

Brother Heribert, 1918-1922

Within seven months after Brother Heribert began his second administration, the armistice was signed to end World War I. The peace and prosperity in America which followed brought greater stability and prosperity to the American Province. It was during this period Brother Heribert exerted his greatest effort to achieve a more stable and consolidated province.

This concern resulted in the closing of several schools. Small staffs were withdrawn from two New York City schools: St. Paul in 1918, and St. Ignatius Loyola in 1921. The last of the Manitoba communities, St. Pierre Jolys, returned to the United States in 1921.(17.) The consequent retreating boundaries of the United States Province directed the Provincial Council's attention toward a greater expansion of existing schools. In spite of this main interest, a new area for the Marist apostolate was opened. In 1919 Brother Heribert sent Brother Paul Stratonic and a community of six brothers to Savannah, Georgia, to begin the staffing of what became Marist School for Boys.

The concern for reorganization also inspired construction and real estate developments. The needs of the Hermitage communities in Poughkeepsie were met by the addition of a four-story annex to the Juniorate building. Provincial House funds were used for this frame structure and for the purchase of sites for another juniorate and another academy in order to relieve the congestion in the overcrowded St. Ann's Academy in New York City. The first of these sites was a twenty-two acre property in northeastern New York City, which was purchased for \$109,000.(18.) The second site was purchased in 1921 in Tyngsboro, Massachusetts where a proposed juniorate would offer facilities nearer home to the New England candidates for the brotherhood.

Another feature of the reorganization period was a greater Marist participation in secondary education. At the time there were but two high school departments conducted by the brothers: St. Ann's Academy (established in 1897), and St. Ann's Hermitage. A high school department was started in 1907 in Lowell, but the lack of applicants closed it shortly afterward. In 1920, the pastors in Winooski, Vermont; Lawrence, Massachusetts; and Augusta, Georgia asked for brothers to teach in their proposed high schools. Due to limitations of personnel a favorable answer to all requests was impossible. But attempts to establish high schools in the existing Marist communities were made. Both grammar schools in Lowell and Lawrence, Massachusetts inaugurated secondary education in 1920. Within twelve years both of these departments failed, because of lack of funds and lack of applicants. A few years later these same schools re-established high school departments which are flourishing today. In 1923 a ninth year was added at Ecole Hevey. Due to lack of applicants the effort to begin a high school in this Manchester school proved futile. It was closed at the end of the 1926 scholastic year.(19.)

An unusual concern was added to those mentioned during Brother Heribert's second administration. An influenza epidemic spread over the United States adding to concerns of provincial personnel. In Manchester, the brothers left their classrooms to tend the sick in the local hospital. In Poughkeepsie the sickness also curtailed classes, and caused the death of one of the brothers. The February 2, 1920 entry in the Provincial House annals records:

The epidemic of influenza prevalent throughout the United States at this time, lays low scores of our students and teachers at the Hermitage. Two sisters from St. Francis Hospital volunteered their services to care for the sick at the Novitiate. Sister Madeleine spent thirty-six consecutive hours by the bedside of Brother Michel Ange just before his death. . . The devotedness and attachment of Doctor Charles McCambridge to our community were very much in evidence as he plowed his way on foot, two or three times a day, through waist-high snow drifts to tend to our sixty victims of the flu.(20.)

Important Marist visitors brought encouragement to the brothers during this administration. The first was Brother Cesidius, the founder of the first North American community at Iberville, Canada. From his original community of six brothers had sprung two provinces with almost five hundred brothers. This visit commemorated his diamond jubilee as a Marist. Two years later Rev. Brother Angelicus, Assistant General, conducted the canonical visitation of the Province. Also Very Reverend Brother Stratonic, sponsor of the

American missions, now Superior General of the Institute, visited the Province. Both brothers were satisfied with the progress made since 1911 and the plans of the reorganization period for future Marist developments.

Brother Heribert had the opportunity to report on the progress of the American Province on his trip to the Mother House in Italy in 1920. The occasion was the convocation of the General Chapter of the Institute. He and Brother Leo, Director of St. Ann's Academy in New York City, were among the sixty-one delegates from twenty-two Marist provinces of the Institute who attended. Following the election of Brother Diogene as Superior General, the general problems of the Institute were discussed. At the end of the Chapter, a table of statistics issued indicated that there were 4,513 Marist Brothers conducting 587 schools in the Congregation. (21.) The United States Province ranked ninth with one hundred and sixty-six brothers and seventy-eight candidates in the houses of studies.

On Christmas day 1922, Brother Heribert, the last of the French provincials, turned the administration of the growing province over to Brother Leo. In the years that followed, Brother Heribert was named the Director General of the Hermitage communities in Poughkeepsie (1922-1928, 1931-1934) . After a three ear tenure as accountant at Mount St. Michael in New York City (1928-1931 he returned to spend his remaining days at the Hermitage. He died in 1939, a year after he had retired to the Provincial House infirmary.