

John Duggan Autobiography

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. EARLY LIFE AND EDUCATION
2. FINDING THE LORD: WITH THE BROTHERS
3. CHANGE OF DIRECTION: ST. PATRICK'S SEMINARY
4. SERVING THE POOR
5. GETTING TO KNOW ARCHBISHOP MITTY
6. THE SPANISH MISSION BAND
7. PLAYERS OF THE BAND
8. DECOTO, OUR LOBSTER FACTORY
9. AGRICULTURAL WORKERS ASSOCIATION
10. TROUBLES AND THE DEMISE OF THE BAND
11. BISHOPS' COMMITTEE FOR MIGRANT WORKERS
12. DUGGAN WITH THE BIG THINKERS
13. ECUMENISM BEFORE ITS TIME
14. MARCHING WITH MARTIN LUTHER KING
15. PAPAL VOLUNTEERS IN LATIN AMERICA
16. ROME AND VATICAN II
17. RETURN TO STOCKTON: PASTOR OF ST. LINUS
18. TO BE OR NOT TO BE
19. TO CESAR WHAT IS CESAR'S
20. THE CHALLENGE OF A FAMILY
21. SEPA AND ADULT EDUCATION
22. TRACY HIGH AND TITLE ONE
23. EPILOGUE

MY MIND TO ME A KINGDOM IS

INTRODUCTION

It has been said that everyone's life is worth the telling. Whether it is worth the writing and the reading is another question. The story of my life may be the exception to the first statement, but be that as it may, I must tell that story for better or for worse, if only for my own peace of mind. The title of the story, "My mind to me a kingdom is," came to me at an age when I first discovered that I had a mind. I can no longer remember the author of that poem, but I can never forget the profundity of that line. My mind to me has been a kingdom, albeit confused and befuddled at times. Perhaps it was Brother Leo at St. Mary's

College who first made me aware of the gift of my mind and its potential, which he called the challenge of education.

Since that discovery, now going on 50 years, life has been a series of ups and downs, with joy and sorrow, happiness and frustration; but overall, the development of my mind through the inspiration of St. Mary's College has been my greatest satisfaction. Indeed, if this work demands a dedication, it is to Brother Leo and James L. Hagerty that I dedicate it.

CHAPTER 1: EARLY LIFE AND EDUCATION

I was born in San Francisco on August 30, 1915. My parents, Thomas Duggan and Maryanne Dillon, were both from County Kerry, Ireland. They met in San Francisco shortly after the earthquake and the fire, and it was there that they brought their family of six into a world of poverty and struggle just prior to the end of World War I. I was the babe of the family, and the name Babe stuck with me much longer than I preferred. The twins, born before me, died shortly after their birth, and it was Father Ralph Hunt who baptized those twins on a cold winter's night in the old house where we lived. It was because of that that I was christened Ralph, a name I never cared for, and I was called by that name until I discovered that John came before Ralph. To the confusion of some of my friends, I have insisted on being called John since that discovery.

My sister, Marie, and brothers, Mike and Tom, may someday read this as a surprise and I hope with no worse reaction. They came before me and had to put up with many of the events I now write about. I belatedly beg their pardon and tolerance.

At the time of my birth, my father was working for what was then called The United Railway company, which was later changed to the Market Street Railway Company. In 1916, the employees of this company went on strike and were fired. My father lost his job as a result of the strike but was fortunate enough to be hired by the Municipal Railway, which was just beginning service. Father Peter Yorke, then pastor of St. Peter's, our parish, had supported and encouraged the strikers, and from these early years, the Duggans were pro-union and antiscab. Some of our relatives had stuck with the scabs, and this was long a sore point within our family. My prejudices against them stayed with me a long time.

In our family, our sense of justice had its beginning from this event. Our sense of justice didn't come alone from our parents; they reflected it as the teaching of the Church, which they received from the powerful sermons of Father Yorke. He was an exceptional leader of his people, and his like has not been seen since then. I was only 11 when he died in 1926, but his image and character stay with me to this day. How he failed to reproduce himself in the priests who followed him, I still don't understand. Archbishop Mitty was a strong man too, but he left no great followers. Institutions seem to fear strong leadership.

That early teaching and training must have been important for me, for my sense of justice grew with the years, and it made me a rebel against injustice ever since. Father Yorke was gentle with his people, and while he may have scared off the timid with his conviction and his strength, he was a power and an inspiration to those who listened to his words. Historically, he was one of the real founders of unionism in San Francisco. Feeble attempts have been made over the years to glorify his name, and I remember those last years I spent at St. Peter's when all, young and old, worked so hard for the Peter Yorke Memorial. The funds that we raised and the memory of this great man seem to have diminished with the years.

The old neighborhood where we were raised had a definite formative influence on me, some of it not altogether for the good. We lived close to the corner of 25th and Kansas Streets, a block away from the firehouse. It, together with the old Market St. Railway car barn on 24th Street, and the San Francisco Hospital a few blocks to the north, stand out in my memory. I broke my arm by that firehouse, and it was the firemen who picked me up (I fell skating) and got the ambulance, and it was at that hospital that I spent time recuperating. Sweet and sour memories go together.

Robbery and prostitution were part of the Potrero gang, and while neither I nor my brothers were part of those gangs (as far as I now recall), they did have an influence on all of us. While I was only 12 at the time we moved from Potrero Hill, I was streetwise beyond my years. In the opinion of my parents, I was learning altogether too quickly.

A short distance from where we lived, there lived another Mrs. Duggan, and she, in the parlance of the day, ran a house. At the time, neither I nor the little gang I ran with understood what was going on, but we all knew our mothers did a lot of talking about this other Mrs. Duggan and her friends. This madam Duggan used to call me to do her shopping; whether I gained preferential treatment by my name, I know not, but she paid well, and my mother, who was aware of my enterprise, didn't interfere with it. Father Yorke never spoke of this kind of thing when he condemned injustice.

Shortly after the death of Father Yorke in 1926, the Irish began moving away from St. Peter's. In our case, our moving was not altogether due to this; I think I had a lot more to do with it. I was then in the sixth grade at St. Peter's and I wasn't the least bit interested in what was going on in school. I regarded that institution as something of a plot between teachers and parents to persecute little boys. I think I loved my parents, but why they made me go to school, when there were so many fun things to do, puzzled me. Teachers, I knew, couldn't be trusted.

Besides my poor school record, which was miserable, there was the problem of my fighting, which was getting worse as time went on. My brothers and others in our area had their share of fights, but with me, fighting was something special. I was growing proud of my ability to beat the other guy. When my mother confronted me with the contrast of my

poor school record with that of my peers, my proud response was the reply, "But I can lick them."

I remember one particular occasion which probably became the principal reason for moving when we did. On that particular day, my mother was at Stiles' butcher shop on 24th Street, when a fight developed between one of the Flagherty twins and myself. We began in front of the Roosevelt Theatre, and the gathered crowd soon blocked the street car coming up 24th Street. My mother and the butcher were attracted by the crowd, and she began declaiming against the rowdiness of the neighborhood just about the time I emerged from the fight wiping the blood from my wounds. "Glory be to God! That's my Babe!" she cried out. 'Tis said that Mr. Stiles laughed so heartily that little further business was done in his butcher shop that day. On the way to our house, my mother resolved that it was high time we moved from the scene of my crimes. It was around this time too that our little gang had broken into a house where we thought the people had moved out; they hadn't completed their move and they returned to catch us red-handed. I escaped jail and probation, but not by much, so my protest against our moving carried little weight in the Duggan decision to move. A new school and a different environment were thought to be what I needed, and quickly.

In my own confused feelings, that move was something of a disaster. Even at that early age, I felt our move was motivated by other reasons, which I was scarcely able to express or understand. Somewhat later, I concluded it had to do with the need of the Irish immigrants to better themselves in the eyes of their neighbors and relatives. They had to become other than what they had been; Father Yorke could have prevented them from fleeing to new places, but there was no Father Yorke now. He had held them together and had given them a strong sense of their importance and their dignity; the products of St. Peter's in his eyes and in the eyes of his people were second to none. With his death the parish and the school went downhill quickly. His people concluded that they could only improve themselves by moving away from the Mission and the Potrero; little did they understand their need of roots. I felt this need but couldn't express it. Somehow I felt that the Irish were moving to other parts of town to escape from themselves, and that they could never do. They wanted so to improve themselves that they destroyed much of what they were and had been. As much as they had condemned their English oppressors of the past, they unconsciously envied them and wanted to become like them. Material status had become all-important to them, and they had lost any confidence of improving themselves in their old neighborhoods. Culture and traditions of the past were forgotten; the fashionable house and the better car became all-important. I suspected these as the reasons for the mass exodus of the Irish from their old neighborhoods, but at that early age, I could not express my feelings and thoughts on the matter. They stayed with me, however, and they led me to a suspicion and dislike of the Irish who gave up what they should have preserved and cherished.

To me, the old areas offered something that the new districts could not fulfill. I felt uprooted and confused by what happened when we moved, but I couldn't share my

misery, nor could I express it. To be sure, there were positive advantages: my new neighborhood and new school put me on the straight and narrow, and I began to learn to read, and fighting became a thing of the past for the most part. A good sociologist could explain this far better than I, but I know I was deeply hurt at the time.

My new school was Sacred Heart at Fell and Fillmore Streets. It was there that I began to read, but the mysteries of grammar and arithmetic were still beyond me. Our new neighborhood was the Sunset District, a short distance from Golden Gate Park, which I learned to enjoy and appreciate.

On graduation from grammar school, I entered the Christian Brothers novitiate in Martinez. The reason for my vocation, if such there was, is still beyond me to explain. I suspect it had a lot to do with the coffee and pastry the Brothers fed us after we played baseball against their teams.

CHAPTER 2. FINDING THE LORD: WITH THE BROTHERS

My last years at Sacred Heart School had a salutary effect on me in many ways. Besides learning to read, albeit limitedly, I came to know the Lord in my own simple way. My anger and fighting were now in the past. I spend the first two years of high school with the Brothers in Martinez before they moved to Napa. My lasting impression of Martinez was the smell of its oil refineries and the occasional explosions and fires that happened periodically when things went wrong with the oil processing. Martinez was easily forgotten once we moved to the beautiful Napa hills where the new novitiate was built. The move to Napa took place in 1932, and I spent two years there before becoming a novice Brother. My lasting impression of high school was the teaching of Brother Patrick; he got through to my mind as no teacher before him had ever done. He was far and away the best teacher I ever had. His teaching gave me confidence in my ability to learn; but unfortunately, he didn't teach all the subjects I needed to know, and I discovered that good teachers were few and far between.

Athletics, especially football, provided an outlet for my fighting disposition and anger. Tackling an opponent with all the force I was capable of became a joy I had never anticipated, but it also taught me the meaning of the expression "punch drunk." After high school, I entered the novitiate proper and received the habit and the name of Brother Joseph.

