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Redemptorist North American Historical Bulletin

The first article in this unusual issue is a speech by Father **Francesco Chiovaro** accepting the **F.X. Seelos Award** for history from the Institute for Redemptorist Historical Studies (North America).

Father Chiovaro has been the general editor for the Congregation's History Project since 1987; he called or organized many of the meetings around the world, as well as the General History itself, and published the first volume. He recently announced his resignation due to ill-health. In his speech, one we are sure will be of interest to our readers, he briefly sketches the main difference between European and North American Redemptorist life.

The second is a speech by the editor of the Redemptorist History *Bulletin*, **Paul Laverdure**, specifically about the future of Redemptorist History in North America, although many of his statements could be applicable to Redemptorist History writing around the world. Laverdure, who began working with the Redemptorists of the Toronto Province, then briefly for the Edmonton-Toronto Province when it was formed, wrote *Redemption and Renewal: The Redemptorists of English Canada, 1834-1994* (Toronto 1996). He has written, translated, and edited a number of other books, most in relation to Redemptorist history, taught Redemptorist history to the novices of the French-Canadian Beaupré Province, and is presently the archivist and historian for the Yorkton Province.

In this issue, readers will also find twelve brief biographies of some of the founders of the Yorkton Province, written by Dr. Laverdure and donated to the *Bulletin* by the Yorkton Province. As the 2006 centenary of the Yorkton Province approaches, Yorkton has been distributing these leaflet biographies since January 2005 to its many parishes and they have been inserted in parish leaflets or bulletins on a monthly basis. Although Redeemer's Voice Press has ended commercial printing (and is gradually using up its paper stock), it continues to handle the *Bulletin* and to publish religious materials such as Gregorian and Julian calendar pads and calendars in English and Ukrainian.

As it has since done since the Bulletin's production moved in 2000 to Redeemer's Voice Press, the publishing company of the Yorkton Province, **Yorkton has donated the paper for the *Bulletin***.

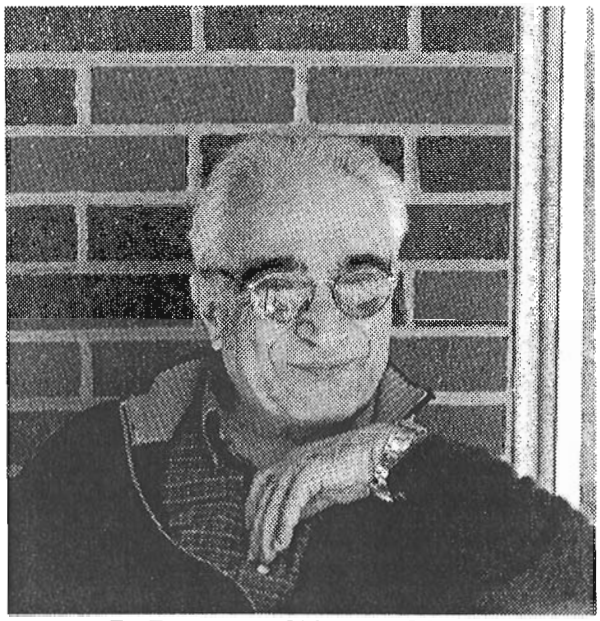
Any brief biographies, parish histories, or other celebratory volumes relating to Redemptorist history which the authors or publishers would like to see announced or distributed by the *Bulletin* are very welcome. Please send copies c/o the **Redemptorist Archives, 165 Catherine Street, Yorkton, SK, S3N 0B9, Canada,** and remember that our print run is now 475 copies!

Coat of Arms in Old Church Slavonic

Address by Francesco Chiovaro, CSSR

at his Reception of the Third Blessed Francis Seelos Award

during the Historical Conference
Sponsored by the
Institute of Redemptorist Historical Studies: North America,
Holy Family Retreat House, Hampton, Virginia, October 7, 2004



Fr. Francesco Chiovaro, CSSR

Dear Friends,

I am moved as you can see. I did not expect such a testimony of esteem. I do not believe I have done anything to deserve it. Worse, I was not able to complete the work that I had begun (the multi-volume history of the Congregation). Now I am sure that, with my successor, Dr. Otto Weiss, everything will go better. As the Romans say: *"Omne factum, rite factum,"* whose sense we can translate with: ""All's well that ends well."

I am glad to be here. It gives me a welcome opportunity to tell you how visiting the American and Canadian confreres over the years has enriched me. It will be my way of thanking you. Many of you know that my first contacts with the American confreres were not very pleasant. They date from the General Chapter of 1967/1969. We did not know each other and we were biased and full of prejudices. We were all looking for the same thing, the renewal of the Congregation, but in different ways. I was young and fiery. In short, I won a solid reputation of being a pain in the neck. Even my name Chiovaro was changed to Jivaro. The funny side of this is that, at the same time, in Europe, I was considered a philo-American. It was true. I have always had a great attraction to the United States, because a great part of my family lived in Des Moines, Iowa. In Calabria, where I was born, everyone had two homelands: the United States and our own.

Twenty years later, Most Reverend Father General, Juan Lasso de la Vega y Miranda, asked me to plan a history of the Congregation. The first regional meeting took place in Esopus, New York, in October of 1987. I had many apprehensions about this first meeting. I had been schooled in medieval history and knew practically nothing about the histo-

ry of the Congregation; and this meeting was being held in America. In the end, it turned out well, thanks to Fathers F.X. Murphy, Joseph Oppitz, Wally George, Carl Hoegerl, and many others.

For me, the American meetings became an annual event for sixteen years. I missed only two of them because of serious illness. How do I explain this fidelity? I had discovered another face of the Congregation. For me, as a European, it was an unknown face. If I were to summarize the great work of the Congregation in the United States as I see it now, I would say that it was the preservation, the safeguarding of the faith. By groping forward, with some perplexities and distractions, but with surprising and even astonishing perseverance, the American Redemptorists became one of the pillars of the Catholic Church in America.

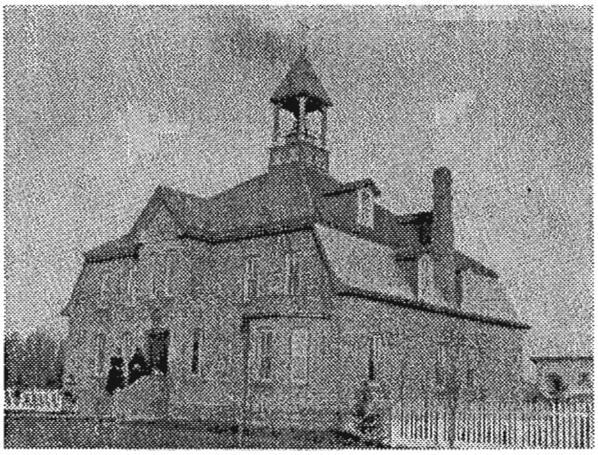
The more I knew of this history, the more enthusiastic I became. I started to understand the apostolic nuncio, who visited the United States in the 1800s, when he wrote in his report to Rome: "The Catholic Church in the United States of America rests on two columns: The Jesuits for the cultural world and the Redemptorists for the people of God."

