

PAPER 11

“Providence will Provide”

50 years of the Discalced Carmelites in Australia

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Introduction

When I was asked earlier this year by Fr Ross Collings, the Australian Regional Vicar, to produce something for the fiftieth anniversary of the first foundation of the friars in Australia, I was quite hesitant. Hesitant with good reason, because of my prior commitments and my distance from the source material. Yet also interested enough, and committed enough to the value of history, to see that something should be done. I suggested therefore that I produce a chronology giving the outline of significant dates. That chronology is at the heart of this modest work.

To help me in this work materials that Fr Hilary Doran had gleaned from the archives were made available. I have made use of this material as well as an earlier account Fr Hilary wrote of the foundation in Brisbane. It is this material which is the basis of the account I have written, largely based on the memoirs of Fr Matthew. It is his recollection of the constant saying of Archbishop Duhig ‘Providence will provide’ that gives this work its title. For the sake of both perspective and completion I have also made available the stories of the individual Carmelites who came to Australia before 1948.

I have not tried to interpret the last 50 years of our Australian foundation. However any list of dates always implies selection. In making this selection of what I think is important one of the themes I have sought to highlight is the recruitment of local vocations, a necessary part of any successful foundation if the Order is to be implanted, or as they say nowadays, inculturated. Hence there is an attempt to list all those who have entered since the Order came to Australia.

I am only too aware of the gaps in my own memory and know that there will be mistakes in what I have written. I simply ask that any corrections be made known. I expect that the meeting of the friars in Varroville this July will provide an opportunity for this and for rich reminiscences, anecdotes and personal perspectives. In this context it is wonderful that we will have the presence of one of the founding fathers, Fr William Fenton from California.

This, then, is a family story. In making it available I hope it provides a sense of the past so that in remembering we may learn for the present and the future. I also hope that the inevitable curiosities of history will make this an enjoyable as well as an instructive story.

Gregory Burke, OCD
Morley
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Daniel MacEvey

The funeral of Fr Daniel MacEvey in August 1860 was one of the biggest seen in the Western Districts of Victoria. Until 1982 it had been assumed he was a Franciscan friar and was considered one of their early pioneers. However, in the August 1982 'Footprints', published by the Melbourne Archdiocesan Historical Commission, Fr Patrick Conlon OFM identified MacEvey as a Discalced Carmelite. He is, therefore, the first Discalced Carmelite to come to and minister in Australia. In 1987 I requested Fr Fabian MacCormack OCD, the then Provincial Secretary, to search the archives for material relating to Fr Daniel MacEvey. The following account is based on that research. To understand his story the historical background of the Irish Province needs to be recalled.

When the Discalced Carmelites became separate from the ancient Order of Carmelites in 1593 the leadership was reluctant to allow the new Order to spread outside Spain and her dominions. As a result of papal intervention, however, foundations were made in Italy and then throughout Europe. In 1600 the Discalced Carmelites were divided into two separate Congregations. The houses outside Spain became part of the Italian Congregation completely distinct from the Spanish Congregation. The Italian Congregation had a strong missionary focus.

In 1621 Fr Thomas of Jesus (Sanchez Davila) founded the missionary seminary of St Albert in Leuven, Belgium. This was the same Thomas who initiated the desert monasteries of the Order, at Bolarque, in 1591. In his time in Rome, from 1607, he was active in furthering the Church and Order's missionary endeavour.

In 1610 he established the friars in Brussels, Spanish Netherlands. St Albert's was founded to prepare missionaries for England, Ireland and Holland. Fr Simon Stock Doughty was the first English friar. He founded the English Carmelite mission in 1615.

THE IRISH PROVINCE

In 1625 Fr Edward of the Kings Sherlock arrived with another friar to begin the mission in Ireland. They obtained a house in Cork Street, Dublin and opened a popular chapel there. The mission prospered despite official harassment and within 20 years there were 9 foundations: Dublin, Athboy, Drogheda, Ardee, Galway, Limerick, Kilkenny, Kinsale and Loughrea. At the General Chapter of 1638 they were recognized as the Province of St Patrick. Within three years of its foundation, Cromwell had embarked on a renewed campaign to eradicate Catholicism from Ireland. In 1642 three friars, Fr Thomas Aquinas, Brothers Peter of the Mother of God and Angelus of St Joseph were martyred.

The friars were outlaws for the greater part of the latter 17th Century. Conventual life was impossible in these circumstances. By 1720 there were only two houses, Wormwood Gate, Dublin and Laughier. In 1743 they were dispersed once more, only to regroup two years later in Stephen's Street, Dublin. Due to the political and legal circumstances, the life of the regular clergy at this time was exceptional. They understood themselves to be missionaries to the people. While living together they had a considerable degree of independence. The regular observance of common prayer, table and purse with the attendant habit, tonsure, abstinence and cloister were not observed. The clergy all wore the same semi-secular dress of white shirt and frilly cravat, cutaway coat and knee breeches, silk stockings and buckled shoes. Clergy were not addressed as 'Father' but as 'the Reverend Mister' and were considered gentlemen. The Carmelites were known as the 'Gentlemen of Clarendon Street', as the Franciscans were known as the 'Gentlemen of Adam and Eve's'. All the other Orders were similarly styled after their place of residence. It was only in the late 19th Century under Roman influence that the regular observance was introduced. It only prevailed after determined resistance from the missionaries that lasted quite some time.

In 1793 the Carmelite friars bought a property in Clarendon Street and built a chapel which was opened in 1797. There is a ciborium in the sacristy of St Patrick's Cathedral, Melbourne inscribed 'Clarendon Street Chapel 1799' with the crest of the Order. This relic was presumably brought to Australia by Fr Daniel MacEvey. There is no record that he sought permission to remove it from Clarendon Street.

