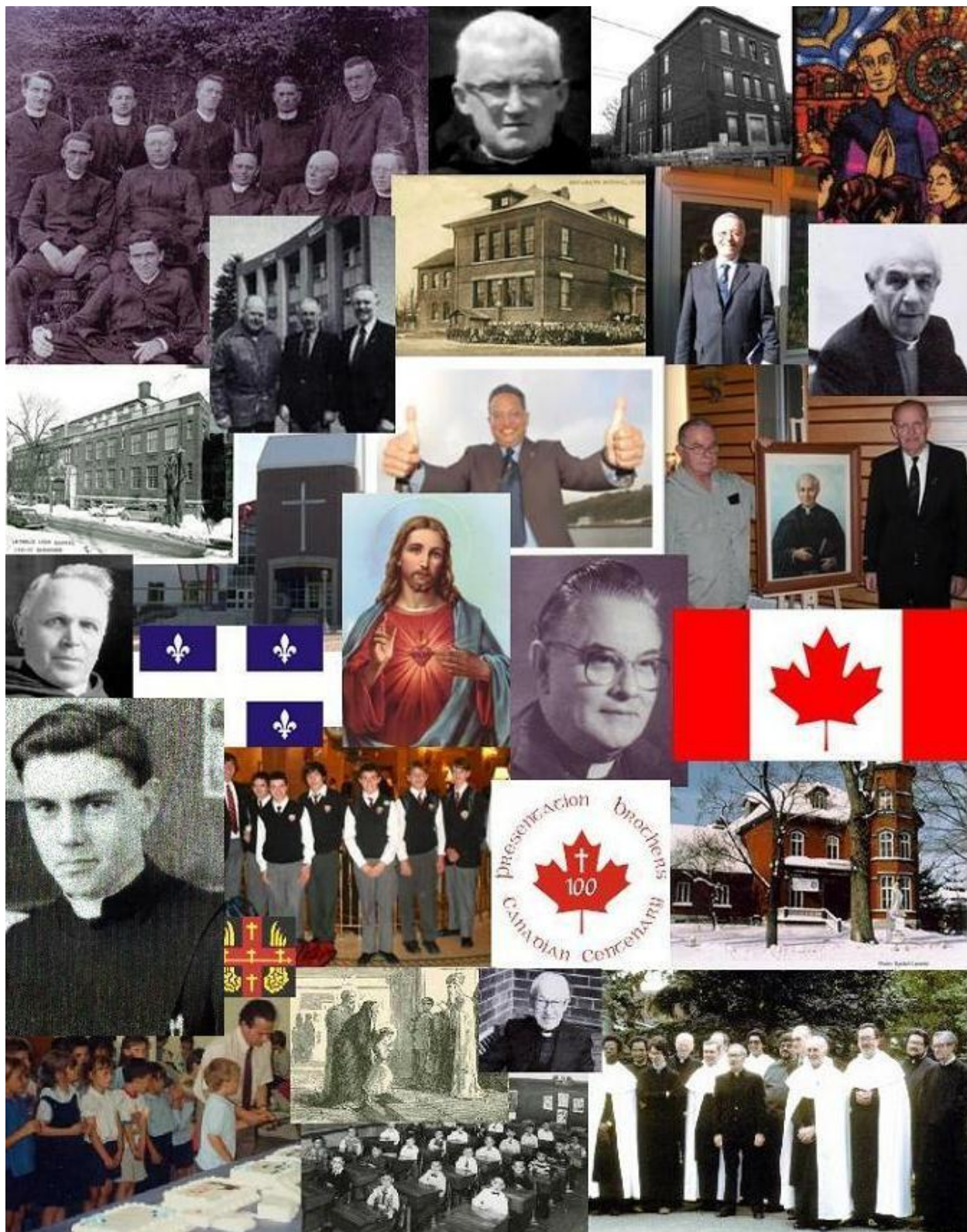


# the PRESENTATION BROTHERS

## A CENTENARY IN CANADA 1910-2010





## OUR LADY OF THE PRESENTATION

She trod the Temple steps,  
A child of tender years,  
To give to God on high,  
Her hopes, her joys, her tears.

And angels hovering there  
Bore up to Heaven's throne,  
An offering brighter far  
Than gold or precious stone.

O Lady, to whose star  
We look unceasingly;  
Give us to share thy faith,  
Thy love, thy purity.

(Br. Cormac O'Carroll, F.P.M.)

this booklet is dedicated to the memory of all the  
deceased presentation brothers who served  
faithfully in the Canadian province in the spirit of  
blessed edmund rice.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	4
Letter from the Right-Honourable Stephen Harper P.C., M.P., Prime Minister of Canada	5
Letter from Brother Martin Kenneally F.P.M., Congregation Leader	6
Letter from Paul Scanlan, Presentation Brothers Schools Trust	7
Letter from Ann Perron, Director of the Toronto Catholic District School Board	8
Map: Foundations in Canada	9
Blessed Edmund Rice and the Presentation Brothers	10
The Seed that Grew: A Short History of the Brothers in Canada	11
The Pioneers: St. Gabriel's & Canon O'Meara School	13
Montreal Catholic High School	15
St. Patrick's Academy, Sherbrooke	18
St. Columban's School, Cornwall, Ontario	19
Novitiate at Longueuil	20
25 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary	22
Presentation High School, Montebello	23
Rapid Expansion	25
Luke Callaghan Memorial School	
St. Aloysius School	26
Daniel O'Connell High School & St. Augustine's Elementary	27
St. Willibrord's High School, Ville La Salle	28
Verdun Catholic High School	29
Ghana	32
British Columbia & the USA	33
The Quebec Situation	36
Brebeuf College School, Toronto	38
The Brothers Today	40
Brothers' Reflections	
Br. Henry Spencer F.P.M.	42
Br. Donatus Brazil F.P.M.	46
Br. Denis Claivaz F.P.M.	48
Br. Lawrence Maher F.P.M. (RIP)	50
Br. Bernard Murphy F.P.M.	53
Br. Mark Fitzpatrick F.P.M.	55
Br. Ivan Verba F.P.M.	57
Br. De Paul Wright F.P.M. (RIP)	58
Br. Francis Schafer F.P.M.	59
Provincials of the Canadian Province	62
Brothers Who Have Served in the Canadian Province	63

# INTRODUCTION



In the great Canadian novel, *Fifth Business*, Robertson Davies describes the life of Dunstan Ramsey, a soldier and teacher, who plays an integral role in shaping the lives of others without himself seeking glory or attention. The more research I conducted on the Presentation Brothers in Canada over the past century, the more I have become convinced that theirs is a similarly extraordinary story of “fifth business” characters in the development of the Church and Catholic education. In co-operation with clergy, school boards, the laity, other religious orders, and students, they have always laboured quietly, diligently, and humbly to form “Christ in the young”. They have shown God’s presence among us for the past hundred years, and we rightly celebrate that achievement. This is not a new revelation for me, of course, as my time as both a student and colleague of the Brothers and my personal experiences in meeting so many around the world have always borne out.

Like so many citizens of this country, the earliest Brothers were immigrants, mostly from Ireland. They came to a strange land for one reason – their faith. They established schools to educate young people in their faith and to be model citizens, and fully involved themselves in the lives of their communities. They showed us, and still show us, that quality teaching is truly a vocation and not just a job. In working for social justice and with the poor and marginalized, the spirit of Blessed Edmund Rice shines through. This work continues today. The only difference now is the fewer number of Brothers; our world and our Church is impoverished for it.

In writing a history and putting together reflections and stories from Brothers, co-workers, Associates, and past pupils, I am conscious that many institutions and people mentioned herein are given short shrift, or omitted altogether. The fault is mine alone. Each school ran by the Brothers deserves its own detailed history, each Brother his own biography, each mission its own elaborate coverage. Much of what you will read in this booklet comes from the ready availability of material already present in the Brothers’ Archives in Mount St. Joseph in Cork, and from the personal memories of some of those Brothers still living who have worked in Canada.

Michael Feeheley Da Costa,  
Editor

## THANKS

Special thanks to the following whose assistance made the publication of this booklet possible:  
Brother Donatus Brazil F.P.M., Archivist; Brother Francis Schafer F.P.M., Provincial; Brother Ivan Verba F.P.M., Bursar; the Administration and Staff of Brebeuf College School; Brother Denis Claivaz F.P.M.; Brother Martin Kenneally F.P.M. (Superior-General); Brother Bernard Gazire F.P.M.; Brother Henry Spencer F.P.M.; Andrew O’Connell, Communications Director; Carlos Pereira, TCDSB Printing Services; Brother Bernard Murphy F.P.M.; Brother Mark Fitzpatrick F.P.M.; John Garufi; and Kevin Doyle.

## CENTENARY PLANNING COMMITTEE

Brother Robert Fanovich F.P.M. (Co-Chair); Rosemary Lavery; Michael Doyle;  
Brother Henry Spencer F.P.M.; Michael Da Costa (Co-Chair)





PRIME MINISTER . PREMIER MINISTRE

*It is with great pleasure that I offer my warmest greetings and congratulations to the Presentation Brothers, as you mark the centennial of your congregation's work in Canada.*

*This special milestone offers a wonderful chance to reflect upon your vocation as Christian missionaries. At the heart of the call to religious life is a desire to give of oneself to others. As chaplains and educators working in schools across Canada, you have played an important role in the academic and spiritual development of young people, and promoted values and religious traditions that are fundamental to the Catholic faith.*

*I would like to commend you for helping to prepare students for the responsibilities of adulthood and for responding to the needs of the disadvantaged with generosity and compassion. Your example of leadership is an inspiration to other Catholic men of character and conviction. May your faith continue to offer you strength, inspiration and guidance in the future.*

*Please accept my best wishes for a most memorable celebration.*

*The Rt. Hon. Stephen Harper, P.C., M.P.*

OTTAWA  
2010



## Presentation Brothers Generalate

---



I am honoured to be invited to write this introduction to the Centenary Souvenir Booklet commemorating the ministry of the Presentation Brothers in Canada.

We give thanks to God for the gospel witness and the good achieved by so many Brothers during the last hundred years. The mission of the Brothers would not have been possible without the active support and collaboration of so many lay men and women – teachers, parents and friends. We wish to honour them also in this celebration.

We express sorrow for our human failures or for the good we failed to do in responding to the call of the Spirit.

Above all, this centenary celebration challenges us as a Catholic Christian people to look with hope to the future. The arrival of the Presentation Brothers in Canada in 1910 was a prophetic response to an urgent need. What prophetic response is called for today? I would like to highlight two areas:

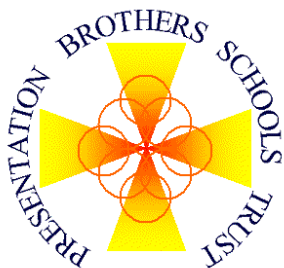
- 1) Our planet is in peril. The environmental crisis is *the* ethical and religious challenge of our age. Within the context of our charism, how can we respond?
- 2) How can we present the person and message of Christ to young people today, in a way that captures their imagination and challenges their generosity? This calls for a new creativity on our part.

The Presentation spirit continues today through the Brothers' Community in Toronto – Br. Ivan, Br. Philip, and Br. Henry who continues to minister in Brebeuf. The Presentation spirit is indeed alive and vibrant in the school community of Brebeuf College. Canadian Brothers working outside of Canada include Br. Denis Claivaz in advocacy ministry with Edmund Rice International at the U.N. in Geneva and Br. Kevin Mascarenhas in Waterford, Ireland. Br. Kevin runs an Immigrant Support Centre for the large immigrant population in Edmund Rice's own city. He recently took final vows as a Presentation Brother. These are examples of a new prophetic response and of our call to 'Sing to the Lord a New Song'. I invite young men in Canada and especially students of Brebeuf to consider the wonderful challenge of being a Brother among God's people today. In March 2011, a group of Brebeuf students will travel to the Brothers' mission in Northern Ghana as part of an immersion experience in a developing world country. You can be assured of a warm welcome from the Presentation Brothers and the Ghanaian people. I hope it will be a life-changing experience for you, helping you to 'see in a new way'.

Finally, I would like to thank Mr. Anthony Azzopardi, Principal, and the staff of Brebeuf College who have led the way in facilitating and supporting this Centenary Celebration. Our special thanks are also due to Mr. Michael Da Costa and the members of the Centenary Celebration Committee. This souvenir booklet and all the events associated with the Centenary are due to their vision, commitment and dedication. May Our Lady of the Presentation guide you all and may Blessed Edmund Rice continue to inspire you in the years ahead.

*Br. Martin Kenneally*

Br. Martin Kenneally F.P.M., Congregation Leader



14<sup>th</sup> Sept. 2010

Dear Brothers and Friends in Canada,

The Presentation Brothers transferred the responsibility for their eight schools in Ireland to the above named company in 2009. This is an all lay company with volunteer directors. Our main aim is to ensure the provision of education in the Presentation Ethos for the students of our schools. We believe our link to the Brothers and the Presentation Family to be of paramount importance. It is, therefore, with great joy and pride that we have learned of the centenary of the arrival of the Presentation Brothers in Canada.

The Directors of the Presentation Brothers Schools Trust congratulate you and your committee on celebrating this wonderful occasion and pray that it will be a time of great blessings for the Brothers and all members of the Presentation Family in Canada.

I am presently planning the establishment of some form of "Association of Presentation Brothers Schools" and would hope to include Brebeuf College and all other schools with links to the Brothers. This should ensure some form of common bond between the schools in Ireland, Ghana, Canada and West Indies.

Wishing you every success with your celebrations.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Scanlan

Paul Scanlan  
Chief Executive Officer.

---

*Directors: Jack O'Sullivan (Chairman), Denis Bohane, Triona Brennan, Anthony Kenneally, Tim O'Connell, Colm O'Corcora*

*Secretary: Paul Scanlan*

*Co. Reg. No.: 466013 – a company limited by guarantee not having a share capital. CHY 18608*



*Office of the Director of Education*

September 20, 2010

The Presentation Brothers  
c/o Brother Henry Spencer F.P.M.  
Brebeuf College School  
211 Steeles Avenue E.  
North York, ON  
M2M 3Y6

Dear Friends in Catholic Education:

It is an honour to congratulate you, on behalf of the Toronto Catholic District School Board, on the occasion of your 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in Canada.

The TCDSB is forever indebted to all of our religious orders for their sacrifices and contributions to the establishment of publicly-funded Catholic education in Toronto.

The Presentation Brothers are no exception. Since 1984, the Brothers have been dedicated teachers, administrators, coaches, mentors, chaplains, guidance counsellors and friends of the TCDSB community.

As role models of Gospel values, we are united by our shared leadership and responsibility for the education of our students and the goals of our Catholic School Graduate Expectations. I extend our best wishes for the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Ann Perron".

Ann Perron  
Director of Education

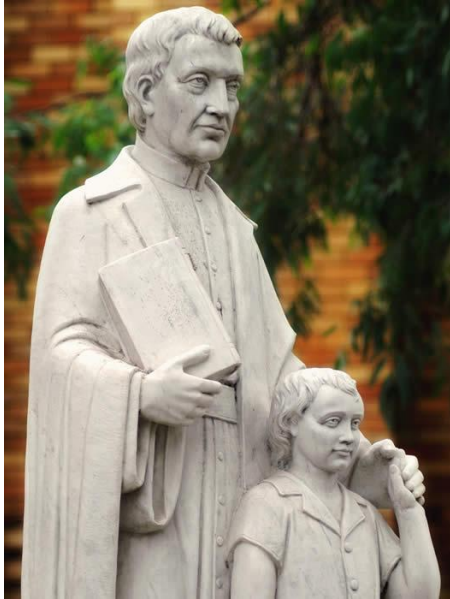


# FOUNDATIONS IN CANADA



- (1) Montreal, Quebec (1910)
- (2) Sherbrooke, Quebec (1911)
- (3) Cornwall, Ontario (1913)
- (4) Montebello, Quebec (1945)
- (5) Prince George, British Columbia (1968)
- (6) Toronto, Ontario (1984)

# BLESSED EDMUND RICE & The PRESENTATION BROTHERS



1762 – Edmund Rice is born into a prosperous farming family in Callan, County Kilkenny, Ireland. Penal laws restrict many rights for Catholics, including education. Edmund is educated illegally at a priest-run “hedge school”.

1779 – Edmund begins an apprenticeship with his uncle, a wealthy merchant in Waterford. The business will be turned over to him by the time he is 24, and he becomes a multi-millionaire by today’s standards.

1787 – Edmund marries Mary Elliott, who dies from the result of a horse-riding accident. Before passing away, she gives birth to a handicapped baby girl. Edmund begins devoting more of his time to practising his faith and helping the poor and marginalized.

1802 – After deciding not to enter a monastery, he instead opens a school in a stable for the poor boys of Waterford. Religious men soon join to assist him. They live and pray together and support each other. Construction of their first permanent school – Mount Sion – begins a year later. The school, which also feeds and clothes its pupils, slowly but surely improves their lives, and more schools are opened in surrounding parts of Ireland.

1808 – Edmund and eight of his followers take formal vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience to the bishop and adopt a Rule similar to the Presentation Sisters. Known as the “Gentlemen of the Presentation”, or Presentation Brothers, they become the first order of religious Brothers founded in the English-speaking world.

1822 – Most Brothers agree to become a pontifical congregation with Edmund Rice as the first Superior-General. They are now known as the Christian Brothers. As Superior-General, Edmund can now move Brothers between dioceses without having to seek each bishop’s permission. Brother Austin Riordan and a few of the Cork Brothers, however, decide to remain under the local bishop as Presentation Brothers. Thus, Edmund Rice is regarded as the Founder of both Congregations.

1838 – Edmund resigns as Superior-General of the Christian Brothers.

1844 – Edmund Rice dies in Waterford.

1876 – The first Presentation school outside of Ireland opens in England.

1889 – The Presentation Brothers decide to become a pontifical congregation under a Superior-General. Their headquarters and novitiate is at Mount St. Joseph in Cork.

1910 – The Presentation Brothers arrive in Montreal and immediately open schools to educate English-speaking Catholics. From here, their story in Canada unfolds.

# THE SEED THAT GREW: A SHORT HISTORY OF THE PRESENTATION BROTHERS IN CANADA

By Michael Feeheley Da Costa

*He called to me and said, "Look, the ones going to the land of the north brought my spirit to rest on the land of the north." (Zechariah 6: 8)*



The pioneer Presentation Brothers (with high collars) pictured with Christian Brothers in St. John's, Newfoundland in 1910 en route to Montreal.

It might be said that one hundred years is not a long period of time in the Catholic Church, whose inception dates back 2000 years. Yet for those of us in a country like Canada, whose European history is just four hundred years old, a centenary is an amazing milestone. And in the lifetime of the Congregation of the Presentation Brothers, the work in Canada has been an important mission for almost half of its history. Since 1910, Presentation Brothers have given dedicated, humble, and exemplary service to Catholic education and to the

Church "from sea to sea". Leaving Ireland behind, or responding to the call of their native church, Brothers have worked to "form Christ in the young" from Montreal to Montebello, Toronto to Prince George. They have been teachers and chaplains, coaches and sacristans, friends and mentors, bursars and principals. It seems impossible to summarize properly a centenary of service and give due recognition to the many men whose tireless efforts succeeded in changing the lives in young people. In tracing their history in Canada to the present day, the charism and spirit of Edmund Rice shines through.



Montreal, 1910



Any reading of the history of the Presentation Brothers shows that Superior Generals and their councils, or the “Regime” as they called, were incessantly bombarded with requests for teaching Brothers from various bishops in Ireland and the far-flung corners of the world. Two English-speaking Montrealers from Quebec, Canada -- Canon William O’Meara and Alderman Dan



Gallery -- had such hopes in mind in early 1910, and what better place to look than Ireland? It was important to secure good English-speaking teachers in Montreal at the time, since anglophone students who went to French schools could rarely compete for jobs with their francophone confreres upon graduation. Nor were the French-speaking teachers in English schools adept enough to impart a first class education in their second language. Religious Brothers and Sisters, with their vows of poverty, also kept the costs to a minimum for school commissions.