Since then, I have begun to speak of a third founding of the Congregation after that of Saint Alphonsus, which is the first, and that of Saint Clement, which is the second. The American environment, culture, and history, and above all, the apostolic zeal of the Redemptorists, have forged a new face for the Congregation. Our American confreres spoke of it with a certain degree of modesty. On the other side of the Atlantic, we did not understand, because we were badly informed, or not informed at all. Saint Augustine had said it before: "One does not love what one does not know."

For sixteen years, I have tried to make your reality known, wherever I was called to speak of the history of the Congregation. I spoke very little about your parish missions, something that is well known throughout the entire Congregation. In particular, I tried to explain what was, and what is, an American parish: a center of openness, of social and religious formation, especially for immigrants. In Europe, a parish is merely a center for dispensing the sacraments. I spoke also of my enthusiasm for your retreat houses, of their organization, and their success. Something like this does not work in Europe; I do not know why. If I were in charge, I would invest almost all our available resources into these centers of spiritual life. We need it. And, in my opinion, it is the future, not only of the Congregation, but of a Christianity that is becoming, more and more, merely a remnant, a Diaspora.

In short, I became more a philo-American than you. That is how I am now. Everything was made possible for me because I was always welcomed with the greatest possible kindness. I always felt that I was a brother among you.

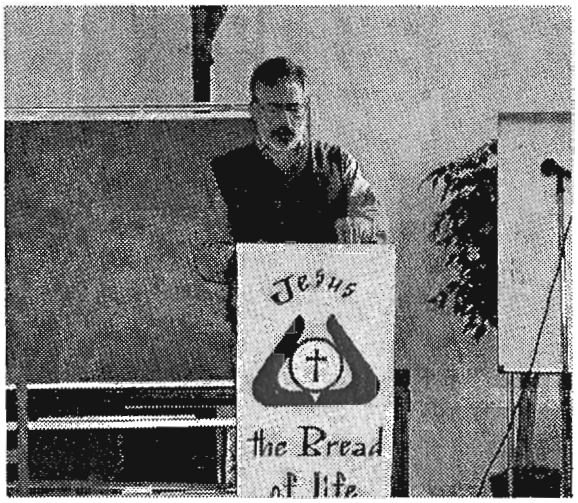
It is time for me to end. Thank you for what you were, thank you for what you are. Thank you for your brotherly love. ***



This is St. Gerard's monastery and chapel, Yorkton, Saskatchewan, 1904, the year of St. Gerard's canonization. Is it the first structure dedicated to St. Gerard?

The Future of North American Redemptorist History

This speech was first given by Dr. Paul Laverdure on 7 October 2004 at the Redemptorist History Conference III, in Hampton, Virginia. It followed a survey of the evolution of the Institute for Redemptorist Historical Studies sketched by Father Carl Hoegerl, CSSR.



Paul Laverdure

I have been asked to present my thoughts on the future of Redemptorist history. Essentially, as a lay person, I am an outsider and anything I say can be easily dismissed as uninformed. Fifteen years, however, as an historian and an archivist within the Congregation, brings me some inside information, so that anything I say can also be dismissed as hardly objective... I may even be part of the past, rather than someone qualified to discuss the future. I suppose, however, my relative youth might guarantee that I will be forced sometime in the future to reread and eat any or all of my words spoken today. I am flattered. I have been judged worthy to play the prophet: but we all know how dangerous that is. We all must wonder exactly what the conference organizers and Father Hoegerl in particular were thinking when they invited me to pronounce on the future. I will prefer to think that they have some confidence in my health and future participation in this group of historians.

The first principle I hold in predicting the future of history is that historians will continue to do what they have already done. *Sub sole nulla nove*. Biographies, parish histories, the occasional study of mission techniques--all will continue to appear. We have seen biographies of provincials and parish centennials. Especially intriguing, we have seen some rarefied and excellent studies of spirituality both in the Spirituality Series published in Rome and in Father Hoegerl's own *Spiritus Patris*. We will see more, I hope, because I find this aspect of history the most difficult to trace. How does anyone trace the history of a soul? of a spirit? You might as well nail jello to the wall. Yet, some people are able to do it and I am eager to see more of it.

The second principle I hold in predicting the future of history is that theologians will continue to explore the signs of the times, that is to say, contemporary history. As gender, race, moral issues, and ecumenical relations dominate or have dominated contemporary minds, so Redemptorists, both theologians and historians will examine these issues and show the role of Redemptorists in women's congregations, ethnic relations, such as the black apostolate, the Redemptorist role in developing Catholic moral stances to new or rather, renewed questions such as reproductive technology, euthanasia in an age of technology and cybornetics, and palliative

care. For church historians trained in traditional areas–languages, chronology, politics, institutions and biography–the new areas of science and technology, business and finance, gender and power are *terrae incognitae*, yet if we invite the experts among us, the traditional historian can and will integrate these insights into the story.

The third principle I hold is that Redemptorists and their historians like theologians will begin if they have not already done so, to take into account the role of their environment, their milieu, or their context. Redemptorists have often been studied *in vitro*. As Father Chiovaro once stated, to read a history of the Redemptorists in the United States or Canada fifty years ago was to have read the same history of the Redemptorists in any part of the world. Only the names were changed. This was part of the homogenization of history so that people and places fit into hagiographical patterns already established by Saint Alphonsus and his context. The brother (Gerard), the young priest (Pampalon or Stanggassinger), the apostle (Hofbauer) — and so on — became models and eventually, the only history available apart from Saint Alphonsus and his times. This is particularly true with the history of the Naples Province.

After St. Alphonsus, time seems to have come to a stop; or, at least, the writing of history has come to a stop. We know very little about the Redemptorists in that area of the world. With the passage of enough time, the nineteenth century, under Otto Weiss and Adam Owczarski and their team of historians in Rome, should and will become better known to us. Soon, even the twentieth century will reveal its secrets as we tackle its archives and put the Redemptorists in their context and show how that context was changed by the Redemptorists.

While Marxist historians have become discredited if they were not already by their association with Orwellian newspeak and Stalinist atrocities, the dialectic is a useful principle: we must go back and forth between Redemptorist sources and the wider context of religious life, church, community, and society.

Father Wally George, the second coordinator of our Institute, wrote to me in a private letter in 1993 to discuss one of my manuscripts. In his letter, he emphasized that the history of the Redemptorists is one of a religious institution. There are special demands made on the historian when he tells the history of an institution; historians must be clear on what the institution is and how it functions. This is especially important when the institution has a religious purpose. Religion and, today, the term: spirituality, are fundamentally important to the vast majority of people and, yet, are almost impossible to define.