During these years prospective recruits were drawn from either Gaelic speaking Connaught where Loughrea was situated or English speaking Leinster with its centre in Dublin. Language and other cultural differences made cooperation between the two houses difficult. Candidates for the Order were sent to the Continent for their novitiate and clerical studies. Mostly the Irish students were trained in houses of the Italian congregation. However, exactly where -they were sent depended on the Provincial of the day. Strangely, some were sent to Spain. This caused difficulties because they had been professed in the Spanish Congregation and on their return to Ireland had to transfer to the Italian Congregation. This situation lasted until 1839 when the Spanish Congregation came to an effective end, when the religious were dispersed. The single Order of Discalced Carmelites we know today dates from the unification of Pius IX in 1875.

DANIEL'S STORY

Daniel MacEvey was born in Dublin in 1815. His name has a variety of spellings, sometimes appearing as McEvey, McVeigh or Veigh. However he usually signed his name 'MacEvey'. He presented himself as a postulant in 1831 The Provincial, Fr John Francis Estrange, having himself trained in Spain, favoured sending recruits to Spain. He noted in a letter of 7 October, 1831, to the General of the Italian Congregation in Rome: "Three postulants, Henry Merger, William Kindles and Daniel MacEvey have set out to Spain to join the Order there" MacEvey made his novitiate in Granada, in the Andalusian Province. He studied in Salamanca and was ordained a deacon there in 1837. 'The Banner of Belfast' newspaper, in its obituary of MacEvey, stated he was ordained a priest in Salamanca in 1837, other sources give the date as 1838 and the place as Maynooth.

From 1838 until 1842 MacEvey appears in the Irish Catholic Directory among the Carmelite priests in Clarendon Street. In 1841 MacEvey had set out for Australia. He arrived in Sydney on 28 January 1842. He does not appear to have asked the Provincial's blessing for this move. Indeed, he does not appear to have formally joined the Irish Province. On Christmas day 1843 Fr Francis Nicholson (later the Archbishop of Corfu) wrote from Rome to Fr Redmond of Hanlon, the Irish Provincial:"I told the General you appear to regret having lost McVeigh (sic). He has consequently authorized me to tell you that, if you wish you can get him back, and you may profess him for our Italian Congregation, and if he will not join our missions in the East you can keep him in Ireland".

IN AUSTRALIA

Upon his arrival in Australia MacEvey worked as a priest in the Yass and Queanbeyan Districts. Bonaventure Geoghegan O.F.M. was the first priest in the Port Phillip District and later first Bishop of Adelaide (1859 -64) and Goulbourn (died 1864, before taking up his appointment). He retired from Port Phillip in April 1842 and had gone to Sydney. In September the same year he returned to Port Phillip, taking with him Daniel MacEvey. At first, this partnership worked well. MacEvey celebrated the first High Mass in 'Australia Felix' at which Geoghegan preached on St Patrick's Day, 1843. However, by May, Geoghegan was complaining, in his usual fashion, about his assistant. In November 1844 MacEvey accompanied Archbishop John Bede Polding OSB of Sydney and Archdeacon John McEncroe on visitation to the Western Districts. In its obituary the 'Banner of Belfast' claimed MacEvey had celebrated the first mass in Belfast (Port Fairy, as it is now named) during this missionary journey. They were certainly a varied party: Polding, the English Benedictine with his neo-gothic dream of a missionary-abbey-diocese and McEncroe, the Irish democrat campaigning for an Irish clergy for an Irish people, along with MacEvey.

By 1845 relations between Geoghegan and MacEvey were such that they only communicated by letter, while living in the same house. MacEvey withdrew to Geelong from where, on 14 February 1845, he wrote to Geoghegan: "I candidly confess that past circumstances make MY residence outside of Melbourne a very great desideratum to me, and I believe to be absolutely necessary to my peace of mind - to obtain and preserve that tranquillity which we should have, to discharge piously our religious duty. I aim at nothing else, nor do I wish anything more" MacEvey remained at Geelong until May, when he went to Parramatta. It was out of the frying pan into the fire. He soon took offence at some "noxious calumny so ungenerously implied" in a letter from Polding. He sent a copy of the Archbishop's, now lost, accusation to Geoghegan inviting him to disclaim responsibility for Polding's attitude to him. Geoghegan hotly denied any part in the affair and laid the blame at MacEvey's feet. He accused him of "capricious curiosity or suspicion" and pointed out that since leaving Port Phillip he had refused two appointments and had to "face home under the merited displeasure of your Archbishop". Polding had asked MacEvey to leave the mission.

RETURN TO IRELAND

MacEvey received a charitable welcome from O'Hanlon, who was still Provincial. He wrote to Geoghegan from Parramatta on 27 September, 1845: "I have received a most kind and pressing invitation from Mr O'Hanlon to return immediately to St Teresa's: he offers to receive me with 'open arms' and to make me a conventual on my arrival; it is one of a series of indescribable kindnesses.

He urges that it is well known in Dublin that the Benedictine Order will supersede all the other missionaries that are in Australia, as soon as they are able to effect it, and concludes with these words, 'Return instanter, take time by the forelock whilst you have a friend at the helm'."

A letter from Rome to O'Hanlon in June 1846 speaks of his imminent return. MacEvey is listed once more in the Catholic Directory from 1847 to 1854. His return home was complicated by there being two Discalced Carmelite Congregations. In 1848 MacEvey at last joined the Italian Congregation. But he sought to have precedence in the community from his profession in the Spanish Congregation. He lost the appeal he made to the General Definitory. O'Hanlon wrote, on 9 January 1850, to the General: "Fr Daniel, displeased at the decision is now reviving the question relative to other Fathers of the Irish Province who were professed in Belgium eight years ago. It is ungrateful of Fr Daniel to be causing this trouble over so small a matter, seeing that after spending five years on the secular mission in Australia he was received back into the Irish Province with every kindness". Sadly this is the last reference to MacEvey in the archives of the Irish Carmelites.

