sacred Heart Church and Hall. This was ideal: for the shape of the church and the adjoining hall were such that we could assemble to process to Mass, hold a delicious luncheon afterward, and display religious articles. After lunch we had a question and answer period. Some interesting questions came forth.

An Episcopalian friend told me she was told by a Catholic priest that all the females in Our Blessed Mother's family had immaculate conceptions.

Well, I've heard a lot of dippy assertions but that one is a prize. I doubt that any priest said any such thing. Often priests are quoted for things they never said, and I think this is the case. The only one in the world who was ever conceived without original sin and in the fullness of sanctifying grace was Our Blessed Mother. This grace was given to her because of her special vocation: to be the Mother of Christ.

What do you say to a non-Catholic friend who says: "What difference does it make what church you go to? We all worship the same God and Saviour."

In March 1942 I arrived at Napier Air Field, Dothan, Ala., to work as an Air Force chaplain and was assigned a billet in the Officers BOQ. When I got to my room an English pilot had my room. We sat and chatted. He was 28 years old and had been a detective with Scotland Yard before becoming an RAF pilot. He probably was killed in action, since such was the fate of most of these fine young men. I asked him: "Are you a Catholic?" "No. Church of England. But I don't see that it makes any difference what church one goes to. We all worship the same God." "Now, John, stop to think. An Eskimo worshiping a totem pole in Alaska and a Catholic worshiping Christ in the Holy Sacrament can hardly be equated in the worship of God." He thought for a moment and smiled: "I suppose that is different." There is much confusion today because so much is said about the God of Love, and too little is said of the God of Truth. Jesus said: "I am the way, and the truth and the life." Let me recommend a book which is not easy reading, but is important: "The Crisis of Truth" by Ralph Martin. The author exposes clearly the attacks against the truth, which are going on within the Church; and presents the Church and the Scriptures as expositors of God's revelation. The book is being widely read.

Is there still an hour fast before Communion?

Yes. I would not be scrupulous about a few minutes leeway, but it is good to respect the laws of the Church. For a priest who is celebrating a second Mass, he is allowed to have liquids — coffee, milk, Alba, etc. — but not breakfast. For the sick there is a 15-minute fast recommended, unless the person is very sick, then no fast at all. We should not go overboard with a rigorous interpretation, but we should also not be indifferent.

When are you going to Ireland again?

We plan a group tour to Ireland early in May 1983. This tour will emphasize the west of Ireland, with a time around beautiful Dingle Bay, and the glorious sweeps of the area. We will also touch some of the south and east (Dublin), but the emphasis will be on the west, and more association with the native Irish.

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