So, we historians look at the institution. It shows an established pattern of organization of resources and of deployment of responsibilities and its resources to achieve a chosen purpose. The history of an institution will be the story of how well it has succeeded or failed to achieve its purpose. In the classic pattern of institutional development, or decline, institutions have proved successful when they keep the purpose for which they exist in clear focus. On the other hand institutions go into decline when that purpose is lost, and the institution is corrupted by an internal struggle over power and resources seen (once the sense of purpose is lost) as ends in themselves. ...

Sometimes an analysis of the archives or other research resources can lead an historian to conclude that his telling of the story of a religious institution must, to be true to the evidence, be nothing more than the corruption of an institution into a power struggle and a scramble for resources.

This was, in essence, Wally George's criticism and the criticism of some other readers of some of my work. In other words, I wrote "outside in." My history took this direction not because this indeed is all what happened but because my view and the vision of many other historians do

not allow us to see beyond more tangible phenomena, in this case of power and resources. The purpose of the religious institution sometimes lies beyond the historian's vision. The philosopher and Redemptorist Joe Owens in a review and critique of my book, *Redemption & Renewal; the Redemptorists of English Canada*, summed up his unease in a sentence: I had missed the spirit of the Congregation. I told a whacking good story, but something — that elusive jello on the wall — the spirit was missing. Some Redemptorists disagreed and the book was published, but I am forever sensitive to this criticism and I read the spirituality books, and the charism documents, with extra care when writing anything else about religious life.

It is true that the phenomenology school I was trained in, and whose influences show in my work, is being gradually superseded by a generation — my generation — more alive to cultural context. So, my advocacy of context is somewhat self-interested, but without accepting postmodernism, we are convinced that the religious history of any group or institution must take into account the cultural milieu defined by the horizions set by their particular religious faith and, today, by the religious beliefs, motivations, and even spirit of the age. None of us today are especially concerned with history that is pious, although that would occasionally be a byproduct, but with history that is true, not only from the outside in, but from the inside out.

To be true, or at least as true as this generation of scholars can present it in answer to this generation's questions and concerns, I see more team work. It is time to break out of the traditional historian's solitary stance of sole expert, sole omniscient and yet absent narrator. No one historian can do it all, master it all, know it all. A religious congregation such as the Redemptorists has always prized teamwork. The future of Redemptorist history will depend a great deal on the Congregation creating a team out of its disparate elements, and from interested outsiders, and experts in different fields, to survey the history of this unusual group of men.

I cannot accept that the General History of the Congregation or even a History of the Redemptorists in North America can be written year by year as if it were a glorified chronology. Without interpretation and context, it is irrelevant. Nor can we organize ourselves, research, write, and publish one volume up to a certain date and then start all over again for the next section. Expertise dies with each Redemptorist who dies or moves to other work. A multi-volume history of the Redemptorists will never be published at this rate. We need to adopt project management techniques whereby a small core of historians manage the work of many more volunteers across chronological and thematic boundaries to form a broader history. For example, if someone is an expert in canon law, then have that person write a summary history of the Constitutions and Statutes of a province or of the Congregation, the impact of the changes in canon law, for the entire history. The general editor can then integrate sections of that schema for individual volumes. I remember Father Langton writing a history of the provincials of the St. Louis Province. It was excellent and is bound to be a useful resource for the history of the Redemptorists in the western United States. If we had assigned him just the provincials up to 1893, our latest volume's deadline, then we would have to find someone else to do the rest, since he has died and taken his historical training, his memories, and his expertise as a provincial with him. This multiplies the time necessary exponentially since each new member of our historical group needs to be trained and to acquire new skills–computer, languages, vocabulary, and so on. Above all, we all need, whatever our religious congregation, diocese, or institution, more work in and familiarity with our archives.

And so, we organize these conferences and invite you interested people, readers, students, scholars, theologians, linguists, treasurers, spiritual directors, pastors, preachers, and teachers to write the brief histories of your specific work, and your motivations, and to send them to your archives, to your archivist, to Father Hoegerl

here and to his successors or to our *History Bulletin* or even to *Spicilegium Historicum*, our international history journal published in Rome. Volunteer a few hours each week for your archives. Sort, translate, type, identify that photograph. One day, perhaps soon, they will be used for a history of the Redemptorists in America. That is the future of Redemptorist history in North America; it will ultimately depend on the Redemptorists, themselves.

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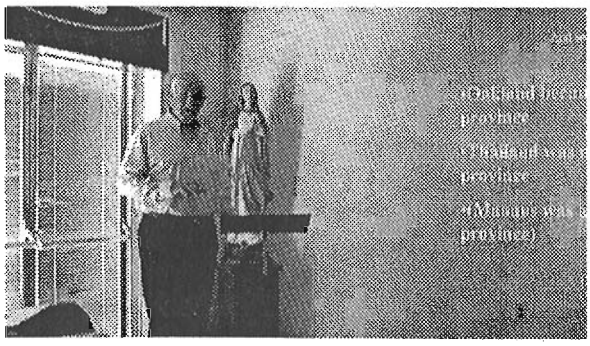


Father Richard Boever, CSSR, lecturing on contemporary New Orleans Redemptorist history.

In the last Bulletin, several errors in Fr. Richard Boever's photo captions slipped in.

For the historical record, "Mandeville, New Orleans" are two separate cities in Louisiana divided by a large lake. The picture depicts the former "Little Flower Villa" in Mandeville, Louisiana.

The photo entitled "Old Holy Ghost Church in Houston" bears an amazing resemblance to the "Texas expansion -- Holy Ghost Church 1946" depicted! The OLD Holy Ghost Church was a wooden structure.

The "Old parish of Immaculate Heart of Mary and new parish in Crowley, Louisiana, 1959" are two completely different buildings, but the "parish" has always been one! That is the actual former convent depicted in one photo and the original church in the other photo, before the church was remodelled in the early 1980s.

The city of "McAlister KY" is spelled McAlester, but it's not anywhere in or near KENTUCKY! The Redemptorists ministered in McAlester, Oklahoma from 1946 to 1961.

Is not "The First Ten Years (1953-1970) -- Expansion" a mathematical conundrum?

The two photos identified collectively as "Lacombe Church" are actually two different buildings, the front of the chapel on the seminary side of the property, and what was commonly known as the "white house" in the residential part of the Lacombe property.

The doghouse and trailer photo referred to as "home sweet home" in Corpus Christi is juxtaposed with the actual CHURCH building in Crowley; the first "home" of the confreres in the pioneer years of Crowley was across the street from the church, until the present rectory was built in the 1960s.

Well, you get the idea. Members of the Vice Province may find all this more amusing than distracting, and perhaps a bit surprising from an historical journal!

Byron Miller

And, thank you, Byron, for keeping us on our toes.

Father Wallis (Wally) Herbert George, CSSR

born 22.04.1924, professed 02.08.1945, ordained 29.06.1950, died 11.05.2005

A funeral mass was celebrated May 15 for Redemptorist Father Wally H. George in the chapel at St. Clement Health Care Center in Liguori, Missouri. Father George died May 1 at St. Anthony's Medical Center in St. Louis. He was 80 and this year was celebrating the 60th anniversary of his profession of vows.