AUSTRALIA, ONCE MORE

MacEvey left Clarendon Street for the last time in 1854. On 4 October, he left Southampton on the SS *Argo* and arrived in Melbourne on 6 December 1854. In 1848, the Irish Augustinian, James Alipius Goold had been appointed the first bishop of Melbourne. Goold appointed MacEvey to St Francis' Cathedral and regularized his canonical situation. To this end he requested from Rome a decree of secularization 'for the good of the diocese'. In 1855 the Carmelite General was informed of the application. The effect of this was that MacEvey ceased to be a Carmelite and became a secular priest of the diocese of Melbourne.

MacEvey was at St Francis' from 1855 to 1859. His great work was the building of the 'Ladye Chapel'. Goold laid the foundation stone on 6 January 1856. The building was completed and blessed in May 1858. Polding celebrated a Pontifical Mass, Goold blessed the chapel and Geoghegan preached. The effect was meant to be one of splendor, as the Melbourne' *Argus* commented: "The new chapel presents one of the most beautiful interiors of which our city can boast ... Indeed, the only fault which can be found with the chapel is that it is too rich to harmonize with the rest of the buildings". In 1858 the members of the Confraternity of Our Lady of Mount Carmel donated one of the stained glass windows in the Ladye Chapel. It is probable that this group was under the direction of MacEvey, as it slips from the records about the time he left Melbourne.

MacEvey went from St Francis' to Geelong in late 1859 and remained there until January 1860, when he moved to Belfast (Port Fairy), where he died on 2 August 1860. 'The Banner of Belfast' of 4 August 1860 states that MacEvey left Melbourne because his health had failed so that he was obliged to leave the scene of his labours. He had thought of revisiting Ireland but because of the scarcity of clergy he was induced to remain in Victoria. "It was hoped that the comparative quiet of the country would repair his shattered health; but from the time of his arrival here he gradually sank until death terminated his sufferings".

'The Banner of Belfast' paid handsome tribute to Daniel MacEvey acclaiming his 'exquisite taste' as shown in the magnificence of the interior of the Ladye Chapel attached to the Cathedral. It concludes, "He was a man of capacious and highly cultivated intellect, and as an eloquent and impressive preacher, he stood in the front rank. He died in the 46th year of his age, and the 23rd of his ministry". The obituary refers to MacEvey's attachment to Clarendon Street Chapel, whose significance it explains in this way: "within the walls of which now historically celebrated edifice the struggle for Catholic Emancipation originated".

His funeral was one of the biggest seen in the Western Districts. The hearse was followed by "the vehicles of the clergy, the several magistrates, merchants and other residents, and a cavalcade of 240 horsemen to the Tower Hill cemetery ... the body was carried to the grave followed by the vast assemblage".

Fr Redmond O'Hanlon fulfilled one last act of kindness for Daniel MacEvey. In 1862 he was asked by the English Benedictine Heptonstall, the agent of the Australian Bishops in England, to forward 50 pounds sterling to his mother.

References: Disalced Carmelite Archives, Dublin and 'Footprints' and the Melbourne Archdiocesan Historical Commission.

William Burke (Columba of the Blessed Sacrament, OCD)

William Burke was born on 5 April 1860 in Derrybrien, County Galway. He was ordained in Dublin for the diocese of Maitland on 8 February 1885. He arrived in Maitland diocese on 24 February 1886. "His first appointment seems to have taken place twelve months later. He is recorded as having been assistant in the parish of Lambton from February 1887 to May 1889. From the Australian Catholic Directories I have traced that Fr Burke was rector of the parish of Muswellbrook from 1889 to 1892, but that no trace of him is to be found after that". (PWilson)

In December 1892 Fr Burke received the Carmelite habit in Loughrea. He was professed on 8 December 1893. He desired that the Order make a foundation in Australia. With this in mind he dedicated savings to be used for such a venture. Most of his ministry was as Novice Master in Loughrea. He died, 30 October 1930, in Loughrea. He had a considerable reputation among the brethren for holiness and true religious spirit. Present at the last anointing were his novices. Two of these were to contribute much to the Order in Australia, the future Frs Jarlath Flynn and Hilary Doran.

References: notes of Fr Hilary Doran, Australian Discalced Carmelite Archives and the Maitland Diocesan Archives, courtesy of Mgr Phillip Wilson.

Georges Thierry D'Argenlieu (Louis of the Trinity, OCD)

Georges Thierry d'Argenlieu was born in 1889. At the age of 17 he graduated from the Ecole Navale. During World War I he received the Legion of Honour for his part in the Moroccan campaign. He left the Navy in 1920 and became a Carmelite at the age of 31. At the time of the French mobilization in 1939 he was Provincial of the Paris Province. He took off his habit and resumed the uniform of a naval commander. He was captured by the Germans in June 1940 at Cherbourg. Three days later he leapt from a moving convoy train en route to Germany. He commandeered a fishing boat and sailed it to Jersey. A few days later he reached London and presented himself to the Carmelite Priory in Kensington, and in what must be that hospitable community's only lapse, he was turned away. When his identity was confirmed he used to visit Kensington, to share fraternal life. In London he worked closely with General de Gaulle.

He was commissioned to gather the remnants of the French navy and regain French colonial Africa for the Free French forces. In late 1940, while attempting to negotiate with the Vichy regime in Dakar, he was seriously wounded. Six weeks later, needing crutches to stand, he directed the assaults on Gabon, Port Gentil and Libreville. In 1941 he was appointed to a similar mission in the Pacific. When his ship reached Brisbane he visited Auchenflower Carmel. He saw the French Prioress, Mother Mary Raphael, Who held him in high regard as a friar and as a patriot Perhaps it was this visit that stimulated Mother Raphael to seek a foundation of Carmelite friars for Australia. Admiral d'Argenlieu meanwhile gained New Caledonia for the Free French and made it his headquarters. During this time he arrested and imprisoned a number of Marist Missionaries who were Vichy supporters. It is for this that the Marists in Australia and the Pacific remember him!

