



The Alaskan Shepherd



Volume 47 Number 9

December 2009

Some give by going to the Missions

Some go by giving to the Missions

Without both there are no Missions

YEAR OF THE ALASKAN PRIEST: Part I



1) Bishop Donald J. Kettler 2) Father Stanislaw Jaszek 3) Father Gregg D. Wood, S.J. 4) Father Roman P. Caly 5) Father Frederick C. Bayler 6) Father Theodore E. Kestler, S.J. 7) Father Kasparaj Mallavarapu 8) Father Charles J. Peterson, S.J. 9) Father John B. Martinek 10) Father Normand A. Pepin, S.J. 11) Father Jack de Verteuil 12) Father Joseph Hemmer, O.F.M. 13) Father Patrick D. Bergquist 14) Father Ross A. Tozzi 15) Father Thomas G. Provinsal, S.J. 16) Father Robert Fath 17) Father Sean P. Thomson 18) Father Miroslaw Woznica

CATHOLIC BISHOP OF NORTHERN ALASKA
1312 PEGER ROAD FAIRBANKS, ALASKA 99709
Phone: 907-374-9532 <http://www.cbna.info>

Special Masses are offered throughout the year for you and your intentions by our Missionary Priests. Please pray that God may bless us and our work.

In March, Pope Benedict XVI declared a “Year For Priests” beginning with the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus on June 19, 2009. This new Jubilee Year will conclude with an international gathering of priests with the Holy Father on June 19, 2010. Pope Benedict went on to proclaim, *“I have decided to inaugurate a “Year for Priests” in celebration of the 150th anniversary of the “dies natalis” (day of birth) of John Mary Vianney, the patron saint of parish priests worldwide. This Year, meant to deepen the commitment of all priests to interior renewal for the sake of a stronger and more incisive witness to the Gospel in today’s world, will conclude on the same Solemnity in 2010. “The priesthood is the love of the heart of Jesus”, the saintly Curé of Ars would often say. This touching expression makes us reflect, first of all, with heartfelt gratitude on the immense gift which priests represent, not only for the Church, but also for humanity itself. I think of all those priests who quietly present Christ’s words and actions each day to the faithful and to the whole world, striving to be one with the Lord in their thoughts and their will, their sentiments and their style of life. How can I not pay tribute to their apostolic labours, their tireless and hidden service, their universal charity? And how can I not praise the courageous fidelity of so many priests who, even amid difficulties and incomprehension, remain faithful to their vocation as “friends of Christ”, whom he has called by name, chosen and sent?”*

In this Missionary Diocese of Northern Alaska, our now eighteen priests are tasked to bring the Mass and Sacraments to an area spanning over 409,848 square miles. The challenge is immense. Approximately ten of our eighteen priests cover the most remote and widely spread apart area of our diocese, which encompasses 38 of our 46 parishes. These 38 Mission parishes can only be reached by plane. In the summer, the Missionary can reach some villages by boat, and in the winter, snowmachine travel connects others. The fact is, our priests live much as their parishioners live; independent, isolated, and sometimes without running water.

Only nine of our parishes have a resident priest. Many communities are unable to celebrate Mass on a weekly basis, especially in the majority of our bush parishes. Here, a priest may need to cover several villages



Bishop Donald J. Kettler and “local” priests take time for a photo during their Priest Gathering, in November 2009, at the Bishop’s residence in Fairbanks. It is a rarity for so many of our priests to be present in the same location. Left to Right: Bishop Donald J. Kettler, Fr. Robert Fath-North Pole, Fr. Fred Bayler, Fairbanks, Fr. Kaspar Mallavarapu, Fairbanks, Fr. Normand A. Pepin, S.J., Fairbanks, Fr. John Martinek, Delta Junction and Tok, Fr. Jack de Verteuil, Healy, Fr. Pat Bergquist, Fairbanks. Front Row: Fr. Miroslaw Woznica and Fr. Sean Thomson, both Fairbanks.

on a rotating basis; two weeks at one parish, two weeks at the next.

Over the past 22 years, the brevity of my time in Alaska, I have had the honor to come to know many of these Missionary priests. They have escorted my three children and many of my nieces and nephews into Catholicism through the Sacrament of Baptism and they were with my family throughout my father’s illness, administering the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick and then finally escorting him to end of his earthly life. I have always held the vocation of priesthood with the highest esteem, but it is with special regard that I hold the Alaskan priest, whose ministry and devotion I have been fortunate enough to witness firsthand.

I am pleased, that in the Holy Father’s Jubilee “Year For Priests,” I have this opportunity to present to you our team of Alaskan priests, the priests of the Diocese of Fairbanks.

--Patty Walter



BISHOP DONALD J. KETTLER

On August 6, 2000, The Diocese of Fairbanks was without a bishop, after Michael J. Kaniecki, S.J., died suddenly of a massive heart attack at Emmonak, Alaska. We were to remain orphaned for nearly two years. On June 7, 2002, Pope John Paul II announced the appointment of Msgr. Donald J. Kettler as the

fourth Bishop of the Diocese of Fairbanks, our new Shepherd.