That novitiate year with its early rising, frequent prayer, and regular manual labor was a happy and important one for me. Those many hours of prayer and meditation developed my mind and led me to understand and question things I never knew existed. It was during this year that I wrote to a friend who had gone on before me to St. Mary's College. He responded in a long letter to the many questions I asked him; for me, his explanation of reality was invaluable. My friend's name was Barry Fagin. He later left the Brothers, but for me at that particular time, he was a godsend. It was he who first quoted the line of poetry

“My mind to me a kingdom is,” and it was the meaning of that line that turned my life around. I began to understand the meaning of life and the reality around me, and that made all the difference in the world as time went on. I began to understand myself in relation to the world about me: physical life had power and beauty, but intellectual and spiritual life were far and above the physical order. Until this time I had not understood the importance of my mind, and life was complicated and confusing; henceforth, difficulties would remain, but the well-trained mind made these more acceptable and easier to deal with. In the fall of 1934, I entered St. Mary’s College as a freshman. I began my academic career by flunking English A. Brother Patrick never had me in English, and the teachers I did have in that subject failed to reach me.

After that initial failure, I began to hit the books and studied in earnest. Brother Leo, well known to Bay Area audiences, was one of my first teachers. He taught a class, an introduction to study, that was a real help to students of my background. I followed him closely in his lectures and poetry readings, and it was his message that formed my study habits henceforth. I remember well his “To every man there openeth a high road and a low. The high soul takes the high road, and the low soul takes the low. In between on the misty flats there walketh you and I, but to every man there openeth a high road and a low.”

For one of his classes I wrote a paper in which I asked his response to difficulties I had been encountering. He returned the paper with the suggestion that I read and reflect on Oliver Wendell Holmes’ “Chambered Nautilus.” That poem became an inspiration and a help to me and a milestone in my education. I still remember those lines: “Build thee yet more stately mansions, O my soul, as the swift seasons roll, ’till thou at last art free.” From that time, poetry became a joy and a consolation, and those years I spent in college were some of the happiest of my life. St. Mary’s was not the greatest of schools, but it was a good school and offered an opportunity for an appreciation of the liberal arts to those willing to accept it. Under Brother Leo and Professor Hagerty of the philosophy department, I grew as a person: on graduation I won the philosophy medal, the first mark of distinction my education ever brought me. As a teacher, Professor Hagerty did not satisfy all. He asked more questions than he answered, and many students weren’t able to accept his Socratic approach to learning. From him I learned to question, and that questioning process led to more learning; many questions led to other questions, and for many questions there were no ready answers. This was all part of the process of education. Those who wanted their answers in ready-made packages had little patience with this kind of education, but for me, I found it most satisfying.

It was in those college years that I first encountered the Great Books movement and I came to know something of Mortimer Adler and his great work. He too was to have an influence on me. Dorothy Day and the Catholic Worker Movement then came to my attention, and they were to show me the meaning of social justice. They linked up with my early education and Father Yorke’s teaching.

I graduated from St. Mary's in 1937 and I was sent to teach at the Brothers' school in Los Angeles. Cathedral High School was located a short distance from Chavez Ravine, now the home of the Los Angeles Dodgers. The school and the neighborhood were heavily Mexican in population, and it was because of this that I began studying Spanish. The founder of the Christian Brothers, Saint La Salle, was dedicated to the education of the poor, and I began to understand that dedication at Cathedral High School. I first realized then that it was one thing to say you loved the poor and another thing to carry that love into action. The Christian education of the poor is not easily accomplished in the United States; according to the American standard of values, the poor were poor because they were lazy and because they did not want to advance themselves. Even some of the Brothers believed this. I found it difficult to accept. It seemed to contradict the Gospels and the teachings of St. La Salle. There was a natural envy on the part of some of the Brothers of the Jesuits, their counterparts in education. The Jesuits, as the Brothers saw them, had chosen the better part of education, the education of the elite and the better off. Christian education of the poor demanded a lot of dedication and inspiration; I was to find it wanting with the Brothers. Somehow or other, economic and social realities of American society have a far stronger effect on American people than do religious ideals, and the Brothers were not beyond this influence. I found it difficult to accept that reality: that even those who professed Christianity with religious vows were not beyond the pernicious influence of racism and prejudice.

Whether these or other reasons were the cause, I left the Brothers after three years of teaching. I know, too, I resented the fact that there was too much direction from the Brothers' European motherhouse and too little self-government by the Brothers in their own districts. The European direction struck me as Jansenistic as well. Additionally, even though I was happy with teaching, I wanted to know more about this theology that Professor Hagerty praised as the ultimate development of philosophy. I didn't discuss much of this with the Brothers but left them with the expiration of my vows in June of 1940. The questioning mind isn't the greatest asset for peace of mind, but peace and freedom are often at odds. The truth may make us free, but not without cost.

CHAPTER 3. CHANGE OF DIRECTION: ST. PATRICK'S SEMINARY

After studying Latin and Greek at St. Benedict's in Mt. Angel, Oregon, I presented myself as a candidate for the priesthood at St. Patrick's Seminary in the fall of 1941. I wasn't there very long when my enthusiasm and idealism for the study of theology received a rude shock. In comparison with the academic standards of St. Mary's College, St. Patrick's was a disappointment. Potentially, seminarians were of high caliber, but the standards of St. Patrick's were so poor that there was little or no intellectual development. Traditionally, the seminary educational system was ideal; in practice, what went on at St. Patrick's was a disaster. Students were accepted in the minor seminary at the beginning of high school, and they were supposed to receive eight years of classical education before beginning theology. In theory this was fine, but somewhere along the line, American seminaries missed the boat. I think the reason for this failure was the underlying distrust of ecclesiastical

authorities for intellectual development. St. Thomas and the early Church Fathers may have held the mind in high repute, but the notion was conveyed to seminarians at St. Patrick's that theology would give them all the answers to the questions they would have to face. Theology was taught without any real dependence on philosophy or reality, and the overall atmosphere was one of smugness and cynicism on the part of students and faculty. Reason and scientific study were good and perhaps necessary for others, but for the priest they were unnecessary; they were something like the fifth wheel on a wagon.

Most of this showed itself from my first days at St. Patrick's. However intelligent the students and faculty were, they were not educated in any real sense of the word; there was little regard for learning. Intellectually, I was not half as well endowed as many of them, but what I had received from my college training was immensely more than what St. Patrick's had to offer.

My original reaction to this was the quick escape, and the sooner the better. A holy old priest, Father Redon, then my confessor, dissuaded me from this. He agreed with much of my criticism, but he said that I should stay until God made it clear what I should do. His holiness prevailed over my impatience, and I stayed at St. Patrick's until I was ordained in the summer of 1945. The four miserable years of my stay taught me to control my tongue and temper, but it wasn't easy. I became more anti-system and anticlerical as the days went on, but few if any were aware of my feelings. I wonder now if any others went through a seminary feeling as I did; but God did not intervene.

We were in World War II in those days; gardening was encouraged and I took to helping the war effort in that way. Athletically, I was then over the hill, but hiking and gardening satisfied my physical needs. It was in the gardens that I first got to know McCullough, McDonnell, and Garcia; we were later to be the Spanish Mission Band after ordination. These three were behind me in the class I was assigned, but I liked them and joined them in evening recreation for the study of Spanish. McDonnell was something of a genius in many ways. He took over the direction of the teaching of Spanish, and our little group made good progress. He and his entire class were a puzzle to me in that they shared little or none of the smugness and cynicism of the other classes. They were more like a group of religious order seminarians than secular seminarians.

CHAPTER 4. SERVING THE POOR

My appointment to St. Mary's was the beginning of many things. Above all, it was a learning process, the like of which would have been hard to duplicate elsewhere. The Church of St. Mary's (at 7th and Jefferson Streets) is close to downtown Oakland. It had a bit of everything: Blacks, Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, gypsies, and many alcoholics. As one character put it, he knew there were a lot of nutty people in the world, but why did so many of them have to be around St. Mary's? It had a rich variety of the good, the not so good, and the bad: all were a part of downtown Oakland. Father Charles Philipps was the pastor, and he too was a bit on the odd side. He was sent to this unwanted ecclesiastical

plum because of his constant challenges to the Archbishop. Charlie, as I came to call him, was a character right out of Dickens. He made a great to-do about commitment to the poor, but when the chips were down he was too frequently away from St. Mary's to be really concerned with them. He was their ardent champion in words, if not in deeds, but for all his inconsistency, he was a good man, and he had many moments of greatness. In many things, he had a profound effect on me. As long as I communicated with him, he felt he was my alter ego, and in that regard, I could do pretty much as I pleased. After getting used to the madness of the place, I lost myself in a series of wild and interesting ventures.

World War II was still on when I arrived, but it ended shortly after I got there. The Old Oakland Hotel had been taken over by the military, and much of my time was spent administering to the needs of the wounded, both physical and mental. We had charge, too, of both the city and county jails, and overall, it was a busy place. Ordinary calls were mostly of the extraordinary variety. After a nervous first year there I felt I could handle anything that came along. The first sick calls I attended were combinations of murder and suicide. This in addition to preaching and administration of the sacraments tended to make me a nervous wreck at first, but as time went on, I got used to the demands of our people.

Someone should do a special study of the life and times of the Rev. Charles Philipps, for he was indeed a unique individual. He represented a phase in the history of the Catholic Church that was poorly understood. In a way, he bridged the gap between the European Church and the American Church. Modernism was condemned by the Church in the last century, but it couldn't have been all that bad, because Charles Philipps was a modernist. Veritably, his like shall not be found again. Together with his disturbing limitations, he had some extraordinary qualities. After reading a book (and he read voraciously), he insisted on sharing his reading with anyone willing to listen. The other assistant priest had been with Charlie a number of years and he was extraordinarily close-mouthed. He was a good priest and exacting in his dealings with the people, but it was hard to get the time of day out of him. He knew how to handle Charlie: he seldom spoke to him. This left me as Charlie's victim, but I wasn't altogether unwilling; he too became a prime influence on my education.

However, I wasn't altogether a willing listener to his long conversations. When in a hurry, I used to use the back stairs to avoid him waiting in his room close to the front stairs where he could see me passing. Many times he was a bore, but overall, I enjoyed his talk. Most of his stories were humorous and informative.

Speaking at St. Patrick's Seminary when I was still there, Charlie was explaining the importance of the compost pile to the European farmer. An Alsatian farmer's son by birth and upbringing, he knew what he was talking about. He was involved at the time in a "heifers for Europe" project, and he was explaining that the heifers were bred before being shipped to Europe, so that when they arrived at their destination they could furnish manure, milk, and a new calf to the lucky farmer. Besides these blessings, the cow could be used to pull a plow to till the land. Father Mulligan, then rector of the seminary, a just but

hard man, was deeply interested in all this. He too was a farmer's son, from the Midwest. "Wouldn't it be more practical, Father Philipps," he asked, "to send small tractors to those needy farmers?" Charlie, looking at him with something of disdain, replied, "Father Mulligan, did you ever see a tractor that shit?" Charlie was of the earth, earthy.

