

# Leaving Rome

Although I enjoyed being in Rome, and the job I held was a privilege and an honor and allowed for much personal growth, it was time to go back to my first assignment, one that was always close to my heart—Marist College. When I first left, it had been a terrific shock because it had been so unexpected. It came as a blow to be called away when the crisis of organizing our college had just started. It is true that we had just been granted the charter and that we had the support of a tremendously dedicated faculty with a lively and stimulated group of students.

I was leaving all this in very good hands. Linus Foy was a gem, hardworking and very efficient, the right man and at the right time. He was the educated professional that I had never been given the chance to become. Linus had been part of the initial growth of the college and had a good vision as to where we were heading. I was extremely grateful that he kept so closely in touch with me by letter and by phone, and he also respected the fact that I had had my hands full, being extremely busy with the new assignment of the division of the Province into two separate administrative units. I was then in charge of ten countries of Asia and twelve countries of Africa, which expanded to seventeen.

Brother Linus kept me well informed both on the decision to admit women to the college and on our connection with IBM as well as with the general growth. He also caught me completely by surprise when he invited me to attend the graduation to be awarded an honorary doctorate. The further surprise was the dedication of the Fontaine building that summer, which was named after my family.

Now, in 1976, leaving Italy and especially Rome was not too bad after all, as I was heading back home. But I could not just leave without gratitude for the wonderful experience in the growth of the Institute and its wide vision. I had been there from 1958 to 1976, visiting many Brothers all over the world, experiencing new growth and new expansions. I also experienced the great courage of Brothers facing death in mission areas. It was a time to count my many blessings, the blessings of working with other congregations, of being able to help get a special passport for travel facilities, of the special privilege of being a courier for the Holy See, and to face the fantastic work of the Church in many mission countries and poor areas. Although I never set foot in South America, I experienced its zeal in the many Brothers who passed through Rome on the way to special training programs. I did manage to visit Vietnam to inspect a congregation that wanted to join us just before the war started there. It was a pleasure to assist the many Brothers working to help our worldwide work.