After further diplomatic work for the Free French he returned to London in 1943. He was appointed commander of the French naval forces in Britain and played a role in planning the Normandy invasion. At the liberation of Paris he walked beside Generals de Gaulle and Leclerc in the great victory parade to the thanksgiving *Te Deum* in Notre Dame. After the war he was Governor General of Indo-China until 1947 when he asked to return to his monastery. On his retirement, he was given a number of awards including the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour and being invested as a Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath. He then removed his admiral's uniform and resumed his Carmelite habit and lived a humble and quiet life of prayer. Because of his closeness to de Gaulle he wanted to avoid having his ministry politicized. He therefore seldom preached in public preferring to lead 'enclosed' retreats for groups such as priests and nuns. He died at the priory of Avon in 1964.

Reference -Journey to Carith Rohrbach and Sr Margaret Mary, Ormiston.

Agostino Galantli, OCD & Tomaso Attanasia, OCD

Fr Agostino Francesco Galanti was born near Rome in 1901. He entered the Carmelites at the age of 17 and was ordained at the age of 25. He became a member of the community at Stella Maris on Mount Carmel. He taught humanities in the Order's inter-war International College of Philosophy. He was involved in administration as procurator. In later years in Australia he took pride in the extensions to the monastery for which he was responsible and for building flats and shops in Haifa which were meant to provide income for the Stella Maris community. He was also secretary to a number of Apostolic Visitations in the Holy Land.

In March 1939 the British army, commanded by Montgomery, took over the building opposite Stella Maris, mined the entrance and restricted the use of the light house on the roof to friendly shipping. With the outbreak of the Second World War the College of Philosophy was closed and the students returned to their countries of origin. Several members of the community from enemy countries, including Frs Agostino Galanti and Tomaso Attanasi, were imprisoned by the British authorities. It did not help that Fr Tomaso was a Fascist. They spent 18 months imprisoned first at Emmys and then in the Franciscan monastery of the Flagellation in Jerusalem. Frs Agostino and Tomaso were then brought to Australia, as prisoners of war.

In 1942 they were both interned, in Tatura or nearby Bonegilla camps, for the duration. In the camps, Galanti was able to have a limited ministry with the

Italians. The chaplain of the camp, Fr Owens, always spoke very highly of Fr Agostino. Apostolic Delegate Panico sought to have all the interned priests released into the care of their respective Orders. As there were no Discalced Carmelite friars in Australia, the Donvale Carmelites were asked to take in our brethren. The condition was that they were to follow the regular observance of the house, even to saying the Divine Office in choir. This they did. Although, Fr Tomaso Attanasi was unhappy in his vocation, telling the friars he had been ‘virtually kidnapped’ at the age of 13. Like Galanti he was a member of the Roman Province. Fr Tomaso was musical. The Port Melbourne priory house notes for October 1945 congratulate “Fr Thomas, O.D.C., for the great success of his ‘Ave Maria’ at its first public performance in the Cathedral Hall”. He dedicated a motet in honour of Our Lady of Mount Carmel “To my Dear Fathers and Brothers at ‘Whitefriars’, 8 December 1945” (O.Carm archives). Attanasi returned to Italy after the war and left the Order and the ordained ministry. He is remembered by those who knew him on Mount Carmel as being somewhat unpredictable.

In 1944 Galanti was asked, by either Archbishop Mannix or Apostolic Delegate Panico, to assist Fr Modotti, SJ the principal Italian Chaplain in Victoria. This work he did unsparingly from the Port Melbourne Priory. From 1946 he was himself the Italian Chaplain in Melbourne. He continued this work until the arrival of the Capuchins in May 1948. He directed the magazine “Angelo della Famiglia” until the end of his life. Fr Agostino was associated with the foundation of the Juventus football club in Melbourne. In the last year of his life, Galanti suffered from high blood pressure. He died as a result of a stroke, at about 2am, on Good Friday, 7 April, 1950.

Fr Matthew McGettrick came down from Brisbane for the funeral. He celebrated the Solemn Requiem Mass in Sacred Heart Church Cariton. Archbishop Mannix presided, attended by Frs Nugent and Curtain O.Carm. The tributes paid at his death indicate he was greatly loved and respected. Fr Nazario Mammi O.E.M. Cap preached the panegyric. He said, “His humility and modesty concealed from the eyes of the people the nobility of his soul and the integrity of his character. He hardly ever spoke of himself and his achievements in the mission field. A true Carmelite, he had a strong love for Palestine and the Holy Places, and at a young age left his native country to carry on the work of the sacred ministry there ... There he spent most of his youthful years educating and training Carmelite students. He was above all a most efficient administrator in the name of his own Order and the Holy See. When the war broke out he was taken prisoner and brought to Australia, a land he loved much. He was released through the kindness and influence of the Archbishop and became associated with Fr Modotti in the work for the Italian prisoners of war and the spiritual care of the Italian community of

Melbourne'. Fr Paul Clery, O.Carm. remembered him as "a gentle, capable man and zealous priest".

A long line of cars followed the hearse from Carlton to Fawkner General Cemetery where Fr Agostino was buried in the Carmelite plot. On 10 March, 1952, his remains were transferred to the private Carmelite plot at Donvale.

References: O.Carm Archives; On God's Command Pino Bosi; Ricordo del Santuario di S. Antonio e dei Fondatori.