On another occasion, after being without an assistant for some time, he greeted the young man with the welcome that now that the assistant was here, he (Charlie) intended to take a few days off. The young man was flabbergasted. "What shall I do if someone dies?" he asked. "Why you bury him, of course," responded Charlie. He believed in putting people on their own, and with me this was fine. He had a camp on the Russian River for poor children. This was fine for the children, but it put a burden on the parish. Silent Tom, the other assistant, was about as helpful as a sick duck, so I learned to do things for myself in my own way. I became involved in the needs of the parish as I saw them, and my order of priorities would have astounded many a priest and pastor, but Charlie's advice was "Use your head; do what you can."

In a short while, I was as happy as could be, doing pretty much what I pleased. Charlie left for France with his heifer project after I was at St. Mary's for a few months. The area teemed with the problems of youth, and tackling them was high on my priority list. I had kind of cleared with Charlie the making of a boys' club under the old school building, but even by his permissive standards, I think I went pretty far with what presented itself as a minor construction project. Before the kids and I finished that clubhouse, it's a wonder that old school building didn't cave in. We put in showers, a boxing ring, and set up two pool tables and still had room enough for meeting rooms. The club expanded in membership, and when Charlie returned he was delighted with the progress that had been made. Not many of these kids went to church, but they loved the club. Church attendance didn't bother Charlie or me. We were convinced we were building for the future, and as long as the kids kept out of jail, we were satisfied. We lost some to crime and gangsterism, but you can't win them all.

I have long since lost contact with the majority of those kids, but for the most part, they turned out well. I think the only one I have kept contact with (and that through the sports page) is Frank Robinson, present manager of the San Francisco Giants. Frank may not remember, but I remember him and his natural ability to hit a baseball. I can lay no claim to discovering Frank, but he did play ball for our St. Mary's team; the first baseball suit he ever wore was from the St. Mary's Boys' Club. Most of the donations for the buying of those uniforms came from the merchants on Seventh St.; the majority of these merchants ran cantinas and bars.

It was at this time that I met Jimmy Delgadillo. Jimmy fought professionally under the name "Baby Tarzan." His nose still carries the mark of the boxer, but he was smart enough to get out of fighting with his brains intact. He was a real asset to the Boys' Club, but he preferred to work on fundraising and public relations rather than directly with boxing. He was then driving a taxi and he knew how to hustle. He brought me into contact with many

of his friends, one of whom was Eugene Ronstadt. I recognized Ronstadt immediately. Some years before in Los Angeles, the Ronstadts—Robert, Richard, and Eugene—were students at Cathedral High School. I remember Eugene in particular, for he was a crack boxer with the school club. As a freshman, he outboxed all high school competition; in a short time he was boxing with the professionals at the Main Street Gym. When World War II came along he landed in the Navy. At the time Jimmy presented him to me in Oakland, he was out of work and finished with fighting. Jimmy put him in charge of the boxing club and Ronstadt produced many good boxers. He was still good in the ring, harder to hit than a nervous jackrabbit, but Jimmy's plan to have him win money for the club with his boxing didn't work out. Gene called himself our friendly enemy and he was indeed that. His boxers did win bouts, but many claimed our victories were due more to Gene's cheating than to the superiority of our boys.

As the members of the club grew older, they became more civilized and sought social interests. We were fortunate to have the Sisters of Social Service working with us in the parish, and they too were a real influence on our youth. The St. Mary's Boys' Club evolved into the St. Mary's Youth movement, which included boys and girls together.

It was around this time that I met Evelio Grillo. He was then director of Thompkin's Recreation Center, a short distance from St. Mary's. To him I was always "Pappy Duggan," and I dubbed him "the Preacher Man." As a former Catholic, his views on the Church were stimulating if not always easy to take. He still breaks up over telling of the time he came into my confessional wanting to borrow my car. According to his account of that event, I was supposed to have said, "Thanks be to God, you've finally come back!" "Calm down, Pappy," he replied, "I don't want to confess; I only want to borrow your car." It's a good story, but that's not the way I remember what happened.

The unemployed and the hungry took up much of our time and energy at St. Mary's, and I determined to do something about it. It was next on the list of our priorities; we needed a House of Hospitality. In 1948, Fr. McDonald and I drove to New York to visit Dorothy Day and the Catholic Worker Movement. One of her helpers followed us back to Oakland, and he began the Peter Maurin House across from the county jail on Fourth St. He was a first-rate organizer, and in no time at all our house was feeding several hundred a day and offering shelter to more than 40 a night. I felt pleased and proud of what had been accomplished.

There were two county jails as well as the city jail within the parish, and I gave them a good deal of attention, perhaps more than I gave to my personal appearance. This was brought home vividly to me one day as I was walking home from a visit to the jail. I felt pleased with what the Lord and I were doing for the poor and needy, but my happiness was abruptly interrupted. Close to the church I met an old wino whom I always thought to be my friend. He was obviously drunk and not in a good mood at all. My cheery hello was greeted by something of a snarl. He backed off a few steps and dramatically pointed at me, saying, "Look at'cha now. You're a mess. If Cardinal O'Connell had you in Boston, he'd

send you so far out in the boondocks you'd never get back." He did this with such dramatic force and gesture that I was deeply impressed and no small bit crushed. I walked to the parish house muttering to myself something about the likes of Cardinal O'Connell and the strange loyalties and ideals that he inspired. I felt that guy was far more messed up than I was; furthermore, he was drunk. As I sent my suit to the cleaners the next day, I knew that drunk had "won me," as the kids in the club would say.

A short time after this episode, on my rounds at the jail, another of my good friends asked to speak to me. With some reticence and apology he informed me that our man running the Peter Maurin house was in his words "a first-class homo." Still worse, he was using his position to assign men at the sleeping quarters on the basis of his favorites. There was going to be trouble unless something was done about this situation. This was long before the gay rights movement, and while I wasn't familiar with all sides of homosexuality, my decision was clear: that man had to go, and immediately. My reaction was predictable and there was no criticism on the part of the gay rights movement. I wonder what the reaction would be if that happened today.

Our man in charge was going to be difficult to replace; he had done an admirable job of setting up our center and coordinating the operation. I stepped in to fill the gap for a while, but this was a full-time operation. Wanting to avoid dominating the work of the Peter Maurin house, I concluded that we needed a board of directors, and that shortly came into being. Replacing our man in charge was much more difficult. I had the idea that some of our good people at the church should get involved in this enterprise, but pious people aren't always willing to do the work of the Lord. After much thought and meditation, I came to the conclusion that Carroll McCool, my good friend, would be ideal for our need. He was a veteran of the war with a disablement pension, and while he couldn't do much physically, he was ideal temperamentally. His only complaint with the Trappists (he had been one and left them) was that they spent too much time in manual labor and not enough time praying. Obviously, Carrol was going to be a tough nut to crack, but the situation demanded courageous action. His time spent in church was long and difficult to imitate. After assisting at both morning Masses with only a coffee break between, he began with what seemed an endless series of prayers. In his opinion, anyone who didn't pray the 15 mysteries of the rosary was a spiritual piker; but this was one of his few dictums. Despite the fact that I think he had me pegged as a spiritual piker, I succeeded in talking him into taking charge of Maurin House, for which he seemed ideally suited. He was certainly unflappable in the midst of its madness and extraordinary demands. His stay was only to be for a while, but that while went on until the Nimitz Freeway took everything in its path in 1952.

As an activist, McCool was not much, but that was as we expected. It was his becalming influence on the men at the center that we hoped for, and our hope and prayers were not in vain. I think Carrol accepted his job as penance for his sins, or the sins of all of us, but his sacrifice was acceptable to the Lord. He wasn't there at the center too long when William Everson, the Bay Area poet, arrived for a visit. He liked what he saw at the Maurin

House, and he decided to join Carrol in the work. He and Carrol became close friends, and in no time at all he was grinding out the rosaries together with his new friend; little else interfered with their prayers. They were equally useless as far as the practical running of the center went, but together they radiated a kind of peace and joy that had a becalming influence on the men. Everson continued writing religious poetry and printing on a press that must have come from the early days of printing. Together they were a rare and happy team. The men on the soup line seemed to sense their inability to handle the running of the house, and they, by the grace of God or something miraculous, took over the practicalities of the center. In no time at all things were running as smoothly as they had been before. Soup was served from 10 until 2 each day; preparation for the next day's soup took several hours thereafter; pots seemed to be boiling all the time.

Carrol never preached to the men, but if he was going to stay there he had to keep up with his prayers. The early hours of the morning were spent at the church, but at 6 each night, he announced there was going to be a rosary in the kitchen. Those who wanted to stay could do so; many did, especially in the winter months. I haven't seen Carrol or Bill for years, but their time as bosses at the Maurin Center I shall never forget.

I left St. Mary's in 1950 after the formation of the Spanish Speaking Band. I had been there five years, and my stay there did more for me than I did for the people.

CHAPTER 5. GETTING TO KNOW ARCHBISHOP MITTY

While at St. Mary's, I had been in close contact with the needs of the Spanish speaking. A Father Almendares was added as a priest to work with the Mexican people while I was still there, and he was great for those who were already coming to the church. My interests lay with the people who weren't coming to us, and they seemed to be wherever the poor were located. My Spanish was not the best, but it got the job done, though not to my satisfaction. I felt I needed more study and practice with Spanish, and at Father Philipps' suggestion, I went to talk the matter over with the archbishop. Archbishop Mitty wasn't easily approachable. He ruled his diocese with something of an iron hand, and few priests went to him without being called by him. He too was a just man but a hard man, and from his looks I had little reason to question this.

My only previous contact with Archbishop Mitty was when I brought him a priest who had come to me from the Oakland skid row. Mitty's sympathy and concern for that poor fellow deeply impressed me, and he expressed appreciation for my bringing the poor man to him. I then half concluded that maybe his priests didn't understand him, and I became certain of this later on. Beneath his tough exterior, Mitty had a big heart, but he was a man's man and had little feeling for the weak and the timid. This was misinterpreted by the wise guys who said his greatest sin was that he hated priests. Like Father Yorke, he was a courageous and forthright man, but he kept to himself, and he obviously didn't believe in teamwork.

When I told him of my need for further study of Spanish, his response was right to the point: “What do you want to do about it?” I said I would like to go to Mexico for six months, and with a few more questions, he assented to my request. Within five minutes, I was in and out of his office, impressed by his concern and directness. That directness led me to the opinion that he would have been a good street fighter. He wouldn’t have wasted words, and he would have hit his opponent before he got hit. I liked Mitty.