Bishop Lambert A. Hoch ordained Donald J. Kettler a priest in St. Joseph Cathedral, Sioux Falls, on May 29, 1970. Father Kettler was associate pastor at Sacred Heart parish, Aberdeen, South Dakota, from 1970-76 and from 1977-79. He spent the year 1976-77 as associate pastor at St. Therese’s parish in Sioux Falls. From 1979-81, he was Director of the Diocesan Catholic Pastoral Center and a member of the Diocesan Marriage Tribunal. During the years 1981-83, he earned a degree in Canon Law at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. In 1983, he was named Officialis on the Marriage Tribunal. The year 1983-84 saw him serving as pastor of St. Joseph’s parish, Huntimer, South Dakota, and offering Mass at the State Penitentiary.

In 1984, Father Kettler became part of the Sioux Falls Diocese’s innovative television ministry to shut-ins. Offering Mass every Sunday morning for television viewers estimated to number between 12,000 and 15,000, he soon became known all over South Dakota as “the TV Mass priest.” In 1995, Father Kettler became Monsignor Kettler. Much of the TV program’s success was attributed in large part to Msgr. Kettler’s “really fine” preaching. He offered the TV Mass from 1984 to the year 2002. During those same years, being the diocese’s top canon lawyer, he served also as its Judicial Vicar. By the time

he headed north to his future in Alaska, in the year 2002, he had served his diocese also as a member of its Finance Council and Stewardship Committee, and had sat on the boards of Catholic Family Services, of Sioux Falls Catholic School System, and of the Association of Christian Churches of South Dakota.

During the years 1987-1995, Msgr. Kettler was pastor of St. Joseph Cathedral; and, during the years 1995 to 2000, of St. Lambert’s parish, Sioux Falls. He spent his final two years in the Sioux Falls Diocese serving as pastor of Christ the King parish, Sioux Falls.

For his motto, Bishop Kettler had chosen “Faith, Hope, and Love”—admitting, with a smile, that the wording was not really all that original. In his short talk at the end of the ordination service, he explained why he had chosen that motto: “Faith and trust in the Lord; Hope of doing something new and challenging; and Love—God loves us so much, we can share it with other people.” He assured the people, “I’ll be there with you. I will pray with you, and I will suffer with you.”

On June 7, 2002, the news of Msgr. Kettler’s appointment became public in Alaska and nationally. On that day, he was introduced to the chancery staff of the Diocese of Fairbanks and held a press conference. All felt immediately at ease with him, in spite of his imposing 6’3”, square-jawed presence.

Even before he was ordained a bishop, on August 22, 2002, Bishop Kettler, described as “a roll-up-your-sleeves-type of man,” made it known that one of the first things he wanted to do as a bishop was to get in a plane and start visiting the villages in his diocese. “I cannot shepherd,” he said, “where I have not been.” Accordingly, only three days after his ordination, he was airborne—in the diocesan Cessna 207, with his Chancellor, Father Richard D. Case, S.J., at the

controls, and me, Patty Walter, on board as a passenger. The trip lasted eight days and took us to nine villages in western Alaska. Bishop Kettler wanted to listen to his people and then offer his vision of the future of the diocese. His focus is still very much pastoral and centered on his people, the Catholic people of Northern Alaska.

FATHER FREDERICK C. BAYLER

Frederick C. Bayler, our newest priest, was ordained June 12, 2009, by Bishop Donald Kettler, in Sacred Heart Cathedral.



At age 55, Father Fred's former life is an extensive biography of experience. Before finally "settling down" this June, Father Fred held the following jobs, beginning in 1971, at the age of 17: Parachutist and Skydiver, U.S. Marine Corps Sergeant, Diplomatic Bodyguard, Marine Security Guard, Helicopter and Aircraft Avionics and Operations, Diplomatic Foreign Service Officer, Consular Officer, Pilot, Commercial Real Estate Appraiser, Fee Appraiser, Chief Appraiser, Commercial Appraiser, Consultant, Owner, Bilingual Education, Adjunct Instructor of Political Science, Teacher American Government, Catechist Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults, Parish Council, U.S. Customs Inspector, Park Dispatcher, Supervisory Backcountry Ranger, Interpretive Ranger, and NRA Certified Instructor.

During the course of his many careers, Fred Bayler often questioned whether he was on his "true" path. He felt particularly called to serve the people of God on a more personal level. When Fred began considering the priesthood, he received some less than enthusiastic responses from many dioceses, concerned primarily with his age. When he spoke with Bishop Kettler, he was encouraged to spend a winter in Alaska. After that period, Bishop Kettler sponsored and supported Fred's path to the priesthood. On December 7, 2006, Fred reflected on this life course in a letter to the Diocese of Fairbanks during his 2nd year of enrollment at Blessed John XXIII National Seminary. Fred begins the letter with this quote from Gospel of Matthew, "Then He said to His Disciples, "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore

pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest."

After serving the Church for many years as a lector, RCIA-catechist, and annulment counselor, Fred felt called to pursue the path to priesthood as a seminary candidate. Fred returned to Alaska to discern his vocation and was encouraged and guided by his former pastor Father Jack de Verteuil, at Holy Mary of Guadalupe in Healy. Father Jack explained to Fred the great need for priests in the largest missionary diocese in the U.S. Many other priests encouraged his endeavor.