How did these Canadians know to approach the Presentation Brothers, which even at the time was a small order? Some Brothers have conjectured that upon arriving by steamer in Liverpool and then on to Dun Laoghaire (Co. Dublin), a kind stranger must have directed them to nearby Glasthule, where the Brothers had a school and residence.<sup>1</sup> Thenceforth, they were sent to Cork to meet with Brother Aloysius Rahilly and the Regime at Mount St. Joseph, and presented the “urgent request of the English-speaking people of Montreal”<sup>2</sup>. The General agreed to send Brothers Ignatius Connolly and Stanislaus Kenneally to visit Montreal later that year and ascertain whether they should send Brothers and to negotiate any terms with the proper church and school commission authorities.



Stepping off the boat in Montreal in 1910, in some ways the Brothers must have felt like they were still in Ireland, for the parish of St. Gabriel’s, where they were hosted by Canon O’Meara, was mostly peopled with anglophone Quebecers of Irish stock. Canada, like Ireland, was still a part of the British Empire and shared similar political and cultural institutions. Like Cork, Montreal was a devoutly Catholic city, with churches and convents literally on every street corner. Hospitals and schools were almost entirely church-run, and baptismal certificates were the only birth certificates! Families were large with numerous children. Much on the other hand must have seemed strange. Montreal was then Canada’s largest and richest city, with a majority French-speaking population descended from the days when Quebec was a French

<sup>1</sup> From an untitled anonymous history of the Canadian Province in the Mount St. Joseph Archives, henceforth called *History*. Whoever wrote it had an intimate knowledge of the Brothers’ communities and spent a lot of time and effort putting it together. It forms the basis for much of this article. p.1.

<sup>2</sup> Irish Presentation Brothers (pamphlet), Canadian Province, c. 1916, p. 5.



colony. Adding to the strangeness, no doubt, was hearing about sub-zero winters and hot, sticky summers, and seeing immigrants from many countries working hard for new lives in a new world.

Despite any reservations, Brothers Ignatius and Kenneally were obviously impressed with the people they met and saw the need for Presentation education in Canada. Archbishop Bruchesi gave his permission and so the Presentation Brothers would become the first English-speaking order of Brothers in Montreal. In August, 1910 the first community of Presentation Brothers travelled from Cobh, County Cork by steamer, and the ship stopped en route in St. John's, Newfoundland. While on that island, which had strong links to Edmund Rice's Waterford, they were hosted by the Christian Brothers, a pillar of Catholic education. This event marks an early and rare connection between the two orders and an auspicious time for Edmund Rice's heirs.

## THE PIONEERS – ST. GABRIEL'S PARISH & CANON O'MEARA SCHOOL

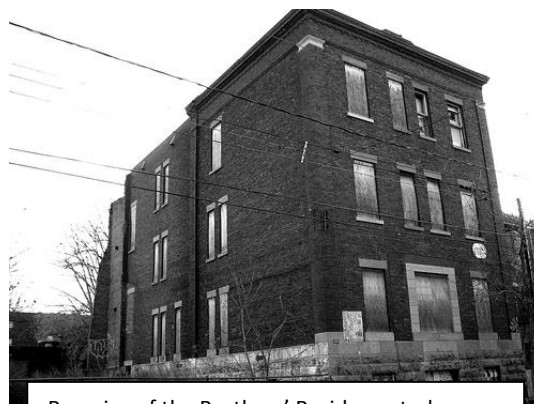


Canon O'Meara School & Brothers' Residence (right)

The first “pioneer” Brothers to be stationed in Canada were: Angelus Keane (Superior), Charles Ryan, Cassian Cagney, Chryostom O’Keeffe, Senan O’Connor, Irenaeus Ring, Alexis Moynihan, and Thaddeus O’Neill.<sup>3</sup> They were given

charge of the Chauveau School, renamed St. Gabriel’s (and later renamed after the much-loved Canon O’Meara), located in St. Gabriel’s Parish on Laprairie Street in the Pt. St. Charles district.

The Brothers wasted no time in transferring their Irish success in education to Canadian soil, and fortunately “This new foundation was a conspicuous success. All eyes were on it from its initiation; its efficiency, discipline, and methods of teaching won golden opinions from both priests and people.”<sup>4</sup> The Brothers lived on the third floor until a new residence was built.



Remains of the Brothers' Residence today.

<sup>3</sup> *History*, pp. 1-2.

<sup>4</sup> *Presentation Brothers in Canada: Edited extracts from the Annals of Mount St. Joseph and the Canadian Province from Archives, Profiles, Provincial Newsletters and other sources (hereafter PBC)*, p. 1.

One former Brother recalls:

I taught in *Canon O'Meara* for the academic years 1949-50, and 1950-51. My first year was with a Grade Five class, my second with a Grade 7. It was an exciting time for me as a teacher, learning the trade (or profession), and being introduced to the then formidable task of preparing the 7<sup>th</sup> graders for provincial examinations. There was also a diocesan religion examination that the 7<sup>th</sup> graders had to take. The provincial examination was used as a screening device for entrance to High School and the students' performance was not taken lightly by either the staff or the Principal. "<sup>5</sup> In the twenties, a Secondary class was added, but the Montreal Catholic School Commission eliminated this facility when the English section of the MCSC started to explode in the early fifties. <sup>5</sup>

They administered the school until 1951, when it was combined with other nearby schools to form the new St. Gabriel's.

The success of the Brothers in running their schools was important for Quebec, which relied on the religious orders to run most of its schools and keep costs down. As Eric Durocher notes, "In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the task of teaching future generations fell to men and women religious because public education had not yet become a government priority as it did after the 1950s."

The Presentation Brothers in St. Gabriel's parish quickly began to make their mark in Canada.

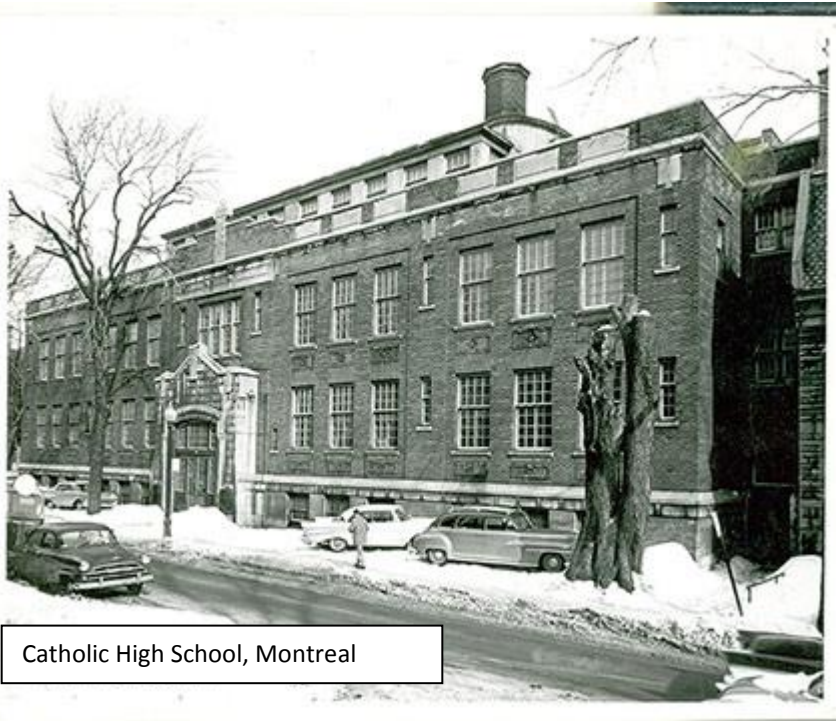


Brother Thaddeus O'Neill and boys from St. Gabriel's (Canon O'Meara).

<sup>5</sup> Leo Purcell, *Canon O'Meara Boys' School*. <http://www.acracan.org/Canon%20O'%20Meara.htm>.



# MONTREAL CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL



Catholic High School, Montreal

In 1911, with both the Brothers and the Montreal educational and ecclesial authorities satisfied with the situation at St. Gabriel's, two new communities of Brothers arrived from the Emerald Isle. The first group was destined for Montreal Catholic High School, located on Durocher Street. With three of the four Brothers' surnames starting with "O", students quickly dubbed it the "O" school!<sup>6</sup> In its first year, seventy boys were on the register, but within a year the population would double, and "the high

reputation of the Presentation Brothers as teachers and their popularity attracted students from all parts of the city."<sup>7</sup> It was initially located in a private house and the Brothers were again billeted on the top floor. The Presentation Brothers thus had the first non-private Catholic high school for English students in the city, or as one Brother noted "We were the first to put Catholic High School education on its corporate feet."<sup>8</sup>

The curriculum was based on the old Irish Intermediate system the Brothers would have used at Presentation College Cork and prepared students for entrance to McGill University. In June, 1912, all students passed their Matriculation Examinations, and the following year one student was the first Catholic to ever win a scholarship to McGill!<sup>9</sup>



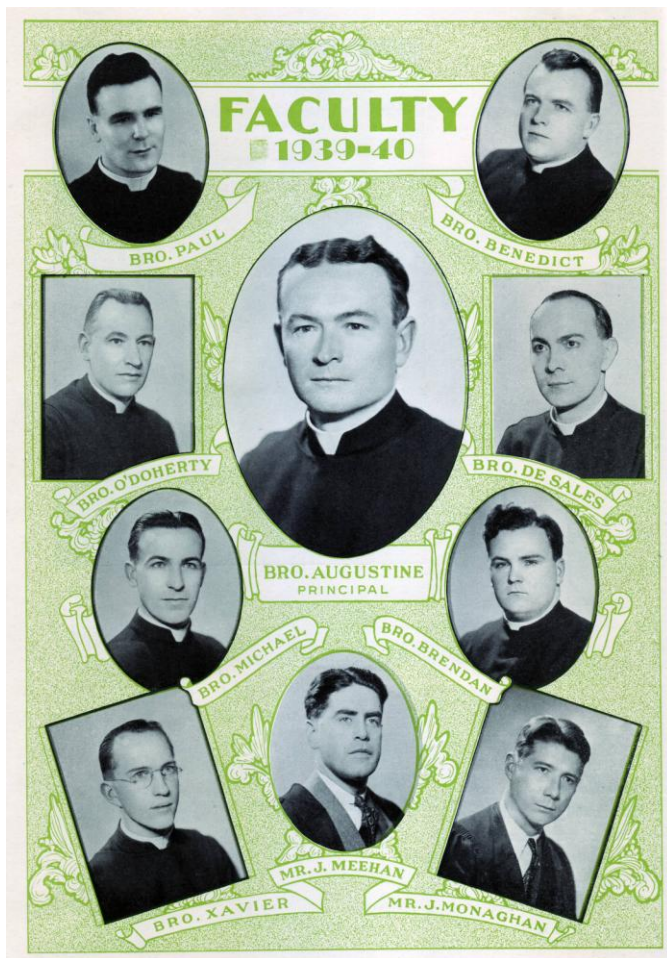
Sodality of Our Lady of the Presentation, 1940.

<sup>6</sup> The staff included Brothers Fidelis O'Connor (Principal and Superior), Chrysostom O'Keeffe, Cyprian O'Callaghan, and Hilary Kirby.

<sup>7</sup> *PBC*, p. 3.

<sup>8</sup> *History*, p. 3.

<sup>9</sup> *PBC*, p. 3.



In 1921, a new modern building was erected to house 385 pupils in eleven rooms. The school quickly established an excellent reputation. One education inspector in 1932 remarked: "I have, after due consideration, no hesitation in congratulating you on the excellent work being done in your school."<sup>10</sup> A prominent alumnus noted that Brother Boyce, for instance, was "the greatest teacher it was ever my privilege to meet."<sup>11</sup>

Aside from academics, the school of course emphasized religion. The annals in 1932 note "Religion and secular education have been happily blended"<sup>12</sup>. The Sodality of Our Lady of the Presentation was a centrepiece of faith life. The school also had an excellent reputation for sports, including hockey, basketball, Canadian football, and boxing.

The Brothers remained in the school and contributed to its success until 1958 when they transferred to larger and more modern Verdun Catholic High School. Catholic High School

closed and an important and successful Presentation enterprise with it.



Montreal City Senior Hockey Champions, 1941.



<sup>10</sup> PBC, p. 11.

<sup>11</sup> Clarence McCaffrey KLC, Catholic High School Montreal, [http://www.umanitoba.ca/colleges/st\\_pauls/ccha/Back%20Issues/CCHA1950/McCaffrey.pdf](http://www.umanitoba.ca/colleges/st_pauls/ccha/Back%20Issues/CCHA1950/McCaffrey.pdf).

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 11.

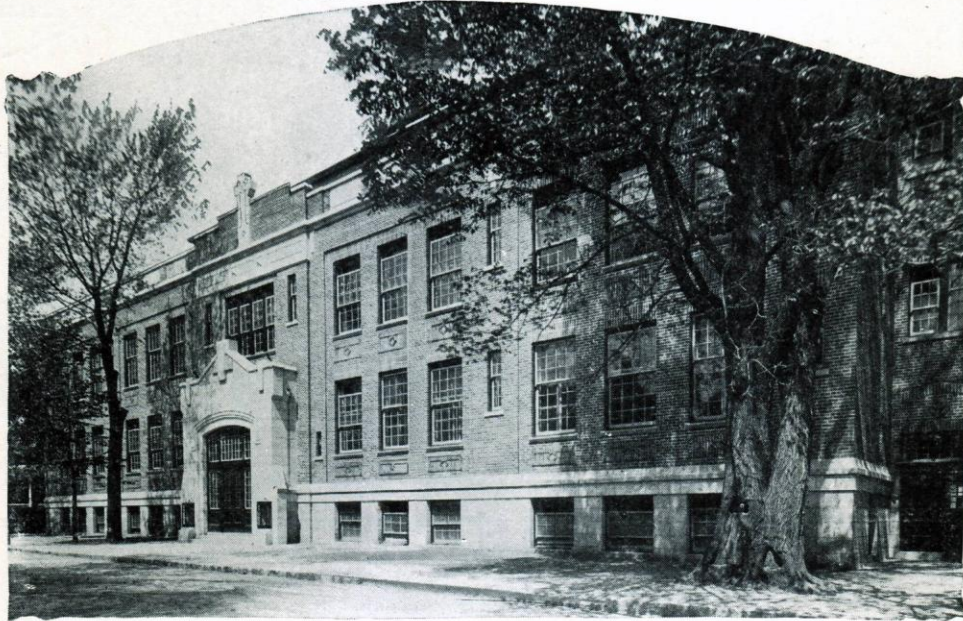


# *Solve the Problem of Where to Educate your Boy*

by Registering him at

## **CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL**

Establish 1899



Conducted by

## **THE PRESENTATION BROTHERS**

*An Order Devoted Exclusively to the Education of Youth*

✦ ✦

TEACHING SPECIALISTS

CAFETERIA

CENTRAL LOCATION

GYMNASIUM

ORGANIZED ATHLETICS

✦ ✦

A School that Emphasizes  
Character Building

A School your Boy will be  
Anxious to Attend

SEPARATE JUNIOR DEPARTMENT

✦ ✦

A catholic institution of established standing for the  
higher education of boys offering a definite preparation  
for a career in the professions or the business world.

✦ ✦

Telephones: MArquette 2713-1879

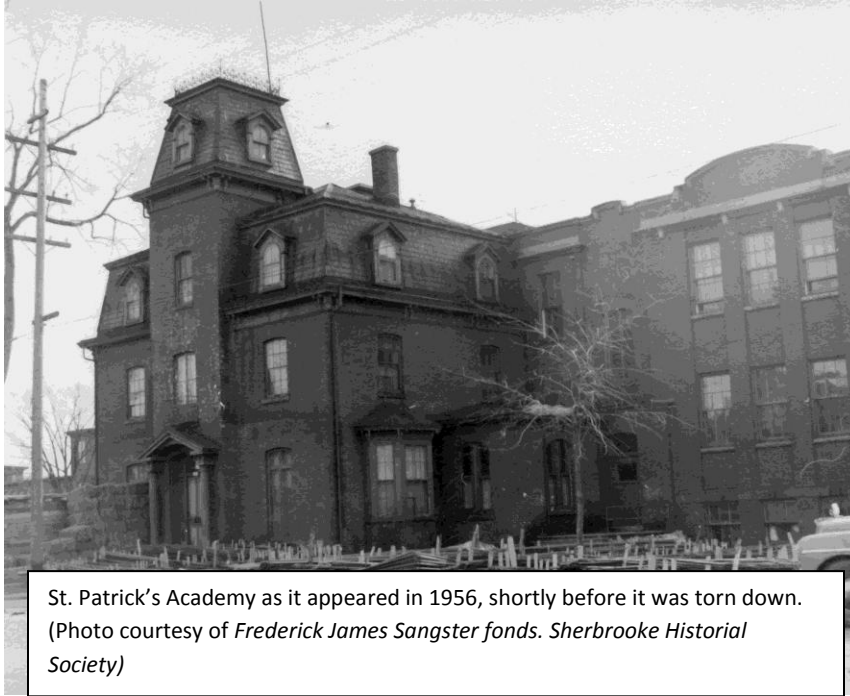
3461-3467 DUROCHER STREET

:

ABOVE SHERBROOKE STREET WEST

School Advertisement, 1935

## ST. PATRICK'S ACADEMY, SHERBROOKE, QUEBEC



St. Patrick's Academy as it appeared in 1956, shortly before it was torn down.  
(Photo courtesy of Frederick James Sangster fonds. Sherbrooke Historical Society)

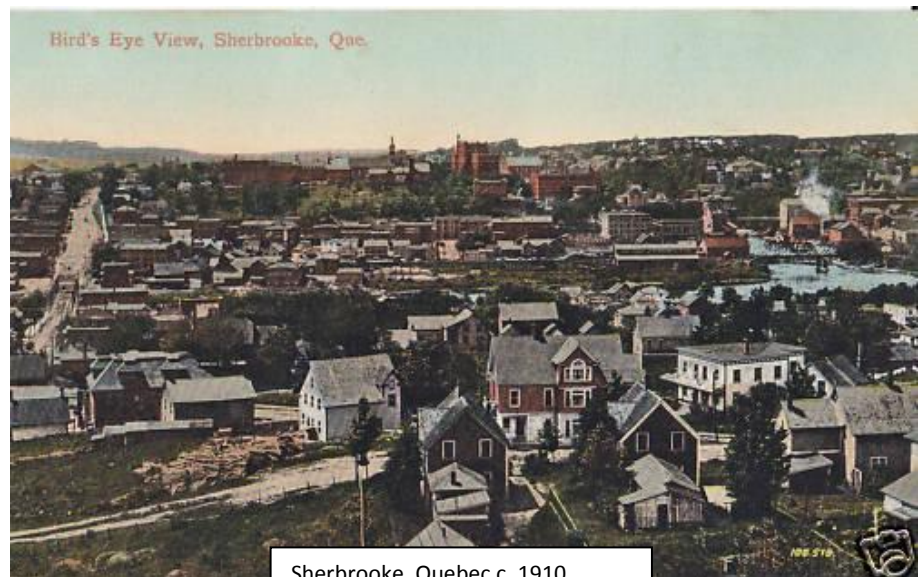
The second community to receive Brothers in 1911 was Sherbrooke, a city one hundred miles east of Montreal. The area had a small Irish population that was relatively wealthy and influential in a city of francophones. The community consisted of Brothers Cassian (Superior and Principal), Senan O'Connor, Edwin Collins, and Polycarp Moynihan. The Brothers ran the school based on an agreement with an English-speaking sub-

committee of the French board, but tensions between the communities were always present.

The school was “unpretentious” and initially had four classes attached to an old mansion which served as the residence. It quickly established an excellent reputation, and “. . .the improvement in the manners and conduct of the pupils, and harmonising with a notable development in the religious and more training of the youth, was highly appreciated.”<sup>13</sup>

The Brothers withdrew in 1954. By 1955, the francophone board decided to give the school to the Salesians, but the school closed soon after and was demolished.