I went to Mexico in the fall of 1946, and my stay there was also a good learning experience. I should have gone to a regular school, but once there, I chose to work in a parish with the people. I was accepted for the most part, but in Agua Caliente, no gringo was allowed to forget that the Americans had robbed Mexico of her territory in the last century. Their contempt and anger with us shocked me at first, but after they found out that I did not deny the truth of their claims, we got along rather well. Had I known and understood history better than I did, I would not have been so shocked; but I returned to the United States with a better knowledge of Latin America than when I went. On my return, my Spanish had improved, but I knew it was going to take more than simple goodwill to heal the harm we had done to Mexico in the past. I came back with an understanding of why they called us imperialists; I came to know America from a Mexican perspective, and it wasn’t a comfortable experience.

On my return to St. Mary’s, Father McDonnell and I began discussing the need for a special group of priests to work with the Spanish speaking. There were some priests in our area from Mexico and Central America, but they did not fit the needs of the people as we saw them. We had been experimenting working cooperatively for the needs of our people, most of whom were Mexicans. We were not Mexicans ourselves and had but limited preparation for the difficulties facing us, but as there was no Spanish-speaking apostolate for the poor, we were determined to do something about this need. After clarifying our own thoughts on the matter, we went to see Archbishop Mitty in the fall of 1950. When he understood the need, he agreed to free the four priests we suggested to work with the needy and oppressed. Shortly thereafter, we returned to him: Fathers McDonnell, McCullough, Garcia, and myself. We had several discussions with the archbishop, working out the details of our proposal. Strangely, he did not appoint one of his administrators to meet with us; I think it was because he enjoyed listening to us argue and discuss the needs of people as we saw them.

Near the conclusion of our meetings, I remember him saying, “Can you imagine the Irish priests doing this for their people?” My parents were both Irish, but I didn’t bother spoiling his enjoyment of the situation. Father Yorke had done exactly this for his people, and he was indeed my inspiration in our planning for the work before us. Our approach, we had explained in detail, was to be one of direct contact with the people: the poor and the needy who had little or no association with the regular parishes. Mitty saw the wisdom and the possibilities of this, and a short time after our last meeting with him he gave us carte blanche to proceed as we saw fit. He had never done anything like this previously, and the Fathers were amazed. We were elated with our appointments, but we didn’t know

what we were walking into. One of my priest friends, Father Nick Farana, cornered me at one of our clerical gatherings and excitedly said, “You guys don’t know what you’re walking into. Pastors are against your kind of thing and they will eat you up.” He was partially right, but they didn’t eat us up. We were obviously going against the current, but I felt little fear of the future, and the present was roses all the way.

CHAPTER 6. THE SPANISH MISSION BAND

“The Spanish Mission Band” as a title for our work didn’t satisfy us, but names and titles are often misleading. We needed to start, and a name was necessary; let them call us what they would. Shortly after our initial efforts were under way, the mothers of Father McCullough and McDonnell went shopping for their sons. Tom and Don specified they wanted nothing fancy: black shirts and black pants were all that was necessary, and the cheaper the better. This the good women explained to the salesman where they were shopping, and they innocently and somewhat proudly added that their sons were members of the Spanish Mission Band. “Oh how nice,” the salesman replied. “We have an excellent music department on the lower floor.” That was not to be the last of our embarrassments with the title we had chosen.

My mother would have been with the two shopping mothers, but she died on the day of our first organizational meeting with Archbishop Mitty. Meanwhile, the Band played on and, according to our critics, with many a discordant note.

One of the first problems we fixed was where we were going to stay; we wanted to avoid parishes at any price. As a compromise, it was agreed that we would work out of St. Patrick’s Seminary, but almost immediately this was found to be impractical, as we would have to travel too far to get to the people we were serving. Eventually, we were forced by the situation to stay in rectories close to the areas we represented, but this too was difficult to accept, as most pastors where we were staying wanted to know too much about our business. Pastors were unaccustomed to having priests come and go as they pleased; being late for dinner was unacceptable. Eventually, each of us worked out a system of his own. We divided the diocese into counties: Father Garcia took over Contra Costa County; McCullough, San Joaquin; McDonnell, Santa Clara; and I had Alameda County. The other counties already had some answer for their Spanish speaking people.

We began visiting every Mexican family we could find. Father Garcia was a genius at visiting people: he seemed to be tireless, and he had a sympathetic way about him that endeared him to people. He carried with him in his old station wagon a good supply of beans, rice, and flour, and his coming was looked forward to by the needy and the un-needy alike. He is known by thousands whom he has well served over the years.

McDonnell, working in Santa Clara County, was a maverick before he ever joined the Band. He settled in East San Jose, where he quickly established a Guadalupe Center. Books could be written about this strange fellow, for he was truly a *rara avis*.

McCullough took over the vastness of San Joaquin County, and he too was unique in his approach to people. The two Macs worked so closely together, I find it difficult to think of them separately.

CHAPTER 7. PLAYERS OF THE BAND

Father Garcia, as already stated, was the only member of our group with farm labor as a background, and that background gave him a jump on the rest of us as to how we should proceed. Father John was too much of an actionist to value his past experience, and he seldom pointed out the mistakes we made early on in our approach to people's needs. What came to him as second nature in dealing with agricultural workers had to be learned the hard way by the rest of us. He seemed to be able to cover more distance and make more visits to his people than any of us, and his famous little black book, where he entered his appointments and visits to be made, should become one of the great historical documents of our time.

The hydra-headed Mac, as I came to call Fathers McCullough and McDonald, has to be understood as a team operation, for a team is what they became from their early childhood. Both were born and raised in and around St. Joseph in Mountain View. There was something of genius about both of these men, or so I thought after getting to know them. They were similar in many ways, and yet very different in other ways. McDonnell was gifted with a mind that would have set him apart in any of the demanding fields of science, art, or business. Unfortunately, that mind was left unchallenged in the priesthood, except for his work in languages, where he excelled. He absorbed whatever philosophy and theology the seminary offered him, which unfortunately wasn't much. McCullough had a better philosophical mind than McDonnell, and he used it to a good extent until he became confused after his dismissal destroyed the enthusiasm of both of these men. It was that destruction that led to my own anger and frustration with the Church.

Father Ronald Burke became a member of the Band when I retired from it in 1957. He had worked with us before ordination, and he was a natural asset and performed equally as well as others when he took my place in Decoto. When the Band was terminated, he and Garcia did not lose their vision and enthusiasm. Burke went to Mexico and later to Guatemala as a missionary, and his output as a missionary is remarkable to this day. Garcia continued to work admirably with the people wherever he was sent, even with the termination of the Band, but McCullough and McDonnell seemed to lose much of their vision and enthusiasm. But we are getting ahead of our story.

From the start of our work, the two Macs fit together like hand and glove; their sharing of ideas in boyhood and in life at the seminary continued on in the priesthood, particularly with their appointment to the Band. Their first joint venture was an attack on the old liturgy. This was 10 years before the reform of Vatican II, and their criticisms were very valid and far ahead of their time. The Mass, they said, was meaningless in Latin, and the

hymns and music then in vogue were, in their opinion, equally so to the people. In this enthusiasm for reform of liturgy, Garcia and I joined in, if somewhat at a distance. They set out full speed ahead for an understandable liturgy in Spanish. Most of this cleared with the chancery office, which McDonnell contacted regularly, but that venerable institution was too preoccupied with important matters to keep up with the likes of us. Melodies and hymns by the dozens were composed by McCullough and McDonnell, and what these lacked in beauty and liturgical refinement was made up for by the enthusiastic singing of the Fathers and their people. My own appreciation of this was limited; McDonnell and McCullough could carry a tune, but Garcia could not without great practice. His willingness to sing more than compensated for his difficulty in carrying a melody. The people, in general, were only too willing to put up with the limitations of the Band; after all, it was the first attention they had ever received from the Church, and for that they were most appreciative. With the regular parishes, this kind of thing would never have occurred, much less would it have been tolerated. But where the Band performed there were only the birds, the bees, and little groups of long-neglected people. The people seemed to love it; St. Francis and John XXIII would have loved it too.

These experiments with the liturgy were but the beginning of our ministry to the people we came to enlighten and evangelize. The only specifics we had offered the archbishop were our goodwill and commitment to a direct apostolate to the needy, and that could embrace a multitude of things. So much had been left unsettled that our clerical training prevented us from making progress. After disposing of the big questions of where we were to eat and sleep, there remained a number of decisions we had to resolve. Looking back, the questions that loomed so large then now seem trivial, but they were the kind of thing that occupied chancery offices and clerics for centuries. Mitty had cut much of the red tape that was binding us, but we did not seem to realize that. By treating us as he did, he seemed to be regretting the way he had run his diocese for so long. He left us completely on our own; other than to pay our salary regularly, we didn't hear from him. It was Charlie Philipps who resolved our problem, and he was at his finest when he did so.

I well remember his oration to us when we told him we thought we needed direction and guidance: "Use your common sense, man, and do as it tells you. Your scruples about acting prudently are exactly what prevents the Church from making the progress it should. We priests are dominated by the opinions of superiors, who are very often victims of their own ignorance and who only kill our initiative. Go on and do your own thing; if you are afraid of making mistakes, you'll never do anything. You see this nonsense too in the religious orders who meditate too much on the lives of their holy founders and end up doing little or nothing on their own. This is why I have always said that religious orders should be disbanded a hundred years after the death of their founders. History shows that the first generation of the order spends its time in getting the founder canonized; the second generation writes his life and wonders how he ever did what he did; and the following generations spend their time getting permission to do what they should be doing on their own. There is so much humbug in the Church." For me, this was Charlie's finest hour, and I profited greatly from it.

After this we went our merry way, encouraged by few and criticized by many. As to the specific problem of how to avoid interference from pastors, Charlie again came to our assistance, though I found it harder to understand his message this time. “You need to find your lobster factory, man.” And with this message he went on to relate how fishermen of Antigonish could not market their catch until they formed a cooperative lobster factory. I puzzled over the practical application of Charlie’s advice until it gradually dawned on me: we needed a base of our own, where we could meet and discuss, eat, sleep, and recreate without being interfered with. Once I saw the light, our solution was obvious. I had been staying in Niles in southern Alameda County. A mission of that parish was Decoto, where I had been saying Mass in the little old church. That church was made to order for our purpose.

CHAPTER 8. DECOTO, OUR LOBSTER FACTORY

I am not sure if the people of Decoto, now Union City, ever saw a lobster factory, but Father Philipps could explain the reference far better than I. As time went on, we became more and more attached to the old man, and I am sure he too loved us. He was to die before we were too well established; we owe him much for his wisdom and direction. To the majority of the clergy, he was a bit of a nut; but in our estimation, he was a man born out of season. John XXIII would have understood him and loved him, and he would have understood and loved John XXIII. He was a rare combination of prince and pauper, and he played both roles magnificently. To many, he was dangerous and confusing; to those who knew and understood him, he was indeed exceptional and even great. Theologically, I have said he was a modernist. His ideas would have gotten him in great trouble if he had lived at the time of the Inquisition. On the question of private property, I suppose he was positively heretical; his solution to our economic problems was simple and direct: “Land should be redistributed regularly. The Popes insist that this cannot be done without ‘just compensation’ but what do they mean by this? How can the poor and the landless compensate when they possess little or nothing? How can you compensate for something which began with injustice and has continued with injustice? What about the injustices in Latin America? And we call ourselves theologians. How interested are we in the establishment of liberty and justice for all; who are we trying to fool?”