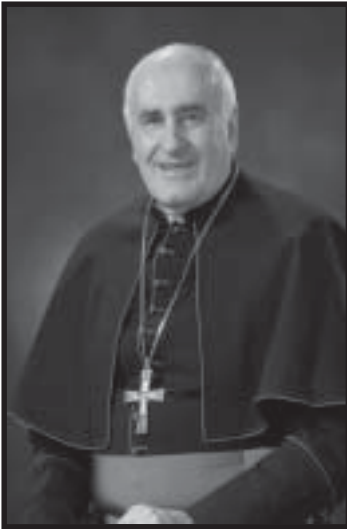
The 12th of June arrived, and the Diocese of Fairbanks rejoiced in the ordination of its newest priest. The Ordination Mass was celebrated by Bishop Donald J. Kettler and concelebrated by Father William Palardy, Academic Dean and Faculty Advisor, Blessed John XXIII National Seminary. Eleven of our priests, as well as four visiting priests, concelebrated. Six Sisters, one Brother, and five Deacons from the Diocese of Fairbanks attended, as well as eight acolytes. Of special note was Fred's own son, now 25, David M. Bayler. David, and his cousin David Giddings, assisted throughout the Mass whenever the order called for kneeling, as Fred was recovering from recent knee surgery.

Of his call to the priesthood, Father Fred reflects, "It was my service as an Altar Boy at Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church (El Paso, Texas) in my youth, and the strong and steadfast devotion of my now deceased Mother, Shirley, a Third Order Franciscan, and many others that sowed the seeds of my priestly vocation." Following his ordination, Father Fred was assigned to Sacred Heart Cathedral as Parochial Vicar, where he currently serves.

FATHER NORMAND A. PEPIN, S.J.

It is fairly impossible to summarize the life of Father Normand A. Pepin, S.J., though I have attempted to do so in the paragraphs that follow. Father Louis L. Renner, S.J., writes of Fr. Pepin, in *Alaskana Catholica*. One of the longer biographical entries, Father reflects

When asked in what role I see myself in God's flock, as shepherd or sheep, I replied, "I am the sheepdog, I protect the flock."
 --Fr. Fred Bayler



Dear Co-missionaries in Christ,

I am truly grateful for this annual occasion to convey to you my sincerest appreciation for the spiritual and financial support you continue to give this needy Missionary Diocese of Fairbanks. By your loyal assistance, you enable us to bring the Mass and the Sacraments to our widely-scattered flocks of Eskimo and Indian peoples. On my own behalf, and on their behalf, I express to you these very sincere sentiments of gratitude. God reward and bless you! Know that we—the missionaries of Northern Alaska, our flocks, and I—remember you and all your concerns daily in our Masses and prayers.

As you know, this has been a trying year for our poor diocese. We have borne, and are still bearing, the stresses and pressures of the weak economy and the costs of reorganization. I have had to trim back my already sparse staff and to eliminate some programs. However, relying on the grace of God and on your continued support, I feel hopeful, as I face the coming New Year of Our Lord 2010.

And, along with reasons for hope, there have also been reasons for joy and gratitude. Our Radio Mission, KNOM in Nome, the oldest USA Catholic radio station, has now received the prestigious Gabriel Award for Radio Station of the Year for the 17th time—for the 14th year in a row! Given the shortage of priests in this diocese, it was with a special personal joy that I, on June 12, 2009, ordained to the holy priesthood Fr. Frederick C. Bayler—and, about this same time, welcomed into our seminary program Clint Landry from Louisiana.

Making Our Lord's words, "Well done, good and faithful servant!", our own, we bade a grateful farewell to Sr. Marilyn Marx, S.N.J.M. For the past seven years, she served as Director of the Kateri Tekakwitha Training Center in Galena. Prior to that, she served the diocese, for eleven years, as chancellor.

We bade a grateful, but rather sad, farewell likewise to seven staff members, whose positions needed to be terminated because of the financial exigency confronting the diocese. And—in March, in Bethel, during a Mass of Christian Burial—we bade a grateful farewell, and "Rest in peace!", to Eskimo Deacon Peter Aluska.

As you know, I see myself primarily as a pastoral bishop. As such, it gave me a sense of joy and fulfillment this past year, as I traveled far and wide throughout our vast diocese and brought ministries proper only to a bishop to many communities. In various villages and towns—including Kotzebue, above the Arctic Circle—I confirmed the young. In Nightmute, I ordained to the permanent diaconate Chris Tulik. In Bethel, I celebrated the Chrism Mass. In Bethel, too, I welcomed five Eskimo men into the permanent diaconate program and directed the annual deacon retreat. In Tok, I helped Holy Rosary Parish celebrate their 60th anniversary. As bishop, I was pleased to be able to sponsor *LIFE in the Holy Fire Conference*.

So, while the Year of Our Lord 2009 was, in many respects, a year of real challenges, even of genuine heartaches, for me and the diocese, it was—thanks to Our Lord's grace and abiding goodness—for me personally also a year of joyful moments and blessings. I see it end, in my case, not without joy and deep-down peace of heart.

I pray that the New Year of Our Lord may be for you, my dear Co-missionaries, and for those near and dear to you, a year of much hope and joy and of many graces and blessings. I extend to you my most sincere, personal best wishes. Yours, in Faith, and Hope, and Love . . .

