

July 8th-15th 1951

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*Visitation Report of* CLONTARE



COMMUNITY: Brs Gerard O'Shea (S) Matthew Thyer (S S) & (B) Bruno Doyle (C) Lasarian O'Doherty John O'Brien Alonzo Angus and Baylon Frewen. Br Lasarian is a candidate for Final Profession, Br John is a T.P. and Brs Alonzo & Baylon are Coadjutors.

OBSERVANCE@ The Superior fresh from his six years in Highton has adopted the Spiritual Exercises Time Table that he found so successful over there. The Community rises at 5.45 and there is nothing to interfere with Prayers or Meditation as the boys rise at 6.45. Br ~~Alonzo~~ Alonzo leaves at the end of the first point to get up the Dairy boys. When the new dairy with the milking machines is ready this practice will be unnecessary as the milking will be done after breakfast. Lecture is read at the end of breakfast. Particular Examen is at 12.35, dinner at 12.45 and all the Exercises are held after dinner with Br Alonzo supervising the boys. He makes his Exercises later. This arrangement ensures a full muster of the Community except one at the Spirituals. Tea is at six at which Lecture is read. The resident chaplain dines with the Brothers but in practice it works out that he is with them only in the evening. Night Prayers are said with the boys at 8.15 and complete at 9.30. Spiritual Conference is studied at supervision of the study rooms.

Monthly Retreat is held on Sunday morning. Accusation on Friday night. The Sunday Conference has been omitted but the Superior has promised to have it regularly at 12. Council Meetings have not been held. Here again the Superior has promised amendment. The Acts & Rule Book, which cannot be read because of the presence of the priest (who may be there for the first part of breakfast) will in future be read in the Chapel. Unpunctuality is the worst fault of the Community especially at meal times. Breakfast time is most uncertain and as no signal announces it there has been a straggling attendance. The Superior has promised breakfast at 8 and the siren to signal the time.

The Sub-Superior's health is rapidly deteriorating. He still has ~~a~~ much of his former energy but he finds it hard to retain his food and there is frequent vomiting after meals. He works hard and is a great support to the Superior. He is frequently absent in the morning but the Brothers understand that he is a sick man. I arranged for a visit to the Specialist for him and left word that if his health did not improve sanction for his staying in in the mornings should be sought from the Provincial.

The Community is a very happy family under the strict but sympathetic rule of the Superior. All are cooperating fully with him. He has made a very favourable impression on the Archbishop and on the resident Chaplain, a great friend of the Brothers.

The over-the-page points were left with the Superior at the end of the Visitation. Many of the issues raised he has already given his attention to but I recorded them as a support to his policy.



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THE COADJUTORS: Neither Br Alonzo nor Br Baylon is ideal for the work in hand. Br Alonzo supervises most of the farm activities and while he has the best intentions he lacks that practicality necessary for success. Br Laserian relieves him of much of the responsibility of the dairy. The Superior keeps Br Alonzo up to the work and gets a reasonable amount out of him. His real worth is in truck-driving and in supervision of boys when the others are not free. He excels in this. Br Baylon does most of the transport work when he is in good health. He takes the working boys at night for Technical instruction.

THE WORKING BOYS. The general impression is that they are a poor type intellectually although I heard nothing, apart from a remark from Br Alonzo, against their moral rectitude. Unfortunately the Chaplain is too much taken up with his other duties, very heavy in themselves, to give them much attention. The facilities for Confession for them and for the school lads are not ideal. I was surprised to hear that the workers received no instruction of any kind during the week, I mean no Religious Instruction. I left direction with the Superior that they be taken for at least one talk a week.

Br Hugh in the kindness of his heart took in two men imbeciles, one who has a brother in the district and the other from Wandering Brook. There is danger that Clontarf might become a refuge for such. I took no direct action in their regard but the Superior is not too happy in their presence.

HEALTH OF BROTHERS: I did not have Visitation with Br Baylon who underwent a very serious operation last week for a diseased malformation between kidney and bladder that has been poisoning his system for years and has even affected his heart functions. The operation has been successful but he has gone through a bad time. The Superior I have already mentioned. Br Alonzo suffers from arthritis in the hip with what he thinks is a diseased bone. With the aid of drugs he keeps going.

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS: Br Hugh had the Chapel done up inside giving it a much improved appearance with the exception of the sanctuary. The blue and the concept generally there do not appeal to me. Br Laserian has earned the highest praise from Fr Stinson for his sacrificial work. All within the house is in first class order - dormitories, parlours, dining rooms etc. The immediate surroundings of the main buildings are most creditable but farther afield there are unsightly dumps and rubble heaps. The Superior has all this in hand & has already done much. The Archbishop speaks of the great work done by "ppor Br Crowley" and is delighted with his successor. A box of the best cigars on Field Day has sent his stocks up. Fr Stinson says His Grace nearly got a heart attack when the gift was made but has not stopped talking of it since.

*S. R. Young*



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FINANCE: Br Hugh spent freely but it must be said that as far as the inside set-up is concerned he got the worth of his money. He paid scant attention to anything outside the main buildings and the approach; and the farm and farm buildings were neglected. That is where the present Superior's work will come in.