Father George, born in Wyandotte, Mich., made his first profession as a Redemptorist at Mount Saint Clement's College in DeSoto and was ordained to the holy priesthood in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin.

Father George, who was often erroneously known as Walter, but who preferred Wally to avoid explaining that his name was his mother's maiden name (soon made famous by the American divorcee, Wallis Simpson) then spent twenty-five years in Brazil, as a local treasurer, consultor, parish priest, and director of a wide-ranging radio apostolate. For eight of his twenty-five years, Father George undertook the immense work of coordinator of pastoral life in the upper Amazon Valley. He was stationed in the Brazilian cities of Codajas, Belem, Manaus, and Coari. He then served as director of mission assistance for Latin America from 1975 to 1978 while stationed in Washington, D.C.

Father George became pastor of Saint Michael's Parish in Chicago from 1978 to 1981 at which time his vast experience and many languages brought him to be named as an editor of the General Congregation's Catalogue while serving as a member of the staff of Saint Joseph's Preparatory College in Edgerton, Wisconsin. He took great pains and some pride in compiling the 1983 Catalogue (in which he thought he set out his name once and for all as "Wallis George").

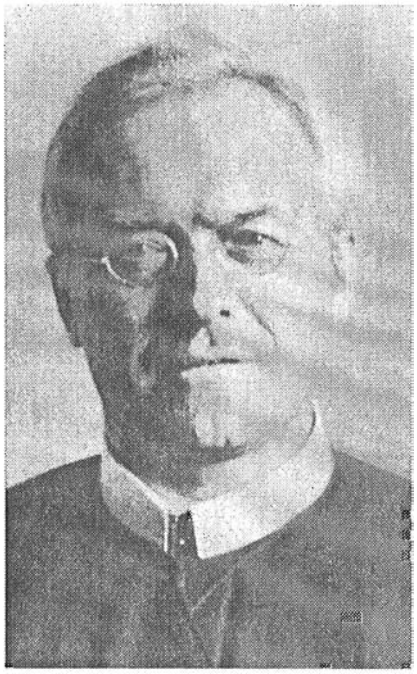
In 1988, he was asked to serve as the coordinator of the North American group of Redemptorist historians and archivists preparing for the General History of the Congregation. He organized and chaired the annual meetings, commented on work, organized the archival documents relating to the western United States in the Roman General Historical Archives, and produced several studies of the relationship between Redemptorist charism, theology, and history in the United States. In 1999, he became a recipient of the First Blessed Francis Xavier Seelos Award for Redemptorist History in recognition of his contribution to the writing of the history of the Congregation in North America. Declining health brought him to live at St. Clement Health Care Center since 1999.

He was buried in Liguori, Missouri. Several historians and archivists will remember the enthusiasm he had for everything he did.

* * *

CENTENNIAL SNAPSHOTS

1. Father Achiel **Delaere**, CSSR



Born 17 April 1868 into a Catholic farming family in Lendelede, Belgium, the young Achiel (often spelled in the French manner as "Achilles") Delaere made his religious profession of the vows of poverty, chastity, obedience, and perseverance with the Redemptorists in Belgium on 6 October 1889 and was ordained on 4 October 1896. He volunteered for missions anywhere in the world. Impressed with his religious spirit of self-sacrifice, his superiors chose Father Delaere for a new mission. He was first sent to Galicia to learn Slavic languages. Father Delaere then came to Canada on 28 September 1899, surviving a stormy Atlantic boat crossing which sank the ship off northern Newfoundland. He and other survivors of the shipwreck were picked up off the rocks by another passing ship and brought to land. He then made his way to the new Redemptorist mission field of Brandon, Manitoba to work with the Galicians in the area. While travelling by foot, horse, and buggy through the immense Canadian prairies in every kind of weather to meet his parishioners, he realized that most of the Galicians were not Polish but Ukrainians and he successfully petitioned to change from the Latin rite to the Ruthenian rite so that he may better serve these people. He moved to Yorkton, Saskatchewan in 1904 and dedicated himself solely to the Ukrainians. After intense study with the Basilians, he celebrated his first Divine Liturgy in his new rite on 26 September 1906 in St Boniface, near Winnipeg, Manitoba. From this day the Redemptorists celebrate the beginnings of the first Eastern Rite branch of the large Redemptorist Congregation of Priests and Brothers. Delaere became the founder of several mission chapels, churches and parishes in Saskatchewan and Manitoba, of Yorkton's monastery and church of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Sacred Heart High School, St. Joseph's College, Redeemer's Voice Press and in Ituna of St. Ann's Orphanage. He was also instrumental in the appointment of the first eastern-rite Catholic Bishop in Canada—Blessed Martyr Nicetas Budka. He was the first Redemptorist of any eastern rite (there are now several rites in the Congregation), the first to dedicate himself entirely to the Ukrainian people, the rector-ihumen of the Yorkton monastery for many years, and the first Vice-Provincial of the Redemptorist Yorkton Province. He died in Yorkton on 12 July 1939 and is buried there. VICHNA PAMIAT'.

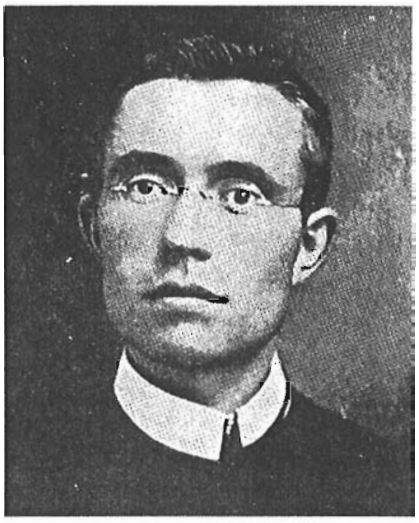
2006

Ukrainian Redemptorists 100 years

The year 2006 marks 100 years since the Redemptorists began formally working with eastern European immigrants in North America and eventually around the world in their own rite. This series of 'Bulletin Inserts' is dedicated to the pioneer Redemptorist Fathers and Brothers of the Yorkton Province. For more information about the Redemptorists, contact: the Redemptorist Vocation Office: 250 Jefferson Ave., Winnipeg, MB, R2V 0M6, Canada *or visit our website:* www.yorktonredemptorists.com