+Donald J. Kettler
Bishop of the Diocese of Fairbanks

Newly Published:

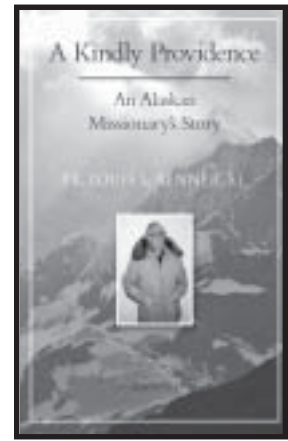


A Kindly Providence

An Alaskan Missionary's Story

Yes, please send _____copy(ies) of *A Kindly Providence*
written by **Father Louis L. Renner, S.J.**

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**A WONDERFUL GIFT
TO GIVE OR RECEIVE!**



Concerning the autobiography, they wrote:—

“...written very vividly, clearly, and sincerely in a quietly engaging style.” (David J. Leigh, S.J., author of *CIRCUITOUS JOURNEYS: Modern Spiritual Autobiographies*)

“A fine and complete record of a full and fascinating life.” (Brad R. Reynolds, S.J., writer and photographer)

“Your Autobiography is very, very good. In reading it, people will have the experience of being right there where you are at the time. Chapter One is beautiful. It is an American classic, in itself.” (Margaret Cantwell, S.S.A., author of *North to Share: The Sisters of Saint Ann in Alaska and the Yukon Territory*)

Fragmentary quotes from the autobiography weave an intriguing tapestry:—

“As I was standing on top of Little Diomed Island in Bering Strait, the sight of the Siberian mainland warmed my heart....Just inches from my head, he left a 2-inch deep hoof print....but that was wartime....and Christmas 1943 was the most difficult Christmas of my entire life....the storm in my soul was hushed to a gentle breeze....the desire for the Alaskan missions....‘Thou art a priest forever’....an old, two-bladed pocketknife....On that day, one of the major surprises of my life awaited me....that solo drive....surrounded on all sides, as well as top and bottom, by absolutely nothing other than black coal....disembarked at Plymouth...we spoke ‘Frenghish’....longest, hardest, sweatiest day of my priesthood....talk about entering Vienna ‘in style!’....Mass in the submarine *US Quillback*....alone, in the presence of the head man of the Archdiocese of Munich-Freising....the *Scavi*, the catacombs under St. Peter’s....so, smuggling a crucifix out of East Berlin could be a bit risky....I rarely in my whole life felt so utterly relaxed, so totally at ease, so grateful....when Libby Riddles won the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog race....on King Island....Solemn Profession....Therefore be it resolved....most consoling of all my priestly Christmas seasons....well up the Chilkoot Trail....a very rude awakening....a Ruby in my life....Pope John Paul II and Pres. Reagan....And a challenge it proved to be!....the very summit of old Oz himself....when in walks Father General....‘And Gaawd bless you too, Faawther!’....stickdance....the slap of a slimy fishtail in my face....got down to minus 76....Yet another case of mixing the useful with the pleasant....Up comes the stern. And, up comes—the kid’s breakfast....end of a wonderful 2,327-mile trip!...But then I thought to myself, ‘Oh, what the hell! Why not?’....*Koyukon Athabaskan Dictionary*....not a ‘natural’ for prison ministry....a grizzly parading her two cubs past our camp....left a big hole in my personal life....the Dempster Highway....little foxes running around on my tent platform....‘The Great and Sacred Jubilee Year of Our Lord 2000’....Vice President of the United States, The Honorable Richard B. Cheney....proved to be a fairly accurate prophecy...**ALASKANA CATHOLICA**.... the same kindly Providence.”

A Kindly Providence is a comprehensive and richly illustrated autobiography. Fr. Louis L. Renner, S.J., a dedicated missionary in Alaska for 40 years, tells a compelling story of a full and fascinating life of service to the people and the Church in northern Alaska, a great land of natural beauties, challenging elements, and vast wilderness regions.

Beautifully, Fr. Renner interweaves the everyday lives of the people and the Church as he experienced them first hand as a scholar, a teacher, a “bush missionary,” and ever the Jesuit priest. In the course of his long years in Alaska, among other ministries, he taught German and Latin at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, edited the Catholic newsletter *The Alaskan Shepherd*, and had the pastoral care of two different Indian villages on the middle Yukon River. For his scholarly writings, Tony Knowles, the governor of Alaska presented him with the “2002 Governor’s Award for Friend of the Humanities.”

A Kindly Providence, in softcover, spans 583 pages including some 80 illustrations.



ALASKANA CATHOLICA

“Through years of dedicated research, writing, and documentation, Father Renner has created a succinct yet comprehensive guide detailing in total clarity and conciseness the history of the Catholic Church in Alaska. Within this historic documentation the reader can reference over 225 years of Catholicism in Alaska. Father Louis L. Renner, S.J., has accomplished in Alaskana Catholica a momentous feat—a magnum opus.”
Donald J. Kettler, Bishop of Fairbanks