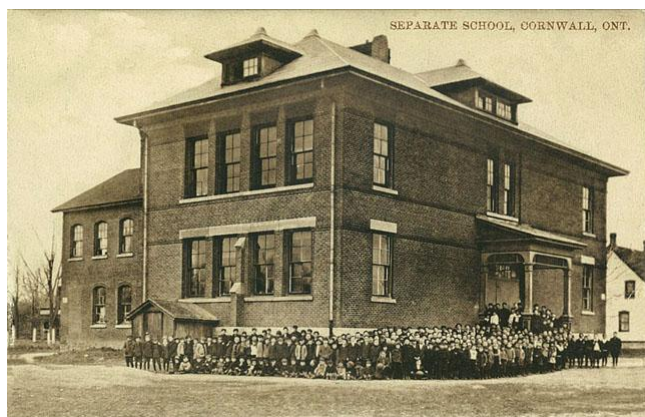
One of the school's former teachers and illustrious alumni is none other than Brother Philip Giroux!



Sherbrooke, Quebec c. 1910



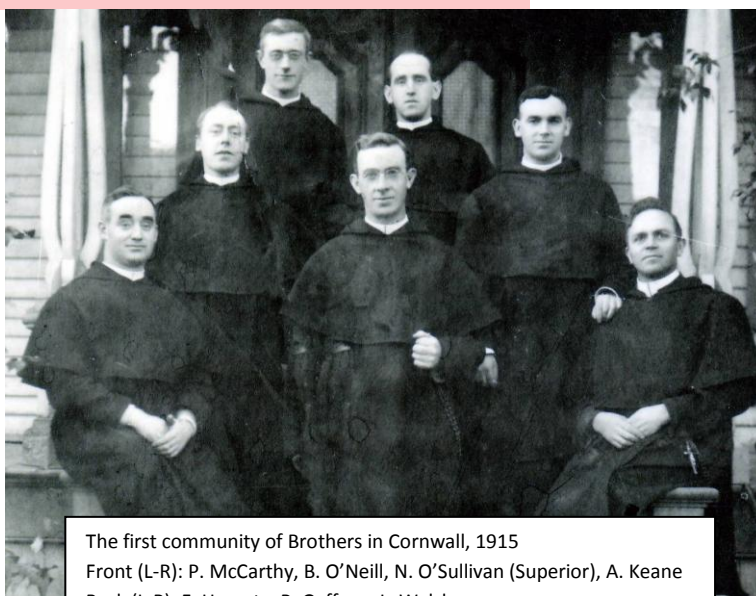
## ST. COLUMBAN'S, CORNWALL, ONTARIO



The first foray of the Brothers out of Quebec into the adjoining Province<sup>14</sup> of Ontario happened in 1913. Cornwall was a small city of Scots, French, and Irish on the St. Lawrence River. Vicar George Corbett, “seeing the splendid work the Brothers had already accomplished in Montreal” travelled from his parish of St Columban’s to Cork in 1912 to convince the order to send Brothers to his town, and they agreed they would in a year’s time.<sup>15</sup> The pioneer

Brothers set out from Cobh on August 15, 1913 to New York, and then on to Cornwall.<sup>16</sup> The school was “the nearest thing to a wreck”, no doubt because Ontario at the time was dominated by Orangemen who were often antagonistic to the publicly-funded “separate” Catholic system and did their best to underfund it. On September 1<sup>st</sup>, 1913, three hundred boys were enrolled.

The Brothers were forced to return to university as their Irish qualifications were not recognized by the Ontario Ministry of Education.<sup>17</sup> Nonetheless, despite these roadblocks, Vicar Corbett observed in a letter to the Provincial: “I have heard from all sides warm praises of your success in imparting both religious and secular knowledge to your pupils; and high encomiums of your methods of training our youth to become practical Christians and worthy citizens.”<sup>18</sup> This success would continue throughout the school’s history.



The first community of Brothers in Cornwall, 1915  
Front (L-R): P. McCarthy, B. O'Neill, N. O'Sullivan (Superior), A. Keane  
Back (L-R): F. Hegarty, P. Gaffney, L. Walsh

The lack of open-mindedness on the government’s part would be a main problem that led to withdrawal of the Brothers from St. Columban’s in 1959, since Ontario did not recognize even Quebec qualifications and this made it difficult to transfer Brothers across provincial lines. The Brothers would not return to Ontario until 1984.

<sup>14</sup> Canada is divided into ten “Provinces” (states), not to be confused with the Canadian Province of the Brothers.

<sup>15</sup> *Irish Presentation Brothers, Canadian Province*, c. 1916, pp. 5-6.

<sup>16</sup> Brothers Nicholas O’Sullivan (Superior), Neri McCarthy, Felim Hegarty, Lasarian Walsh, Borromeo O’Neill and Patrick Gaffney, and joined soon thereafter by Angelus Keane and Cassian Cagney. History, p. 5.

<sup>17</sup> *Irish Presentation Brothers, Canadian Province*, c. 1916, p. 6.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.* p. 14.

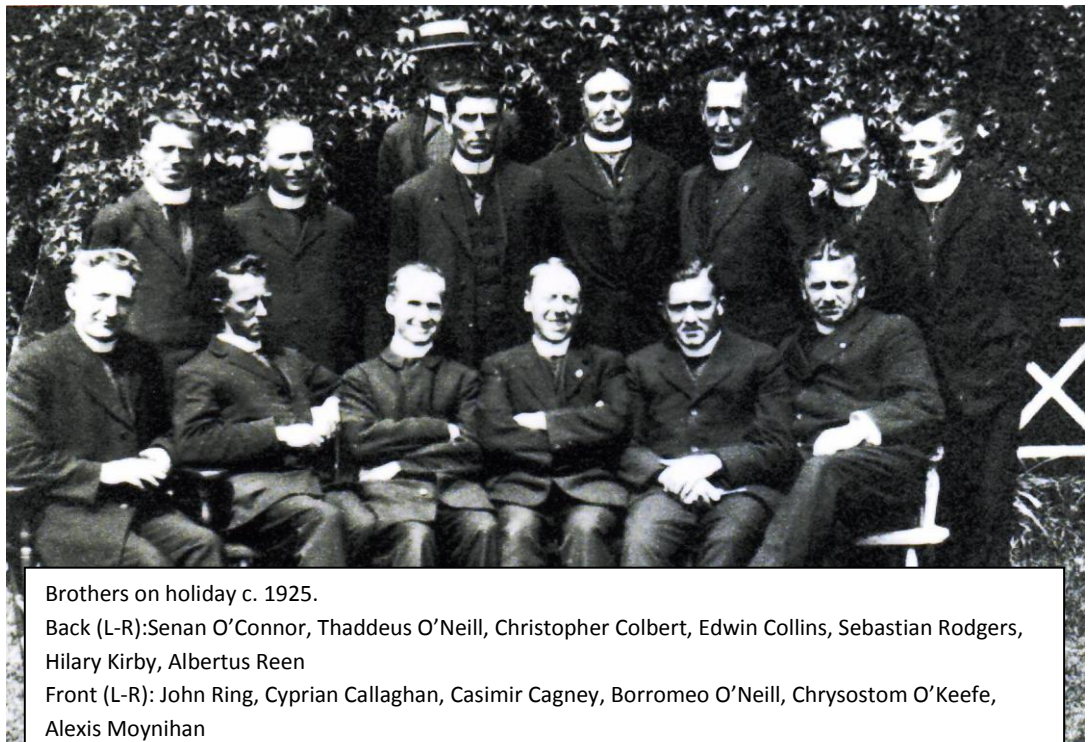
## NOVITIATE AT LONGUEUIL, QUEBEC



By 1914, with three schools in two Canadian Provinces under the Brothers' direction, the Regime decided that Canada should be able to train some of its own Brothers without recourse only to Ireland. The Brothers were "desirous of enlisting the support of the Clergy, throughout the Canadian Provinces, in finding suitable subjects for this Novitiate – Young men of talent and piety. . . ready to follow the

vocation of teaching in the Presentation Order. . . anxious to devote their lives to the meritorious work of education and forming the character of the youth of this Dominion."<sup>19</sup> Brother Peter Curtin, who later became Superior General, found a suitable house for a Novitiate on a large, private property on Princess Royal Ave. in Longueuil, Quebec, across the St. Lawrence River from Montreal. He was able to pay for the house in cash, thanks to generous donations from parish priests, friends, and supporters

(including Canon O'Meara and Vicar Corbett). One, Martin O'Callaghan, gave the Brothers a piece of land whose selling price was almost the whole cost of the Longueuil land. That the Brothers in



Brothers on holiday c. 1925.

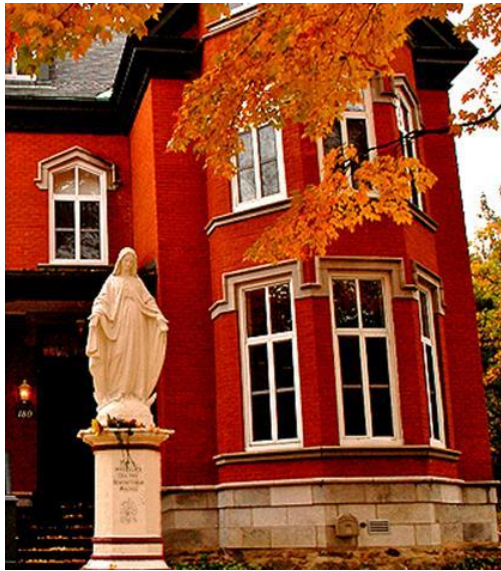
Back (L-R): Senan O'Connor, Thaddeus O'Neill, Christopher Colbert, Edwin Collins, Sebastian Rodgers, Hilary Kirby, Albertus Reen

Front (L-R): John Ring, Cyprian Callaghan, Casimir Cagney, Borromeo O'Neill, Chrysostom O'Keefe, Alexis Moynihan

Canada financed the establishment of the Novitiate without any funds from Ireland shows the esteem in which the Brothers were held by the people of Montreal.

<sup>19</sup> Letter from John E. Donnelly, P.P., St. Anthony's Church, Montreal, June 5, 1914 in Mount St. Joseph Archives.





On September 21, 1914, the Archbishop of Montreal blessed and opened the Novitiate, adding “You have only two subjects now, but I am sure you will soon have many more”. Brother Casimir was the Master of Novices. Of the first two novices, one was an alumnus from the Chaveau School (Canon O’Meara). The third postulant who entered the next year became Brother John Francis Finbarre Foxe, a past pupil from Presentation College Cork. Clearly, the Brothers’ schools were influencing young men to devote their lives to God and hundreds would pass through Longueuil over time. As one Brother recalls, “That Novitiate produced quite a crop of excellent and able Canadian and American Brothers. . . .”<sup>20</sup>

The strength of the foundation in Canada was confirmed when in 1915 Brother Stanislaus Kenneally was appointed Visitor with two Consultors, and in 1920 Canada was made its own Congregational Province with Brother Berchmans Boyce as the first Provincial Superior.

In 1930, Brother Angelus Keane had an addition to the Novitiate constructed for \$45,000 and the old house became a Juniorate<sup>21</sup> led by Brother Albertus Reen.<sup>22</sup> Its first year saw 20 students.

In 1970, the Novitiate re-opened with nineteen novices. In 1976, it became an international novitiate. Extensive renovations were undertaken in 1985, but it was finally sold in 1995.

Today, the former Novitiate is a beautiful retreat centre run by the Sisters of Notre Dame.



Presentation Brothers of the Canadian Province assembled at Montreal Catholic High School, 1957.

<sup>20</sup> *History*, p. 7.

<sup>21</sup> A secondary boarding school that prepares students to enter a religious congregation.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.

# TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY IN CANADA

## The Montreal Catholic School Commission

PLATEAU SCHOOL - 117 ST. CATHERINE STREET WEST  
POST OFFICE BOX 476 - TELEPHONE PLATEAU 5231-5232

*Montreal*, April 6th 1936

UDIES

Reverend Brother Wenceslaus Whelan,  
Provincial of the Presentation Brothers,  
Longueuil, Que.

Dear Brother Provincial:-

We, the members of the Montreal Catholic School Board and, in particular, the members of the English Committee and our General Chairman, rejoice in this opportunity of offering your community our sincere and heartfelt congratulations and best wishes upon the approaching celebration of the silver jubilee of your arrival in Canada.

From your beloved Ireland, your Brothers came to our shores twenty-five years ago and the significance of this event will evoke general rejoicings, felicitations and genuine gratitude, of those fortunate to have received the fruits of your labors.

A blessed privilege it is for us on the banks of the St. Lawrence in the City of Mary to extend our heartfelt and profound felicitations to the Presentation Brothers from the Island of Saints for their twenty-five years of glorious accomplishments coupled with a record of duty well and faithfully done.

The Montreal Catholic School Board was fortunate in obtaining from the Mother House in Cork a band of Presentation Brothers to give to the youth of our city all the Christian ideals of faith, all the culture and all the scholarly learning for which the missionaries of Ireland have been famous for centuries.



It is worthy of note and a testimony of their sturdiness and vigor that all the seven who arrived here in August 1910 to direct Chauveau School, all are still active in the grand work of Christian Education. Reverend Brother Angelus, has reached the highest position in his Order by being elected Superior General. Reverend Brother Ireneus is Principal of Luke Callaghan Memorial School, Reverend Brother Charles, one time Principal and now Assistant Principal of the same school, Reverend Brother Alexis is Principal of Chauveau School, Reverend Brother O'Keefe after directing Luke Callaghan Memorial School for six years is teaching in Sherbrooke, Reverend Brother O'Connor former Principal of Daniel O'Connell School is now at the Novitiate in Longueuil and Brother Cashin has returned to his native Cork. Not one is missing on the roll call of duty, of service and of sacrifice. A glorious record of achievement, of courage, initiative and resourcefulness!

Twenty-five years ago they came, young, vigorous and zealous to this country, as strangers in a strange land, but to-day they are known, loved and esteemed throughout this city. To-day the Presentation Brothers direct schools that dot the four points of our city.

The twenty-five years completed have been years of devoted service to our children and loyalty and submission to this Board.

During this quarter of a century the Presentation Brothers have worked unselfishly, energetically and successfully in the various classrooms with credit to their community and to the great advancement of their pupils.

For twenty-five years their zeal, their obedience and submission have been the pride and consolation of this Board.

Words of ours cannot express our feelings as we reflect upon your two and a half decades of patient toil, unremitting zeal, unstinted devotion and unflagging interest in promoting the cause of Christian education in our midst. May the Brothers in the years to come follow with the same vigor and zeal in the footsteps of the group who left their beloved Ireland in 1910.

Accept this testimony of our regard, respect and appreciation of your laudable and meritorious services to this Board.

In the humble offering of this modest tribute there is implied, in conformation of its genuine expression, the assurance of the pleasure and esteem it will afford to you and to us that the happy relations that have existed between this Board and the Presentation Brothers may continue in the future as strong and as loyal as it has been during the past twenty-five years.

We remain,

Very respectfully yours,

*Wenceslaus Whelan*  
General Chairman,



## PRESENTATION HIGH SCHOOL, MONTEBELLO



In 1944, the first Canadian Provincial, Augustine Cronin, moved the Juniorate from Longueuil to Lachine and again in 1945 to Montebello near Ottawa. The building, a large mansion, cost \$17,000 to purchase.

Brother Bernard Murphy recalls “We

did the teaching theory in our lectures and then we applied the practicum in our classroom. It was so exciting for us, as we were young men setting out each day to school full of zest and a sense of pride and purpose. “<sup>23</sup>

The Montebello school, called Presentation High School, thrived for many years as a boarding school, often taking in students who did not do well in the laxer environment of the local public schools. Under Brother Plunkett Browne, additions and renovations totalling \$300,000 were undertaken.

The philosophy of Montebello was similar to all Presentation schools: to develop the whole person. As Bro. Bernard, the Principal, explains in the school’s first yearbook:



Education is much more than Mathematics or Geography – a true education must educate the WHOLE man – mentally, physically, socially, and spiritually. We, here at Presentation, like to think that our students DO receive this four-fold type of education, and that it will reflect in later life. If we may believe what we sometimes hear, students are better for having come to Presentation, then, we certainly cannot be faulted for having TRIED to make them better, for that is our life’s work.<sup>24</sup>

Despite its successes, the diminishing landscape of English-language education in Quebec meant that the school was closed in 1989 due to a lack of students. It is now a high-end hotel called Auberge Montebello.

<sup>23</sup> “My Years in Canada and the USA: Notes from Bro. Bernard Murphy”, 2010, p. 2.

<sup>24</sup> Presentation Reflections (yearbook), 1979, p. 4.

# “Montebello Musings”

By John Garufi



I spent two years at Presentation High School in Montebello from 1970 to 1972. There were fifty students, of which at least forty were rejects from other schools with nowhere else to be placed!

The “zoo keepers” were Br. Baptist Nigh, Br. Robert Claivaz, Br. Shawn, Br. Connelly, Mr. Rooney, Mrs. Daniels, Mr. Hudson and others, whose names have faded after forty years but not my gratitude.

The 1970’s, with Woodstock, Mary Jane, Revolution, Vietnam and many songs to inflate our egos on the extent of knowledge we had about life, was the context of the “PRESENTATION” adventure.



Profit was at the bottom of the list of priorities and not the objective of the board of this school. It was rather to collect as many St. Jude’s candidates – “hopeless causes”!

Br. Baptist always managed to feed us and he did a great job with the tight funds he had!

Of course we were supervised, guided, educated, disciplined, counselled, trained, fed, cleaned, and loved for 24 hours a day from September 1st until the end of June.

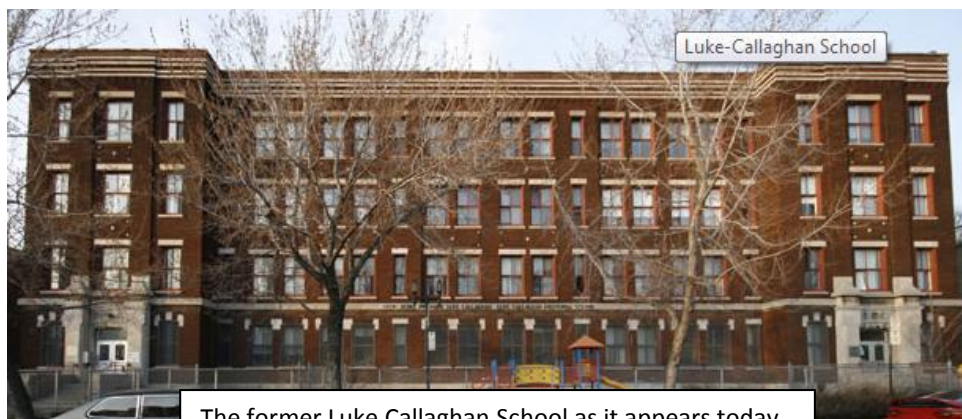
Sports, education and guidance for life was the curriculum of Presentation High School Montebello. Fifty per cent of our litter found the right road; some got lost but again managed to see the light. Others are still serving time in jail.

I am what I am, partly thanks to Br. Denis (Robert) Claivaz, who was the Principal of the school at the time, and the leader of our educators. I remain forever grateful.

## **RAPID EXPANSION**

Many schools were opened in the decades following the first establishments, each one no doubt deserving of its own detailed history and study of the work of the Brothers there. Normally the parish priest or the Catholic School Commission would invite the Presentation Brothers to administer and teach in the school, often in collaboration with religious Sisters.

### **Luke Callaghan Memorial School (formerly St. Michael's) (Montreal)**



St. Michael's School<sup>25</sup> opened in 1919 on Boucher Street and was situated in St. Michael's parish in Outremont, which at the time was wealthy and very Irish. The pastor, the Very Reverend

Dr. Luke Callaghan, was a firm supporter of the school and Brothers from its inception, and for that reason the school was renamed after him upon his death. A new school was constructed on St. Viatour Street and had separate wings for boys and girls. The girls were educated by the Sisters of St. Ann. At times there were over a dozen Brothers teaching plus lay staff. For a time there were "secondary tops", classes for secondary-level students. Both orders withdrew in 1968 when the area ceased to be predominately Catholic and pupil numbers dropped.