It was he who first introduced me to the legislative process in the state capital, and it was from him that I learned of the 160-acre limitation law. I shall never forget Father Charles Philipps; he made many a contribution to the kingdom of my mind. My good friend, Father Gerald Cox, was with Charlie in his last years of life. Gerry should write a book about Charlie.

Charlie directed us to Decoto, at least indirectly (if that isn’t a contradiction). Decoto was far from the loveliest village of the plain, but it was reality in the raw. It was there that the Band developed as a team. We moved into the sacristy of the church in September of 1951. Our quarters were crowded but adequate, if you can so describe four people living in those

small quarters, which were about 8 feet wide and 30 feet long. As I recall, we slept in a double-decker bunk bed and two army cots. We were young and rugged enough to accept the inconveniences for about two years. There was running water in the sacristy, but for our toilet we had to go to Jess Orozco's gas station, which was about a mile away. We soon tired of making that trip and resolved to dig out beneath the church for the making of a toilet and a shower. Anyone with the slightest experience would have cautioned against this, but we were without the slightest experience. Well, almost: Duggan's Dugout at St. Mary's did give me some experience.

After preliminary investigation by engineers Duggan and McCullough, we began our construction. This was mostly done during what we considered our legitimate recreation time. The basement was excavated about 4 feet below ground level, and anyone with experience could have told us that our toilet-shower flow might be lower than the level of the sewer line under the street. That problem didn't occur to us until we were halfway to the sewer line, and by then it was too late to reconsider. We kept on digging and hit the sewer line with the exact fall that seemed needed; not only that, there was an L bend in the sewer line that seemed to be waiting for our coming. I have often reflected on that strange occurrence, but at the time I took it in stride, as did the others, and why not? We knew that God was on our side. For those who doubt Divine Providence, they must explain coincidence, for I cannot.

We finished our work not only with toilet and shower, but we excavated enough for a good-sized meeting room for the people of the parish. That church burned down our second year there, but for doubters, there are still many people living there who should be able to attest to the miracle of that sewer line.

Before our arrival at Decoto, the diocesan planning department bought land in the center of town for the future church. The Mexican and Portuguese people were delighted with our coming, and both groups were anxious for the building of a parish hall at the new property. After some preliminary meetings, our parish building committee came up with plans for the center, and with the obtaining of chancery permission and county permits, our volunteers began construction of their new social center. Portuguese, Mexican, and Anglos worked together on that project, and it was during one of those working days that our efforts were interrupted by the announcement that the old church was on fire. We all rushed wildly to the fire, but there was little that could be done to save the church. It had served us well, and fortunately, we were able to live at the newly constructed center immediately. The insurance of the church helped pay for the new construction. The old church was open night and day for the visits of the people, and candles were always burning before the saints' statues. Auxiliary Bishop Donohue jokingly asked what was my alibi on the day of the fire. Fortunately, I had a good one; I was spending much of my time with the people at the construction site. I firmly believed the Lord was with us, but it did seem strange that the old church burned down just about the time we were ready to move to the new building. I have many good memories of working in Decoto; the people were friendly and appreciative of our ministry. Life there had its tragedies, too. After leaving, I

read of the shooting of the police chief of Union City (which Decoto did become in combination with Alvarado). The shooting happened in the very hall that we had built. It had served as church and social center for us, but the parish had its own church at the time of this tragedy.

Decoto was a happy experience for me. Its people were simple and good, and I was able to do much for them. My success with them was largely due to the assistance of Sister John of the Holy Family Sisters. She not only ran a very good school of religion for the children, but she had a decided effect on the people and the entire community. She seemed to meet all of the people, and they loved her in a special way. She was ably assisted in her work by the one and only Dorothy Sisneroz, who did Sister's every bidding in a remarkable way. These two provided for my meals and needs when I was without a housekeeper. I shall never forget them, for without their help, my stay in Decoto would have been much less eventful and memorable.

I left Decoto and the Spanish Mission Band in 1955, and my departure was a sad one for the people. The town had grown considerably from the time we began working there, and it was being taxed as an ordinary parish, as all the others were. I protested this treatment to the archbishop, but this time he bested me; every parish had to support the diocese and its needs. My leaving was pretty much of my own doing, as I asked to be changed. With the change I landed in Richmond with a pastor for whom I had little or no liking. Nine months later I asked for another change and was sent to Tracy. My love affair with John Mitty was pretty much over.

CHAPTER 9. AGRICULTURAL WORKERS ASSOCIATION

Agua means water. The Agricultural Workers Association was to be shortened by us to AWA. We told the people that as one cannot live without water, so one cannot live without the Agricultural Workers Association. Such was our message to the field workers when we decided they needed a union to protect themselves. This was particularly the contribution of Father Thomas McCullough, who passed it on to McDonnell and Garcia, and I received it from them. After his ordination in 1947, McCullough was appointed to St. Mary's Church in downtown Stockton. That area was then run down and consisted chiefly of cheap hotels and poor housing. The principal inhabitants were Filipinos, Mexicans, and Blacks. A great number of single men lived in flophouses, and it was from these that the farm labor market received its workers. Conditions for these workers were appalling, and McCullough quickly saw this and determined to right this wrong. He had become a close friend of all he served, and they trusted him. Unlike McDonnell and me, he did not become involved in youth work; it was the economic, social, and political problems that were his primary concern, and he devoted his considerable energy to improving them. From the start of his ministry, justice had to be served, everyone had a right to the necessities of life, and as it was, farmworkers were little better off than slaves and had few benefits in the land of the free. The comfortable quarters of the Fathers at St. Mary's were a source of pain and scandal to Thomas McCullough when he contrasted them to how the

poor were living. He couldn't keep his thoughts to himself, and almost from the start of his priesthood, he was a source of disturbance to the pastor and the other assistants. At first they listened intently; later they became bored and opposed to this firebrand; and finally, many of the priests in that area opposed the rantings and actions of Thomas McCullough. This did not slow down our hero; he was like a whirlwind on the plain and his eloquence and action influenced the whole of Stockton and well beyond. Some reacted in his favor, but many looked upon this strange fellow as an enemy to be gotten rid of. John the Baptist could not have disturbed Stockton more than did Thomas McCullough. I christened him the Pied Piper of San Joaquin County, which he little appreciated. Social do-gooders flocked to him and formed services for the needs of the poor. Maryknoll Sister Xavier was quick to recognize the genius of this man; without pushing or interfering, she wisely directed him in many of his enterprises. To me there was something of the second coming about all this, but it wasn't roses all the way for Father McCullough. His charismatic effect on people who became his followers began to frighten him, and I spent many an hour in the Decoto sacristy trying to explain life and reality to Tom. His views were constantly evolving, and as soon as he led us up one plateau, he seemed off scaling another mountain. With him, life was not boring.

At one point, he had convinced us that what the people needed was cheap, adequate housing, and I, with all the others, followed our master in carrying out this mandate. Money seemed to come to him from everywhere, and he quickly applied it to the needs of the people, which were then land and material for housing. On free days his priest friends and admiring seminarians would arrive in Stockton to assist McCullough in the social revolution. We lovingly followed the master in all that he wished, and as we applied our limited skills to the demands of the day, I became aware that most of the families we were assisting showed little if any interest in what was going on. I brought this up in conversation, but it was quickly put down like a bad thought to the pious novice. McCullough was never short of explanations, and all of them were convincing at the time.

On these days, Tom was a master of all trades and a mountain of strength. In the seminary, he was an outstanding athlete, and he could have been a professional in several sports. He excelled in track, football, and baseball, and we were all constantly amazed at his abilities. Summers were hot in the San Joaquin Valley, and I remember one particular hot day which I shall never forget. We were mixing cement in an old mixer which Tom inherited and which followed me for some 30 years since that time. While we were mixing, the motor fell off the machine, and marvelous Tom, sizing up the situation, explained to us that there was "no problem," a favorite expression of his. He quickly applied himself to putting the motor back in place, when it slipped from his hands and landed on his head. It was a blow that would have put the ordinary mortal out of commission for days, but not so McCullough. With another of his famous "no problem" remarks, he got to his feet, somewhat wobbly, but insisted on returning to putting the motor back in place. This he did, but as a compromise to us, he betook himself to the emergency room at San Joaquin County Hospital to get his head (now a bloody mess) patched up. He returned shortly after with a patch on the wound, and we all continued with the work of the Lord. It couldn't have been

more than an hour later when the whole thing happened again, even to the last detail; only this time the motor providentially landed on the other side of Tom's head. When his nurse friends saw him at the hospital a second time within two hours, they were amazed, but McCullough was made to amaze people. Is it any wonder I was attracted to the likes of Thomas McCullough? That night the four of us said Masses at different camps for the braceros; Tom with his doubly patched head was quite a sight. Afterward, Garcia and I bunked at Tom's humble quarters and were quickly asleep. McDonnell and McCullough continued talking on into the night about the needs of a labor union for farmworkers.

McCullough was foredoomed by his enthusiasm and innocence to fall victim to the enemies he was daily creating, and they included the clergy as well as the farmers. He had great interest in obtaining cheap transportation, and after convincing us of the wisdom of getting model A's, which, he explained could be repaired with baling wire, he then proceeded to get himself a motorcycle. He went tearing around town on his motorcycle, to the scandal of the pastors and the more solid citizens of the community. I think he followed this with getting himself a big Navy surplus bus for the transportation of his beloved braceros, but it was his hospitality house for farmworkers which really disturbed the pastors and the Fathers. Braceros were legal farmworkers from Mexico, but for every legal worker there seemed to be two illegal workers. Tom loved and served them all.

All this was too much for the conservatism of the pastors, and they reported Tom to the chancery office, which ignored the situation for the time being. But the matter disturbed Tom, who had high regard for his fellow priests, maltreat him as they would. The effect of criticism by priests and the community gradually led to a loss of Tom's spontaneity and enthusiasm. He was accused of housing illegals at the storefront he had rented for the workers, but his efforts with the workers' association continued in spite of all. With my transfer to Tracy, I was but a short distance from McCullough in Stockton, and I was able to assist him in some of the burdens of his program.