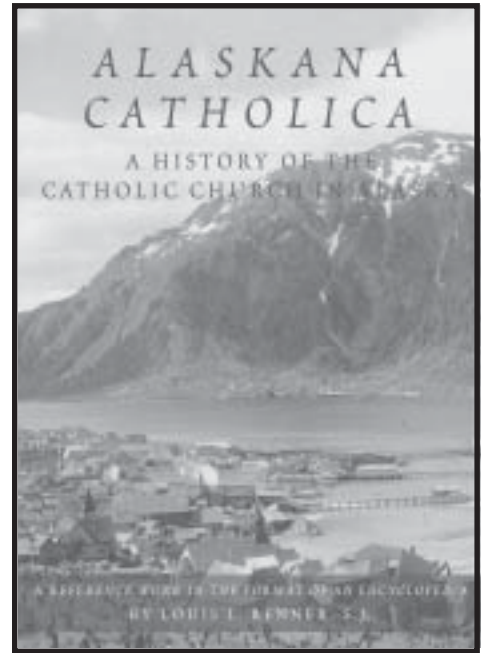
“Father Renner is the foremost authority on Catholic history in Alaska, writing history at its purest, almost exclusively from archival sources.”

Dr. Dorothy Jean Ray
Historian and Anthropologist

**A WONDERFUL
GIFT TO GIVE
OR RECEIVE!**

“This fascinating volume offers an intimate picture of the activities of the Catholic Church’s Alaska Mission, from its beginning in the nineteenth century to the present. It is a fact-filled account of people and places with a wonderful array of characters...Father Renner, with a historian’s concern for the facts and a writer’s eye for a good story, has produced a valuable work.”

Francis Paul Prucha, S.J.,
Professor of History Emeritus , Marquette University



“One of the main intents of this volume,” we read in the author’s Preface, “is to keep alive for posterity the memory of many major Catholic Alaskan figures—clerical and lay, Native and non-Native, living and deceased—by the recording of their lives and deeds.”



Alaskana Catholica (“a unique gift, whether to give or to receive”) is a reference work in the format of an encyclopedia. It offers its readers something more than mere bare-bones reference data and Who’s Who-s. Moreover, some entries have a story about the given entry’s subject attached to them. Some have a “tapestry” woven out of a series of quotations from the mission diary of the given place attached to them. These stories and tapestries give readers a kind of “you are there” experience, of being present at an event of the past or at a place remote to them.

Close to 400 images illustrate *Alaskana Catholica*.

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Father Miroslaw Woznica 
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St. Raphael Church/Fairbanks


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Chaplain Catholic Schools/
House of Prayer


Father Kasparaj Mallavarapu 
St. Mark University Parish/College/Barrow

Father Sean P. Thomson
St. Mark University Parish/College/Prison Ministry

Father Robert Fath 
St. Nicholas Church/North Pole

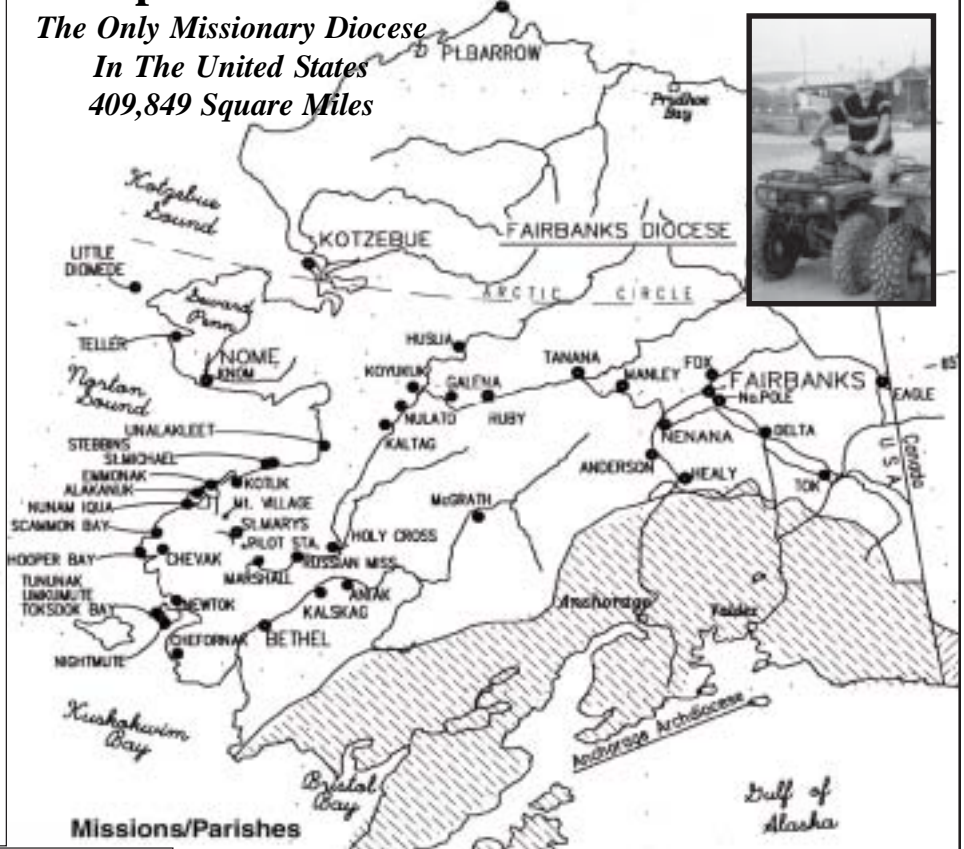
RURAL ROAD PARISHES

Father John B. Martinek 
Delta Junction/Tok


Father Jack de Verteuil 
Healy/Nenana /Denali Park/
Clear AFB

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Father Roman P. Caly 
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St. Michael/Unalakleet