The First Foundation

THE AUSTRALIAN BACKGROUND

The first Catholics to live permanently in Australia arrived with the First Fleet in 1788. They were mostly Irish convicts, with a few marines. The first priests, also convicts, arrived in Australia in 1800. One of these, James Dixon, was given conditional emancipation and allowed to minister from 1803 to 1804. The Castle Hill rebellion in 1804 put an end to his privileges. The first official chaplains John Therry and Philip Connolly, arrived in 1820. The first 32 years of the Catholic Church in Australia are the story of a church without priests. John Bede Polding, the first bishop, arrived in 1835. With his arrival the normal structure of the church was in place after 47 years.

However, Polding was an English Benedictine who had a vision of the Australian church as an Abbey-diocese staffed by priest-missionary-monks. This dream was resented by the Irish priests who, led by Archdeacon John McEncroe wanted, "an Irish clergy for an Irish people". While Polding remained as Archbishop of Sydney until his death in 1877, and his successor Roger Bee Vaughan was also an English Benedictine, the dream had long been overtaken by the reality of an Irish clergy. The appointment of Patrick Francis Moran in 1884 to Sydney was a sign of the new order.

The question of whether the church was to be either Irish or English may have been decisively settled, but another identity issue took longer to resolve. Polding took the view that the Australian church had to develop its own identity. When he urged his fellow bishops to think of themselves only as Australians, all but one of the Irish born bishops affirmed the primacy of the Irish tradition. The Manly Union was founded in 1914 to promote an Australian clergy and hierarchy for an Australian Church and people. The Australianization of the Church which was promoted by the Apostolic Delegates was resented by many of the Irish Clergy.

It was not until the 1930's that Australian priests outnumbered Irish priests in Australia. This struggle within the Church helps explain why when the friars arrived in Brisbane in 1948 they were surprised to discover they did not receive an unqualified welcome in some quarters.

However, the general pattern for the Church had been set in the Irish model. Even today, after 50 years of significant immigration from non-English speaking countries, immigrants and their chaplains often find they are considered an addition to the Church rather than part of it. The Church in Australia was shaped by the educational crisis which began in the 1870's. One after the other, the different colonies introduced legislation for compulsory schooling. The governments only funded the secular state schools. The Church's response was to set up an independent school system virtually completely staffed by religious. - The Catholic school system was such a success that it shaped the Church in Australia.

The Church of Brisbane which the friars encountered in 1948 was one that was caught up in rapid expansion as a result of immigration and the post war baby boom. In spite of shortages of funds new schools and parishes were being opened at an amazing rate. It was a "time of great expansion but also of great stress. This expansionary climate was meat and drink to the Archbishop of Brisbane, who loved nothing better than buying property and building. James Duhig was born in Ireland in 1871 and migrated to Queensland with his family in 1885. He became the Bishop of Rockhampton in 1905 and was Archbishop of Brisbane from 1917 until his death in 1965. His attitude to Australian society was irenic and integrationist, in contrast to Mannix in Melbourne. He received his reward in 1955 when he was knighted by the Queen. His Grace was not embarrassed to be known as Sir James.

His advice to new Orders coming into his diocese, such as the Carmelites or Augustinians, was to bring popular preachers who could attract a following through parish missions and retreats. This was his advice to the Carmelites in Dublin. He told the Provincial he wanted 'really good and competent men' in the ministry of preaching. He was to be disappointed, at least in this regard, in the band who came, none of whom had any considerable experience in this sort of work. Fr Matthew McGettrick had three years work in the public church at Kensington after six years teaching theology in Dublin, Fr Jarlath Flynn had spent the ten years of his ministry teaching Greek at Castlemartyr, Fr Cormac Fenton, probably had the most potential, but he was without any experience at all, as he was newly ordained.

Duhig gave permission to the Order for a house and was open, at least in the beginning, to them having a parish. Not that it was his desire that the Carmelites take on a parish. He stated his intentions as follows, "I believe it would be wise to commence just with a retreat house or mission house, and thus be entirely free from any parish care or duties. What we really want is a little band of zealous, saintly, capable priests to give retreats to religious communities and lay organizations, and to preach occasionally in the Cathedral or to give a course of lectures".

THE INVITATION

Mother Mary Raphael was a nun from Autun Carmel. She had been at Jaro Carmel in the Philippines since 1929 and was one of the pioneers at Kubuna in Papua in 1934. For medical reasons she came to Australia in 1937. During her time in Brisbane, Mother Raphael was elected prioress at Auchenflower. In 1941 she was visited by Fr Louis of the Trinity, Admiral d'Argenlieu, when his ship was in Brisbane on his way to claim the Pacific colonies for the Free French. She was always so proud of him. (Sr Margaret Mary, Ormiston) Perhaps this visit was important in stimulating her to seek a foundation of the friars for Australia. It was she who wrote in 1944 to the General and the Irish Provincial asking for a foundation. She was obviously a remarkable woman. She returned to Papua, with the sisters who were evacuated during World War 11, and died in the temporary Carmel on Yule Island on 15 July, 1953. We can only be grateful for her initiative. She obtained the backing of Duhig for the foundation of the friars. Her last act at the end of her third term as prioress was to write in April 1947 to the Irish Provincial, Fr Kevin Neary. Fr Kevin's reply stated that Fr Kieran Dolan, a Definitor General, had told him that the General "was very pleased with the prospect".

1947 was a year of change. In Rome, a General Chapter was held, the first since 1937. Fr Silverio, who had been Vicar General since 1946, when Fr Peter Thomas was killed in a car accident in Texas, was elected General. At the Chapter, Fr Michael Moylan replaced Fr Kieran as Definitor General. In Brisbane, Mother Veronica was elected Prioress. Mother Veronica wrote to Fr Kevin, who in response wrote to Duhig, who was in Rome at the time, requesting a foundation in Brisbane.