He and McDonnell produced a clever little brochure, replete with cartoons, entitled "Where is OLI?" To them OLI was organized labor, which had long neglected the needs of the farmworkers. The two priests had bugged labor about this neglect for several years. On one occasion they rode on Tom's motorcycle across the country to get answers to their letters, which largely were ignored. The four of us traveled to Texas to ask the Committee for the Spanish Speaking of Archbishop Lucey for help with our cause. Lucey was encouraging, and he joined in our efforts to arouse the interests of Catholic Rural Life and Catholic Social Action on behalf of farmworkers. Historically, McCullough and McDonnell represented a major part of Catholic Social Action in the 50s and the 60s. All this began to pay off in 1956. AWA was now fairly well established and was ready to submit itself for California state approval. Tom had some good people gathered who had been working with the Community Service Organization, and they became something of a mainstay of the proposed union. I remember Joe Correa, Dolores Huerta, Louis Gonzalez, and Richard Lopez; all had a hand in the efforts of AWA. I sent Andy Arellano from Tracy, and Tom and McDonnell were trying to convince a young fellow from San Jose by the name of

Cesar Chavez to join us. Cesar wasn't ready at that time, but he was greatly influenced and inspired by Father McDonnell. The success of AWA finally caught the eye of organized labor just about the time we were applying for a state charter for the Agricultural Workers Association of California. This was the spring of 1958, when we were contacted by phone by the AFL-CIO. They wanted to meet us in San Francisco to discuss the formation of a farmworkers' union.

I remember the meeting very well. It was held at the Saint Francis Hotel, and we weren't used to such plush surroundings, but our hosts were obviously right at home. They told us that they were delighted with the progress of AWA and they were now ready to begin organizing farmworkers in earnest. In the words of the Godfather, they made us an offer we couldn't refuse. Of course, we explained that the matter had to be submitted to our Stockton "office," which we suspected would go along with our judgment in this matter. Financially, AWA couldn't make it, and after all, we had been waiting for the arrival of organized labor for a long time. They offered a trained organizer with a budget of half a million dollars for the first year, and they would hire any organizers already with us. The offer was more than we could have hoped for, and we happily returned to Stockton to announce the good news to our followers. They too were delighted with the offer.

The Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee, or AWOC, as the new union was called, was set up in Stockton under the leadership of Norman Smith, an old-time organizer with the Auto Workers. We were both happy and hopeful with the turn of events.

CHAPTER 10. TROUBLES AND THE DEMISE OF THE BAND

The coming of the new union almost paralleled the beginning of the Community Service Organization in Stockton. Father McDonnell and I had contacted its founder, Fred Ross, in Los Angeles in 1949 or so, and we urged Fred to come to the Bay Area, which he did shortly after our visit to him. We were impressed with what the CSO was doing in Los Angeles. Ross had been trained by Saul Alinsky in Chicago, but he had made many contributions to Saul's methods, especially in applying them to work with the Spanish speaking. We had been working somewhat along the same lines as the CSO, but we were amateurs in comparison with Fred. He taught us much. Even with his help, our time with organizing people in community services was necessarily limited. So we were happy when he came to the Bay Area.

Shortly after Fred's arrival, I was in Decoto. He worked with our people in Decoto and with Father Cox in Oakland. The same Jimmy Delgadillo who had been so helpful to me at St. Mary's with the Boys' Club now became Father Cox's helper with the CSO. Evelio Grillo joined in that effort, and while the Oakland group went its own way in politics and organizing, Fred was its original inspiration. Fred met Cesar Chavez and Herman Gallegos in San Jose, who were both connected with the work of Father McDonnell. It was Cesar who captured Ross' attention and who later went with Ross to Los Angeles.

In Decoto he had much to do with the development of our leaders and in Stockton had much influence on Joe Correa, Dolores Huerta, and Louis Gonzalez. Fred worked with Father Garcia's people also. I remember Vera Rose in particular in the CSO; Ralph Vega and Paul Duran also come to mind as some who brought the Chicanos into the world of political reality. It would be an exaggeration to say that the Band was the reason for the success of the CSO in Northern California, but it would be hard to explain the history and development of the CSO without the Band. I always considered Father Cox an adjunct of the Band, and his work at St. Mary's certainly left its mark on the CSO. As time went on, the CSO became a powerful political force in the state of California, and I for one am glad to say I had something to do with the birth and development of political awareness among the Spanish speaking. It has been said that power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely, but it can also be said that power is necessary, and little can be accomplished without it. Saul Alinsky made me see the necessity of the power of the people if they were to avoid slavery, and I appreciate his lesson.

I saw some of the corrupting influence of power in the state convention in Calexico in 1959. Cesar Chavez had then been working as a full-time organizer for the CSO in Los Angeles, and much of his effort was in the direction of improving the lot of the farmworker. He pleaded long and earnestly with the CSO leadership at that convention to support the farmworker movement. Norman Smith's efforts with the organization of the farmworkers seemed to be going nowhere, and Cesar was ready to enter the fray as full-time organizer. He expected CSO encouragement and help, but the powers that were at that convention could not see themselves supporting farmworkers to that extent. By a close vote, Cesar's petition was refused. He then and there resigned from the CSO and went to devote his full time to the organization of farmworkers in Delano. The CSO has had its difficulties, but it would be hard to explain the growing influence of the Spanish speaking without CSO leadership and the contributions of Fred Ross.

Our part in the doings of the CSO did not draw the ire of many, as did our support of farm labor organization, but even with the CSO we were becoming too political to please those who wanted priests "in their proper place." It was our opposition to the free enterprise system that brought an end to the Band. McCullough and McDonnell were the real villains to the farmers, and they were marked for destruction early on.

McDonnell in San Jose was a radical, as was McCullough in Stockton. In many ways, they were cut from the same pattern. But McDonnell was more systematic than his San Joaquin counterpart. He spoke weekly on a radio program in Spanish, which he organized himself. He didn't do things that the laity could do for him; he was free to preach the gospel and administer the sacraments, and that he did tirelessly. Yet he observed no set schedule and time was meaningless to him. His radio program was taped, and it was carried to the station by one of his many assistants that he found and trained to do the work of the Lord. In San Jose, Cesar Chavez lived in the barrio of Sal si Puedes, which was close to the Guadalupe Center McDonnell founded. Cesar served the Mass which Father said at the jail.

Most of the episodes about McDonnell are as equally fantastic as those of McCullough. If the latter's favorite response was "No problem," the former's was "God will provide." Both responses became exasperating to me. Don set off in the morning with some general objectives, and those who wanted to see him thought they were playing a game of "catch me if you can." Anyone he encountered on his way who seemed in difficulty received his attention, and no one departed without joining him in prayer, and that prayer could go on for some time. When he ate, he ate well, but meals were seldom a part of his regular day. When he slept, he slept well, but sleep only came when he was physically exhausted; often he went to sleep on his feet. Driving became hazardous and he was finally forced to take one of his "brothers" to drive for him. But no matter how hard he worked or how tired he was, he had to finish his Office before retiring; many a time he awoke in the morning in a place he had chosen to finish his prayers. Confessions became too difficult to prevent sleep, and he left many a penitent awaiting the end of one of his siestas. I have seen him asleep on his feet when he was instructing couples preparing to be married.

I remember one night we attended a meeting in Oakland and we both had our cars. I set him on the road with due warning that he should stay awake, and he started off well enough with me closely behind him honking the horn whenever he crossed the dividing line. I lost him somewhere along the line, and I kept on to Decoto. After some hours waiting I went to bed, and the next morning I found him in his car asleep in front of the house. He had taken the road to San Mateo via the bridge; his guardian angel should receive special treatment in heaven, or perhaps he has several guardian angels. The Lord indeed provided for this strange man in ways that I cannot understand.

Don was a good organizer; he wisely delegated work to be done by those who wanted to help him. With a rare instinct for the limitations and abilities of those he was dealing with, he got much out of some people that others would not or refused to work with. By a simple prayer and direction, he would have people carry out complicated operations that they had never done. He established a fine credit union and a cooperative housing operation that I envied. Things worked completely independent of him once they were established. As a speaker he would go on and on, and the only time I ever saw him wanting for words was the day a Yaqui Indian came by the church in Decoto. McDonnell greeted this stranger as if he knew him a lifetime. The Indian was more than a little drunk, and he eyed McDonnell with impatience as he was orating on the beauties of nature and the glory of God. Finally, he said to McDonnell; "*Tu hablas mucho, pero no dices nada.*" It was the only time I saw McDonnell wanting for words. "You talk much, but you don't say anything" summed up many of Don's orations, and I used that against him on occasion.

McDonnell was not proud and he could tell amusing stories about himself. On one occasion, driving home at night after a Mass at one of his camps, he realized he wasn't going to finish his Office in time. He stopped the car on the side of the road and proceeded to read his book by the headlights of the car. A passing motorist stopped to ask if he could be of assistance, but McDonnell informed him that he was only reading his

book. Don said that Good Samaritan left muttering, "That must be one hell of a good book."

Don's Guadalupe cooperative was urged by him to establish a burial society, and this they did, determined to escape the clutches of the mortuary business. They had researched the law and knew that a body had to be buried on the day of death if it was not treated by a mortuary. Don stressed that the burial of the dead was a work of mercy and should be done by the loving relatives and friends of the deceased. And so it was that his men would make simple coffins and the women would lovingly prepare the body for burial. Complications were few, but there were some. One in particular I remember. A certain parishioner died suddenly at work, and before the Burial Association could go into action, a mortuary took possession of the body. As soon as McDonnell was informed of this, he went to the mortuary in his station wagon, accompanied by the wife of the dead man. They explained the matter to the astounded mortician and took the body to the little Guadalupe Hall in Sal si Puedes. On arrival there, the women of the parish were conducting a clothing sale, but that was no problem. Burial of the dead took precedence over the selling of clothes. The preparation and burial of that poor man took place without further incident, though it is said complications presented themselves insofar as the body had already been worked on by the mortician. No problem.

The Alviso housing cooperative was another development of McDonnell enterprises. At a certain time we were called to rescue our friend in need. He had bought several houses that had to be moved quickly to the land owned by the cooperative. There was a time limit, too, by which they had to be set down on foundation. None of us ever succeeded in getting too much work out of our people when it came to physical labor; our Decoto hall was perhaps the great exception to this, but even there I did more work on that hall than anyone else. Be that as it may, we came to Don's assistance, and on one fine day I was working under one of those houses with McCullough. At one time I thought Tom knew all there was to know about construction, but as we went on I learned a good deal on my own, and I came to realize that the master craftsman had his limitations. Such is the background of the incident I now relate.

We were arranging heavy cement blocks under one of the houses in preparation for its placement and support. We were moving along well when we arrived at a point directly under the fireplace, which was supported by several boards well nailed for the purpose. These boards were somewhat in our way and impeded our progress, but we could work around them. Not so, said McCullough; they were unnecessary and should be ripped off, and with that said, he began to remove the boards. At the time we were facing each other about 10 feet apart, not directly under the fireplace, fortunately, for as McCullough continued tearing the last of the boards away, we heard a rumble from above, and the next thing we knew all the bricks above came down with a roar on the ground between us. We were untouched by those bricks but we didn't escape by much. Our initial reaction was wide-eyed amazement, but this didn't last long as Tom broke out into one of his great belly laughs. I was too frightened to follow with any laughter of my own, and it will be a long

time before I forget that incident. It was the last time I was to give way to Tom's judgment and omniscience in building.

