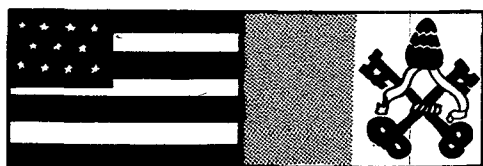


# Third World nations enjoy bumper crop of vocations

By Father Paul Cuddy  
Courier columnist

There is great concern in the States about the shortage of priests and future priests. However some religious communities are flourishing. For example the order of Legionnaires of Christ, which began in Mexico only 45 years ago, is now international with headquarters in Rome and Spain, and houses in the United States. They have 200 priests and 1,000 seminarians, including three from Cazenovia and one from the Rochester diocese. Some American dioceses flourish with vocations,



## ON THE RIGHT SIDE

but all these retain a strong attachment to the Holy See and traditional Catholicism.

In the meantime, we lament the loss of Catholics to fundamentalist sects; to secularism, in which money and pleasure replace our religion; and to the seventh capi-

tal sin, sloth, which grips the souls of millions.

But our country comprises only 7 percent of all the Catholics in the world. If the States and Europe are staggering for a lack of priests, the church in Africa is thriving. Jesuit Father Jerry Aman, a native of Holy Trinity and an alumnus of McQuaid Jesuit High School, is stationed in the Jesuit parish in Benin, Nigeria. Recently this column quoted a letter from him: "Training men to be priests here in Africa is a bargain. But even given bargain rates the cash is often short. I know that the seminarians are on

the lean and hungry side because food is not overly plentiful." As a result of this remark several generous contributors sent me over \$15,000 for the education of seminarians, and for the training of young women in the sisterhoods. In a thank-you note, Father Aman wrote:

"The Gospel story has Jesus saying: 'The harvest is rich, but the laborers are few.' In Nigeria the harvest is rich. Last year in our Jesuit parish alone, we baptized 1,004 people. We performed 102 marriages, and confessions would require an electronic computer to keep track."

# Jonathan realizes that his father, King Saul, intends to kill David

By Cindy Bassett  
Courier columnist

"Master, come quickly! Someone is hiding in the field," the servant told Jonathan. "He's calling out your name!"

"Who is there?" Jonathan asked as he searched about the field in the darkness.

"It's David," came the reply. "I come to you, Jonathan, because my life is in danger."

"What danger? Come into the house," Jonathan told him.

"I have run away from the palace," David replied. "Once again your father is trying to kill me. He will stop at nothing until I am dead."

"This can't be true! My father made a vow in front of me that he would never harm you. Besides, David, he tells me about all of his plans. If this were so, I would know about it."

"Your father knows that we are as close as brothers," David insisted. "Do you really believe he would tell you? If only I knew the reason for his hatred of me. What have I done?"

"You and I have sworn eternal friend-

ship with each other," Jonathan said. "I'll do anything to help you."

"I have an idea," David told him. "Tomorrow is the New Moon Festival, and I am required to eat at the king's table. I will not go. When your father notices my absence, tell him that you granted me permission to spend the holy day with my own family in Bethlehem. If he becomes angry, then we'll know he intends to harm me. If your father does not seem to be bothered, then it is safe for me to go back to the palace. Meanwhile, I will be waiting here, in the field, for the outcome."

"Agreed," Jonathan said. "Now I must think of a way to send word to you either way."

Before the two friends had parted, it was decided that Jonathan would come back to the field with his bow and arrows on the pretense of target practice.

"If I shoot an arrow and say to my servant: 'Come and fetch the arrow; it is close at hand,' then all is well with my father. If you hear me say to the servant: 'The arrow is far out in the field,' then you must flee for your life."

The next day, King Saul noticed immediately that David was absent from the celebration. "Where is he?" he asked Jonathan.

"David wished to join his own family in Bethlehem for the holy day," Jonathan said, carefully watching his father's expression. "And I saw no reason not to grant his request," he added slowly.

"You saw no reason! That is because you are a stupid fool!" King Saul shouted. "Can't you see yet that David is trying to steal the throne from you? Bring him here at once so that he can die!"

"But, Father, David has done nothing to deserve such a sentence," Jonathan replied.

The king did not answer his son with words. In front of all his guests, he threw his spear at Jonathan and nearly killed him. Jonathan had his answer, and left the palace immediately.

It was just after dawn when Jonathan arrived at the field where David waited. He



## THE BIBLE CORNER

shot an arrow and said to his servant, "Go far out in the field and fetch the arrow for me."

As soon as the boy returned, Jonathan gave him the rest of the arrows and told him to go back to the palace.

When he was out of sight, Jonathan called out: "I am sorry, David. It is just as you feared."

Scripture Reference: 1 Samuel, Chapter 20.

Meditation: When Jesus left his followers after his resurrection, he made an even greater promise: "I will be with you always, to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20).

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