Fr Michael Moylan interviewed Duhig three times in Rome. His shrewd comments are instructive: "I have just returned from a visit to Archbishop Duhig, who was exceedingly kind. He says that near where the nuns are at present there is a small parish, which he is prepared to let you have. The nuns, however, have been considering moving to the other side of the city ... if they decide to go here he will give the Fathers a place near them. However he proposes to wait until his return before deciding the location ... He was very glad to hear our Fathers give

priests' retreats, and so is prepared to let them have a retreat house. However, as he is very old, and as the Apostolic Delegate is very anti-Irish, I thought I might ask him for a letter before leaving Rome, giving his formal consent. I asked him if we might go ahead with obtaining the rescript from the Congregation. And when he said 'yes' I said we should require his formal consent in writing. He promised me to prepare one, and I am to call for it before he leaves ... The Archbishop wants good men for retreat work and priests' retreats. So search your pockets for them."

Fr Michael found Duhig vague and forgetful. It was no easy matter to get the formal letter out of him. Mother Veronica assisted from afar, following Duhig's movements and cabling Fr Kevin where he could find the elusive Archbishop so as to make the request in person.

THE FOUNDATION IS APPROVED

On 28 October, Fr Michael sent a cable from Rome to Dublin. He had obtained from Archbishop Duhig the formal permission for the foundation. The Irish Provincial Definitory, on 25 Nov, petitioned formally for the foundation in Brisbane. The rescripts from the Congregation for Religious, of 3 January 1948, were executed by Fr Silverio on 8 January. They were sent to Fr Kevin by Fr Michael on 9 January 1948. At this point the Brisbane foundation existed, at least on paper.

In April 1948, the Irish Provincial Chapter was held in Clarendon Street. The debate about the new foundation is instructive. The capitulars were hesitant about making a decision for or against. They were not aware that the rescripts from the Congregation for Religious had already been granted on 3 January 1948. What they knew about Australia came from such sources as friends among the Augustinians, who advised it was a futile endeavour. No one at the Chapter had even seen an Australian Catholic Directory to know anything of the Church there. The debate centred around whether the proposed foundation was to be a parish or not. "Notwithstanding the confusion and the rhetoric, the Chapter 'were agreeing' that the Provincial Definitory could send out three 'religious to investigate the possibilities and if a foundation seemed not to be for the good of the Order to return home. Some further discussion took place before the Chapter finished, and the act was amended to read, 'finally, they agreed that the Definitory Provincial should await information from the Bishop of Brisbane, and left the matter to the discretion of the Definitory'." (Fr Hilary Doran), Fr Pius Dolan was elected Provincial at the 1948 Chapter. The Definitory met immediately afterwards and decided to act promptly. Fr Matthew recalled, "Shortly after the Chapter I received a telegram from him (Fr Pius): 'Come Dublin immediately'. As soon as I arrived,

he took me into his room and continued as though we had been discussing the matter, 'Now who are you going to have on the team? We have settled on Fr. Jarlath and Br Kieran but who will be the fourth man?' I asked him, 'Who is the superior?' and he said, 'You are'. We went through the whole catalogue of names... eventually he decided on Fr Cormac Fenton, who was still a student priest and had not yet done his faculties exam for the Archdiocese of Dublin".

Fr Pius advised Archbishop Duhig, on 2 May, that the foundation would go ahead. On 26 May, he cabled informing him that four men would be sailing on the 'Maloja'. Duhig replied on 28 May, "I duly received you air-mail letter advising the forthcoming departure of the little band of Fathers of your Order who are to be its pioneers in Brisbane ... I am planning to give them a suitable place, but if by the time of their arrival my plans have not matured, they will get suitable accommodation. I propose asking them first to conduct a mission at the Cathedral. That will serve to introduce them to the people ... I am relying on you to send us good men, capable preachers with reserve and dignity that will make an impression on my people".

RECEIVED WITH GREAT WELCOME

Fr Kevin had already booked four places on a ship for Australia before the Chapter. This was because of the shortage of berths on passenger ships after the war. The four pioneers had about 4 or 5 weeks to prepare themselves for their new life in Australia. They boarded the 'Maloja' at Tilbury docks and departed on 10 June. It was the first passenger ship to go all the way from London to Brisbane. The founding fathers of the Order in Australia were Fr Matthew McGettrick, 34; Fr Jarlath Flynn, 37; Fr Cormac Fenton, 26; and Brother Kieran Deeley, 35.

On Friday 9 July they reached Fremantle. Fr Matthew later recalled, "Australia seemed like being home again, especially on a mild winter evening, and the people too seemed much the same. We enquired for the nearest Catholic church and the priest there directed us to the Carmelite Convent at Nedlands. Here we were received with great welcome. They felt it was an historic occasion and they were privileged to be the first to greet us. We had visited a Carmel at Colombo, in a beautiful tropical setting, where we were treated with politeness and the friendliness that one offers to respected strangers. But in Australia it was different. Here we were received as the answer to prolonged desires and prayers. The coming of our Fathers' to Australia was a very big thing. We had a chat with the sisters in the parlour, and they gave us a magnificent meal, and they did not consider we were bound to abstinence". When they returned to the ship there was a welcoming telegram from the Carmel of Kew.

The 'Maloja' reached Adelaide on 13 July. The travellers received a truly 'Irish welcome' from the nuns at whose Carmel they celebrated Mass, the first on dry land since they had left London. They also happily visited the O.Carm. Carmelites in Port Adelaide parish.

