

Father Harold F. Rogers, founded Painted Post church

Father Harold F. Rogers, Ph.B., founder and first pastor of Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in Painted Post, died on June 11, 1989, in Corning after a long illness. He was 78.



Father Rogers was born to the late Richard and Elizabeth Rogers in Rochester on Sept. 20, 1910. After graduating from Corpus Christi Elementary School and Sts. Andrew's and Bernard's seminaries, he was ordained to the priesthood on June 15, 1935, in St. Patrick's Cathedral by Archbishop Edward E. Mooney.

Father Rogers had only two appointments during his priesthood: associate pastor of St. Monica's Church in Rochester from 1935-1951, and pastor at Immaculate Heart of Mary in Painted Post from 1951 until his retirement in 1981.

Father Rogers' priestly life might well be described in the words of St. John the Baptist: "He must increase, I must decrease." He was a very private person who quietly gave of himself in building up the Body of Christ wherever he ministered. He strongly resisted any public recognition of his many accomplishments and assiduously kept a low profile.

Without fanfare, Father Rogers formed the faith community in Painted Post and supervised the erection of the parish church, rectory and religious-education center. Although these buildings were devastated by the flood that struck the Southern Tier in 1972, they were restored to their pristine condition by the faith-filled pastor. At the height of the flood when the village was evacuated, Father Rogers could not be located for several hours. Characteristic of his low-key style, he had retreated to the hills, from which he quietly

emerged as the waters receded.

Despite his low profile, Father Rogers' hobby with a short-wave radio kept him in touch with hundreds of people throughout the world as "Preacher Man." The family homestead on Breck Street was donated to Corpus Christi Church in 1982 and now known as Rogers House for ex-offenders.

Father Rogers is survived by his nephew, John Rogers; and nieces Ruth

Vincent of Tonawanda and Rita Fitzgerald of Webster.

A Mass of the High Priest was celebrated in Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in Painted Post on Friday, June 2. A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Saturday, June 3, the patronal feast of the parish.

Interment was at St. Mary's Cemetery in Corning.

Bolivian

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be both suitable to do that and able to do that."

They identified a number of such people, and between 1972 and 1974, began training them in the basics of administering a parish. The training included lectures, but central to the process were discussions about the ministerial tasks in which the trainees were already involved. Thus, they learned through their own experiences, Father Deckman noted.

Father Deckman also pointed out that an important component not only of developing a model for lay leadership but of working with the people in the parish was in listening to their opinions and wishes. "You learn as you go along, always in dialogue with the people," he said.

Archbishop Jorge Manrique of La Paz supported the effort, "but always insisted that the community be eucharistic, with a priest as part of it," Father Deckman said. Father Golden noted, however, that the archdiocese's priests' council wasn't "wildly enthusiastic" about lay leadership and that some of the people in the parish itself were resistant to the plan.

That resistance on the part of parishioners gradually disappeared, Father Deckman said, because the people were able to participate in the process of developing the plan. The missionaries also had to educate the people, and, Father Deckman said, "demythologize the priesthood." Part of that education, Father Golden explained, was to help people "realize that priestly vocation is the basis of their baptism."

In 1974, under the leadership of Jorge Jimenez, a former seminarian, the lay team

assumed control of the parish. The eight-12 lay members of the team, most of them volunteers, perform such tasks as administering the parish and its health clinic, providing sacramental preparation and visiting the sick.

Although original members of the team have since departed and the number of team members has varied, the parish remains lay run. In fact, when a priest arrived a few years after the lay people assumed control and tried to return it to an older model of church with himself as pastor, he met such resistance that he finally left.

Members of the diocesan mission team traveled back to the parish on a regular basis for several years to assess the situation. Father Deckman himself returned to Bolivia as a missionary from 1980-86, and visited the parish a number of times. He noted that the parish is still thriving, and this year dedicated a new church. He also pointed out that even though the emphasis in the parish is on lay leadership, he knew of at least five men involved with the parish who were later ordained priests.