CENTENNIAL SNAPSHOTS

2. Father Hendrik **Boels**, CSSR



Hendrik was the second of four brothers born to the Flemish-speaking Roman Catholic farmer and blacksmith Augustine Boels and his wife, Ludovica, on 10 October 1882 in Leffinge, Belgium. He entered the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer (the Redemptorists) and made his profession of vows on 29 September 1901. After studies in the Redemptorist seminary of Beauplateau, Belgium, he was ordained to the priesthood on 7 July 1907. He was then sent to study the Ukrainian language and the Byzantine rite with the Basilian Fathers in Krechiv, Western Ukraine. In 1908 he received permission to adopt the Byzantine-Ukrainian rite. On 6 January 1909, he arrived in Yorkton, Saskatchewan where he became the pastor of the Ukrainians in the Yorkton and surrounding rural areas. For the Synod of the Catholic hierarchy of Canada, meeting in Quebec City on 13 October 1909, Father Boels wrote a forceful letter on the need to name a bishop for eastern rite Catholics in Canada in order to organize the faithful into parishes and to offset their suspicion of the Roman Catholic hierarchy, then identified with their former Polish landlords. This letter made a great impact on the participants of the Synod, was reprinted in the official Catholic newspaper, *The Catholic Register*, and helped in the appointment of Bishop Nykyta Budka to Canada. In August 1910, Father Hendrik was transferred to Brandon, where he served the Ukrainian settlers in the Manitoba areas of Brandon, Portage-la-Prairie, and Shoal Lake. In Brandon, he was chaplain to the students of the first Redemptorist minor seminary in western Canada, established for both Roman Catholic and Eastern Catholic students. In July 1913, when the monastery was transferred to the English Canadian Redemptorists, the Belgians were transferred to Yorkton, where he again served as pastor for the Ukrainians in the Yorkton and Ituna areas. In addition to his pastoral work, he preached missions in Canada and became the Canadian organizer for the Apostleship of Prayer. During the influenza epidemic of 1918, he visited the Ukrainian settlers, comforted them, and gave them the last holy rites, until he himself became sick and died in the house of Mykola Korchinski, in Hubbard, Saskatchewan, on 24 November 1918. For his funeral, a great mass of of people gathered, in spite of the still-raging epidemic; in this way they gave evidence of their admiration and recognition of this gentle Redemptorist pioneer who gave his life for his Ukrainian people. Well-known for his constant reading and sermons on the "Passion of our Lord" by Saint Alphonsus Liguori and the "Imitation of Christ" by Thomas à Kempis, many people considered him a saint and insisted he be buried in Hubbard, close to the people he served. Father Hendrik Boels still lies buried in the parish cemetery of the Holy Cross, in Hubbard, Saskatchewan. His life and death inspired his younger brother, Achiel Boels, to enter the Congregation and to dedicate his life to the Ukrainians. Father Hendrik Boels was only 36. Vichna Pamiat'!

2006

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CENTENNIAL SNAPSHOTS

3. Father Noël-Marie **Decamps**

Born 23 December 1884 in Carnieres, Belgium, of a Walloon (French-speaking) family, Noel Decamps joined the Redemptorists and made his religious vows in Saint-Trond, Belgium, on 29 September 1904. He was sent to Galicia to study Polish and was ordained by Bishop Novak, coadjutor to Cardinal Puzyna, in Podgorze, Poland on 6 December 1908. When he arrived in Canada, he first began to work among the Polish of Ottawa, but was advised by Father Achiel Delaere to dedicate himself to those who did not have enough priests speaking their language: the Ukrainians. Decamps immediately petitioned to join the Ukrainian-Byzantine rite and began to study the language and rite with the Basilians of Ottawa. He arrived in Yorkton on 24 July 1909, where he served the Ukrainian-speaking settlers in the Yorkton and Ituna districts. He was instrumental in the founding of a temporary monastery in Hubbard, Saskatchewan (later moved to Ituna), and in the founding of the Sacred Heart Institute for young women and St. Joseph's College for young men–both now combined in Sacred Heart High School, Yorkton. While Superior of Yorkton from 1916 to 1921, he opened the minor seminary (later St. Vladimir's College, Roblin, Manitoba) in August 1917 and in 1920 enlarged the monastery to house the students. Through his efforts, and with the financial help of the contemplative order of nuns, the Redemptoristines, the interior of the church of the Most Holy Mother of God in Yorkton was painted and decorated in 1919-20 and a grotto was built in her honour in 1921. Besides his pastoral work, he was also the director and a teacher in the minor seminary, master of novices, consultor to Father Achiel Delaere in all of the work of the Eastern-rite Redemptorists in Canada, and a preacher of missions in Canada. Suffering from chronic ill health, he had a number of unsuccessful operations to correct chronic intestinal and haemorrhoidal bleeding before and during his stay in Canada. While in constant pain from inexpert and primitive surgeries, the herculean work of building the Ukrainian missions of western Canada with little or no money and too few co-workers exhausted his strength and his patience. He returned to Belgium on 16 March 1924, and left the Redemptorists on 15 September 1934 to retire to a quieter parish life in Quaregnon, Belgium. A friend to the Redemptorists until his death, he followed the activities of the Eastern-rite Redemptorists in North America with great interest, helped serve the Eastern European immigrants in Belgium, and was always available for advice. He died in Nimy, Belgium in 1956 at the age of 71. Vichna Pamiat'!

2006
Ukrainian Redemptorists 100 years

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CENTENNIAL SNAPSHOTS

4. Father Louis **Van den Bossche**, CSSR

Born 10 February 1887 in Zele, Diocese of Gand, Belgium of Flemish Roman Catholic parents, Louis Van den Bossche made his religious profession of vows with the Redemptorists 29 September 1906 in St. Trond and was ordained 29 September 1911 in Beauplateau. A brilliant student, he won several prizes while at the minor seminary, Collège Saint-Louis, Menin, and wrote 24 articles in Flemish on different aspects of history, biblical studies, and political economics, all published before his ordination. He was soon named professor of history in the major seminary of Beauplateau, but was shortly afterwards appointed one of the first Belgian Redemptorists to begin the Redemptorist mission in Ukraine, at the request of Metropolitan Andrew Sheptytsky. He arrived on 21 August 1913 in Univ, district of Peremyshliany, Halychyna. Here, he rapidly learned the Ukrainian language and transferred to the Ukrainian rite. With the change, he simplified his name to Father Bosky. On 11 July 1914, Father Bosky arrived in Yorkton, Saskatchewan, where he served in the Yorkton and Ituna pastoral districts. From 1916 to 1922, with Father Delaere, he established a monastery in Komarno and built an orphanage and several churches in Komarno, Fisher Branch, and Gimli in Manitoba. He was the organizer and first manager (1922-24) of Redeemer's Voice Press, wrote, translated from different languages into Ukrainian, and published several articles, booklets, and longer works in Ukrainian, English, French, and Flemish, at Redeemer's Voice Press, the Basilian Press, the *NorthWest Review* (Winnipeg), *Gerardusbode*, *Voix du Rédempteur,* and elsewhere. He also wrote several articles to newspapers around the world and regularly in the Yorkton Redemptorists' monthly magazine, *The Redeemer's Voice*, which he also founded and whose circulation he increased to over a thousand subscribers within a year. Some of his longer works were booklets in Ukrainian about Our Mother of Perpetual Help, Martin Luther, and Sister Theresa of the Child Jesus, while his translation in Ukrainian of *Faith of Our Fathers* by Cardinal Gibbons became a standard catechetical work for Ukrainians in North America. Besides his pastoral work, he was a diocesan consultor to the first eastern rite Bishop for Canada, Nykyta Budka, and gave several week-long missions in the Ukrainian parishes of Canada and the United States. In frustration with Budka's ambivalent attitude towards the Belgian Redemptorists, on 17 February 1924 he returned to Belgium, where he served as a pastor and a missionary to Ukrainian immigrants to Belgium, England, France, and Luxembourg. He was the founder and first rector of the Church of St. Volodymyr for Ukrainians in Brussels. In 1936, he was named the director of the retreat house in Roulers, Belgium, and dedicated himself to the Ukrainian immigrants who found themselves unemployed during the general strikes in Europe. He died of exhaustion in Liege, Belgium on 18 April 1938, shortly after publishing *The Holy Liturgy of St. John Chrysostome, according to the Byzantine Slav-Rite* in English and while in the midst of pastoral work. Vichna Pamiat'!