They arrived in Melbourne on the feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, 16 July. At the Carmel in Kew they met Archbishop Mannix and Bishop Wade of the Solomons. Frs Matthew and Cormac each celebrated Mass after the bishops. Matthew recalled, "At that time I had a certain awe of bishops which had a rather paralyzing effect on me. I was to get more used to them before long. In the presence of the great Dr Mannix I found myself quite ill at ease, and there were a few dreadful moments when I was all alone with him in the convent parlour. He wasn't saying anything and I was anxiously searching my mind for something to say. Then I made the faux pas of the century. It must have been especially arranged by Providence to mortify the Archbishop on his most sensitive spot. I said to him, 'Are you an Irishman?'. We were going out the door at the time and he made no reply, but I heard afterwards that when he was walking home with his secretary he was silent and depressed. Eventually he said to his secretary, 'Do you know what that man said to me? He asked me if I were an Irishman!' However when I met Mannix on later occasions he was very nice to me and made no reference to this". Matthew's impressions of the Carmel are interesting. "Our reception at the Carmel was enthusiastic and high powered. There had been some talk before we left home about a possible foundation at Melbourne and the nuns were very keen on the idea. There was a dynamic Prioress, Mother Teresa, and the whole community tingled with dynamism". The sisters gave the friars an illuminated address or blessing which for some years hung in the library at Gregory Terrace.

They reached Sydney on 21 July. Fr Matthew stayed with the nuns at Dulwich Hill while the others stayed on board. They were received by Cardinal Gilroy and saw over Manly Seminary. They stayed in Sydney until 26 July. A welcoming letter awaited them from Mother Veronica. It contained motherly advice, presumably, on how to deal with the Archbishop of Brisbane.

IN BRISBANE

On 28 July, the 'Maloja' arrived in Brisbane. The travellers were met by the Archbishop with some of the clergy. As no accommodation had been made ready they were separated. Matthew recalled, "The Archbishop took me off with him before all the luggage was ready, while the others waited. Thus we were separated, and it would be a long time before we were all to live together again. Fr Jarlath was with Mgr English at Clayfield parish, Fr Cormac with the Augustinians at Villanova College (they had just recently arrived in Brisbane), Br Kieran stayed

with Fr Bree (at Windsor). I spent two weeks at Archbishop's House, Wynberg, New Farm".

"On the way from the boat the Archbishop said to me (he was universally known as the Arch'), in his deep, slow sonorous voice, 'I don't want you men to have a -parish. I want you to be a select community where educated men can go for advice'. This was exactly what I wanted too, but I was yet to learn that what the Arch desired as an ideal and what he was prepared to give us as a practical solution, were very different'.

"That very evening the Arch took me to a debutante ball at the Franciscan parish, in which he received the debutantes and made a short speech. I was impressed by the seriousness and solemnity of the ritual and thought it very old world. The next evening he took me to another ball for the united Catholic schools of Brisbane, at Cloudlands Ballroom, which was a large place perched on top of a steep hill. He impressed on me what a busy bishop he was and how he had to go to all these parochial events".

"During these first two weeks the Arch seemed to take me everywhere he went and kept showing me the sights of Brisbane, especially the many churches he had built. On Sunday I said Mass at the Cathedral and preached. The Arch said to someone, 'You see, these men are not preachers'. A young curate at Wynberg said to me, 'But you didn't preach, you only talked'. These remarks did not register with me, I had too much else on my mind". However these remarks show Duhig's disappointment. These friars were not the rousing preachers, the likes of Fr Simon Hayes or Fr Hugh Byrne of Clarendon Street, that he had wanted, even if only for a limited time, at the beginning of the foundation.

PROVIDENCE WILL PROVIDE

The little community had been split up on their arrival. Duhig promised help in finding a place for the friars to live. But nothing eventuated beyond his constantly repeated 'Providence will provide'. Fr Matthew recalls a typical excursion with the Arch shortly after their arrival, "A meeting of the Diocesan Council was about to take place and I was asked to state in writing what kind of foundation I wanted. I said I wanted a central city church without a parish, school or hospital. After the meeting the Archbishop spoke of taking me to visit Mgr Baldwin, who lived at Ipswich about 25 miles south of Brisbane, to consult him about letting us purchase Toorak House, which was on top of a hill overlooking the Brisbane River. As soon as we arrived he had a private chat with the Mons (as these people are always called) and then we had lunch. I heard no more about Toorak House. All the Arch said to me was, 'Providence will provide'."

Fr Jarlath was staying at Clayfield parish. When Mgr English, the parish priest, had to go to hospital in August, Fr Matthew moved into Clayfield as well. The regular observance, with rising at 4:45 and all the rest, was begun. Fr Cormac became resident chaplain at Marist Brothers College Ashgrove. About the time Mgr English came out from hospital Fr Jarlath was made chaplain at the Marist Brothers, Eagle Heights on Mount Tamborine and Matthew took off on a tour of the various Carmels. The nuns had been clamouring for more contact with “our Fathers”.

When Matthew returned to Brisbane in January 1949, the Archbishop told him he was going to give them the parish of Cannon Hill. But until he was able to make other arrangements for the parish priest of Cannon Hill, they were to go temporarily to Goodna. Goodna was a country parish 15 miles from Brisbane and mostly famous for its lunatic asylum. The names of the Carmelites were down in the Directory for Cannon Hill, but they never went near the place, as the parish priest refused to move.

However Br Kieran and Fr Matthew did go to Goodna in January 1949. The other two were engaged as chaplains. Fr Matthew tells us, “Then I did a dangerous thing, I told them all to arrive at Goodna at a certain date ... Eagle Heights managed to get another chaplain, Ashgrove rang up the Archbishop’s House to say their chaplain had been taken from them. On the very evening that the four of us had arrived at the presbytery, Goodna, I had a telephone call from the Arch. He was furious and demanded I send the men back to their respective chaplaincies. I managed to hold on to Fr Jarlath as they had got a chaplain at Eagle Heights ... But Fr Cormac had to return to Ashgrove that very night and none of us was feeling happy”.