In deciding to put together a file about San José Obrero for the diocesan archives, the two priests said they were trying to preserve the process involved in creating a lay-run parish. The file includes their own written accounts of their experiences, as well as notes, journals, letters and newspaper and magazine articles. This information, they hope, may serve as one model for developing alternative staffing patterns in the Diocese of Rochester. Father Deckman cautioned, however, that the model cannot simply be applied directly.

"I think you have to have a vision, and then listen to the people in the situation, too," Father Deckman said. "It's something that evolved as we did it. It's like Commitment to Ministry. Nobody knows what's going to happen as you go into it. It's a growing of faith."

Administrator

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ple provide long-term pastoral leadership. "There are so many tasks, you must have lay involvement," Mahoney asserted. "You must empower them. It's their parish. Unless you empower laity, your poor pastor might experience early burnout."

In fact, Mahoney said that under current staffing patterns and job requirements for leading a parish, he would not want to do it on a long-term basis. The church must not only encourage greater lay involvement, he said, but must also face the reality of hiring additional personnel to handle the work load as the number priests available for parish work declines. "As priests are taken out of parishes, you will have to replace them," he said.

For the moment, however, Mahoney is looking forward to Father Hafner's return. He plans to take some time off to rest, noting that the last few months have worn him out.

Mahoney has also been accepted into the permanent deacon program, a goal he had when he returned to the diocese last year.

"Ultimately, in the future, the ordination will just enhance my ability to serve the people of the diocese," Mahoney predicted. "Perhaps ... if I'm called to be a pastoral leader some day, I'll be able to bring a sacramental dimension to the people."

Fr. Theophane Larkin, OFM, Webster native

Father Theophane V. Larkin, OFM, a native of Webster and a graduate of St. Andrew's High School Seminary, Rochester, died Friday, May 26, 1989, at the Franciscan Friary at the Basilica of St. John Lateran in Rome, where he served as a confessor. Father Larkin was 72.

Born John Larkin on May 17, 1917, he graduated from St. Andrew's in 1937 and entered the Franciscan order on August 12, 1937 in Paterson, N.J. Father Larkin professed solemn vows on September 17, 1941, and was ordained to the priesthood May 29, 1943, in Washington, D.C.

After serving his first priestly assignment at St. Anthony's Guild in Paterson from 1944 to 1952, Father Larkin was transferred to St. Joseph's Seminary in Callicoon, N.Y., and taught Latin there until 1963.

He served as assistant director of novices of the Franciscans' Holy Name Province at Lafayette, N.J., from 1963 to 1964. He was named director of novices in 1964 and remained in that position until 1967.

Father Larkin's ensuing assignment was at Christ the King Seminary, which was formerly located at St. Bonaventure Uni-

versity in Olean. He served as guardian of the Franciscan community at the university from 1967 to 1973. He received an assignment in 1974 as an English-speaking confessor at John Lateran in Rome.

From 1974 to 1977, he heard the confessions of pilgrims and visitors to the Basilica in Rome, where the Franciscans have served for many centuries. He returned to the United States in 1977, serving as the director of alumni at Christ the King Seminary in East Aurora.

Father Larkin returned to Rome in 1980. He was reassigned to St. John Lateran, remaining there until his death.

Father Larkin is survived by his sister, Margaret McMahon; his niece, Mary Pat Oliker; nephews, Thomas V. Larkin, Gerard R. Larkin, and J. Terence McMahon; grandnieces, Meghan McMahon and Katie Larkin; and grandnephews Jamie McMahon, and Jason, Sean and Matthew Larkin.

A Memorial Mass was celebrated on Wednesday, May 31, at St. Francis of Assisi Church in New York City. A Mass of Christian Burial was held at the Antonianum in Rome on Monday, May 29, the 46th anniversary of Father Larkin's ordination to the priesthood.

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