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CENTENNIAL SNAPSHOTS

5. Brother Thomas **Kucheravy**, CSSR

Early in the morning of the 18th of January 1922, Tomko Kucheravy was found in his bed dead of tuberculosis (known as consumption in those days). Time of death was fixed at a few moments earlier, since he was still warm and clutched a glass of water in his hand. Many people visibly wept at the funeral and followed the burial party to the cemetery in Yorkton, moved by the death of such a promising young man. Thomas Kuczerawyj (simplified to Kucheravy) was born in Canora, Saskatchewan on 2 February 1904. He attended Father Sabourin's school for Ruthenian children in Sifton, Manitoba for a year, but with the death of both his parents, Helena Lewicki and Conrad Kuczerawyj, he was taken into the orphanage run by the Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate in Yorkton in 1916. Since the Redemptorists had just begun their minor seminary in Yorkton, he was enroled as the first minor seminarian of the new school on 2 August 1917. A cheerful, friendly boy, he was a hard-working, exemplary, pious student who gave great hope for the future as a priest. He also had a highly developed talent as a poet and during Metropolitan Sheptytsky's visit with Bishop Budka in 1921, he impressed them both with his verses. Unfortunately, Tomko began to spit blood and spent many days in the Redemptorists' infirmary. When he seemed to have conquered the illness, on 2 July 1921, he entered the novitiate with the Redemptorists and was vested on 31 July 1921. Unfortunately, he had developed a fever the day before and he again went to the infirmary. While there, he showed a great devotion to Mary—reciting the rosary up to twenty times a day—and to St. Gerard Majella, whose life he began to translate into Ukrainian. His minor seminary director, teacher, and novice master, Father Noel Decamps, was sent to inform him that the disease would claim his life. Tomko received the news serenely and, showing great strength of character, turned to console the distraught messenger. Brother Thomas made his confession and declared that he offered up his life for the Redemptorist Congregation and its work among the Ruthenian (Ukrainian and Slovak) people of North America. He was immediately accepted into the Congregation and professed his vows before Achiel Delaere, who also administered the Last Rites. Brother Thomas' last day was spent in prayer. He became the first minor seminarian and novice of the Yorkton Vice-Province to die as a member of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer. As Fr. Decamps wrote in French and Latin, "May he live forever with Jesus and Mary, next to Saint Alphonsus and his blessed sons and there, by his prayers, may he be, as he had been during his life, our consolation and our model! Sweet Jesus, give him eternal rest." He was 18. Vichna Pamiat'!

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CENTENNIAL SNAPSHOTS

6. Father Albert **Delforge**, CSSR

Born 29 October 1885 in Basse-Wavre, Belgium, of a Roman Catholic and French-speaking Walloon family, Albert Delforge made his religious profession of vows with the Redemptorists in Saint-Trond on 29 September 1905 and was ordained in Beauplateau on 29 September 1911. He worked first as a teacher in the Eschen minor seminary and then as a Belgain Army chaplain stationed at Loudun in the First World War. He was closely associated with the St. Raphael immigration society dealing with displaced people. He was assigned to Komarno, Saskatchewan on 16 October 1919, learned Ukrainian, and preached missions in Canada. In 1923, he was assigned to Yorkton for pastoral work. When the Ukrainian mission was taken over by the English Canadian Redemptorists, he was asked to be reassigned and was sent to the Ukrainians in Halychyna from 1928 to 1933. He served as the treasurer in the Zboiska monastery and as a teacher in the minor seminary. When the English Canadians withdrew from Yorkton, he returned to Canada from October 1933 to March 1935. He served the Ukrainians in the Komarno, Manitoba and Yorkton, Saskatchewan areas, where he was also a teacher in the minor seminary and a master of novices. He took a great interest in the history of the Ukrainian people and sacrificed his country, his Roman Catholic rite, and his language to immerse himself completely in asceticism and the Ukrainian language. He strove constantly for his own salvation and the salvation of the souls entrusted to him. He died heroically in the front hallway of the monastery of Our Mother of Perpetual Help in Yorkton on 21 March 1935 from a gunshot to the head when he placed himself between Father Rector, John Bala, and a deranged man trying to kill Father John. Father Albert was buried in Yorkton. Crowds gathered from miles and it was almost physically impossible to move in the church during the funeral services. Father Delforge's burial in the snow was a solemn affair. His death inspired the Redemptorists around the world and more Ukrainian-speaking Redemptorists arrived from Europe to take Father Delforge's place in the work of the Ukrainian mission in North America. Sudden death, even martyrdom, for one's faith and on behalf of others brought them to think: "No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends." (John 15:13) He was 49. Vichna Pamiat'!

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CENTENNIAL SNAPSHOTS

7. Brother Idesbald **Monstrey**, CSSR

Louis Monstrey was born 10 May 1854 in Ichteghem, Diocese of Bruges, in western Flanders, Belgium. When he requested entry to the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, the Redemptorists judged him to be an especially intelligent, talented, and religious man, but too old to begin studies for the priesthood. He professed his vows of religion 12 October 1896 in Saint-Trond (now known as St-Truiden), took the religious name of Idesbald, and began his life as a Redemptorist Brother. With the growing mission field in Canada, the Redemptorists immediately sent Brother Idesbald to where they knew his talents would be appreciated and useful. He arrived on 30 October 1896. After a short time in eastern Canada to acclimatize him to the weather and other challenges of Canadian life, the Belgian Redemptorists sent him to open their first monastery in western Canada, in Brandon, Manitoba. Brother Idesbald served in Brandon from 1899 to 1904 building St. Augustine of Canterbury. When the Belgians decided to turn their attention to the Yorkton area, he was one of the pioneer Redemptorists who left to establish St. Gerard's parish, church, and hall. He willingly turned his hand to everything asked or required and his handiwork was evident in the woodwork of the altars, pews, kneelers, window frames, doors, picture frames, and shelving throughout the many rectories and chapels scattered across the Redemptorist mission field in western Manitoba and eastern Saskatchewan. His paint brushes were in constant use, beautifying churches and walls. He personally built and painted many of the tabernacles in use in the area. He was also an accomplished musician, writing hundreds of scores for piano, organ, and orchestra, organizing and leading church choirs and bands, and teaching the minor seminarians and the orphanage children in Yorkton singing and instrumental music. At least five of his students became priests. The famous song, *Redemptorist Rosary,* was first written in French by Brother Idesbald and his song was translated into Ukrainian and English and from these languages to others around the world. When the Belgians discussed leaving western Canada and the Ukrainian missions, he was one of the few Belgians who opted to remain in 1928. In his later years, he liked to fix watches and clocks. He died in St. Boniface Hospital, Manitoba, on 25 April 1934, leaving few personal belongings behind: his tools, a couple of prayer cards, and photographs of his family members, his manuscript music, and the memory of a dedicated, self-sacrificing brother. He was 79 and is buried in Yorkton. Vichna Pamiat'!