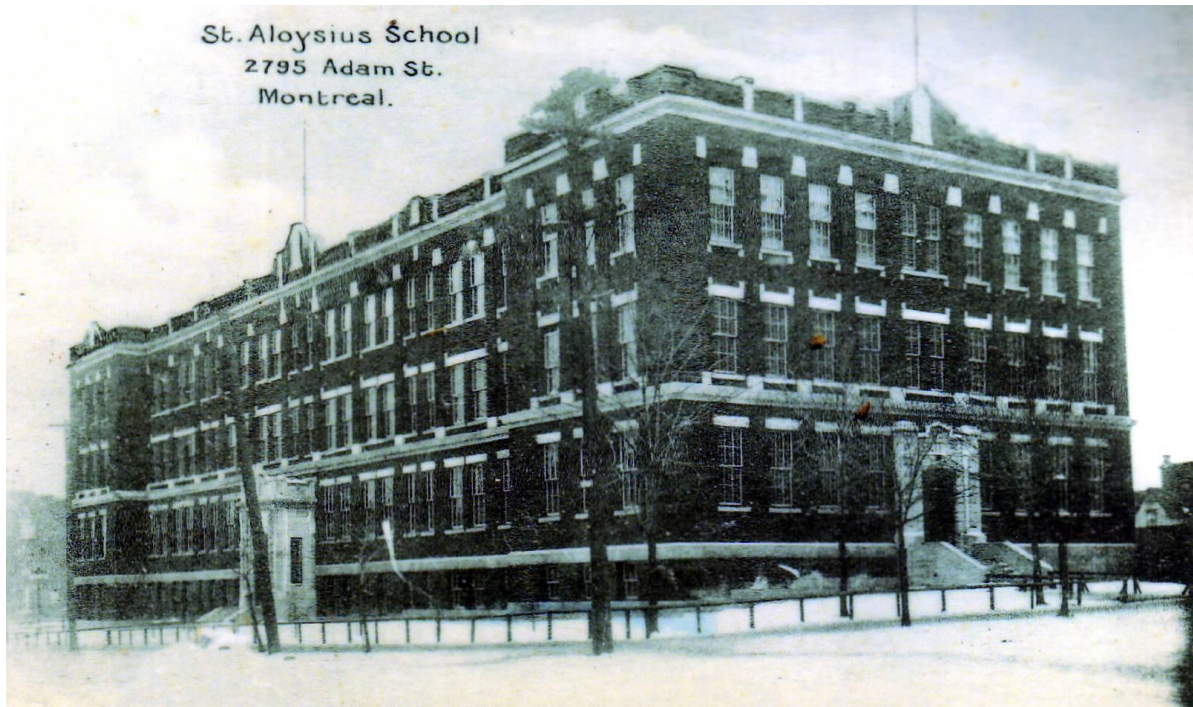
As Brother Henry Spence remembers: "It was the first school I taught in, from 1958-1964. This is where I met Brother Lawrence Maher. There was a strong immigrant population, mostly Italian. Classes were large, and I had 39 students in my first Grade 5 class. The students were well disciplined. It was the first time I saw students go to take industrial arts classes; we didn't have those in Ireland! It was also the first time I saw children playing ice hockey games, which they played after school and were coached by Brothers."

---

<sup>25</sup> The pioneer Brothers were Christopher Colbert (Superior), Charles Ryan, and Francis Dalton. *History*, p. 9.



## St. Aloysius Elementary (Montreal)



St. Aloysius School<sup>26</sup> opened in 1922 in the east end of the city. As at Luke Callaghan, the school was co-ed, with the girls educated by the Sisters of the Holy Name. Many of the Brothers who taught in this school were “Temporary Professed” Brothers, those who had not yet made a perpetual commitment to the order.



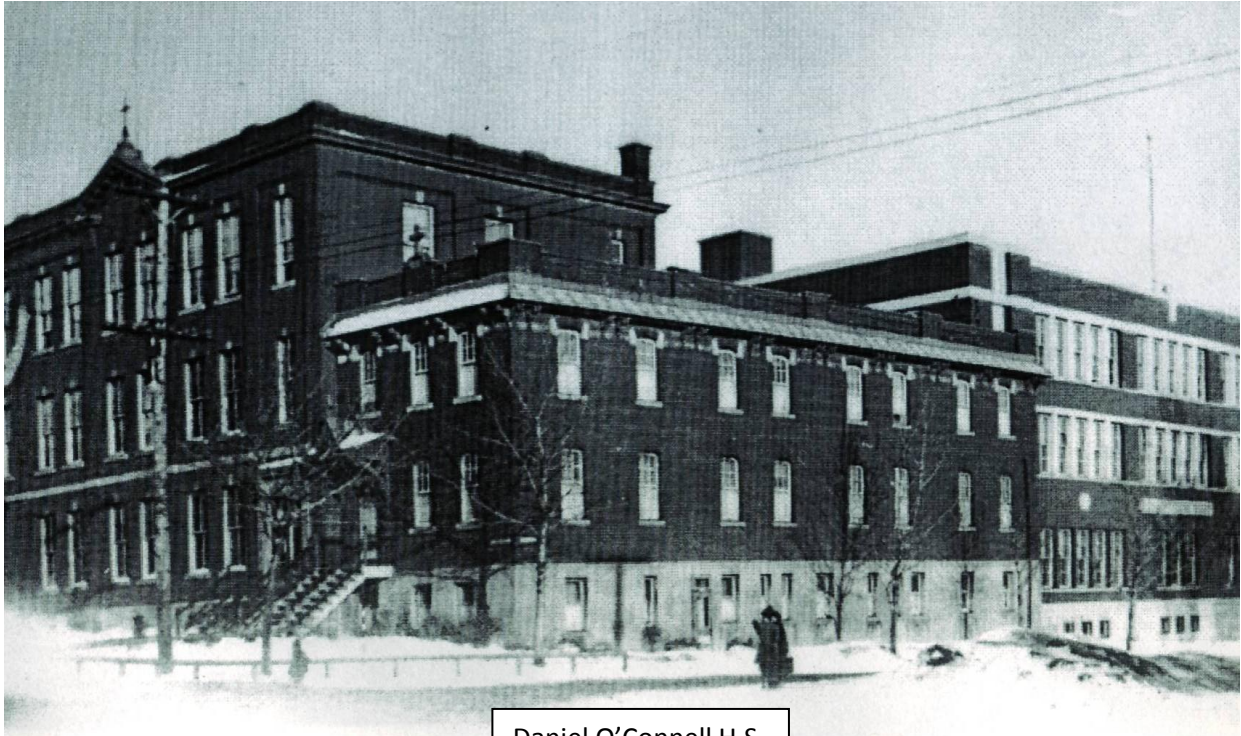
Left: a St. Aloysius girls' class c. 1957.

Brother Mark Fitzpatrick remembers that, “My favourite memories of Canada were the early years teaching elementary school [in part at St. Aloysius]. The children were good and the work was satisfying. When St. Aloysius closed in 1960 I shed bitter tears.”

The Brothers withdrew in 1960, owing to the movement of anglophones to the outer suburbs and in order to provide more Brothers to serve at the new Verdun Catholic High.

<sup>26</sup> The first community consisted of Angelus Keane (Superior), Charles Colbert, Bernard Behan, Baptist Nigh, Joseph Dalton, Benedict Black, and Stephen Milady. *History*, p. 10..

## Daniel O'Connell High School & St. Augustine's (Mount Royal, Quebec)



Daniel O'Connell H.S.

Daniel O'Connell was founded in 1924 and named for the great Irish politician of the 19<sup>th</sup> century who helped to secure full legal rights for Catholics in Ireland and throughout the British Empire. It was located in St. Augustine of Canterbury Parish in Montreal's west end suburb of Notre-Dame-de-Grace (Mount Royal).<sup>27</sup> The Brothers proved fine teachers, as a recollection by Brother Bernard Murphy clearly shows:

In my earlier years in Montreal, we had exams in English, math, religion, history, and geography, set by the Montreal School Commission. On one such occasion, dictation plus detached words (English) was administered at Daniel O'Connell School where Brother Damian McIntyre was the teacher. On this particular day, dictation was given throughout the Montreal area. Brother Damian's class did exceptionally well in this test. The Montreal Catholic School Commission thought that there was some dishonesty or wrongdoing, so they sent their inspector for that area, Mr. Murphy, to investigate. Mr. Murphy decided to give a similar test. Low and behold, the class did better, much to the embarrassment of the inspector. What a victory this was for Brother Damian's class! This was a remarkable achievement and great publicity for his school.<sup>28</sup>

The decline of the English population of the area coincided with the decline in vocations, and thus in 1960 the Brothers transferred to **St. Augustine's Elementary School** and were active there until 1981. The O'Connell building is today a private school called Centennial Academy.

<sup>27</sup> Original Brothers were Thaddeus O'Neill (Superior), Callistus Kelly, Valentine O'Connell, and Joseph Dalton. *History*, p. 10. The high school was closed in order to staff the new Verdun Catholic High School.

<sup>28</sup> Bro. Bernard Murphy, "My Years in Canada and the USA", 2010, p. 3.



## St. Willibrord's High School (Verdun, Quebec)



In 1948, the Provincial Council asked the Regime in Cork for permission to take charge of St. Willibrord's High School in the Montreal suburb of Verdun<sup>29 30</sup>. It had previously been run by the Sacred Heart Brothers, who had been withdrawn.

Brothers were sent from Ireland to help with staffing. They included Augustine Crowley, Michael McAuliffe, Plunkett Brown, and Borromeo Prior.

The school continued to operate until 1961 when it was closed following the opening of the larger and more modern Verdun Catholic High School.

## Ville La Salle High School (La Salle, Quebec)

Ville La Salle High School opened as one of the first co-ed schools in the Montreal area in 1958, following the closing of Catholic High School.<sup>31</sup> It had been a French school called Leroux previously. The Brothers resided in a private residence nearby on Eighth Avenue

As Brother Spencer recalls, "I taught there during Expo 67. It was a wonderful school with a dedicated staff. The students were quite good. Basketball and hockey were very popular. Brother Martin Walsh was the principal: he was loved by the School Board. He was so dedicated you would find him in the school Saturday evening and often all day on Sundays."



The Brothers remained until 1968, and only left due to difficulties in staffing it as the school's numbers exploded.

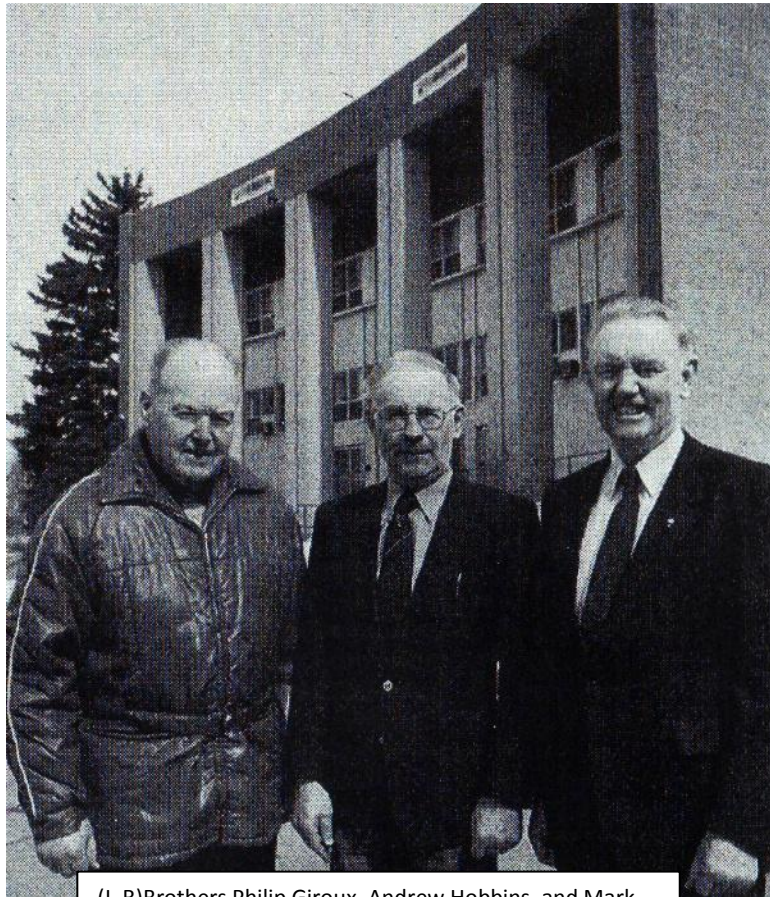
<sup>29</sup> Chrysostom O'Keeffe (Principal and Superior), Senan O'Connor, Fintan Conlon, Hilary Kirby, Ignatius Landry, Gerard McGrath (TP), William McConnell (TP), and Raphael Lunny (TP).

<sup>30</sup> St. Willibrord's essentially became Verdun Catholic H.S.

<sup>31</sup> The first community included Michael Clifford (Superior and Principal), Cormac O'Carroll, Vincent Walsh, Stephen Purcell, David Deny, and joined after a few months by Baptist Nigh.



## Verdun Catholic High School (Verdun, Quebec)<sup>32</sup>



(L-R) Brothers Philip Giroux, Andrew Hobbins, and Mark Fitzpatrick outside Verdun CHS.

Verdun Catholic High School opened in 1961 in the outer Montreal suburb of Verdun and following the closing of St. Willibrord's. It was a co-educational institution and the Brothers were joined by Sisters of Notre Dame (CND) and lay staff. Each wing could house 800 pupils and for a time it was at capacity. Owing to the reduction of the English-speaking population and the restrictive pro-French language laws, the school's numbers shrank gradually.

Verdun was the last Presentation School in Quebec, and the last volunteer Brothers left in 2001.

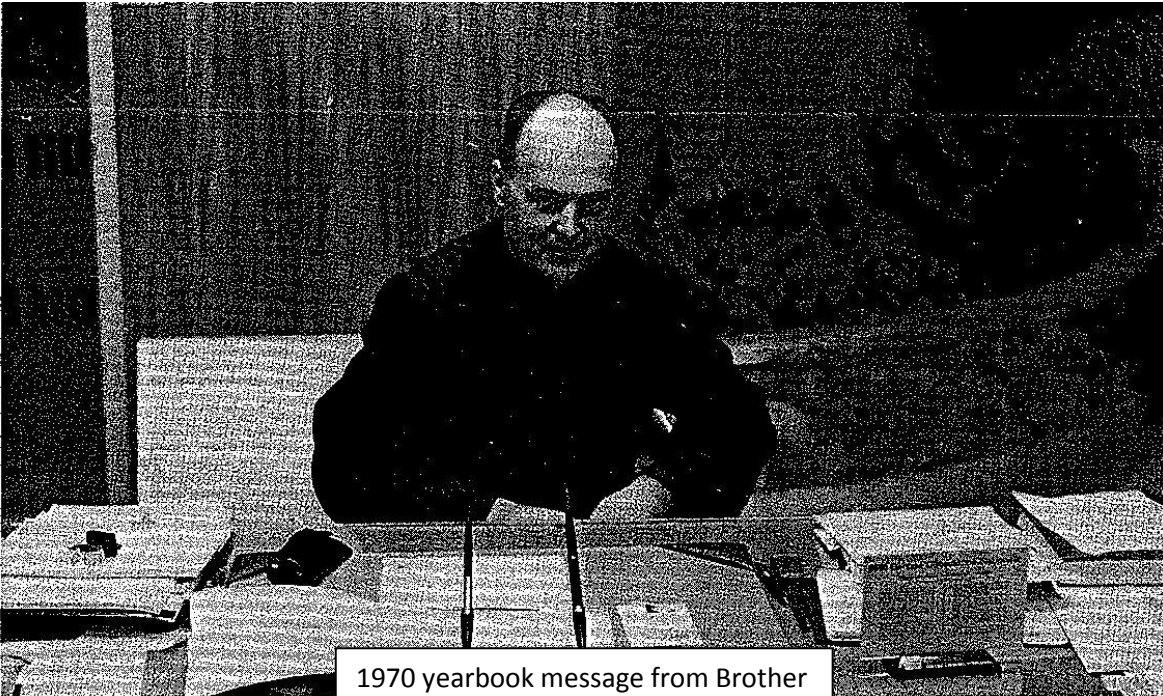


Jeff J. Spazuk: "I remember a few Brothers. Brother Lawrence (Larry) [Maher] taught me religion and introduced us all to Bill Cosby's Noah skit. He was very interesting and informative. I remember Brother Mel pulling my ear and his leather strap! Brother De Paul [Wright] taught my older brother and he was very strict -- you didn't fool around in his class! Brother Charles (I think) was a chemistry teacher and was the most informative and funny teacher I had all through high school."

Darlene Murphy: "I remember Brother Philip [Giroux] as Principal and his puns!"

Linda Gomes: "Brother Berchmans [Henry Spencer] taught me English in 1969 and I'll always remember that all I needed was 75% as a total grade so that I wouldn't have to write my final exam - I had 74.5% and Bro. Berchmans wouldn't let me make it up. He was very strict *but I loved him*."

<sup>32</sup> De Paul Wright (Superior and Principal), Michael Clifford, Martin Moran, Laserian Walsh, Sebastian Rodgers, Bernard Behan, Paul McDonald, Mel Crowley, Luke Gillies, Xavier McInerney, and Leopold O'Mahoney. Verdun High School is no longer a Catholic school but remains open.



1970 yearbook message from Brother Philip Giroux (Principal)

In keeping with the budget-conscious nature of this yearbook, I will try to give a maxi message in a mini space. I know I echo the sentiments of all in Administration and Staff when I thank you, the Graduates of 1971, for the fine spirit of industry and co-operation which you have shown, especially in the past year. Here's hoping that the Undergraduates will uphold the standards you set. In a way you occupy a special niche in being the tenth group to graduate from V. C. H. S. I cannot establish a hierarchy in terms of valuable contribution to the name of the school but I know yours was significant.

I wish you all the best in your future careers and I am sure you will continue to be loyal to the best traditions of V. C. H. S.



## DEDICATION

It is only fitting, that this, Accolade '70 should be dedicated to Br. Martin Moran, for without him, the production of this book would not have been possible. We owe him for his endless hours unselfishly spent, for his patience and endurance during the drudgery of this very difficult task.

He is even more deserving of this dedication — for more than his devotion to us, the students. After years of loyalty to his chosen vocation, Br. Martin has left us, and gone to Africa to aid in the education of the natives. As you can see, he is well deserving of this humble gesture.

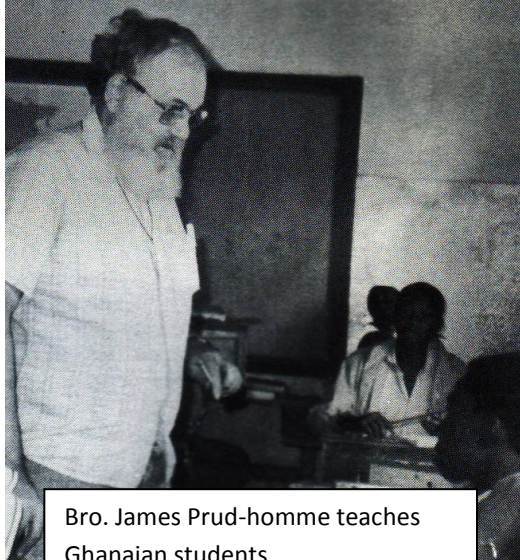
We wish him luck in his future endeavors and thank him sincerely, and God bless you,

Br. Martin  
Wherever you are.