Father Stanislaw Jaszek 
YK Subregion B
Aniak/Pilot Station/Mountain Village/Holy Cross/Kalskag

Father Gregg D. Wood, S.J. 
YK Subregion C
Hooper Bay/Scammon Bay/Chevak


Father Charles J. Peterson, S.J. 
YK Subregion C
Bethel/Marshall/Russian Mission



Father Theodore E. Kestler, S.J. 
YK Subregion D
St. Marys/Nightmute

Father Thomas G. Provinsal, S.J. 
YK Subregion D
Cheforanak /Tununak/Toksook Bay/Nelson Island/Newtok

Father Ross A. Tozzi 
Nome/Kotzebue/Teller/Diomedede

BUSH INTERIOR PARISHES


Father Joseph Hemmer, O.F.M. 
Ruby/Kaltag

Brother Robert J. Ruzicka, O.F.M. 
Brother R. Justin Huber, O.F.M. 
*Nulato/Galena/Koyukuk/Huslia/
McGrath/Tanana
*These parishes currently without a priest visited
by Fairbanks area priests.

**Yukon-Kuskokwim
Subregions
2009-10**



RETIRED

Fr. Timothy L. Sander, O.S.B., 68 years a priest 



Fr. John A. Hinsvark, 43 years a priest

in summary, of Fr. Pepin's career, thus far, *For over 50 years he thanked God daily for calling him to the Society of His Son, to the Society of Jesus. Routinely, on weekends, this Jesuit priest celebrated Mass for the public in three different languages. On weekdays, during the school year, he commuted daily between the Fairbanks House of Prayer and the Fairbanks Catholic schools. In the course of his many years as a Jesuit, he served the Lord and His people in his native New England, in the tropics of Brazil, and in the sub-Arctic regions of northern Alaska. He lived in or visited all 50 states of the Union. He was equally at home on cross-country skis, at the blackboard, and on the keyboard. His musical compositions were performed in Fairbanks and in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Beginning in 1977, he called Alaska home.*



Normand Amadee Pepin was born in Norwood, Massachusetts, on February 26, 1933. He graduated from Jesuit-staffed Boston College High School, in June 1950; he entered the Jesuit novitiate at Shadowbrook, Lenox, Massachusetts, on July 30, 1950. Two years later, on July 31, 1952, the Feast of St. Ignatius Loyola, he became a full-fledged member of the Society of Jesus. He spent two more years at Shadowbrook, taking college level courses, before moving on to three years of philosophical studies at Weston College in Weston, Massachusetts. Father Pepin then taught at Holy Cross College in Worcester, Massachusetts, for a year, then for two at his alma mater, Boston College High. He returned to Weston to make his theological studies and at the end of his third year there, he was ordained a priest, on June 15, 1963. A fourth year of theology at Weston followed. Following this, he volunteered for overseas missions in Brazil, and was accepted. At Volta Redonda, the "Pittsburgh of Brazil," he made his tertianship.

Nancy Cook, long-time Director of the Catholic Schools of Fairbanks, wrote, "I can't thank Father Pepin enough for his long-term dedication to our schools. Father is unique. The students, faculty and staff, as well as parents and families of our students are blessed to have him as such an integral part of our community."

Twice Father Pepin tried to endure the Brazilian climate but was unable to do so. Endowed with a special gift for foreign languages, he was able, while in Brazil, to become quite fluent in Portuguese.

Father Pepin spent the next phase of his career, eight and a half years, at Cheverus High School, in Portland, Maine, where he taught mainly mathematics. He had, by this time, earned an M.A. degree in mathematics at a National Science Foundation Institute. At Cheverus, he was active also in intramural sports and as director of basketball, soccer, football, and street hockey programs. While at

Cheverus, he was active, too, in the Model Cities program, in which he directed, during both the winter and the summer months, tutorial and recreational projects for inner-city boys.

Father Pepin, once again feeling himself strongly drawn to missionary work, looked north. During part of the summer of 1976, he was in Anchorage, ministering at what was then still St. Paul Miki parish, and is now St. Elizabeth Ann Seton parish. In 1977, he returned to Alaska, to spend the year 1977-78 teaching mathematics and Religion at Monroe Catholic High School in Fairbanks. He next devoted four years, 1978-82, to teaching these same subjects to classes consisting mainly of Central Yup'ik Eskimo students attending St. Mary's Mission boarding school on the banks of the Andreafsky River in western Alaska. He spent many pleasant hours cross-country skiing. His four years at St. Mary's he described, almost two decades later, as "the happiest of my life." His stay at St. Mary's was followed by a one-year stay in a parish in Spring Hill, Florida, where his musical talents were in demand.

In 1983, Father Pepin returned to Fairbanks, where, for over two decades, he continued to serve in a variety of capacities,

but mainly as a teacher and chaplain at the Catholic schools. For two and a half years, Father Pepin played the organ and directed the choir at Sacred Heart Cathedral, Fairbanks. For many years, in the House of Prayer, Fairbanks, he offered the Tridentine Mass almost every Sunday. For many years, too, he ministered to the Hispanic community in the Fairbanks area, offering Sunday and feast-day Masses for them. He also offered a variety of adult education courses in Sacred Scripture and the Sacraments, as well as courses based on the New Catechism.