1950 Income was £23203 Expenditure £26077 Sources of income: Private cases £1660 State Wards £2204 Migrants (State) £1156 Migrants (Imp) £1859 State Ward & Migrant Outfit £284 Field Day £1760 Donations £208 Bequests £1200 Sale of Pigs £486 Sheep Skins £453 Child Endowment £5757 Lotteries £2136 (Maintenance) Sale of Pines £330 Land Sales £1022 Repayment Tardun Loan £2000.

Chief items of expenditure: Buildings which includes resident carpenters' and bricklayer's (Joe Pascoli) wages £10146 Motor fuel & maintenance £632 Bedding etc £912

Br Hugh has complicated matters by making out the financial Statement for 1950 up to Feb 12th 1951. On that date the O/D was £4463 Outstanding monies to come in at that date were £2158. The O/D on June 30th '51 was £1032 There was a Bank Credit in No 2 A/C £538

1951 RENOVATIONS: School Room partitions, removed by military, restored. New Boiler House and two boilers. Foot-Wash room cemented. Old Shower Room floored and converted to Locker Room. Vegetable House constructed. Store Room refloored. Brothers' Refectory & Staff Room (Dining) reconditioned. Cement Paths between School & Hall. Windows improved in Tech. School and Fluorescent installed. Baker's living quarters prepared. Fowl Pens roofed. New Pump & Main to supply farm. UNDER CONSTRUCTION: New Dairy. Cool Room. Boys' Primitive Lavatories (pans, cisterns & urinals done at the surprisingly small cost of about £400). General repairs to stockyard & piggery. Killing Shed within range of water. New Laundry. Pump to supply garden & Boys' Lavatories. Painting, furnishing & equipping of Metal Rooms. Hall renovation.

I have every confidence that the present Superior will spend wisely and will get the money. Field Day this year netted £2000

Subsidies have risen to a total of £1/14/4 per boy with the promise of another rise in the near future. Wages paid: Joe Jackson £6 Baker £12 Joe Pascoli £11 2 Carpenters £12 & £6 Painter (Pensioner) £4 Cook £9 and Peter K. £6 Farm Hands £5/10/- & £4 Bootmaker 5 Laundress £8/12/6 Total £89 per week.

Priest's Stipend is £120 and the three Sisters get £50 each and all expenses.

THE SISTERS: There has been some dissatisfaction mainly caused, the Mother Provincial, says, by a disgruntled Sister who has been transferred. The Mother Provincial is now on the staff. They would prefer to be on the Mission Field, their real work, but the Arch has insisted on their continuing. There is a movement on now to get Hungarian Sisters from China to replace the Sisters here and in Castle dare, five to come here and four to Castle dare. At present the St John of God Sisters do the Infirmary dormitory, dining room, + sewing



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Br John O'Brien: I found it necessary to restrict his use of the car. He had been in the habit of taking it to Highgate School in connection with Eisteddfod work. The feeling among the Clontarf Brothers was that he was too eager to "get behind the wheel". In view of his dangerous connections in Highgate I told him he was not to drive the car at any time unless he had a socius. The only one without a licence in the Community is the Superior. I have not much faith in the stability of Br John. He would be better away from Perth and out of a residential school.

TRUCK ACCIDENT: In the second half of last year Brs Alonzo and Laserian were returning from the Saw Mills with a load of light timber. They had a number of boys in the truck. Coming through the Pines short-cut (Private road) Br Alonzo gave the wheel to Br Laserian who was only learning to drive. Br L. looked around when called from the back. Being inexperienced he dragged the wheel with him, went off the road into the sand, with the result that the truck rolled over twice. Some of the boys were thrown heavily on to the bitumen but clear of the truck. Others landed in the sand and were unhurt. Fortunately there was no one killed but a couple of the boys spent a long time in hospital. Total cost was £350 for hospital treatment and £150 for the truck. No insurance could be claimed but the Company gave £75.

THE SCHOOL: There are 164 boys in school and 15 working boys. Grade IV has 36 (Mr Jackson) V has 51 (Br John) VI has 38 (Br Laserian) Ist Year 23 (Br Bruno) 2nd Year (16) (Br Matthew) There are 3 boys in Junior at Aquinas. In most classes there is evidence of very retarded boys but in First Year the work covered and the bright response was well above the average of what one finds in Colleges. The State Inspector was present on two days during my visit. He complained about the position in Mr Jackson's class and recommended that he be given other work to do as he is only "a promoted bandmaster". As this Inspector had been going outside his commission in speaking about Castledare to a priest in the district (I heard this from Fr. Stinson) I had a quarter hour's talk with him on the subject.

Boys are classed as follows: Child Welfare 43 Migrants (Govt assisted) 79 Private boys 57. Of the 57 classed private about 20 are unassisted migrants. Countries of origin are: England Ireland Scotland Wales Malta Poland Hungary Denmark. This and the case histories of the others make it easy to understand the retardation. The Brothers should get out their own syllabus in these institutions to meet this position. There are 7 non-Catholics. There is a good standard of discipline. Deprivation of privileges is the principal means employed. Singing and voice culture generally are taught. Greater care should be given to manners at table. I advocated a monitor system with concentration on the essentials of table etiquette, a monitor to be responsible for each small table. Technical work is successfully taught in wood and within a few weeks they will be ready to take up metal work.