During this year at Goodna I kept an eye out for possible sites for a monastery in Brisbane, but when I would consult the Arch about one it would always be too close to an existing parish and he would end up by saying ‘Providence will provide’. I had no doubt about that and knew for certain that we would get what we wanted.

The time of our stay at Goodna was drawing to a close. The parish priest was soon to arrive back, and as yet we had nowhere to go. Frs Jarlath, Cormac and I decided that we would be willing to stay on in Australia regardless of where we might be sent by the Archbishop. Br Kieran said if we were to be dispersed again he would ask to come home. He had had the hardest time of all before coming to Goodna. Whereas we had had our priestly work to occupy us, he had to be at the beck and call of some housekeeper in a presbytery. On the whole our spirits were at a low ebb.

In January 1950 things came to a head and Fr Matthew approached the Archbishop. He said to him, "Please do something for us". I said this with kind of a sob in my voice that went straight to his heart. He was deeply moved, 'Yes, yes, now you come with me'. So there and then he took me out in his car to Gregory Terrace and showed me this private hotel on an acre of ground. Parochially speaking it was a kind of no man's land between two important city parishes on one side and three suburban parishes on the other, Red Hill, Herston and Bowen Hills. The house had been up for sale for a couple of years but the Archbishop had never mentioned it".

ST TERESA'S, GRANGEHILL

Fr Matthew managed to get out from under the Archbishop's control and went to see the agent himself. He engaged the help of Mr Eric Whitehouse, a solicitor who had a sister in Dulwich Hill Carmel. There was a catch in that the tenancy had just changed hands. Matthew took the advice of the agent to 'go and have a nice friendly chat with her'. He found she would be willing to hand over for a sum of £300. The next thing was to get the Archbishop's formal approval to buy the property. Needless to say this was not plain sailing either. The consent of the Irish Provincial was also obtained. By 28 February 1950, the Carmelites had purchased Grangehill for £15,000, plus £2,500 for the furniture and lease. They received £ 10,000 sterling from the Irish Province which converted to £12, 000. The friars in Brisbane were able to make up the balance themselves.

Fr Matthew wrote, "On St Patrick's Day, 17 March 1950, I said the first Mass in our new house, Grangehill, soon to be know as St Teresa's. I said it in the guests' dining room in the midst of small dining room tables".

Fr Matthew had a valued apostolate among the Legion of Mary. He had the gift of making disciples. Enthusiastic members of the Legion supported the friars and helped ready St Teresa's for use as a monastery and for retreats. The first retreat took place in June 1950 and thereafter each month. Young men were also applying to join the community. A rescript dated 23 June 1950 gave permission for a novitiate for nonclerical brothers. Provision was also made to accept clerical aspirants for three months before sending them to Ireland for the novitiate. Most of those Australians who did their novitiate in Loughrea had previously spent time living at St Teresa's. A number of young men began their novitiate in Brisbane as non-clerical brothers. Some of these were professed. However, all but Br James Groth left the Order, sooner or later.

In 1951 provision was made for a public chapel at St Teresa's. On to the tennis court below the house, two wooden class rooms were transported from Kangaroo Point across Story Bridge to Gregory Terrace. Here they were joined together as St Teresa's Chapel which Archbishop Duhig blessed on Palm Sunday 1951. Many people over the years remarked on the simplicity and prayerful atmosphere of the chapel, but it was always a very modest building. In this, chapel the brethren heard confessions and gave spiritual direction for many years. In those days, the Valley was the main shopping area of Brisbane and trams passed along Brunswick Street. Consequently the friars were kept busy. As well, the boys from Gregory Terrace Christian Brothers College had a custom of paying a visit to the chapel on the way to and from school.

1952 Fr Matthew McGettrick resigned as superior of Brisbane and left Australia. He was replaced as superior by Fr Jarlath Flynn. Fr Matthew twice returned to Brisbane, at the invitation of a former novice, Brian Smith, the coordinator of the Emmanuel Covenant Community. He was then well known as a spiritual guide and teacher of contemplative meditation for the laity throughout Britain. In 1955 Br Kieran Deeley left Australia and became a founder of the Order in the Philippines. After raising considerable sums of money for the Carmelite Church in Manila he had a heart attack in 1964. He then came to Varroville to recuperate. He was to spend the rest of his life as a member of that community. During this time he worked on the farm and was valued as a wise elder brother in community. Fr Cormac Fenton, the youngest of the group, left Australia in 1954. He returned to Ireland but has spent the greater part of his ministry in California. In 1957 Fr Jarlath Flynn returned to Ireland and then spent the greater part of his ministry in St Teresa's, Clarendon Street. Both Fr Jarlath and Fr Cormac are still living.

In time, the people moved out of the area near St Teresa's, the trams stopped running, intrusive heavy road traffic roared past St Teresa's on Gregory Terrace and Brunswick Street. The Valley ceased to be the most vibrant shopping area of Brisbane and became instead a depressed and notoriously sleazy area. The friars consolidated the buildings and in 1967 built a retreat house. This was used, for a time, for priests retreats. However the disadvantages of the site began to tell and the retreats fell off. As well, Catholic patterns of celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation began to change dramatically after the Second Vatican Council. This affected this ministry of the friars in the confessional, as numbers steadily declined. How the brethren responded to these changes is another story. Another story, that could profitably be explored at another time.

The foundation was suppressed by the General Definitory, as requested by the Council of the Australian Regional Vicariate, on 15 February 1996.

Sources: Australian Discalced Carmelite Archives. Notes of Fr Hilary Doran, the chronicler for Fr Jarlath Flynn and the memoirs of Fr Matthew McGettrick. The reference to Fr Louis d'Argenlieu is provided by Sr Margaret Mary of Ormiston Carmel.