During his theological studies, Father Pepin already composed liturgical music and several organ pieces, which were published. While still at Cheverus, he began work on what he intended to be his life's major, crowning work as a composer, an oratorio on the Passion of Jesus. The Fairbanks Choral Society and members of the Fairbanks Symphony Orchestra first performed this, bearing the title "Obedient Unto Death," on April 12, 1987. The oratorio has been described as "the sublime expression of one priest's love for Christ." The *Pittsburgh Post Gazette* referred to it as a "masterpiece." The work was recommended for a Pulitzer Prize in music. A copy of this work makes its home in the Vatican Library. Father Pepin never took a class in composition. He learned composition by analyzing works of other composers. On March, 10, 2002, the Pittsburgh Concert Chorale performed another of his compositions, "Hadassah." On November 23, 2002, in Fairbanks, "before a packed cathedral," his "Requiem" was performed.

Father Pepin still serves as chaplain to Fairbanks' Catholic schools and as director of the House of Prayer.

FATHER PATRICK D. BERGQUIST

Patrick D. Bergquist was born the fourth of seven children to John J. Bergquist and Mary Ellen Fitzgerald on July 1, 1960, in Ottumwa, Iowa. Patrick, after graduating from Dulaney Senior High School in May 1978, went on to attend Western Maryland College, from which he graduated with a B.A degree in Philosophy in May 1982. During

his college years, he was involved in the Catholic Campus Ministry Program. In 1980, he first began to discern that he might be called to Religious life. While home for Christmas, he spoke with his pastor, Msgr. Paul Cook, whom he found very supportive.

Interested in rural missionary work, Patrick went on a "vocation discernment week," in the summer of 1981, with the Glenmary Home Missioners, headquartered in Cincinnati, Ohio. Upon graduating from college, he joined the Glenmary formation program. In the fall of 1982, he entered the Glenmary collegiate program at the University of Dayton. In the summer of 1983, he entered the Glenmary novitiate in Cincinnati. After the novitiate program collapsed, because his fellow novices left it, he was sent to St. Mark's Mission in Clarksville, Georgia.

During this time, he realized that he was not, after all, being called to be a Glenmary Missioner, and concluded that he was called to the priesthood. After working for a year as Director of Religious Education at St. Thomas Aquinas parish in the inner city of Baltimore, he applied to be accepted into the formation program of the Archdiocese of Baltimore and was accepted

In August 1984, Patrick began his studies for the priesthood at St. Mary's Seminary and University in Baltimore. It was while he was in his second year of theology at St. Mary's that he first entertained the thought of one day serving in the Missionary Diocese of Fairbanks. He thereupon began corresponding with



We want to thank in a special way those of you who have included the Catholic Bishop of Northern Alaska (our legal title) in your bequests and wills, and those of you who, at the time of the deaths of dear ones, have suggested that in their memory contributions be made to the Missions of Northern Alaska or to the Alaskan Shepherd Endowment Fund. A suggested wording: "I give, devise and bequeath to the Catholic Bishop of Northern Alaska, 1312 Peger Road, Fairbanks, Alaska..."

Father David M. Fitz-Patrick, at the time Rector of Sacred Heart Cathedral, Fairbanks, and with Michael J. Kaniecki, S.J., then Bishop of Fairbanks. In the summer of 1986, Patrick made his first visit to Alaska

Patrick returned to Baltimore to finish his studies. In May 1989, he graduated from St. Mary's Seminary with a Master of Divinity degree and a Pontifical Bachelor of Sacred Theology degree. As part of his formation program, he spent a two-year internship in the inner city parish of St. Francis of Assisi in Baltimore. At the end of his internship, he was ready for Holy Orders. On February 19, 1990, he was ordained a deacon; and, on May 26th of that same year, a priest. He received both ordinations at the hands of William Cardinal Keeler.

Father Bergquist's first assignment as a priest was that of an associate pastor at Our Lady of the Fields parish in Millersville, Maryland. During his fourth year at Our Lady of the Fields, Father Bergquist, felt called to serve the Lord and His Church on the missions in northern Alaska. He again contacted Bishop Kaniecki. With the permission of a gracious Cardinal Keeler, he visited northern Alaska a second time, with a view to possibly serving there one day.

Beginning in January 1994, Father Bergquist experienced periods of ministry at Sacred Heart Cathedral parish in Fairbanks, at St. Joseph's parish in Nome, and in the villages of Stebbins and St. Michael. These exposures to ministry in urban and rural Alaska convinced him that he was, indeed, called to serve in Alaska. After returning to Our Lady of the Fields parish, he asked Cardinal Keeler to release him for three years to the Diocese of Fairbanks.

In late August 1995, Father Bergquist began his formal ministry in

Alaska as the Rector of Sacred Heart Cathedral. Two years later, desiring to experience life and ministry in the Alaskan bush, he was assigned pastor of St. Berchmans parish in Galena and visiting priest to its dependent station, St. Francis Regis mission in Huslia. To his regret, his three-year, "on loan," stay in the North ended all too soon. In July 1998, he had to return to the Archdiocese of Baltimore, where he then served for a brief time in the parish of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel in Essex, Maryland.