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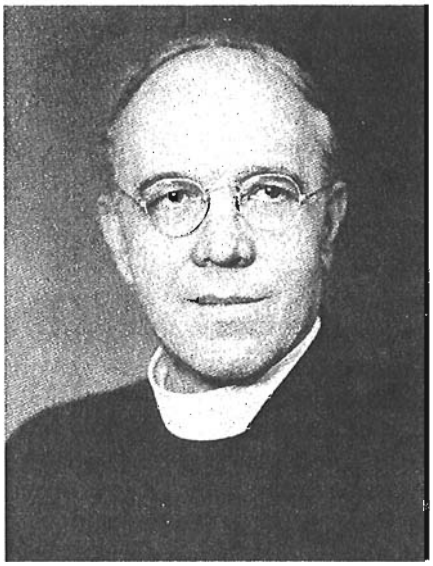
CENTENNIAL SNAPSHOTS

8. Father Dmytro **Hawryluk**, CSSR



Born 3 October 1896 of Yurij Hawryluk and Maria Merluk in Kniazhe, district of Sniatyn, then in the Austrian Empire, Dmytro completed his elementary school in Kniazhe and his secondary school (gymnasia) in Sniatyn. As a student of the gymnasia, he enlisted with the Ukrainian Sich Riflemen and was a lieutenant-ensign in the Ukrainian Galician Army under Austria. After the War, he completed his philosophical studies in the major seminary in Stanislaviv. He joined the Redemptorist noviciate in June 1922 and was professed 6 July 1923 in Zboiska. He made his theological studies in the Redemptorist major seminary in Beauplateau, Belgium. Metropolitan Andrew Sheptytsky ordained him on 26 July 1926 in Lviv. Father Dmytro taught in the minor seminary in 1927-28 and preached missions and retreats in Halychyna. The young priest was transferred and on 15 October 1932, he arrived in Yorkton, Saskatchewan. In addition to pastoral work in the Yorkton and Ituna districts, he gave missions and retreats in Canada and was known as a powerful, emotional preacher. He was superior and pastor in Ituna where, through his efforts, a new monastery was built. By his zealous work, he contributed to the organization of numerous branches of the Ukrainian Catholic Brotherhood in Saskatchewan, to the organization and the acquisition of the first church dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Wynyard, Saskatchewan and to the building of St. Nicholas' Church in Parkerview, Saskatchewan. He also contributed several articles in Ukrainian to the religious monthly, *The Redeemer's Voice Magazine,* and to the annual *Redeemer's Voice Calendar-Almanac.* Many of his catechetical articles were gathered together into substantial booklets and sold in the thousands throughout North America. He was a zealous priest and distinguished by a great devotion to the Most Holy Mother of God. Father Dmytro Hawryluk spent his last months in St. Boniface Hospital suffering from heart disease and died 3 September 1950 in Langley Prairie, British Columbia, where he had gone to rest. He is buried in the Sacred Heart parish cemetery which he had done so much to beautify in Ituna, Saskatchewan. He was 53. Vichna Pamiat'!

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CENTENNIAL SNAPSHOTS

9. Father Hector **Kinzinger**, CSSR

Hector was born 10 September 1876 in Nieuwpoort, western Flanders, Belgium. He heard the Redemptorist missionaries during the retreats given at his high school college and he resolved to enter the monastery in 1895. He made his vows 4 October 1896 in St. Trond, and was ordained a priest exactly five years later, 1901, in Beauplateau. After further studies, Father Kinzinger began pastoral work in Tournai and Liege (1903-05). He made a second novitiate for advanced mission training in 1905 and was named a missionary for the next two years. He was named socius (chaplain) to the novices in St. Trond and Roulers until 1909 and then briefly returned to the missions until he was named a teacher of philosophy in the new major seminary at Gars-am-Inn in Bavaria (1909-13). He was appointed one of the first Belgians to the Galician missions and was stationed in Univ, Halychyna. During the First World War, relying on his Belgian passport for protection, he served as a pastor in places abandoned by the secular clergy, but he finally had to take refuge in Univ where he lived as a recluse (1917-18) and learned the language and the rite in depth. He was appointed novice master in Univ (December 1917), rector in Zboiska (1918-21), superior in Stanislaviv (1921-24) and preached missions with Fathers S. Bachtalowsky and G. Shyshkovich on the first Redemptorist mission team in Halychyna. He was named to Canada as rector in Yorkton (1924-27), vice-provincial (1927-28), missionary in the United States and Canada (1928-30), and superior and pastor in Ituna (1930-33). His clear, incisive analysis of the gradual assimilation of the Ukrainian people in Canada into the English-speaking population was instrumental in the decision to transfer the Canadian Ukrainian missions to the English Canadian Redemptorists. When the Ukrainian Redemptorists in Canada protested, he was named superior of Holosko, but the Polish authorities refused him permission to enter the country, because Father Kinzinger, while in Zboiska, had given assistance to the Galician Army during the Polish-Ukrainian War of 1918-19. He was named missionary in Tournai and returned to the Latin Rite. He was named Extraordinary Visitor to the Congo (1934-35), Vice-Provincial of the Redemptorists there (1935-39), then rector and director of the minor seminary in Tournai, only to supervise the evacuation of the students during the bombardment by the Germans. He lived in Liege until 1951 when he was named rector in Namur at the age of 75, when most Redemptorists at that age had already retired. He then lived in Tournai (1953) and was appointed confessor to the students in Leuven. He died in Leuven, Belgium, on 13 October 1957. The fact that he worked on three continents in important positions of trust and responsibility showed the deep respect and confidence his superiors had in him. He was a passionate, logical, deeply religious man devoted to duty. He was 81. Vichna Pamiat'!