My skepticism extended to other matters of the Band's procedures. After AWOC was established in Stockton under Norman Smith's direction, I felt we should back off in our too obvious support of the union. Tom and Don agreed with me in theory, but not so in practice. It was only a short while after his arrival that we came to realize the obvious limitations of Norman Smith. However experienced he was with the Auto Workers' problems, he knew little about the problems of farmworkers. In oratorical power and bombast, he was hard to match, and he certainly made the state legislature aware of his opinions; the entire valley rang with his denunciations of the farmers and their supporters. This was all to the good, but it wasn't primarily what was needed. Smith was at home with the workers on skid row and the day haul, and with the Filipino workers he was ably assisted by Larry Itliong, a longtime resident of the Filipino community and a farmworker himself. But Norman knew no Spanish, and the Mexicans were a mystery to him. Though they comprised the bulk of agricultural workers, he could not reach them, and he didn't know how to train Mexican farmworker organizers. Initially, he was suspicious of the Fathers and kept them at a distance, but once he saw the McCullough-McDonnell machine in action, he knew he needed them if he was to succeed. So as time went on our two heroes once again became more and more involved in the work of the union. I smelled trouble and I cautioned against this, but it was like whistling in the wind. They dutifully cleared their actions with the chancery office and they made it clear that they were only explaining the social doctrine of the Church, but that again was in theory; their practice was subject to the weakness of human nature.

I am no strict legalist on what the work of the priest should be, but I didn't like the way that our friends were being used by Norman Smith. I had a strong intuition that when the chips were down, and the farmers ganged up on the Church, it was going to be the two priests who would suffer the most. These innocents felt they had an airtight alibi for what they were doing, but my feelings were different. I thought I could hear the threatening music of impending doom, much as in a Verdi opera. I told them that I wouldn't trust the hierarchy when the farmers were shouting for their blood. I was right. But our tragedy was to be played out to the full. It took place in what I call the flying phase of our operation. Tom and Don bought themselves a secondhand Aeroplane in the late 50s; as they explained, it was the cheapest and quickest way of getting the work done. They flew across the country several times. Later when McDonnell was working in Brazil, he needed that plane for his work with the Japanese who were immigrating there in great numbers. Believe it or not, McCullough flew that plane to him in Brazil. When McDonnell finished with his work in South America, he flew back alone to the United States. These guys were unbelievable. What I know to be their history I almost hesitate to relate for fear of being accused of making up their story. But to return to the final act of their tragedy.

I had been living and working in Tracy since 1957 or so. This was an agricultural area with many wealthy farmers, many of whom were Catholics. In very short order, they knew

where I stood as I weekly explained the demands of justice for farmworkers. They, of course, complained to the pastor, but by this time my teeth were showing and the poor little pastor was not going to face me on that issue of justice for farmworkers. After some three years there, things got so bad that he engineered my move to Stockton through his Irish friends in the diocese. I decided on going to Tracy that the pastor could handle the ordinary parish duties, and I devoted myself almost exclusively to the needs of poor Mexicans. He wasn't consulted on that decision, but the cut of the pie certainly didn't favor me; I had more baptisms and marriages than he ever thought of.

By the time I arrived in Tracy, I knew how to work with people and I accomplished much in a short time. There were many Mexicans on the south side and a good number of Blacks. The Mexicans were ready for action, and after we discussed their needs, we set to work to address them. Within a year we built a Guadalupe Center on property donated by the Honorific Society, a group intended to represent the needs of Mexicans in the United States. A good credit union followed quickly, and this was administered by some radical Anglo members of the parish. Bea Brickey and Jan Sherry organized and ran the credit union and it was effective for several years. Orbin Brickey was the head of a good group of men in the St. Vincent de Paul Society. All in all, we made much progress in a short time. Perhaps we were too strong, for after the Brickeys moved to the north side of Tracy, where we built a second Guadalupe Center, the enemies of the poor caught up with us and I was moved to Stockton. I could do little to fight the move, so I went in peace. There, after all, I could work even closer with McCullough.

In those years, Tracy had many bracero camps, as did the entire San Joaquin County. Braceros were farmhands from Mexico, first imported during the war to help harvest the crops; they were deemed necessary after the war by Public Law 78. We fought this law until it was repealed in 1964. It should have ended with the end of the war, but farmer power exceeded people power at that time. While the braceros were here, we said Mass at night in their camps, of which there seemed to be several hundred, and farmers and Mexicans living here made money on the braceros, who were poorly paid and badly provided for.

It was at this time that McCullough met Henry Anderson, who was doing a study of the bracero movement for his doctoral thesis. He and McCullough became close friends. Henry supplied us with the social and economic facts of braceroism. When Anderson's thesis did appear, it was a bible of information on all phases of farm labor. It was such a threat to the growers that they applied pressure on the university to the extent that the thesis was not accepted. After this frustrating experience, Henry, through McCullough's influence, was taken on by AWOC as a research person. He supplied Smith with a world of facts on the bracero system, similar to what Ernesto Galarza had done before the coming of the union. It was Galarza who first introduced us to the evils of farm labor in the late 40s. His strike in Tracy against the tomato growers was the first time we walked a picket line in support of farmworkers.

Henry Anderson added something to our lives which we cannot easily forget. It was because of him that McCullough, McDonnell, and Duggan were included as subversives by the House Un-American Activities Committee in 1958. As seekers of justice we appreciated the distinction, and all this was a prelude to the final act of the drama.

The farmers had long since determined that McCullough and McDonnell must be stopped, and it was our friend Norman Smith who presented the growers with their opportunity for bringing the Fathers to their end as supporters of farm labor. Norman didn't intend to do that, but that is what happened.

Things were not going well for Smith around Stockton. In addition to his trouble with the farmers, his union had internal troubles. Dolores Huerta had become aware of his poor operation and she was his chief opposition in the union. This and other things sent Smith far to the south, where he organized a strike in Calexico. Smith's strike started off well enough but subsequently ran into difficulties, and he decided he needed his priest friends to help the cause. Ever-ready Tom and Don flew to San Diego to obtain Bishop Buddy's permission to inform the strikers of their rights and duties on the basis of the Catholic social doctrine. The bishop acceded to their wishes, and they flew on to Calexico, a hundred miles or so to the east of San Diego. What happened thenceforth I can only conjecture, for Don and Tom remained silent after they were brought down.

A big rally was held on a Saturday morning in a hall that the union had hired. The strikers crowded the hall, and in their midst there were growers and other enemies of the cause. Exactly what the Fathers did, I do not know, but I presume they gave a spirited explanation of the Church's social doctrine that was not too objective, according to the growers and their spies. The Fathers also led the workers in singing "Solidarity Forever" in Spanish. In all it was a great meeting, and the two priests flew back to the Bay Area for their Sunday Masses. The farmer opposition went into action immediately; they reported to the local priest and the San Diego chancery office that Communist priests were working in Calexico for Smith's union.

McCullough and McDonnell were greeted on Monday morning with telegrams from the Bishop of San Diego asking if they knew anything about Communist priests who were parading in their name in the strike of Calexico. From that point on, the situation became increasingly ridiculous: the bishops in California were contacted by Buddy, and it wasn't long before our two friends were sacrificed on the alter of injustice to satisfy the demands of the growers.

Bishop Buddy well knew who the priests were and what they were doing in Calexico, but he totally caved in to the economic boycott threatened by the farmers. Archbishop Mitty was then dead, but the San Francisco Archdiocese caved in, too, to the pressure of the growers who were mounting a statewide attack on the Church. As the saying goes, money talks when the chips are down, and it certainly did in this case, far more than virtue and economic justice. McCullough and McDonnell had played their last piece for the Spanish

Mission Band. There was a trial of sorts for their side of what had happened, but their explanation received little support; theirs was a lost cause.

They were removed from their assignments. McCullough was sent to St. Mary's Church in Oakland and McDonnell arranged to be sent to Japan in preparation for his new interest: working with the Japanese in Brazil. To me, they were both broken in spirit, but they were loyal and obedient servants to Holy Mother Church, but not so Duggan. I think it was then that I lost the little respect and faith that I had left in the institutional Church. Up to this point, my role with the Band was in the background, as I was no longer one of its members since my resignation in Decoto. I had strongly supported what the others were doing and counseled them as best I could. With their downfall, I became increasingly bitter and critical of the institutional Church.

My immediate reaction was to dash off an angry letter to Bishop Donohue, then acting for the archdiocese at the death of Mitty. That letter wasn't very respectful or prudent, but it said what I felt should be said under the circumstances.

I remember stating that I had but one ecclesiastical career to sacrifice in protest to the injustice done to McDonnell and McCullough. Savonarola was burned at the stake for less than what I put in that letter, but nothing happened to me immediately. Donohue didn't even answer my letter. He did not forget me, however, as I was to learn when he shortly after became bishop of Stockton.

I didn't have too much to do with Don or Tom after this, as we were already living in different worlds when the demise of the Band took place. This happened in 1959. Then McDonnell left for Japan, and McCullough suffered something of a breakdown in health; he had never been sick in his life. Neither Don nor Tom responded to Vatican II, which for me was a real inspiration and revival of faith, at least for a while. To this day, we have lost the ability to communicate meaningfully, and I feel this deeply, but they are no longer the men I once knew and for whom I had such admiration and respect.

Fathers Garcia and Burke went on their regular way after the termination of the Band. Garcia accepted a new assignment in Oakland and after serving several years as a pastor returned to become an assistant priest, where he felt he could be closer to the people as he had been as a missionary.

Father Burke took on the direction of the Latin American Missionary Program (LAMP), which was founded by the Band. He was later to go to Guatemala as a missionary, where he did tremendous work before his life was threatened by the rightist government of that country. He is now working in San Bruno, and we are still close friends. Unlike McCullough and McDonnell, he has grown with the new directions of the Church, but he still meets with them on a regular basis.

CHAPTER 11. BISHOPS' COMMITTEE FOR MIGRANT WORKERS

Before the coming of Bishop Donohue to Stockton, I had been changed from Tracy to St. Gertrude's in that fair city. There I worked closely with Tom and with the good Franciscans who had taken over St. Mary's parish. Father Alan McCoy was the pastor at St. Mary's, and he was a joy and an inspiration to be with. Don and I had brought the Cursillo movement to Stockton from Texas, where we had made a Cursillo. We were highly impressed with this movement, and we explained its elements to Father Alan. He was willing to give it a try in Stockton and it became established there under his direction. I felt that in many places the Cursillo movement only solidified the unwarranted power of the clergy over the people, but with Father Alan it became a real asset to the Church and to the people. It liberated rather than restricted the lives of the men and women who made it.