There were also some “embryonic experiments” in sending Brothers to teach: at a parochial school for black students in Milwaukee, Wisconsin USA (1947-1949)<sup>33</sup>; in Lafleche, Quebec (1955-1970)<sup>34</sup>; and Greenfield Park, Quebec (1970-1976).<sup>35</sup>

## GHANA



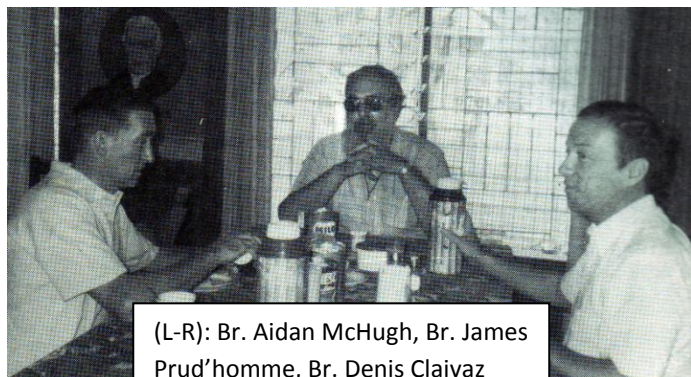
Bro. James Prud-homme teaches Ghanaian students.

In the spirit of the Vatican II, the Brothers expanded beyond the “First World” to Ghana and conditions that would resemble the poverty and lack of opportunity that Edmund Rice would have seen in his time. There were Canadian connections to Ghana, as the request for Brothers came from Bishop Bertrand, a Missionary of Africa (White Father) from Montreal. Two of the three Brothers in this new mission were Canadian: Xavier McInerney and Stephen Purcell, and together with Irishman Fanahan O’Brien they staffed St. John Bosco Training College in Navrongo.

After a few years they were replaced by Brothers James Prud-homme and Martin Moran from Canada and Joe Gilleece from Ireland. They also conducted courses in mathematics, English, and music for neighbouring schools. Beyond the classroom, they were involved in many extracurricular activities, including running the library, Young Christian Students, Legion of Mary, public speaking, science fair, athletics, and tutoring. The Brothers’ presence meant that the college was raised to post-secondary status, the only such institution in Upper Ghana at the time.

The Ghana expansion was under the jurisdiction of the Canadian Province and its Provincial, Brother Lawrence Maher. When Brother Lawrence visited Ghana in 1970, he remarked that the work being done there, under difficult circumstances, was laudable.

Other Brothers from the Canadian Province who served in Ghana over the years include: Denis Claivaz, Francis Schafer, Dominic Nixon, Raphael Toodle, James Needham, and Peter Shymko. Today, the Ghana mission is growing and the Brothers run many schools. The Assistant Congregation Leader, Brother Francis Agoah, is himself a Ghanaian. The seeds planted from Canada are indeed strong and mark a strong future for the Presentation Brothers.



(L-R): Br. Aidan McHugh, Br. James Prud’homme, Br. Denis Claivaz

<sup>33</sup> Kevin Clarken and Ignatius Landry.

<sup>34</sup> Vincent Walsh and Bosco Kendall (TP).

<sup>35</sup> Vincent Walsh (Principal) and Andrew Evans.

## BRITISH COLUMBIA



Bro. Ivan Verba helps the Sacred Heart children celebrate with cakes.

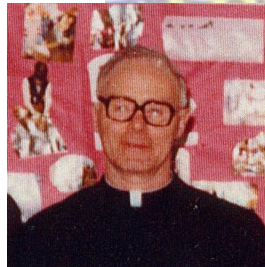
In the late 1960s, the Brothers accepted an invitation from Bishop O'Grady to come to Prince George, British Columbia, on the other side of Canada. A primary school for aboriginal children was in **Fort Ware**, accessible only by water plane. Brother Leo Prud'homme and a postulant named Peter Hodson lasted a year and were replaced with Cormac English, who also lasted a year. Another Mission to **Dawson**

**Creek** lasted two years under Luke Gillis and Mel Crowley. No doubt these were difficult missions so far from urban life.

Roots in the city of Prince George, British Columbia took firmer root. In 1968, Brothers Mark Fitzpatrick and Leo Prud-homme arrived in the city by propeller plane. The Presentation Brothers began working in Sacred Heart Elementary School, a co-educational institution with 200 pupils. As the official history of the school observes: "When the Sisters of St. Ann finished their time at Sacred Heart School, the school was fortunate that the Presentation Brothers arrived. They carried on the great work of the Sisters of St. Ann and operated the school from 1968 to 1994. The pioneering Brothers were Mark Fitzpatrick (Superior), Neri O'Sullivan and Leo Prud'homme. By 1969, the British Columbia mission had ten Brothers and ten postulants. Very quickly the Brothers showed what Edmund Rice education is about: development of the whole person and helping others in the community. Brothers were active in the Legion of Mary, they started a youth group, and directed choirs, among many other Apostolates.

The school was guided by many excellent Brother Principals:

1968-1972	Bro. Mark Fitzpatrick
1972-1983	Bro. Leopold O'Mahoney
1983-1992	Bro. Ivan Verba
1992-1994	Bro. Peter Shymko



Other Brothers who taught in the school included: Gerard Despathy, Joseph Wichrowski, Damien McIntrye, Leopold O'Mahony, Timothy McCarthy, James Needham, Neri, Patrick Coffey, Albertus Reen, Luke Gillies, Cormac English, and John Tobin.

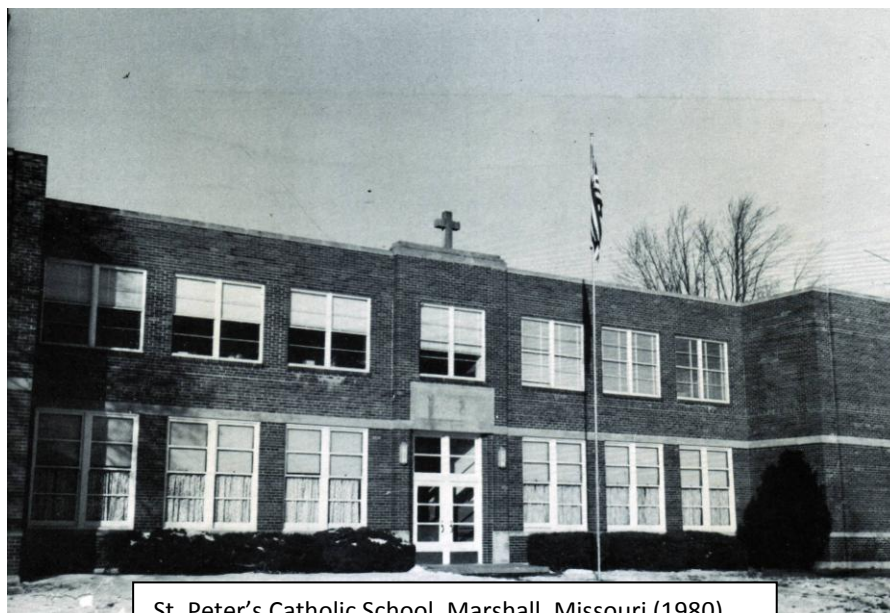


As Terry Wilson, the first lay principal observed, “In a very special way we are sorry that the Presentation Brothers are leaving us. We could not have enough paper to list what the Brothers have brought to our school. Their contribution to Sacred Heart School is simply immeasurable. More importantly, it is not just what they brought, it is how they brought it. They gave of themselves to educate and develop each child under their care.”<sup>36</sup>

The Brothers were active in the diocese until 1997 when a new community in Knoxville, Tennessee was opened.



Three important missions from the Canadian Province were created in Canada's neighbour to the south. The United States communities included: Marshall, Missouri (1972); Springfield, Missouri (1975); Kissimmee, Florida (1989) and Knoxville, Tennessee (1997). The Kissimmee community still exists and houses the Provincial Superior.



St. Peter's Catholic School, Marshall, Missouri (1980).



## THE QUEBEC SITUATION



The Profession of three new Brothers (1979)

Front (L-R): Lawrence Maher, Joseph Warner, Michael Doyle, Mark Fitzpatrick, Andrew Hobbins, Fr. Jean Le Gros, Martin Walsh, Sylvester Canning, Gerard Despathy, Fr. Salvatore Rose, Mel Crowley  
Back (L-R): Brendan Beaton, Raphael Toodle, Luke Gillis, James Prud'homme, William Wingson

Gradually, by the 1980's, three factors combined to significantly lessen the Brothers' presence in Quebec and forced the closure of schools, which had always been the order's main apostolate. These were: the lack of new vocations, the rise of secularism, and the legal changes to English-language education.

In the early 1950s there were seventy Brothers in the Province, and half of them were North American, but by 1985, there were twenty.<sup>37</sup> The demise of the Church was a result of the "Quiet Revolution" which saw many French Canadians react against the once powerful Catholic Church. This also coincided with "political and societal changes, including the exodus of English-speaking families, and the end of the baby boom. . . ."<sup>38</sup> The lack of vocations meant that the Longueuil Novitiate was sold in 1986 and new Brothers would be trained in Ireland. Brothers saw firsthand "the secular tide [sweep] aside the confessional public schools."<sup>39</sup> The Brothers' schools were all English-speaking, and after 1976 the Parti Quebecois government began passing laws that limited those who could attend them, especially new immigrants. Brothers such as Mark Fitzpatrick looked with dismay at these changes and "regrets that his community didn't put more resources into establishing their own private Catholic school in Montreal."<sup>40</sup> These might have remained with lay support.

The last Brothers left Quebec in 2001.

<sup>37</sup> Eric Durocher in "Fitzpatrick arrived here in '54" in *The Catholic Times* (Montreal), 2001.

<sup>38</sup> Phylis Duschastel in "Presentation Brothers mark 75 years here" in *The Catholic Times* (Montreal), Sept 1985 p.1.

<sup>39</sup> Durocher.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

## “Well Done, Brothers”

By Eric Durocher, Catholic Times (April, 2001)



Brothers from the Canadian Province gather at the Brebeuf Residence in Toronto c. 1996.

Front (L-R): Henry Spencer, Donatus Brazil (Provincial), Lawrence Maher (Principal), Andrew Hobbins, Father Elia  
Second Row (L-R): Eric Lucas, Mark Fitzpatrick, Denis Claivaz, Bernard Murphy, Philip Giroux, Michael McAuliffe,  
Michael Maiorano

Back (L-R): James Needham, Patrick Sullivan, Raphael Toodle, Edwin O’Sullivan, Gerard Despathy, Father Joseph  
Lasowski, Francis Schafer

Many religious orders in Canada have come under fire in recent years, but the Presentation Brothers have not been among them.

The stature of this community of teaching Brothers remains strong and impressive in English Catholic Quebec, even though there are just a handful left.

For that matter, the Brothers are suffering the same malaise that afflicts most religious communities in the Western Hemisphere: aging members and few novices. But it wasn’t always so.

At one time about one quarter of the community, which is based in County Cork, Ireland, was in Quebec educating young men – and later in co-ed schools, young women – in the Catholic tradition.

Their apostolate led them to serve where needed, especially in blue-collar areas. It’s no surprise that the Brothers accepted to run schools in some of Montreal’s most densely populated parishes at that time: St. Gabriel’s, St. Aloysius, St. Michael’s, St. Augustine’s, and St. Willibrord’s. They also served areas that had small pockets of English Catholics such as in Sherbrooke and on the South Shore.

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the task of teaching future generations fell to men and women religious because public education had not yet become a government priority as it did after the 1950s. Religious brothers and sisters taught young people for a fraction of the cost that would be needed to operate a lay-run system.

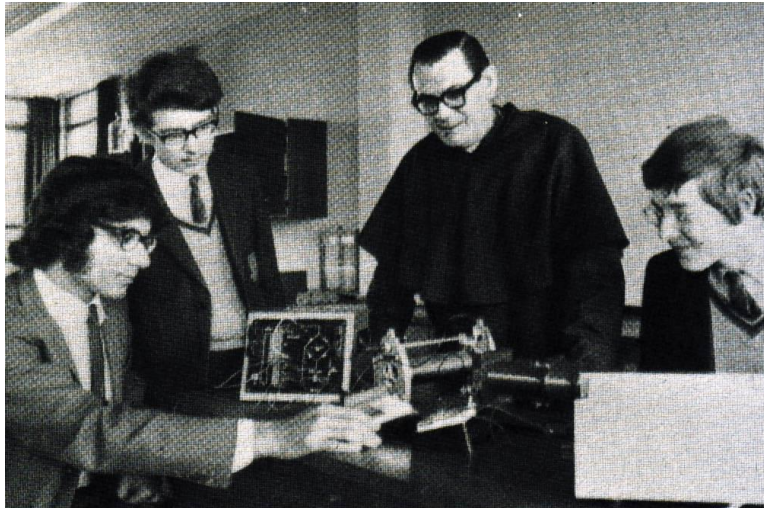
But the Presentation Brothers, like all religious, offered much more than an inexpensive education: they excelled in dedication and service, provided continuity and follow-up, and upheld Christian values. Education wasn’t run on a 8:30-to-3-o’clock basis. Teaching wasn’t a



job, it was a vocation. And many of us, including our parents and grandparents, had the benefits of such a formation.

Of course, the religious also had a reputation for strict discipline. Some were smug; others overzealous in their piety. Religious communities also had their share of well-intentioned but ineffective teachers, just as today. But on the whole, they offered their students a caring, stable learning environment, centred on Gospel values.

## NO FANFARE ,PLEASE!



Now if the current group of Presentation Brothers had it their way, at the end of April, Andrew [Hobbins] and Michael [McAuliffe] would fly back to Ireland, Philip [Giroux] would drive to Toronto, and Mark [Fitzpatrick] would hand over the key of their Verdun residence to the new owner. And that is how the Presentation Brothers would draw the curtain on 91 years of dedicated service to the English Catholic youth of Quebec.

It would be quiet, simple, efficient, and most of all, done without fanfare. It's not that the Brothers don't want anyone to know they are leaving; it simply reflects the modest way they approach their ministry.

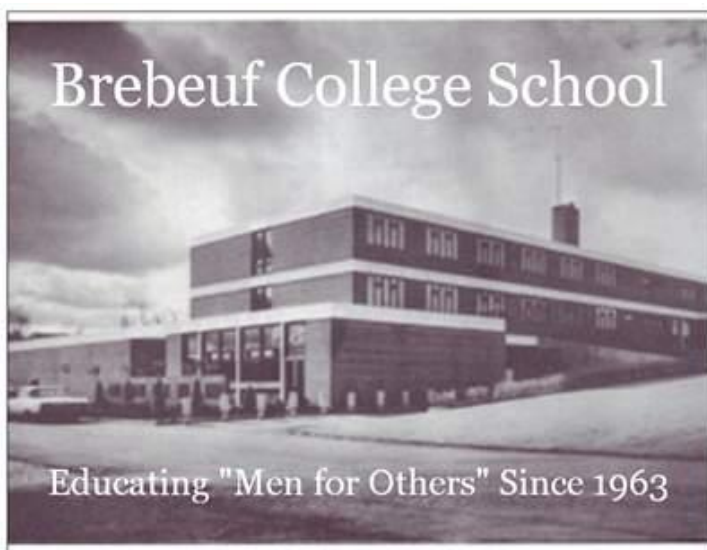
"They're not men who put themselves front and centre," is how one former student, Father Joe Cameron, describes the Brothers. "They always stayed in the background, did their duty well, but were quiet about it."

Brother Andrew, 70, continues his volunteer work at Verdun Regional High School (formerly Verdun Catholic) until a day or so before he leaves on April 25. He coaches basketball and helps out in the office. Brother Philip, 83, will help out at St. Willibrord's soup kitchen until the end of the month. Brother Michael, 76, is bursar and maintains the house, and Brother Mark, 65, works with the Legion of Mary and helps out at St. Thomas More Parish. He will stay in Montreal for a few months after the house officially closes.

Together, these four men have given more than 160 teaching years to English Catholic youth. That's only four. About 150 Brothers have taught here during the 20<sup>th</sup> century; 42 are buried in St-Antoine Cemetery in Longueuil. Given that the Brothers never retired after 25 years of teaching, means that they have racked up thousands of teaching years in the Quebec schools they administered.

So, the fact that they're leaving Quebec this month – their home base in North America for close to a century – should be duly noted and publicly acknowledged, even if it makes them a little uncomfortable. They, along with many women religious orders, priests and fellow Brothers have helped to build the public Catholic education system that English Catholics enjoyed until recently. They were instrumental in giving us a century of English Catholic education. Well done, good and faithful Presentation Brothers!

## BREBEUF COLLEGE SCHOOL, TORONTO



In 1983, the Archbishop of Toronto, Gerald Emmett Cardinal Carter, invited the Presentation Brothers to take over the Administration of Brebeuf College School in Toronto (see interview with Bro. Henry Spencer). The school had been run by the Jesuits but they decided to withdraw due to a lack of manpower. Brother Lawrence Maher moved into the Jesuit community for a term to become familiar with the community, and in 1984 was appointed Principal. The original Brebeuf community also

included: Bernard Murphy, Henry Spencer, De Paul Wright, Michael Clifford, and Joseph Wichrowski. Over the years, they were joined at the school or those in the community: Michael Doyle, Peter Shymko, Leopold O'Mahoney, Ivan Verba, Donatus Brazil, Vincent James, Francis Schafer, Jude Collins, Dominic Nixon, Philip Giroux, and De Sales Van Dorrestyn.

The Brothers quickly endeared themselves to the students and staff. They added their charism to the school in a quiet and genuine way, all the while maintaining the excellent academic and spiritual traditions that the Jesuits had established. As Michael Daoust '67, an alumnus and long-time mathematics teacher observed, "If the Jesuits taught us to think with our minds, the Brothers taught us to love with our hearts." As a group, the Presentation Brothers modelled generosity, compassion, faith, and friendship to students and staff alike.

The Brothers were as impressed with Brebeuf as the school was with the Brothers. Brother Bernard Murphy notes: "It was at Brebeuf that I was awe-struck by the total dedication and commitment of the lay-staff. Some teachers were so dedicated that they used to stay after school for many hours to prepare work, do corrections, and prepare tests. These lay people helped me immensely to be a better teacher. "

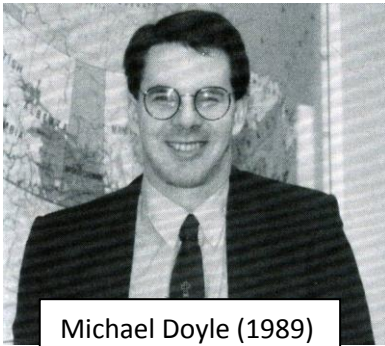
When Brother Lawrence retired in 1996, only Brother Henry Spencer was left on staff, and he himself retired in 1998. Brebeuf looked like it might be a fairly short chapter in the Brothers' history, but Brother Henry decided to stay at the school and volunteer in Chaplaincy. Thus to this day, his daily presence and that of Presentation Associates maintains the link to the Presentation Family and the charism of Edmund Rice education in Canada. Among the many tangible signs of this include: devotion to Our Lady of the Presentation and prayers to Edmund Rice; the raising of funds for the Brothers' schools in Ghana; the introduction of the Edmund Rice Volunteer Awards; the promotion of vocations to the Brothers; Mass on the Feast Day of Edmund Rice; and ministries such as visiting of the elderly. The newest Presentation innovation will be a Ghana immersion trip for students in March, 2011.



# “Education, Dedication and Inspiration”

By Kevin Doyle '92

Education, dedication, and inspiration. These words spring to mind when I think of my years at Brebeuf and the powerful impact the Presentation Brothers had on our school community. The generosity and hard work of those men played a vital role in fostering a special atmosphere in the hallways and classrooms of Brebeuf.



Michael Doyle (1989)

Education - The Presentation Brothers may have been religious by calling, but they were teachers and school administrators by profession. Their passion for teaching was obvious and their academic standards rigorous. My Grade Nine English teacher was **Brother Doyle** (no relation!). It was clear from the first day of school that he was an educator who had time for every student - the drive to challenge those who needed the challenge and the energy to help those who needed that extra assistance.

