

Impressions of a Visitor: 'I Wanted to Come Back'

A country of many contrasts, a "lively Church," and a warm welcome at St. Mary's downtown Church were some of the impressions offered recently by Father Frederick Nnabuife, a Nigerian priest.

"Father Fred" as he is affectionately known to the parishioners at St. Mary's, was here for five weeks; a return trip after a two-month stay last summer.

Though he emphasized that it was difficult to speak of America and American culture from his limited time here, Father Nnabuife saw America as a land of many contrasts: political, social and religious.

"I take the good and the bad in every country," he said, "and it is the same in America."

Some contrasts in this country he found glaring: the poor and the rich, the drinking and the hardworking people, the religiously committed and the aloof.

"Freedom, liberty and human rights are in print," he said, "but some cannot obtain the good life; and there are definite differences between the rich and the poor." He had not expected to see the prevalence of alcoholism and crime, and the wide gap between the rich and the poor — particularly in employment opportunities — surprised him.

However, he was edified by the commitment of law

enforcement officers to control crime: "Whenever I would go out, day or night, the police patrol vehicles were always obvious," he said. He also admired the government's efforts to help the unemployed.

Though his experience with the Church was also limited to a few parishes, he found it a "lively Church" taking its own shape and style, and "very progressive" in contrast to the Church in other countries. For example, more lay people are involved here as Eucharistic ministers; but his impression was also that the training for Eucharistic ministers is more structured in other countries.

More people attend daily Mass here than in other countries he has visited — another contrast; and he felt that people elsewhere do not realize how many Americans are committed to their faith. "I heard more people's confessions here in one day than I did in one month in a parish in Germany."

Another contrast that he noticed was that here he contacted people mainly in church and after Mass, whereas in Germany and Italy, people would want to invite you into their homes and get to know you better; they would take the initiative to create the situations for that to happen.

One of the most impressive things Father Nnabuife experienced during his stay was



Charles Burnett, right, bids farewell to Father Nnabuife as Sister Mary Agnes Trabold, SSJ, looks on.

the harmony among the staff members at St. Mary's "It's like a family," he said. "If one does not feel at home here, he will feel at home nowhere. There is a spirit of welcoming and acceptance by everyone, both last year and this year, and that is why I wanted to come back."

Father Nnabuife has completed studies in Rome, and will be returning this month to parish work in the Diocese of Orlu in Nigeria.

As he bade farewell to the staff and parishioners at St. Mary's, his memory was of

the "warmth in this house which is diffused into the parishioners, and their response to my needs originated in that warmth."

The parishioners in turn wished him Godspeed and many blessings in his ministry, and expressed their sincere appreciation for his presence among them. "His deep sense of prayer, generosity and good sense of humor enriched our life here," one staff member remarked. "We're really going to miss Fred!"

Blessed Trinity Plans Benefit

Auburn — The sixth annual Blessed Trinity School Benefit Dinner will start 6:30 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 15 at the Owasco Country Club. Chairmen for the event are Dr. and Mrs. Michael FitzGerald and Hon. and Mrs. James Cuddy.

Following the dinner, Blessed Trinity students will present musical entertainment under the direction of Charles Eckert, the school's musical director.

Proceeds from the event, sponsored by the school board, are used to defray operating expenses.

Committee members for this year's dinner are Dr. and

Deadline
Items intended for publication in **At Your Parish** must be written and at the **Courier-Journal** offices, 114 South Union St., Rochester, N.Y. 14607, before noon of Thursday preceding Wednesday publication.

Mrs. Joseph Rowley, Dr. and Mrs. A.J. Santillo, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Liegel, Dr. and Mrs. Paul Fallon, Mr. and Mrs. Rocco Malvoso, Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Donnelly, Dr. and Mrs. Michael Iacovino, and Mr. and Mrs. Philip DelloStritto.

Sarah Child



All in the Family

Talk about Cleaning Up!

I'm reworking a piece I wrote a couple of years ago, hoping this time it will sell.

Rewriting is a breeze compared to grinding out the rough draft. And far more rewarding.

Take out an excess adverb here, an unnecessary introductory clause there, and voila! you have crisp, unadulterated copy.

Shining, beautiful and clean, it is a joy to the eye, the process not unlike taking a house from cluttered to clean.

But, ah, there's the rub! In 20 some years of writing, I have learned a little about cleaning up my prose. In the same amount of time I have grown only more inept and hopeless about keeping house.

I know several writers who confess to the same problem. Perhaps it's a matter of being exact in only one area of your life. Or maybe it's an occupational hazard.

Part of the problem with working with words is that you incline to collect other people's. We take the morning paper, the evening paper and the New York Times (which comes out in the morning but which we read at night).

We also take four weeklies, including this one. Three bi-weeklies (part of the job) also arrive at the house, plus one weekly news magazine, two television publications and several monthly periodicals. I also have the habit of

tossing one or two magazines in my shopping cart occasionally. And this doesn't count the bag of paperbacks I bring home from the half-price book store every week.

Once every seven days, I throw away a lot of the reading matter, but not until I have read, clipped and filed either in the cabinet or memory what I can use or think I can use.

By the time I plow through it there is little time left to do much else besides the dinner, the dishes and the laundry.

For years now, the head of the house has been suggesting that I get somebody in to help me. I keep putting him off with first one excuse and then another.

Perhaps it all goes back to the last time I had help. I was single and working the 3 to 11 p.m. shift on the morning paper. The young woman whose ad I had seen in the classifieds came in the morning getting me out of bed.

Could she do this?, I asked.

No, I didn't have the right detergent or rubber gloves.

Could she do that?

No, that job was best done in summer when the windows are open.

Not not knowing quite what to do, I asked her to sit down and have coffee with me.

Before we drained the pot, she had begun, at my urging, the story of her life.

At story's end, I glanced at the clock. It was time for her to go and besides I didn't have anything to serve her for lunch. So I paid her and went back to bed.

Airliner Disaster Prompts Oratory Test

Elmira — Because of the Russian downing of the Korean Airline 007 killing 269 persons, the Elmira Council 229, Knights of Columbus, has scheduled a special oratorical contest for 7:15 p.m., Friday, Oct. 21, at the George Washington School.

Boys and girls, 11 to 14,

will be eligible to present a four-to-five-minute memorized speech on the theme "How we can prevent future commercial airline disasters." Trophies will be given the winner and runner-up.

A selected panel of judges will determine the outcome.

'Peace and Poor,' Topic for Dinner

Father Charles Mulligan, diocesan division director, will speak on "The Implications of the Bishops' Pastoral Letter on War and Peace on the Poor," at the 66th annual meeting and awards dinner for diocesan Catholic Charities.

The dinner will open with a cash bar, 6 p.m., Friday, Oct. 14, at Arena's Banquet Center, 1335 E. Ridge Road.

Tickets at \$10 per person are reserved by calling 546-

4894, today, Oct. 12.

The connection between money spent on the arms race and the concomitant lack of money for the poor has been consistently made by the popes since Pope John XXIII.

Adoration Mass

The Nocturnal Adoration Society will have its annual Mass and supper, 6:30 p.m., Thursday, Oct. 20 at Sacred Heart Cathedral. Father Robert Miller, rector, will preside at the Mass and will speak at the supper. Father Robert Muhlnickel will preach.

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