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10. Brother Casimir **Brasseur**, CSSR

Born 23 January 1894 of a Walloon family in Hoegaarden, Belgium, Henri Brasseur applied to join the Redemptorists in 1912. In those years, the formation period before vows was a long testing period since there were no temporary vows; they were permanent. After his postulancy in Beauplateau, he became a candidate, and entered the novitiate directed by Father Hippolyte Clement. An old Belgian Redemptorist Brother Casimir who had lived in the "New World" had just died, while the Belgians had just opened their mission in Eastern Europe. So, Henri was vested in 1917 and took on the old name and became a new Brother Casimir with the desire to help the Eastern Europeans in the New World. He left his candidacy years in Jette to enter the second novitiate in Saint-Trond. He was finally professed on 3 May 1918. Brother Casimir was assigned to Saint Joseph's in Brussels for a year. On 8 September 1919 four Belgian Fathers and two Brothers were assigned to the new Vice-Province of Yorkton in Canada: Fathers Frans Van den Bosch, Delforge, Janssens, Gelin, and Brothers Modest and Casimir. By 16 October 1919, Brother Casimir was in St. Mary's, Yorkton, where there was a novitiate, minor seminary, and the administrative offices of the new Vice-Province as well as a flourishing parish, out-mission chapels, and a large garden to feed everyone. He worked there mainly as a cook, feeding a few dozen people at every meal and many more during special occasions. He helped occasionally in Ituna, on the farm and in the building and maintenance of a number of chapels. He was a master of all trades: cook, gardener, porter, refectorian, sacristan, tailor, everything that needed to be done to free the priests for their work in church and chapel. When the Belgians withdrew in favour of the English Canadians in 1927, Brother Casimir sadly left Canada and returned to Belgium. As a veteran missionary, however, he was immediately sent to the Belgian Congo. Matadi, Tumba, Kionzo, and Bandakani became his stations and from Canada's winter cold he experienced Africa's summer heat. With the outbreak of the Second World War, he and other Belgians again returned home. The bombs, fires, and evacuations forced him to move often and to help rebuild several places: Saint-Trond (1939-40), Bergen (1940), Brussels (1941), Antwerp (1942-43), and Saint-Trond again (1943-46). After the war, he was stationed in Louvain (1946-51) and Beauplateau (1951-58). In 1958, he retired to Louvain where he helped to keep up the monastery and welcomed Redemptorist visitors who came to study at the Catholic University from around the world. He was a man filled with gratitude for all of the graces he received in life and kept the motto "Pray and Work–Ora et Labora" as his touchstone. When he was not working, he could be found saying his rosary. For relaxation, he visited his family and sent his brotherly affection, hymns, and acrostics in his letters. He had been a missionary brother and pioneer for the Ukrainian Catholic Church of Canada and the Roman Catholic Church in Zaire. He died in Louvain on 5 June 1972. He was 76. Vichna Pamiat'!

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CENTENNIAL SNAPSHOTS

11. Father Jaak **Janssens**, CSSR

Born in Bruges 12 July 1878 of a large family from which eight of twelve children joined the clergy or religious congregations, Jaak (called Jacques in French and Jacob in English) joined the Redemptorists, was professed in Saint-Trond on 3 October 1897, and was ordained in Beauplateau on 25 September 1904. After further studies in theology, Father Janssens became a teacher in the minor seminary of Saint-Trond (1905-06). He was particularly interested in the Hebrew scriptures and his studies brought him the appointment as professor of exegesis in the major seminary of Beauplateau (1906-12). He was an excellent public speaker and was then named a parish missionary while living at Saint-Trond (1912-14). Father Schrijvers, one of the founders of the Redemptorist mission in Ukraine, asked him to volunteer for the work of Christian Unity. Father Janssens arrived as one of the first Redemptorists in Halychyna in 1914 just before the First World War. With Halychyna invaded by the Russians, the Redemptorists were in constant danger of death, deportation, or imprisonment. They were forced to remain in their monastey. Father Janssens took the opportunity to learn the Ukrainian language and rite thoroughly. After the War, he was assigned to Ituna, Saskatchewan to take the place of the recently deceased Father Boels. From 1919, he worked in the outlying districts of Beckenham, Jasmin, Bedfordville, Goodeve, and Hubbard especially against schismatics and pseudo-priests who were attracting several Ukrainian Catholics to their sects. He developed a series of clearly dogmatic sermons explaining the Catholic position that was appreciated by many people, Catholics and non-Catholics alike. Since many Canadian Ukrainians were fearful of assimilation into the Roman Catholic Church and very suspicious of any priest who had been a Roman Catholic, his Belgian background worked against him and he left for Yorkton for a short while and then returned to Halychyna in 1922. There, he preached in all weathers and heard thousands of confessions. Bishop Ratti (the future Pope Pius XI), then the Papal nuncio to Warsaw, consulted Father Janssens about Polish-Ukrainian problems and Father Janssens' brief was studied in Rome. Metropolitan Sheptytsky personally thanked Father Janssens for his work. He continued to study the Ukrainian language to improve his sermons, but his health began to give way from exhaustion. He returned to Belgium in 1928 and lived in the retreat house in Roulers until 1932. He then took on the directorship of the Holy Family in Saint-Trond (1932-34), but he was unable to go on. On his death bed, perfectly submissive to the Will of God, he repeated three times: "We are going to Heaven!" He was 61. Vichna Pamiat'!

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12. Jozef **Ghekiere**, CSSR

Born 10 April 1890 in Iseghem, in the Diocese of Bruges in Flanders, Belgium, Jozef Ghekiere was the son of a Flemish Roman Catholic butcher. The young Jozef made his profession of the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience with the Redemptorists on 24 May 1908 in Saint-Trond and was ordained on 29 June 1916 in Beauplateau, Belgium. He spent the next two years teaching in the minor seminary in Essen. Enjoying sturdy health, he was judged apt for the rough Canadian climate. He arrived in Yorkton, Saskatchewan on 17 April 1919 and served among the Ukrainians of Yorkton (1919-20), Komarno, Manitoba (1920-23) and in the Yorkton district from 1923 to 1929. In Yorkton, he was a teacher in the minor seminary, and after 1927, superior and rector of the monastery. He was responsible for almost thirty parishes and the work was crushing, but he managed it to the wonder of many. With the transfer of the Ukrainian Canadian mission field to the English Canadians, on 11 January 1929 he left for Halychyna, where he worked as the minister-treasurer, consultor, and as a teacher in the formation house of Holosko, near Lviv (1929-31). He became the founder and rector of Kovel' (1931-36), and after 1936, rector in Holosko, where he supervised an important addition to the building. He was a responsible, frank, and direct man who abhorred all flattery and sham. While seemingly a little rough in his speech and actions, he was sensitive, hardworking, and earned the respect and admiration of everyone. Expulsion from Ukraine by the Soviets to Poland, then under attack from the Germans, forced him to live on the streets of Peremysyl exposed to the winter elements for several days before he could obtain a train home to Belgium. This, combined with his weight and age, brought on death in Brussels on 21 January 1940. A pioneer missionary to Ukrainians on two continents had suddenly disappeared. Much of his family traveled from Western Flanders to attend his funeral and many of his former colleagues from Canada and Ukraine, now refugees in Belgium, also assisted at the beautiful funerals celebrated for him both at St. Joseph's and at St. Vladimir's Greek-Catholic Church in Brussels. His death inspired one of his nephews to join religious life. Father Jozef Ghekiere was 59. Vichna Pamiat'!

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