Dedication - Did **Brother Maher** sleep? It seemed as though he was always in his office, ready to meet whatever the day had to offer. Brother Maher was always willing to listen, to advise and to help. There were many students at the school who were able to purchase uniforms or go on trips due to his unfailing generosity. And there were many more who graduated as the fortunate beneficiaries of countless hours of hard work put in by all of the Brothers.

Inspiration - The Brothers led by example, not just in the classroom, but in the larger school and local communities. Many will recall the image of **Brother Spencer** leading a group of students to volunteer their time and energy with seniors. Their many acts of generosity and compassion - exemplified by their devotion to helping their colleagues working in less developed parts of the world - served as true inspiration to the students of Brebeuf.

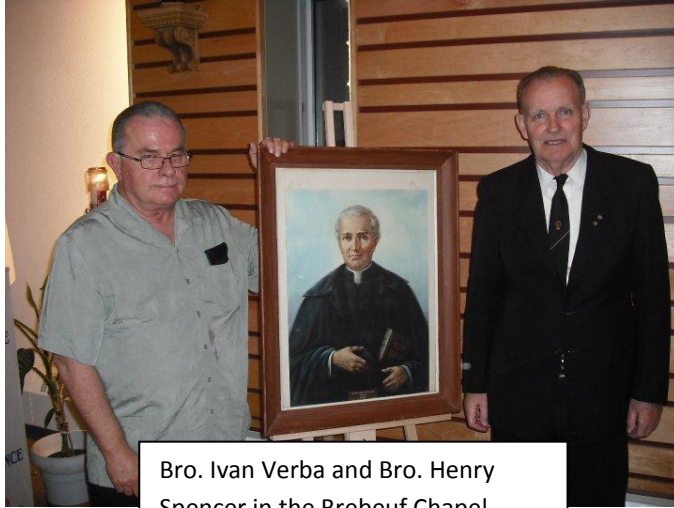
Congratulations to the Presentation Brothers on this special anniversary!



Above: the new Brebeuf; Right: Brebeuf celebrates Mass on the Feast of Bl. Edmund Rice in the school's atrium



## THE BROTHERS IN CANADA TODAY



Today, the Brothers in Canada are centred in Ontario and form part of the Our Lady of the Americas Province, which also includes the USA, St. Lucia, Grenada, and Trinidad.

After many years in educational and parish ministry, **Brother Ivan Verba** lives in the Toronto community and is the Superior and Provincial Bursar.

**Brother Philip Giroux**, at the fine age of 93, lives in a retirement home near his

nephew and family in Marmora, Ontario. Brother Philip was a Provincial Superior as far back as 1958, as well as a teacher and principal. His nephew, Paul Giroux, is an Associate and for a few years was running a school in Marmora for Crown wards named after Edmund Rice.

**Brother Henry Spencer** remains an important part of the Chaplaincy Team at Brebeuf College, from which he formally retired in 1997. A typical day for him involves running the morning communion service, reciting the communal prayer over the PA, helping to plan student retreats, mentoring staff, raising funds and awareness for Ghana, and bringing students to visit the local home for the elderly. Outside of school, Brother Henry coordinates the Associates group, prepares aboriginal Canadians on Christian Island for the sacraments every summer, takes war veterans to Mass at Sunnybrook hospital, and works with the homeless in the Out of the Cold programme. Brother Henry's continued presence has meant that Brebeuf students and staff have remained within the Presentation orbit.

There are four Brothers in the Our Lady of the Americas Province working in different parts of the world.

**Brother Denis Claivaz**, after many years of serving in the missions on Ghana and St. Lucia, now advocates for children's rights as part of Edmund Rice International in Geneva.

**Brother Raphael Toodle** is a teacher and the Provincial Bursar in Ghana.

**Brother Barry Noel** is the Director of Novices in Killarney, Ireland.



**Brother Kevin Mascarenhas**, a Canadian citizen born in Pakistan, was living in Toronto when he became an Associate there. He entered the Novitiate in Ireland after spending time volunteering with the CARE programme for underprivileged youth in St. Lucia. He now runs the Immigrant Support Unit in Waterford for new immigrants and refugees.



Brother Kevin makes his permanent vows in front of Congregation Leader Brother Martin Kenneally at the Edmund Rice Chapel at Mount Sion in Waterford , Ireland.

The Presentation Brothers have much of which to be proud in their hundred years of work for the Lord in Canada. Thousands of students have benefitted in their academic, spiritual, and social lives as a result. Montreal journalist Eric Durocher perhaps sums up their legacy best when he notes that the Presentation Brothers “excelled in dedication and service, provided continuity and follow-up, and upheld Christian values. Education wasn’t run on an 8:30-to-3-o’clock basis. Teaching wasn’t a job, it was a vocation. And many of us, including our parents and grandparents, had the benefit of such a formation.”<sup>41</sup>

We can all pray that the Lord will bless Canada with more vocations to the Presentation Brothers and that the charism and legacy of Edmund Rice will continue in the “Dominion of the North” well into the future.

**A.M.Ð.G.**

<sup>41</sup> Eric Durocher in “Well done, Brothers” in The Catholic Times (Montreal) 2001.

# THE PRESENTATION BROTHERS AT BREBEUF COLLEGE SCHOOL

AN INTERVIEW WITH BROTHER HENRY SPENCER F.P.M.



## **When did you first hear about Brebeuf College School?**

I was in Ireland from 1982-1984 as Director of Novices, preparing candidates to enter the Congregation. In the course of his visit to Ireland, the Canadian Provincial Superior, Brother Mark Fitzpatrick F.P.M., met with me and told me about the Presentation Brothers coming to the Archdiocese of Toronto at an invitation from His Eminence, Gerald Emmett Cardinal Carter, and the Toronto Catholic School Board. He informed me about the new school, St. Jean de Brebeuf, the ethnic makeup

of the school, the staff, and the student body which numbered 750 at the time. He invited me to join the Presentation Community there. I arrived on September 20, 1984.

## **What was your reaction to being transferred to Brebeuf?**

I was delighted and happy to be called to join the Toronto Community. I knew a lot about Toronto, not just the Toronto Maple Leafs hockey team, but life there, the school system, the Church and its leader, Cardinal Carter (a Montrealer). We also knew of the historical rivalry that existed between Montreal and Toronto, and these two great lively and progressive cities with their varied histories and cultures. I knew Toronto was the fastest growing city of the two. In brief, I really looked forward to coming to a great city. I have not been disappointed!

## **When did the Brothers arrive?**

Brother Lawrence Maher spent 1983-1984 living in the Jesuit Community, familiarizing himself with the life of Brebeuf, and working closely with the Principal, Father Winston Rye S.J. The rest arrived in the summer of 1984.

## **Why did the Brothers come to Brebeuf?**

At the time, the Jesuit Community, like all other religious communities, was short of personnel to administer and teach in the school. They informed the Board and Cardinal Carter. Both invited the Presentation Brothers, who accepted the invitations.



## What were your first impressions of the school?

Shortly after arriving, Brother Maher took me on a tour of the school. He seemed to be very proud of the staff, the students, the Ladies' Guild, the Benefactors, and the whole facility. He spoke very highly of the work of the Jesuits, of the foundation they had laid for the future growth and development of the school, and of the loyal, proud band of lay staff who supported them. I seemed to be caught up in his enthusiastic spirit and looked forward to meeting my students. They were polite, mannerly, and well conducted. I liked the idea of students wearing a uniform. I felt I had become part of something great. Some 25 years of my experience here, I know I was right.

Oh yes, the washrooms were so clean – no graffiti on the walls or doors. I got the impression that it was a well-kept school and that students respected and were proud of their school. I did, however, find class sizes very large, averaging 35 or 36 with 42 in my Grade 12 class for a numbers of weeks. This was the best, most-co-operative, well-behaved group of young men I had that first year.

## Was it hard to adjust?

Adjustment for me was extremely easy. There were six Brothers in the Community, all of whom I knew well. They were experienced and imbued with the spirit of Blessed Edmund Rice and were serious about the new task we had taken on in the Archdiocese of Toronto. We were a very closely-knit group of men, with Brother Lawrence Maher as our Superior and Principal.

## Which Brothers were part of that Community?

The following were members of that first Presentation Community appointed to Brebeuf:



1. Brother Lawrence Maher F.P.M., Principal and Superior;
2. Brother De Paul Wright F.P.M., Assistant Superior and teacher of English to visa students and OAC (Gr. 13);
3. Brother Bernard Murphy F.P.M., Community Bursar and mathematics teacher;
4. Brother Joseph Wickrowski F.P.M., Librarian;

5. Brother Michael Clifford F.P.M., retired, Cafeteria Supervisor;
6. Brother Henry Spencer F.P.M., English, Latin, and Religion teacher.

### **How was the Community different from others you had served in?**

Basically, all of our Communities are alike from the point of view of structure and prayer life. Our main apostolate is the same – education – the purpose for which we were founded by Blessed Edmund Rice in 1802. Here at Brebeuf, however, there are more opportunities for involvement in the lives of people e.g. Chaplaincy, Out of the Cold programme, Associates of the Brothers, and in the summer teaching on an Indian reserve. This involvement in activities outside of school life was brought about by the Second Vatican Council, which encourages us all to get more involved in the life of the local community. Our Presentation Community is more open to and accepting of the local community than previous communities I have lived in.

### **How have the deaths of Brothers like Lawrence Maher changed the community?**

Since 1984, when we arrived at Brebeuf, five members died here. I knew them all. They were superiors and principals down through the years in the Montreal area. All had a great influence on me. They were great models of Religious and Community men for me. They lived long lives and were active in one way or another to the end. They served their God and fellow men well. I have been the richer for having lived with them.

The Community felt their loss very much and especially that of Brother Lawrence Maher, who had founded the Brebeuf Community and saw the transition through after the departure of the Jesuits. His sudden and unexpected death had a great impact on our Community. He left an indelible mark in my mind. I feel, at times, that he is still with us and influencing us. He served all well, especially the poor and the needy after the example of our Founder, Bl. Edmund Rice. By his words, his manner of life, by his very example he showed us how to follow in the footsteps of the Master.

### **How have the Presentation Brothers changed over the years?**

Reforms brought about by Vatican II impacted every Religious Congregation in the Catholic Church. Since their origins, very little change, if any, took place within religious life. Their Constitutions did not permit change, but Vatican II not only allowed change with Religious Orders, but it encouraged it. The Church gave fifteen years for all Congregations to renew, modernize, or update their Constitutions, customs, and practices. Many Religious, especially the elderly, found such changes very difficult. Many Religious left religious life altogether. More freedom was allowed, and many were not prepared or ready for such vast and far-reaching changes.

Many required changes took place in the Presentation Congregation. Generally speaking, we coped well with the rapid change, which at the same time new foundations were opened in Africa, Peru, and British Columbia. Our newly updated Constitutions were approved by Rome on the Feast of the Presentation of Mary, our titular Feast, November 21, 1989.



### **How do you think the Presentation Brothers changed Brebeuf, a former Jesuit school?**

Brother Maher had a great influence on all staff members and gained their trust and good will in many ways. He always showed “the human touch”. He was understanding of other people: a man of compassion. He invited staff to dinner in the Brothers’ Residence, especially on days of parent/teacher interviews. This was much appreciated by the staff, as they did not have to go out for dinner. Brother introduced many new programmes to the curriculum, as well as expanding on already existing ones. Liturgies, prayers, and the development of a caring community were priorities for him. He attempted to cultivate a good spirit of co-operation between administration, staff, and students. He appreciated the good work of the caretakers and never failed to include them for a meal in the Residence with the staff. His generosity was returned by all and he gained the good will of those he served.

### **What is your proudest accomplishment at Brebeuf?**

I am proud of many things I did over the years at Brebeuf e.g. my teaching, especially my role as a religion teacher; working with Les Donnes every Tuesday evening helping the elderly at Extendacare and Gibson House; teaching our native children on the Christian Island reserve, to mention a few. However, I am most proud of what I do in Chaplaincy, preparing for Masses, Reconciliation, and Retreats. I enjoy my work in this area and find it very rewarding and fulfilling.

### **In what other ways have the Brothers served in the Archdiocese of Toronto?**

While teaching at Brebeuf, time did not permit us to be involved in other apostolates. Our priority was the school. On Sundays, I assisted the priest at Masses in Sunnybrook Hospital for veterans. In summer, I prepared the Indian children on Christian Island for the sacraments.

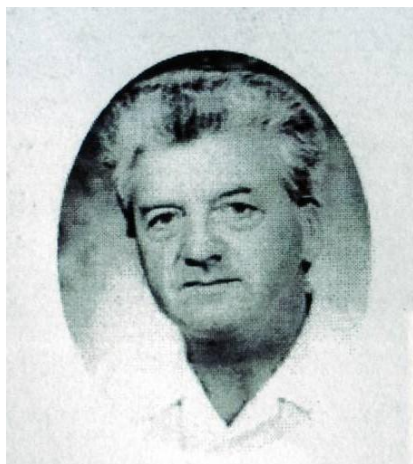
### **How long do you plan to stay associated with Brebeuf?**

As long as I feel there is a need to be filled, and I can play a useful role in Chaplaincy, as long as the Principal allows me, and the good Lord continues to bless me with good health, I intend to stick around for some time!

### **Would Edmund Rice be proud of Brebeuf? Why?**

Yes, Edmund Rice saw that education was the way forward, a means to uplift society. He would be proud of the emphasis we place on religion, the Masses, which were always important to him, and the reception of the Sacraments. He said that “The most salutary half-hour of the day for the children was that spent on Catechetics.” Edmund Rice would be proud of the sound system of education that prevails at Brebeuf and the Gospel values that are espoused and lived in our school community. He would be very proud to see how children of different cultures and backgrounds work and live together. He would appreciate the aid that the Brebeuf students give to the Presentation schools in Ghana.

# BROTHER DONATUS BRAZIL F.P.M.



My ministry was that of Province Leader as defined in our Constitutions, and my presence in the Canadian Province was an unexpected presence. I had been in the West Indies Province since 1962 and was Province Leader there from 1984 to 1990. Due to falling numbers of Brothers, the West Indies and North American (including Canada) Provinces were amalgamated and I was appointed Province Leader of the new Province with head offices in Toronto and San Fernando in Trinidad. I commuted between the two areas including Ghana until 1999 when I was elected to the Congregation Leadership Team at the 1999 General Chapter. So my presence in Canada for those six years was really by default or Providence.

The spirit of Edmund Rice was very much alive at that time. Preparations for the celebration of the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his death in 1994 were well underway. There was much co-operation with the Irish Christian Brothers in evidence and I remember attending the unveiling of the Edmund Rice Icon at one of their schools in Toronto. Bro Lawrence was with me on that occasion. The Associates group in Brebeuf was begun during that period. The group placed huge emphasis on the role of Edmund Rice in their lives and the meetings were organised around different aspects of his life and how they applied to them. They were very energising meetings. Several members of the Brebeuf staff were in that initial group, and the placing of a picture of Edmund Rice not far from the statue of St Jean de Brebeuf in the College was a reminder and an indication of the place Edmund Rice began to take in the lives of the students. There was also a very active Associates group in Prince George drawn from the staff and friends of the Brothers there. They kept the spirit of Edmund alive for many years and even after the Brothers left the area.

When the Beatification of Edmund came around in 1996 there was a huge contingent, organised by Brother Lawrence Maher, drawn from Toronto, Montreal and Prince George at the Ceremony in Rome. This was a further testament to the reverence and esteem with which Edmund was held in the region.

The challenges in the Canadian Province were numerous. However, the main challenge centred around personnel and our gradual withdrawal from our traditional ministry of education. We had three communities in Montreal, namely, Verdun, which was viable, and Longueuil and Montebello that could be classed as caretaker communities. Montebello was for sale in 1993 when I joined the Province and Longueuil was put on the market shortly afterwards. Both were sold in the late 1990s. We also found that we could not continue with the school in Prince George and we withdrew from there too in the late 1990s. However, in order to help boost morale we opened what we called an "International Community" in Knoxville as a vocations community where candidates could 'come and see' our life while discerning their vocation. Of course, vocations were a huge challenge, and as result of extensive advertising, the Lord sent us several people during this period but they did not stay. However, one did, Bro Kevin Mascarenhas, who is now doing wonderful work in Ireland with displaced people in Waterford. He did his novitiate in Ireland and remained there when professed.



My favourite memories would include that visit to the Christian Brothers' school in Toronto with Brother Lawrence for the unveiling of the icon of Edmund Rice that I mentioned above. The visit with Brother Henry Spencer to the Shrine of the Martyrs and to Christian Island and to experience the work that Bro Henry is doing for the local people on Christian Island and is still doing every year in July/August.

My visit to the shrine of Our Lady of Marmora was a really memorable occasion. I felt I was on holy ground and very much in the presence of Mary.

My accompaniment of the Brothers in the various communities we then had would also be a highlight for me. I felt very much at ease with them and recognised the difficulties they were experiencing in their everyday life especially the retired Brothers who were coping with the problems associated with retirement.

The joy experienced during the negotiations and the actual opening of the Knoxville Community in Tennessee in succession to Prince George is another memorable occasion.

The return of two Brothers to Ireland in 1993, and the deaths of Brothers Joseph Dalton, Lawrence Maher, Martin Walsh, James Prud'homme [Ghana] are events that have remained indelibly marked in my memory.

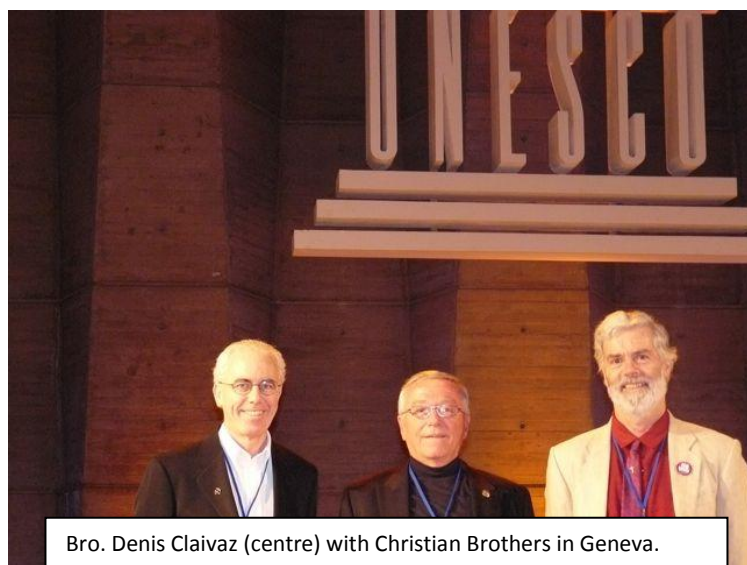
On a lighter note, there was the occasion of a Graduation Ceremony in Brebeuf when Brother Lawrence dressed me up in a College faculty gown and paraded me as a member of the Brebeuf staff. I was very embarrassed but I could not refuse Lawrence and went along with his 'folly'. The plus was that I had an excellent seat at the ceremony.

The greatest accomplishment of the Canadian Province was in the field of education, especially among the English-speaking people of Montreal. There was a time when we had over seventy [70] Brothers working in numerous schools in Montreal. The first was that of St. Gabriel's in the Point in 1910 right through St Augustine's, Daniel O'Connell School, St Michael's School, St Aloysius' School, St Willibrord's, Sherbrook, Montreal Catholic High, to mention a few, to the last, Verdun Catholic High School. Further afield saw us in Prince George, Dawson Creek, Fort Ware, etc, in B.C., Cornwall and Brebeuf in Ontario. There were several schools also in the USA. One of the brighter jewels in the Canadian Province crown was the setting up and financing of the Ghana mission for the Congregation and the Church. This mission has flourished ever since and continues to be a beacon for the Congregation's future.

The Future of the Brothers in Canada is in God's Hands with a little help from us. It is envisaged that we will be in Canada in the Toronto area for some time to come. Though our present Brothers in Canada are in the retirement bracket, we still have the Canadian Denis Claivaz and the Naturalised Canadian Kevin Mascarenhas available for return to Canada. Otherwise we are depending on new members to continue our presence in Canada. While we still have a presence in Canada I believe that the future of the Edmund Rice Family in Canada is secure.