The "call of the North," however, gave him no rest in the East; and, after getting permission from Cardinal Keeler for an undetermined leave of absence from the Archdiocese of Baltimore, he soon found himself back in Alaska again. In October 1998, he became pastor of St. Raphael's parish just to the north of Fairbanks. After much prayer and discernment on his part, Father Bergquist decided that he wanted to serve God's people in Alaska on a permanent basis. In February 2002, he was formally incardinated into the Diocese of Fairbanks and currently still serves as pastor of St. Raphael's.

FATHER ROBERT FATH

Robert attended West Valley High School, in Fairbanks, before continuing on to the University of Alaska Fairbanks to complete his undergraduate core requirements. After a semester at Thomas Jefferson University, in Philadelphia, Robert returned to the University of Alaska Fairbanks, where he completed his degree in psychology, graduating cum laude, in 2001. He enrolled as a first year



Correction in August Shepherd: On the final page, the caption reads, "Representatives from the Native community, Winnie Reeves, Marie Yaska, and Bob Maguire present Father Fred Bayler with handmade gifts." The representatives were Marie Yaska, Winnie Atwood and Sam Demientieff.

Theology student at Mt. Angel Seminary in St. Benedict, Oregon, in 2002. Deacon Robert Fath graduated in May of 2007, with his heart and his vocation directed towards Fairbanks and his ordination to the priesthood at Sacred Heart Cathedral—his home parish. Years earlier, Robert celebrated his Baptism, First Reconciliation, First Eucharist, and Confirmation inside the very Cathedral that he would celebrate Holy Orders. The Cathedral was filled with over 300 parishioners and friends, including, 2 Bishops, 21 Priests, 2 Brothers, 12 Sisters, and 8 Deacons, who packed the Cathedral on June 1, 2007, to rejoice and witness the ordination to the priesthood of hometown boy, Father Robert Fath. A procession of 21 priests, 12 Sisters, 2 Brothers, 8 Deacons, 1 Seminarian, 2 Acolytes, and 2 Servers preceded Bishop of Fairbanks, Donald J. Kettler, and Bishop of Juneau, Bishop Michael Warfel. Fourth degree Knights of Columbus honor guard led the entire procession.

Bishop Kettler greeted the congregation warmly thanking the gathered for joining in the witness and celebration of Robert Fath's ordination. Following the Gospel, Diocesan Engineer, Deacon Paul Perreault, called forth Robert the candidate. Diocesan Director of Vocations, Fr. Ross Tozzi, presented Robert to Bishop Kettler. Bishop Kettler called for consent of the people by praying: *Relying on the help of the Lord God and our Savior Jesus Christ, we choose this man, our brother, for the Order of the Priesthood.* All present responded their consent with, *Thanks be to God!*

Bishop Kettler followed with his homily and a litany calling on those who have gone before us in faith. Following the Litany, Bishop Don and the 21 priests present, imposed hands on Robert, praying in silence. Fr. Pat Bergquist vested Robert with stole and chasuble, while the choir sang, *Veni, Sancti Spiritus.* Bishop Don then anointed Robert's hands with holy

"We are blessed to have so many supporters who make our work possible. I want to especially thank those of you who remember us in your prayers. Donations provide tangible benefits, but the power of prayer and the Lord's grace is our bedrock. Thank you with all our hearts."

Chrism. After the altar was prepared, Robert's parents, Robert Sr. and Anna, presented the bread and wine for Mass. Deacon David Brown, also a week away from his own ordination in Oregon, prepared the wine and presented the chalice to the Bishop, who then presented them to Robert, saying, *Receive the oblation of the holy people, to be offered to God. Understand what you do, imitate what you celebrate, and conform your life to the mystery of the Lord's cross.* Bishop Kettler then offered to Robert the fraternal sign of peace and his 21 brother priests followed. Bishop Kettler invited all priests to join him in the sanctuary for the Eucharistic Prayer. At the altar were Bishop Kettler, Deacon Brown, and Father Robert Fath.

When Bishop Kettler presented our new diocesan priest, Father Robert Fath, the congregation stood and clapped for what seemed like an eternity. Whistles of joy and a few whoops and hollers sounded from the back. Truly, an overwhelming feeling of pride and joy filled the Cathedral and resounded into the streets.

At the end of his first Mass, Father Robert presented his Mother Anna with his Christening hat, which he had used the evening before to wipe the Chrism oil off his hands. Father Robert explained that it was customary that this same hat be buried with the mother of a priest, so that, upon her entry into heaven, she could present it to St. Peter as proof that she had given a son to God as a priest.

Father Robert was immediately assigned, much to his joy, to the very Cathedral in which he had received the Sacraments of his youth and Ordination to the priesthood. As of 2009, Father Robert has been assigned "down the road," to St. Nicholas Parish, in North Pole.

—More about NORTHERN ALASKAN priests to follow!

--Bishop Donald J. Kettler

Anna Fath, Robert's mother and parish nurse at the Cathedral, recalls that, "Robert knew when he was 12 that he wanted to be a priest. He came home from school one day, and very matter-of-factly announced to me that he needed to be a priest. It did not, for the most part, surprise me. He had always been a compassionate, respectful, focused, and prayerful child. But at that moment, he was so sincere about his newly announced intention that I had to convince him the priesthood would wait, at least for him to put away his books and eat dinner!"