

'Local' priest enjoys making frequent stops

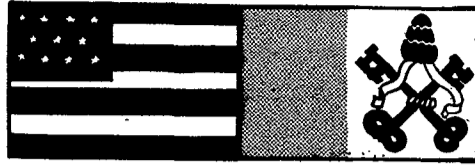
By Father Paul Cuddy
Courier columnist

When Father Joseph Gaynor was my assistant in Clyde years ago, we went to Avon to see Father Henry Atwell. On the way back I suggested: "Let's stop in on Father Napier in Shortsville."

"If you were a train, you would never be an Express, but a Local," Father Gaynor observed. "You always have to make stops on the way."

While filling in for Father Tim Erdle recently at St. Mark's in Greece, I decided to meet some old friends. At 11 a.m. I said Mass at the infirmary of the Sisters of Mercy for the infirm sisters and had dinner with them afterward. Then I had a meeting with the retired sisters at Omega, adjoining the infirmary.

After a bit of a respite at St. Cecilia's near by, I was off to the St. Joseph's Infirmary on East Avenue to meet with Monsignors Frank Burns and Joseph Sullivan, and Fathers Joseph Donovan and John Hurley. I also saw Father Thomas McVeigh, who is critically ill. The Sisters of St. Joseph have added to their many apostolates the care of infirm priests. The number is limited to five by some state re-



ON THE RIGHT SIDE

gulation, but the kindness and care the order provides to some 80 infirm sisters and the five priests is an edification. The sisters invited me to supper with the priests and sisters, many of whom I have known through the years.

The Basilians of St. John Fisher College are only a few miles away and it was 6:10 p.m. I thought: "The Fathers will be at dinner, and I can meet them all." The Basilians have done great work for our diocese both at Aquinas and St. John Fisher, and I wished to give them my respects.

The very literate Father Bob MacNamara is pastor of St. John of Rochester, Fairport, only four miles away. So I spent a half hour with him, then went over for a half-hour to the parish chapel, adjoining the church, where they have Perpetual

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

I left St. John of Rochester a bit after 8 p.m. A Franciscan Sister from Kenya, Africa, is in residence at the Mercy motherhouse, which is on the way back to St. Mark's. Bishop Raphael Ndigni of Kenya had written to me that some organization was giving a scholarship for one of his sisters to come to Rochester for training in sign language for the deaf.

The scholarship fell through, but trusting in the kindness of the Sisters of Mercy to give her room, board and love — and trusting God to supply tuition and other costs — Bishop Ndigni sent Sister Agnes on to Rochester nonetheless.

At 8:35 I rang the motherhouse door bell. The place was bolted like Elmira state prison. Presently, Sister Bonaventure came. "Do you think Sister Agnes is available?" I asked. She put me in a reception room. Soon I was startled as a quite large and strong black African sister — almost regal in her white Franciscan habit and religious veil — came striding into the room with a grand smile and a hearty welcome.

We chatted. She spoke of the disappointment to lose out on the scholarship, the great need for sign language among

Kenians, the inactivity of the government and the church for the deaf, especially the children. She spoke of Bishop Ndigni's concern for them, the kindness of the Mercy Sisters, the burden of the heavy courses she is taking at the University of Rochester and at Rochester Institute of Technology. Besides her studies Sister Agnes works as a part-time assistant to some professor to earn income to pay part of her tuition and other needs.

The name Agnes means "a lamb." But my impression of Sister Agnes is that of a superbly capable, strong, intelligent, dedicated religious sister. And as she breezes about the campuses, in her beautiful white Franciscan habit, she is a visible witness to all of the church's love and concern for the handicapped. She is also a sign of the universality of the Catholic Church.

Anyone who wishes to make a donation toward Sister Agnes' schooling may send it to: Sister Kathleen Milliken, Sisters of Mercy Motherhouse, 1437 Blossom Road, Rochester, NY 14610.

Then it was 9 p.m., so I headed off to St. Mark's, some 15 miles away. It was a good day, and the "Local Train" mentality had stood in good stead.

Pharaoh refuses to let the Hebrews escape slavery

By Cindy Bassett
Courier columnist

"Moses, you're going back to see Pharaoh again?" Aaron asked. "This time Pharaoh may not just throw us out. He could order his palace guards to kill us."

"That will not happen before everyone in Egypt, including our own people, witness the great power of our God," Moses said calmly. "Pharaoh is no match for him. Now will you come with me?"

For his part, Pharaoh seemed amused to see them again. "As I have said, I do not know this God of yours. Show me some sign," he said.

With that, Moses threw his shepherd's staff on the ground in front of Pharaoh and it became a snake that slithered toward him. But Pharaoh only motioned to his magicians, who did the same thing with their staffs.

"Well?" Pharaoh asked. "Whose god is better?"

Without a word from Moses or Aaron, Moses' staff that had become a snake de-

voured all the other snakes. But this sign did not convince Pharaoh to free the Hebrew slaves.

Early the next morning, as Pharaoh was walking along the Nile River, Moses and Aaron again went to meet him.

"If you do not let our people go," Aaron said, "Our God will turn your Nile River into blood. All of the fish will die. There won't be any drinking water in all of Egypt."

Pharaoh again refused, so Moses raised his shepherd's staff over the Nile River. Suddenly blood was flowing everywhere in Egypt. Even the water pots in the houses changed to vats of blood.

But when Pharaoh saw that his magicians were able to do the same thing with their secret arts, he denied their request again. Instead, he ordered that new wells be dug for drinking water.

Seven days later, Moses again returned to the palace with his brother. "If you do not let our people go, the Lord will send frogs to invade every corner of the land. They will be so plentiful that they will



even come to live here in the palace. They will jump on you and all of your officials."

Pharaoh's magicians also were able to conjure frogs, but this time Pharaoh summoned the two brothers, saying, "If you can get rid of these frogs, tomorrow I will allow your people to go into the desert and worship this God of yours."

When the frogs were gone the next day, however, Pharaoh shouted at the two brothers, "The Hebrew slaves have work to do for me. Now get out of here!"

The next disaster the Lord brought on Egypt was worse than the others. When

Moses struck the ground with his staff, a great swarm of gnats came up out of the dust. The gnats attacked all of the Egyptians as well as all of their animals. Only the Hebrews and their animals were spared this misery.

"Call your own gnats forth!" Pharaoh ordered his magicians. But this time, the sorcerers could not produce a single insect. "Get rid of the plague!" Pharaoh shouted at them.

"That we cannot do," one of the wizards timidly told Pharaoh. "The Hebrew god is too powerful for us. We cannot prevail against him."

"It is the finger of God moving in Egypt!" another of the magicians added.

Without another word, Pharaoh stormed from the room. But he still refused to let the Hebrews leave Egypt.

Scripture Reference: Exodus, Chapter 6:1-12; 7:8-19.

Meditation: "As for me and my household, we will serve the Lord" (Joshua 24:15).

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