# BROTHER DENIS CLAIVAZ F.P.M.

## Why did you become a Presentation Brother?



Bro. Denis Clavaz (centre) with Christian Brothers in Geneva.

I attended the Brothers' High School in Verdun and had Br. Martin Moran as my home-room teacher. He was a dynamic social worker. He had us doing Irish dancing and heading out to the 'Ole Folks Homes' and hospitals to entertain the sick and elderly. I was very impressed with the care and concern that he showed and decided I wanted to be "like him". This was the seed that was sown and it grew not only into a vocation, but inspired me to work on the Missions for most of my career.

## In what ministries have you been involved in Canada?

Very little of my career was spent in Canada. I was Principal of our school in Montebello for three years. Every summer we travelled to Moberly Lake in British Columbia to work in the Youth Camp with members of the First Nations. I was also principal of a primary school in Dawson Creek for a year.

## How did you see the spirit of Edmund Rice alive in Canada?

The charism of Blessed Rice was evident in the work of the Brothers in Canada. They were attracted to the marginalized young people who were the minority in the Province of Quebec. Like in Waterford the "window of opportunity" for the apostolic endeavours of the Brothers was visible in the holistic manner in which they involved themselves in our education. The classroom was part, not all, of the picture. The extracurricular activities, our backgrounds, our families and our dreams were all important aspects of the person. The first time a Brother appeared at my doorstep was an historic moment for the family and of pivotal significance in my choice of vocation.

## What challenges were there in the Canadian province?

Language was probably the paramount challenge. However the Irish had the unmistakable charm that was able to transcend this barrier. As one staunch separatist pointed out to me after the cancellation of all parades in Montreal, including the "Santa Claus Parade": 'Please notice that the St. Patrick's Day Parade is the only non-threatening parade left'. Sure enough it was never cancelled.



The Brothers also never lost their simplicity of lifestyle in the midst of such decadent materialism. Coming from rural backgrounds into an urban environment each Brother understood and accepted that they were a living example of what Blessed Rice intended of his followers.

**What are some of your favourite memories while in Canada?**

One year, when I was Principal of Montebello, I remember asking for volunteers, both students and teachers, to drive across Canada with me and work in the “Indian” Camp in British Columbia. This was June 1st and we were to leave June 25th. That evening I noticed a small bag outside my door. After making enquiries I was told it belonged to Br. Albertus Reene, who was the oldest Brother in the Province. I went to him and asked about the bag. He nonchalantly stated that he was ready for the trip to B.C. Indeed he made the trip and volunteered to work with Bishop O’Grady in Prince George. He stayed many years there as Procurator General.

That is the stamina and willingness of so many of the Brothers that keeps my chest out with gratitude and pride

**What are the greatest accomplishments of the Canadian province?**

Last year I visited our gravesite in Longueuil. As I gazed around and reminisced about the great men that lay there, I came to the conclusion that this was our “greatest accomplishment”. The unselfish dedicated men who served so well in instilling discipline and a sense of worth in so many young people is what we are about. It is not the buildings, or the trophies or the awards. It is certainly the Brothers.

**How did you feel when the Brothers withdrew from Quebec?**

One of the Congregations that I admire the most in the Church is the White Fathers. I worked with them for 20 years and their philosophy of “moving on” is enviable. When they arrived in a Diocese they asked the Bishop for his poorest Parish. They worked there for as long as it took to put that Parish on its feet and then handed it back to the Bishop asking for the next poorest Parish.

**What are your hopes for the future of the Brothers and Edmund Rice family in Canada?**

100 years of service gives one the opportunity to reflect on where we have been and look to where He might lead us. Edmund’s charism lives on in so many places where the Brothers are physically no more. I have travelled extensively in recent times and come back shaking my head in disbelief how profoundly functional the Edmund Rice Family is internationally. Declaring Edmund “Blessed” was not an accident but a profound gift to the Edmund Rice Family that the Lord’s work will continue. I have no doubt Blessed Edmund is a key component of that work and Canada has and will play a vital role in the coming of His Kingdom through the intercession of Blessed Rice.

# BROTHER BASIL LAWRENCE MAHER: A GREAT PRESENTATION BROTHER

By Brother Henry Spencer, F.P.M.

*Man's days are like those of grass; like a flower of the field he blooms:  
the wind sweeps over him and he is gone and his place knows him no more'*  
*Ps 103, 15-16*



This quotation often comes to mind since the memorable day, December 18, 1996, when Brother Lawrence was so unexpectedly called home to heaven. It was my privilege and joy to have seen Brother Lawrence play such an active role in our Montreal schools and communities down through the years, to live with him in Brebeuf for twelve years and then, with Brother Joseph Lasowski, make his funeral arrangements. All was such a shock and so sudden, not only for our Brebeuf Community of Brothers, but for all the Brebeuf family to which he had given so much of his time, experience and leadership. All had lost a great friend who really touched the hearts of so many.

Basil Maher saw the light of day on October 3, 1930 in Saint John, New Brunswick. Having lost both parents at an early age, he spent a number of years at an orphanage administered by the Sisters of Charity, for whom he had the greatest respect. In 1946, he was received into the Presentation Brothers in Longueuil, Quebec and made Final Profession of vows on his 21st birthday in 1951. He began his teaching career at St. Aloysius School in Montreal. This was followed by a tour of duty at Luke Callaghan School. It was there that I first met him in 1958. He was a pleasant and happy community member, relaxed and entertaining. It was good for me that I was fortunate in having him in community during my first two years in Canada. He helped me considerably to adjust to my new life.

Because he was a man of prayer and faith, he was always willing to risk. In 1960 he was transferred to Daniel O'Connell School and later Verdun Catholic High School. In 1968 he was appointed Provincial of the Canadian Province and took up residence in Longueuil. It was under his leadership that Longueuil was renovated and the Novitiate reopened in August, 1970 with some sixteen novices. Recruitment was a priority for him. He advertised extensively in newspapers and magazines. It was thanks to his efforts that the Presentation Brothers opened communities in Prince George, British Columbia; Ghana; and Marshall, Missouri, USA. He was looked-up-to by all the Brothers while he commanded their co-operation, love and respect. There was goodwill all around as the Province continued to implement changes brought about by Vatican II. Because Bro. Lawrence was a man of prayer, of faith, he was always willing to risk. I am sure he was mindful of the words of our Founder who said "let Providence be our guide."

In 1983, Bro. Lawrence transferred to Toronto, more specifically to the Jesuit Community attached to Brebeuf College School, where he endeared himself to all from the beginning.

During the 1983-84 school year, he taught History and Religion while preparing to take over as Principal in September, 1984. This was no easy task as Brebeuf was considered the Jesuit 'flagship'.

From the beginning, Brother took control, and his experience of school life and administrative skills were evident to all involved. It was a very smooth transition. Bro. Lawrence delegated much authority to both of his Vice-Principals. He trusted them, as he did all his staff. The Presentation Brothers were well accepted by the Brebeuf Community, and Bro. Lawrence played no small role in that. For many, it was their first time working with Brothers. He wished to build on the good tradition and standards established by the Jesuits and their lay teachers. Young teachers were encouraged to get involved in extracurricular activities. As one teacher said, 'He gave you a job to do and expected you to do it. He trusted you. He is my type of Principal.'

Brother Lawrence was well known for his outstanding spirit of generosity and, apart from his humour, I would submit that it was his greatest virtue. While we in community experienced his generosity and charity, his consideration for the poor reached out to many. A number of people told me how "he stuck his hand in his pocket and gave me some money saying take that, you will need it".

His personal physician, on one occasion, told him of an Irish family who had arrived, illegally, in Toronto by way of Australia. There were 8 or 9 young children in the family, and their parents had no permanent work. Bro. Lawrence sought them out and for some time and brought some food/groceries, etc. for the family to help them out. He even brought the children to Mass. Eventually, the family was deported from Canada, a fact that bothered Brother Lawrence very much. In the spirit of Edmund Rice, the poor were always the object of his generosity and kindness.

In December, 1984, Paddy Ward, a former I.N.L.A. (IRA) member from Northern Ireland was released from Mountjoy Prison, Dublin, where he had served 2 ½ of a 3 year sentence. He was directed to us in Toronto, as we had been informed by the then Superior in Dungannon, Ireland. Bro. Lawrence knowing that it was a great risk to accept Paddy in the traditionally strong Orange Order province of Ontario, agreed to take him in. Word of Paddy's stay soon got out, and on the night of July 11, the words "Smash the I.R.A." were written on our school walls. Some concerned parents phoned. One parent took his son out of school. Bro. Lawrence was not daunted. He helped the man in need, and Paddy Ward will be forever grateful for Brother's kindness, consideration and generosity.



Through his sense of humour, his keen interest in every one that came within the horizon of his life, especially the poor and youth with problems, he endeared himself to many from all walks of life, and was particularly liked by our pupils. They looked to him; they trusted him; they considered him their friend on whom they could rely. I always noticed the attention pupils paid him when he visited classrooms. I am sure they looked up to him 'their model' as they would their fathers. He spoke their language; he cajoled and encouraged them. Yes, he



was their Principal whom they loved and admired. This was brought home to me in a memorable way on December 20, 1996, the day of his wake, when they were dismissed at noon for their Christmas holidays.

The Principal and I agreed to invite students to view his body on a voluntary basis. I thought that perhaps 50 to 100 would visit. Later the Principal informed me that over 1,000 students lined up in silence along the school corridor leading to the Brothers' Residence, where he lay. There was no supervision; it was not necessary. It was an experience I will never forget, a tribute of the highest level paid to their former Principal whose memory they will cherish all their lives. Of particular interest to them - as well as to married and single people - was the formula of his vows written in 1948, and which he held in his hands during the wake: "Well done, good and faithful servant." That was a powerful message for all of us.

His generosity was shown on many occasions. He was always pleased to host meetings for school superintendents and Principals in our community room. They were always assured of a good meal! He was also generous to his staff providing meals on certain occasions when it would be far for them to go home. On Christmas Eve he had a special liturgy for staff and their families. This was followed by refreshments, and even prizes were raffled for the children. He enjoyed those children, and loved to be photographed with them. A Sister in charge of sending people to the Canadian Home Missions, mostly Indian reserves, did not have the air fare to send a team of two to British Columbia. The Bishop of the diocese could not afford to help her either. I spoke to Lawrence about the matter and heard no more about it until I met the Sister at his wake. Bro. Lawrence paid for both who are now doing good work on that Reserve.

He was a big man with a big and loving heart. He was highly regarded by the Metropolitan Separate School Board of Toronto and his loyalty, leadership, and strong support of Catholic education in our multi-ethnic society were often acknowledged by Trustees and Superintendents alike. This was again recognised in June 6, 1996 by the Director of Studies at Lawrence's retirement ceremony.

Brother Lawrence exemplified the best in our Presentation way of life. He was a big man with a big and loving heart. It was my joy to serve and live with him for many years. I saw him work hard in preparing for the pilgrimage to Rome [to see Edmund Rice beatified]. I was close to him during that exciting trip. Perhaps, after seeing the Founder beatified, like Simeon of old, he was ready to sing his "Nunc Dimittis".

A colourful, loveable Brother has been taken from our ranks, and he is sadly missed by many whose lives were enriched by his service and friendship. The Referee has blown his final whistle - the laurels of victory rest with Basil Lawrence Maher. Heaven will be the richer for his returning to his Maker. May his generous soul rest in peace. We shall not see his likes again.

*He shall not grow old, as we that are left grow old,  
Age shall not weary him, nor the years condemn.  
At the going down of the sun, and in the morning,  
We will remember him.*

# BROTHER BERNARD MURPHY F.P.M.



My name is Brother Bernard Murphy of the Presentation Brothers, and I went to Canada in August of 1954. I was assigned to our Novitiate at Longueuil, situated on the south shore of Montreal. Here we continued our studies as Longueuil was also a training school for our Brothers. We had a good staff of educators which included Brother Thomas Murphy, Brother Cormac O'Carroll and our Provincial, Brother Albertus Reen. We did the teaching theory in our lectures and then we applied the practicum in our classroom. It was so exciting for us, as we were young men setting out each day to school full of zest and a sense of pride and purpose.

We travelled by bus and “street-car” wearing the complete habit, like Brother Maher Lawrence. Maher wore sometimes when he was Principal (of Brebeuf). But I found the habit rather cumbersome, especially in travelling and on those hot sunny days. In later years we dispensed with the habit and wore a clerical suit. That was much in accord to our work, but we wore the habit in community.

I liked teaching and I always looked forward to each day with a great deal of exuberance. As the years rolled on, we got more accustomed to our classroom life and that spirit of excitement began to wane somewhat – it was a natural process I suppose.

I taught for many years in the Montreal area. We had a Brother Principal in all of the schools where I taught, plus we had at least six Brothers in most of our schools and in our Communities. We worked in seven primary schools and five high schools. I had worked in Northern British Columbia for eight years. We also worked in Marshall, Missouri, U.S.A. with Brother Jude Collins, an American Presentation Brothers' School Principal. I must say too that Brother Henry Spencer was a Principal as well. He brought much energy and a sense of Christian values was one of his priorities.

In my earlier years in Montreal, we had exams in English, math, religion, history, and geography, set by the Montreal School Commission. On one such occasion, dictation plus detached words (English) was administered at Daniel O'Connell School where Brother Damian McIntyre was the teacher. On this particular day dictation was given throughout the Montreal area. Brother Damian's class did exceptionally well in this test. The Montreal Catholic School Commission thought that there was some dishonesty or wrongdoing, so they sent their inspector for that area to investigate by the name of Mr Murphy (no relation) to the school. Mr. Murphy decided to give a similar test. Low and behold, his class did better, much to the embarrassment of the inspector. What a victory this was for Brother Damian's class! This was a remarkable achievement and great publicity for his school.

In 1976, I was appointed Principal of our boarding school at Montebello, Quebec, which was located forty miles east of Ottawa. Brother Mark Fitzpatrick, who was our Provincial, assigned me to go there. So with some trepidation I accepted to go and give every effort that I could muster to make a success of this daunting task. But “good news” – Brother Lawrence Maher came the following year in 1977! He brought some happy times with his sense of humour and fairness to the staff and students as their Vice-Principal. I always felt secure with Brother in our school. His total dedication and his commitment to our school were second to none. I will always treasure those fantastic years until 1982.

The following year (1983) Brother Lawrence was to be transferred to Brebeuf College School in Willowdale (Toronto), Ontario. He was to replace Father Winston Rye S.J. as the new Principal. I knew that his stewardship would be a challenging one. But in due course, Brother Lawrence was doing great. I suppose his sense of humour and fair-play and his commitment to his new school made his task a little easier.

In 1984, Brother Lawrence invited me to join his staff. I was delighted as I would again share in the stories of Montebello. His all-pervading presence was something that I will always remember. From 1984-1987, I taught math and Latin. I could always visit Brother Lawrence’s office for a chat and a good laugh.

It was at Brebeuf that I was awe-struck by the total dedication and commitment of the lay-staff. Some teachers were so dedicated that they used to stay after school for many hours to prepare work, do corrections, and prepare tests. These lay people helped me immensely to be a better teacher. Did they? Yes, they did!

Then I was transferred to Kissimmee, Florida, in August, 1996. There I volunteered my services as a math teacher at Osceola High School. This was my first experience of working with a lay principal, by the name of Chris Paradiso. This was a man of similar values and a most cordial person. He was a good administrator in such a big, co-educational high school of 2050 students. I felt part of this school of such large numbers of students.

In 2002, Brother Francis Schafer had asked me to help out at Knoxville, Tennessee. I was asked to teach some Grade 8 students at St. Joseph’s School. This school was administered by a lady principal by the name of Dr. A Montgomery. She too was strong and vibrant and, she stressed the importance of our Catholic faith. You could say I was blessed to be part of three schools whose Christian values were of the utmost importance.

But all good things come to an end, so in October of 2006 it was time to bring down the curtain of a career of fifty-two years spent mainly in Canada and the U.S.A. I decided to return to Cork, Ireland and ended my life in North America.

Before I end my writing, I would like to say to the staff and students at Brebeuf College School: *Ad multos annos*. Keep up the tradition of Brebeuf and may your students entrusted to your care continue to excel in both *academics* and on the sports field. God bless Brebeuf and all those students and staff who will enter that renowned institution.



# BROTHER MARK FITZPATRICK F.P.M.



I became a Presentation Brother because Brother Xavier Griffin, a Presentation Brother himself, visited our school in Ballingarry, County Limerick (Ireland). I was in sixth class, the last year of national (primary) school and I was preparing for the primary certificate exam. Brother Xavier's talk was most inspiring and I felt great after it. My interest was so aroused that I decided there and then to give the Brother my name. From then on it is history. I arrived in Canada on August 19<sup>th</sup>, 1954 as a novice. From the beginning I was struck by the vastness of the whole situation – the country itself, the cities, the churches, the schools, houses, cars, etc. The Catholic atmosphere in Quebec impressed me a lot. The Brothers gave us a wonderful reception, especially on our Profession Day -- August 27, 1954.

For the first fourteen years, I was teaching elementary school in the Montreal area. Then I was put in charge of a mixed (co-educational) school [Sacred Heart] which included all elementary classes plus Grade 8, which was my teaching assignment. This was a totally new experience for me. Besides being in a new school, I was in a new province – British Columbia – 3000 miles from Montreal. Also new was the fact that girls formed part of the school. Besides that it was Catholic and no funds came from the provincial government. We were very much on our own and there were lots of new challenges. Having spent four years there as principal, I was transferred to Verdun Catholic High School where I taught various classes and subjects until I retired in 1995.

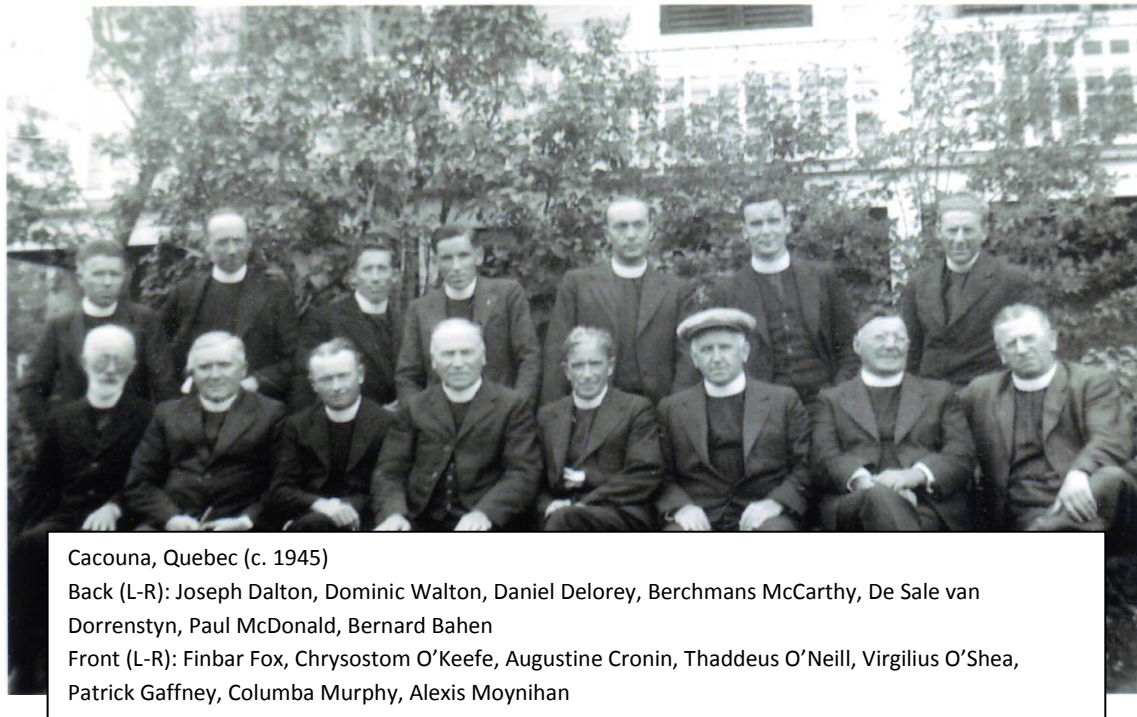
The spirit of Edmund Rice was very much alive in Canada. It was present in our schools. The poor were always with us. They were especially visible in the fifties when droves of them came from Italy and other countries. They came from the boats to the schools looking for education. Most of them had no English and were accepted with open arms. The spirit of Blessed Edmund was experienced in the Brothers' lives too; they lived frugally. Money was scarce; salaries were in the range of \$1800 per annum. In B.C. the same spirit continued. Many native Indians were cared for in our classes. The children were all treated alike and allowances were made for those who couldn't afford to pay full fees.

The first challenge facing the Brothers in Canada was the establishment of a Novitiate for young Canadian aspirants. This they accomplished boldly and in a short period. Within four years of their arrival (1914) novices were living in Longueuil in a suitable residence. As time progressed, fostering vocations became more and more of a challenge. To achieve this end endeavours were made regularly in our schools to inspire vocations to the brotherhood and also to the priesthood. And so it was that many of our former pupils became priests and religious. The political climate in Quebec started to cause problems in the 60s. This was a challenge which affected many, including the Brothers. After living with this thorny situation for a long time, it became apparent that appreciation for religious was declining in a swift manner. The predicament resulted in our men being sent to Ghana, the USA, and other parts of Canada.

Being Provincial in Canada was an honour and privilege. The Brothers were very co-operative and obliging. This indeed made the load sweeter and easier to handle. At that time the young Ghana mission was part of our Canadian province. This was a big challenge then and it increased as steps were taken to establish a new Novitiate in that African country. All in all my time in

office was interesting, demanding, and above all, challenging. I suppose the most rewarding achievement was moving into Ontario again after an absence of twenty-four years [ to Brebeuf].

My favourite memories of Canada were the early years teaching elementary school. The children were good and the work was satisfying. Also I enjoyed my experience in Prince George, B.C. There I witness the lay apostles in action and their selfless dedication was inspirational and a source of joy. Also, the opportunity of visiting the Ghana mission is an experience I will never forget.



Cacouna, Quebec (c. 1945)

Back (L-R): Joseph Dalton, Dominic Walton, Daniel Delorey, Berchmans McCarthy, De Sale van Dorrenstyn, Paul McDonald, Bernard Bahen

Front (L-R): Finbar Fox, Chrysostom O'Keefe, Augustine Cronin, Thaddeus O'Neill, Virgilius O'Shea, Patrick Gaffney, Columba Murphy, Alexis Moynihan

Among the great accomplishments of the Canadian province was opening and operating twelve schools in the early part of the twentieth century. Neither two world wars nor the crash of 1929 deterred them from running their schools despite lack of funds and the poverty of those times. Another great accomplishment was opening the Ghana mission when our numbers were beginning to dwindle. Going into the Diocese of Prince George, B.C., and working there with the lay apostles was a great accomplishment and experience. Moving into the USA in the 1970s was a daring achievement too and it gave us many young American Brothers who were indeed most welcome. Lastly but not least, was the entry into the Archdiocese of Toronto under the leadership of Cardinal Carter, a native of Quebec. These new ventures with dynamic men such as Bishop Bertrand, W.F., Bishop O'Grady O.M.I., and the Bishops in the States, along with the great Cardinal Carter inspired us to greater things just when matters in Quebec were changing drastically for the English-speaking population and for us also as a consequence.

Leaving Quebec was indeed hard to take. Our roots had grown deep and old in "La Belle Province". Even though the writing had been on the wall for a long time the inevitable was still tough when the zero hour arrived. When St. Aloysius closed in 1960 I shed bitter tears. Forty years later, after a complete withdrawal, there was invisible weeping in abundance, but it was all in vain.

I have great hopes for our future in Canada. We have a good, energetic community and a strong enthusiastic Associate group, and friends and supporters galore, so we have to be optimistic and grateful. "More things are wrought by prayer than were ever dreamed by men."

# BROTHER IVAN VERBA F.P.M.

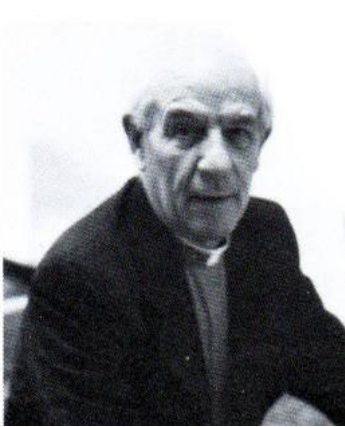


Below is a list of the various ministries in which Brother Ivan has been involved over the years. It certainly shows the variety in the life of a Brother – in this case being everything from a principal to a teacher to a business manager in three different countries!

<u>Years</u>	<u>Ministries</u>	<u>Location</u>
1973-1974	Secretary	Presentation High School Montebello, Quebec
1974-1975	Secretary	Provincial Offices Montreal, Quebec
1975-1983	Elementary School Teaching	Sacred Heart School Prince George, British Columbia
1983-1992	School Administration	Sacred Heart School Prince George, British Columbia
1992-1994	Parish Ministries	Holy Redeemer Church Orlando, Florida
1994-1996	Library/Special Education	Presentation Brothers College St. George's, Grenada
1996-1997	Parish Ministries	Sacred Heart Cathedral Prince George, British Columbia
1997-	Presentation Brothers Accounting & Business Manager	Toronto, Ontario



## BROTHER DE PAUL WRIGHT F.P.M. (RIP)



It is with a great deal of trepidation that I begin to tell the story of my entrance to the religious life. I think that this is largely due to the fact that I have always believed that the Congregation has given me much more than I have been able to give it. I arrived in Quebec City in November of 1920 on an immigrant ship from England. We were bound for Hamilton, Ontario, as we were told that the City was an immigrant stronghold. We had left England due to the sad memories of the 1914 - '18 debacle though I, being only six at the time, had few memories save Armistice Day which nostalgically stays in mind even now.

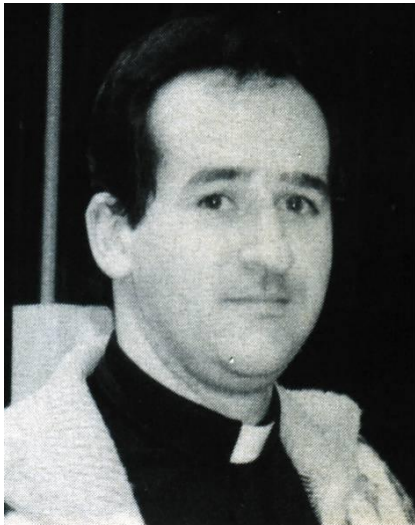
I lived then in Hamilton until the day I left for Longueuil in 1932. I had learned of the Presentation Brothers through a boy chum, Jack Corcoran, who attended the Brothers' Academy in Sherbrooke, Quebec. Jack had a Grandma in Hamilton who was a friend of my mother's. When we parted after his summer in Hamilton, Jack told me he was joining the Brothers at Longueuil. I was intrigued a great deal, as I had the wish to teach, but due to the depression had not trained. However, the saintly Brother Casimir, with whom I corresponded, told me to come with all good intentions and the Order would see me through. I recall my Pastor, a dear friend over the years, expressed disappointment at my going so far away from home. The De La Salle Brothers were in Aurora at the time, a brief hour's journey, even in our old Ford touring car, but somehow the idea of getting a little farther away to Montreal was more attractive to me.

I arrived at Longueuil on 20 November just in time for Presentation Day. I recall working, with the other novices, on building a rink in time to use on Presentation Day. There were about twelve novices and postulants. After two and a half years there, I went out teaching to Daniel O'Connell School and from there to several schools in Montreal. I spent many years at the private Catholic High School of Montreal till I went to Montebello, then a juniorate, staying there for nine years. I later opened the Verdun Catholic High as first Superior and Principal where I remained for twenty years. When Brother Lawrence Maher became Provincial I helped him with formation and remained in that work, as well as teaching the College Entrance classes, throughout the terms of three Provincials. These formation years I count as the happiest, most fulfilling years of my life.

With the opening of Brebeuf College School, I was asked to come and look after Chinese visa Students who came to Brebeuf to prepare themselves, by an English University degree, for the seceding of the British from Hong Kong. Here I have found a new lease of life. It was a thrill getting back to the chalk and blackboards again. I missed it so much after retirement. I often thought to get back but never believed I would. Now I am a pater familias to my Chinese boys. It is such a blessing to me to assist them in their language troubles. I have never seen such interest spans as these Chinese boys possess. I think they would stay as long as the teacher could endure and never lose interest. It is really thrilling to see such desire for learning. Of course they have so much at stake. The high cost of their stay in Toronto impels them to get the most out of the school day.

This is the little story of my life and you will notice it is not in the least spectacular. I feel that the Brothers in Africa and Peru would in a few short years put my fifty years to shame. But perhaps Brother Casimir's maxim, often expressed to us novices, that as long as you do the little things well, and give it your all, you don't have to be worried about not doing great things.

# BROTHER FRANCIS SCHAFER F.P.M.



## **How did you become a Presentation Brother?**

While in studying with the Divine Word Missionaries in College, I came across an advertisement for the Presentation Brothers in a religious publication. For some reason, this advertisement caught my eye and raised my curiosity. It was at a time when I was exploring other ways I might serve the Church as a Brother. Correspondence continued during the school year.

As the year came to a close, a good friend of mine surprised me with the news that he had decided to discontinue his studies at the seminary. For some reason, just as he was getting ready to depart, I passed on the information I had on the Presentation Brothers. I was not sure what he would do with it, but for whatever reason, felt that he needed to have it. To my surprise, I received a letter from him informing me that he had visited the Presentation Brothers and that he was very impressed with them. Several more months passed when I was surprised again by another letter noting that he applied and had been accepted to join the Brothers. After completing another year of my college studies, I decided it was time to take some time away and explore other possibilities as to how I might serve the Church as a religious Brother. As I continued my discernment, I did keep in touch with my good friend. He continued to share his experiences of the Presentation Brothers and encouraged me to consider the Brothers as an option.

Eventually, I accepted his invitation to visit the Brothers in Montreal. I, like him, was impressed with what I experienced and so continued correspondence with the Vocation Director. After other visits to the community and much prayer, I decided that I would give it a try.

After presenting my formal application, I was accepted. My journey to Brotherhood had brought me one step closer to living my dream as a religious Brother. My thanks to Br. Raphael Mario Toodle, for his friendship, continued encouragement and support. I was so happy that I shared the information I had on the Presentation Brothers with him prior to his departure from the seminary. It is amazing how God works in our lives and directs us to places we may have never considered.

## **2. In what ministries have you been involved in Canada?**

My time in Canada was somewhat limited but greatly enjoyed. My Postulancy, Novitiate and university studies were all done in Canada. While I was living in Canada, I served at Presentation High School in Montebello and at Brebeuf. I also began my work as Vocation Director while in Canada.

### **3. How did you see the spirit of Edmund Rice alive in Canada?**

I would like to think that the spirit of Edmund continues to permeate throughout all of Canada by the seeds planted by the Brothers, Associates and past pupils. The work of the Brothers in Canada over the past 100 years has touched the hearts and minds of so many. We have offered quality education in so many areas: Point St. Charles, Montreal, Sherbrooke, Ontario, Longueuil, Verdun, Montebello, Fort St. John, Prince George and Fort Ware. The spirit of Edmund lives on in the lives of our past pupils, their children, grandchildren and co-workers. Edmund's mission was simple: a mission which he himself described in this simple and clear intention: "Trusting in God's help, I hope to be able to educate these (students) to be good Catholics and good citizens." The Brothers are fewer in number today in Canada but there is still a powerful presence that continues to grow and mature having a powerful impact on our world today. The spirit of Edmund continues to be alive in such a real way at Brebeuf because of the Brothers who now serve and have served. The Brothers are joined by Associates who have pledged themselves to share the Edmund Rice charism and ensure its continuance into the future. The Brothers and Associates continue to have a great impact on the life of the students, staff and community.

How shall we ever measure all the good that has come from the spiritual insight, warm heart and determined faith of Edmund Rice? We certainly give thanks for the Brothers and all who were touched by the life of Edmund Rice and who continue to live out his message in their lives of prayer and dedication to the establishment on earth of God's Kingdom of truth and life, of holiness and grace, of justice, love and peace.

### **4. What are some of your favorite memories while in Canada?**

My Novitiate year at Longueuil was certainly one of the most graced-filled years of my life. As I think back on my time in Canada, I cannot help but be reminded of the many Brothers who touched my life in community and school. Many of them now enjoy their eternal reward. These Brothers, all too numerous to mention, truly had a great impact on my life. Each one brings to mind a special gift that I received from them. They taught me what it means to be a Brother, a teacher, a prayer-filled person, a mentor, a friend, and trusted companion. What a blessing they have been to so many. I have many fond memories of my time at Longueuil, Brebeuf and Montebello.

### **5. What are the greatest accomplishments of the Canadian province?**

In addition to reflecting on our accomplishments, one of the highlights of the Canadian Province, that strikes me, is the assistance we could offer to the newly formed mission in Ghana, West Africa. For many years, the Province could offer financial assistance and Brothers to serve on the mission. How proud we are to have been a part of what now has become a thriving and growing Province rich with the blessings of vocations and many dedicated African Brothers.

Today, we reflect on the many ways God works in our lives and calls us to be receptive to the spirit of Edmund Rice alive in our world today; to meet new challenges and address the urgent




needs with the resources we have at our disposal. While we give thanks for our many blessings, we also look forward to the future, a future that is blessed with so many men and women who have joined us on our journey. As one past student of the Brothers noted, “we wish for the Brothers themselves a future of grace and blessing as great as their past has been.”

My hope for the future of the Brothers, Associates and the Edmund Rice family here in Canada and all over the world, is that we will continue to be aware of God’s presence in our lives, receptive to the movement of the Holy Spirit, sustained by the Eucharist, inspired by Mary’s “yes”, and open to the charism, legacy and spirit of Edmund Rice as we move forward in facing new challenges and opportunities well into the next 100 years. May we be devoted to prayer, justice and charitable and educational works, especially with the poor and marginalized.

**EXAM**  
**PAPER 1**  
*Time allowed: several years*  
**Question 1**  
[20 marks]

***What will you do with your life?***

**It's a tough question.**  
**Take a look at our answers . . .**  
**[www.PresentationBrothers.org](http://www.PresentationBrothers.org)**

 **THE PRESENTATION BROTHERS**  
*Forming Christ in the Young*

# PROVINCIALS OF THE CANADIAN PROVINCE

\* = Canadian

1915-1920 Brother Stanislaus Kenneally (Visitor)  
1920-1922 Brother Berchmans Boyce (Visitor)

1920-1925 Brother Berchmans Boyce  
1925-1928 Brother Cassian Cagney  
1928-1931 Brother Angelus Keane  
1931-1932 Brother Cassian Cagney  
1932-1938 Brother Wenceslaus Whelan  
1938-1944 Brother Albertus Reen  
1944-1950 Brother Augustine Cronin \*  
1950-1952 Brother Irenaeus Ring  
1952-1955 Brother Albertus Reen  
1955-1958 Brother Michael Clifford  
1958-1964 Brother Philip Giroux \*  
1964-1967 Brother Plunkett Brown  
1967-1973 Brother Lawrence Maher \*  
1973-1975 Brother Raymond Donnelly \*  
1975-1984 Brother Mark Fitzpatrick  
1984-1987 Brother Andrew Hobbins  
1987-1993 Brother Lawrence Maher \*  
1993-1999 Brother Donatus Brazil

In 1999, the Canadian Province became a part of the newly formed Province of Our Lady of the Americas (which includes Canada, the U.S.A., Grenada, St. Lucia, Trinidad & Tobago).

1999-2005 Brother Donatus Brazil  
2005-2010 Brother Gerard Despathy  
2010 - Brother Francis Schafer

# PRESENTATION BROTHERS WHO HAVE SERVED IN THE CANADIAN PROVINCE

\* = Canadian

Aherne, Polycarp	Donnelly, Raymond *	McDonald, Paul	O'Shea, Victor
Alamatha, George	Downing, Francis *	Cyril *	O'Shea, Virgilius
Allen, Henry	Doyle, Patrick *	McInerney, Xavier *	O'Sullivan, Neri
Bahen, Bernard *	English, Cormac	McIntyre, Damien	O'Sullivan, Nicholas
Barrientos, Michael	Evans, Andrew *	McKenna, Isadore	Powell, Leonard
Beaton, Brendan *	Fahey, Regis	John	Prather, Stafford
Black, Benedict	Fitzpatrick, Benedict	McSharry, Lawrence	Prendergast, Albert
David *	Patrick	Michael	Prior, Borromeo
Blaise, Christopher	Fitzpatrick, Mark	Milady, Stephen	Prud'homme, James *
Boyce, Berchmans	Fleming, Majella	Moran, Martin	Purcell, Mel *
Brazil, Donatus	Forester, Edwin	Moynihan, Alexis	Purcell, Stephen *
Brown, Plunkett	Foxe, Finbar	Moynihan, Polycarp	Reen, Albertus
Brunnock, Raphael	Gaffney, Patrick	Murphy, Austin *	Regan, Bosco
Cagney, Casimir	Gillis, Luke *	Murphy, Bernard	Ring, Irenaeus
Cagney, Cassian	Giroux, Philip *	Murphy, Joseph	Ro(d)gers, Sebastian
Cameron, Michael	Halpin, Kevin	Murphy, Patrick	Ryan, Francis
Canning, Sylvester	Harrington,	Columba	Charles
Cardinal, Edwin *	Marcellus	Murphy, Thomas	Schafer, Francis
Claivaz, Denis *	Hart, Jerome	Murray, De Lellis	Shanaghan, Richard
Clark, Robert *	Lawrence *	Myers, Thomas	Shymko, Peter *
Clarken, Kevin *	Hegarty, Felim	Needham, James	Spencer, Henry
Clifford, Michael	Hobbins, Andrew	Nigh, Baptist *	Steele, Joseph *
Coffey, Patrick	James, Gerard	Nixon, Dominic	Sullivan, Patrick
Colbert, Christopher	James, Vincent	O'Callaghan,	Tobin, John *
Collins, Aidan	Keane, Angelus	Anselm	Toodle, Raphael
Collins, Borgia *	Kelleher, Aloysius	O'Callaghan,	Trimble, Eugene *
Collins, Edwin	Kelly, Gabriel *	Cyprian	Usselman, Wayne *
Collins, Jude	Kendall, Bosco *	O'Carroll, Cormac	Van Dorrestyn, De
Conlon, Patrick	Kennealy, Michael	O'Connell, Francis	Sales *
Connally, Hugh	Stanislaus	O'Connell,	Verba, Ivan
Crean, Leander	Keyes, Jude *	Valentine	Walsh, Laserian
Cronin, Augustine *	Kirby, Hilary	O'Connor, Fidelis	Walsh, Martin *
Crowley, Augustine	La Manna, Patrick	O'Connor, Mark *	Walsh, Vincent *
Crowley, Mel	Landry, Ignatius	O'Connor, Senan	Walton, Dominic *
Curtin, Peter	LeBlanc, Anthony	O'Doherty, Michael	Warner, Joseph
Dalton, Francis *	Lucas, Eric	O'Donoghue, Bede	Whelan, Wenceslaus
Dalton, Joseph *	Lunny, Raphael	O'Keefe,	Wichrowski, Joseph
Daly, Peter *	Maher, Lawrence *	Chrysostom	Wingson, William *
Dehart, Daniel	Maiorano, Michael	O'Mahoney,	Wright, De Paul *
Delorey, Anthony *	McAuliffe, Michael	Leopold	
Denny, David *	McCarthy, Richard	O'Neill, Borromeo	
Despathy, Gerard	McCarthy, Timothy	O'Neill, Thaddeus	
Diaczun, Anselm	McConnell, William	O'Shaugnessy,	
Donnelly, Earl *		Stanislaus *	