Father Alan was also instrumental in changing the Franciscans' approach to parochial life. He had charge of the training of the young Franciscan theologians before their ordination, and under his direction many of them turned out remarkably well. They had a good effect not only in Stockton, but in all places they were later sent. Unfortunately, things returned to business as usual when Father Alan left Stockton, but while he was there, life was exciting and promising.

When Bishop Donohue arrived in 1960, we both agreed I would be better off elsewhere. My old friend, Monsignor William Quinn, was then with the Bishops' Committee for Migrant Workers and he needed an assistant. Not surprisingly, he was able to obtain Duggan from Donohue.

Thus it was that I began my new career working for the Bishops' Committee for Migrant Workers. Our office was located at 1100 South Wabash in Chicago. In that same building Father Leo Mahon was in charge of the Spanish speaking program for the Archdiocese of Chicago. Monsignor Quinn gave me very few directives, but he specified we were not to bother the bishops with our program or our difficulties. I thought this rather strange advice, but it was founded on some wisdom, albeit not to my way of thinking. Bill Quinn would make an annual report to the bishops on what we were doing, but that report was pretty general and it amounted to the extent of the bishops' involvement with the migrants. Monsignor Quinn became a kind of troubleshooter for the Papal Volunteer Program after Vatican II, and that put the migrant program almost solely in my hands. I proceeded without portfolio, but that was all to my liking.

Sister Xavier, the same who worked well with McCullough in Stockton, was then a part of Father Mahon's program, and it was from her that I received both inspiration and direction. Leo Mahon was something of a theologian and he was training Puerto Ricans to work for the church. His program was the best thing I had thus far come across. He was soon to have the opportunity of testing his thinking in Latin America, when Chicago took over a parish in Panama. He and Ivan Illich were of one mind on what the Church should be and how it should proceed. They were both ahead of their time, and I learned much from them.

The first year in Chicago, I spent most of my time traveling the routes of the migrant workers. These started in the Rio Grande Valley in Texas and ended in the various agricultural areas of the Midwest: Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, and Illinois. Many of the migrants went into the potato fields of Idaho and some even visited Washington and Oregon. Migrants from Florida came to New Jersey and New York. Our work extended to all these places. Most of the Florida migrants were Negroes, and it was these that Ed Murrow's "Harvest of Shame" dealt with in his fine documentary in the 60s.

On returning to Chicago from these places, I relaxed, listening and discussing mutual interests with parish priests. They were a different breed from the California priests; they were certainly better educated, and the ones associated with Bill Quinn and Leo Mahon particularly interested me. These had a certain contempt for their California counterparts. The ultimate insult for someone you wanted to insult was to say of him, "That guy couldn't even get through Menlo Park." Menlo Park was the site of St. Patrick's Seminary. I agreed with their estimate, but I found their smugness disconcerting. Intellectually, they were far ahead of the rest of the clergy of the United States, and this was because the clergy of these places so closely imitated the Church in New York City. In spite of their smugness I found myself strangely at home with that Chicago crowd.

Before my coming to Chicago, Monsignor Quinn had arranged for a number of us, his friends, to attend a training session under the direction of Saul Alinsky and Ivan Illich. Lester Hunt and Nick Van Hoffman were then working with Alinsky, and I well remember the master stressing the need and use of power. It was out of these meetings that I became part of the Big Thinkers.

CHAPTER 12. DUGGAN WITH THE BIG THINKERS

Illich had much influence on Monsignor Quinn, as indeed he had on all of us, for he was an extraordinary person by anyone's standards. It was around him that what I am pleased to call "The Big Thinker Operation" came into being. I do not want to use this term contemptuously, but I can readily understand how many priests in other places came to regard that special group from Chicago that Illich inspired. He had a most perceptive mind, and from his first contacts with priests in New York he realized the immaturity of the American mind. After working in New York, he arranged his transfer to Puerto Rico, where he intended to train priests and laity for what he envisioned as the new Church. When he found difficulties there, he moved to Chicago, where he had many friends. Cardinal Spellman was so impressed with his genius that he made him a monsignor, and that in itself opened many doors for Illich. He chose to operate in Chicago.

Whatever Quinn's limitations were, he was an excellent front man and generally charmed those he dealt with. Illich saw this on meeting Quinn, and it was Quinn whom Illich chose to open doors for his new operation. In no time at all he had Bill convinced that what the American priests needed was a new vision and a new direction; they intended to

reconstruct the minds of the clergy. Quinn was mesmerized by Illich, and shortly he was arranging meetings for the new order of things. I think many of Illich's ideas were good, but his approach to American priests was fundamentally demeaning. Be that as it may, I came out of one of his first training sessions in Chicago with all the fervor of a religious fanatic. I joined the Big Thinkers flattered that I was considered one of them, though I now think that I was used as one of Bill's messengers.

The meeting with California priests was encouraging, but the New York priests reacted negatively, and the Texas meeting was a real bomb.

None of us thought very much of Texas priests, and this attitude probably cost us two strikes before we were able to make our presentation. It wasn't altogether surprising to me that this became the last effort of the Big Thinkers, though we did convert Archbishop Lucey to our way of thinking.

Lucey was something of a puzzle to me. He came out strongly in favor of the worker, but in many things he was more conservative than most bishops. I became aware of this working in Texas. It was there that I met the incomparable Henry Munoz, who was then associated with Lucey's operation for the Spanish speaking. Henry's boss was a priest with far less understanding of the needs of the Spanish speaking than Henry, and the latter became quite critical of his director's insights. As a matter of fact, Munoz became downright contemptuous of his superior, and he began to show this as only he could.

I had become quite friendly with Henry, and together we were able to serve the needs of the migrants and the Spanish speaking in a way that made sense. Gradually, Henry's relations with his boss worsened. At the time the thing struck me as amusing, but eventually Munoz's job was on the line, and I violated clerical protocol by defending him against his boss. One doesn't do this kind of thing within the Church, especially in Texas. I spoke to Archbishop Lucey, but my words availed little. Henry lost his job, and my position in Texas became rather shaky. This happened after our session with the Texas priests.

In spite of that failure we were wined and dined by Archbishop Lucey, who seemed well satisfied with our efforts; after all, as he then said, priests' thinking could not be changed overnight. If we had any doubt in that matter, it was laid to rest by the splendor of that dinner. Splendor is a strange word to describe a dinner; sumptuous might be more appropriate, but while I remember the meal, it was Lucey's appearance on that occasion that made the deepest impression. I had never before witnessed a bishop's dinner, and I didn't realize how ornately they were decked out for such things. He looked like cock robin, down to his bejeweled slippers and bright pink socks. I was now certain that Christ had nothing to do with the regalia of the hierarchy. How the Church can still live with such stuff is beyond me. Another huge chunk of my commitment to the institutional Church crumbled away with that dinner.

However, Texas was important if the Bishops' Committee for the Migrant was to mean anything, and I kept plugging away for a relevant program. Henry, after being sacked by the archbishop, went to work with the Teamsters, and on one occasion he called me to meet him and his new bosses in El Paso. I drove there from San Antonio and we had a good session on the needs of Texas workers for union organization. Somehow, my presence at that meeting came to the attention of the ecclesiastical powers in San Antonio, and that news in turn was conveyed to Lucey, then in Rome at the Vatican II Council. Duggan had done it again.

CHAPTER 13. ECUMENISM BEFORE ITS TIME

After an ineffectual first year with the Bishops' Committee for Migrant Workers, I understood more clearly the needs of these workers. Religiously, they were well provided for; most of the priests and dioceses of the Midwest were very aware of the migrants and they provided Mass and the sacraments for them and whatever else they could in the way of food and clothing for their needs. It was the deeper social, political, and economic needs that the Church was not touching, and that troubled me. Henry Munoz had been most helpful in providing for these needs; he also gave me new ideas for our program. What he had done in Texas should be done for the migrants in the Midwest, but how could we go about this? Monsignor Quinn was of little help for me, but Lester Hunt, his former secretary and my predecessor in the Chicago office, was very helpful in suggesting a new program for the Bishops' Committee for Migrant Workers.

According to Lester, our program could have more muscle and meaning if we acted in conjunction with the Protestants and others interested in the needs of the migrants. This made good sense, and Lester and I convinced Bill Quinn that this plan should be brought before the bishops. Hunt's idea had another facet, which was that we should seek foundation funding for the carrying out of this plan. With the approval of Quinn and the Catholic bishops, Lester brought this plan to the Council of Churches. Through his friend, Bill Koch, who worked for the migrants representing the Council of Churches, the plan was accepted and we had started an ecumenical movement for social justice. Lester helped too with the nitty-gritty of contacting foundations, and after much work, we were finally granted an audience with the lower echelons of the Ford Foundation, which seemed to have more of a hierarchy than the Church. It was my job, together with Bill Koch, to present our proposal to the Ford Foundation.

Koch and I had many preliminary meetings in New York, and by these meetings I became quite familiar with the Big Apple. Our proposal made sense to us, but I am not so sure its many points were accepted by the bishops; Quinn said they accepted and that was good enough for me. We agreed to help the migrant in his social, political, and economic needs, and everything in between. If and when the foundation granted us seed money for the proposal, our joint effort was to be henceforth supported by money from the Council and the Catholic bishops. None of this funding was to be used for religious purposes of propaganda. As good as all this sounded, it didn't wash with me, as ultimately it was not

acceptable to the foundation. Their principal point in refusing our request was that there had never been a previous example of such cooperation between Catholics and Protestants, and why should this cooperation now be inaugurated by the Ford Foundation? Had I sat on their board, I think I would have reacted exactly as they did. Had Protestants and Catholics jointly cooperated for the needs of social justice before this, I think our proposal would have been accepted.

Our disappointment in not obtaining funding from the Ford Foundation was later eased when Herman Gallegos, Ernesto Galarza, and Julian Zamora succeeded in getting funding for work with Mexican Americans.

My previous contact with Protestantism was most elementary, but after many meetings with Koch and several visits to the Council of Churches' Vatican on Riverside Drive in New York, I came to the conclusion that they operated in much the same way as did the Catholic bureaucracy. They seemed to allow Bill Koch even less running room than I got, but Bill Quinn was easy to work under.

It was because of this project that I got to know New York. I well remember the occasion I landed at Kennedy Airport only to find I had lost my wallet. That embarrassment took place at the same time the American bishops were leaving that airport for Rome for the beginning of Vatican II. I was flat broke with the loss of my wallet, but explaining that to a group of bishops was not going to be a pleasant cup of tea. I spotted Bishop Maher, recently appointed to San Diego after the death of Mitty. He had worked as Mitty's secretary before becoming bishop. I had been in the seminary with him, but with the demise of the Band and my reaction to it, he was no great friend of mine. Under these circumstances I wouldn't have asked him for a burnt piece of toast had I been starving. I phoned Bill Quinn collect, and he was forwarding me money at the hotel where I was to stay in New York; that would take a little while and I still had to get to the hotel from Kennedy. For the moment, I felt tempted to remove my collar and do a little panhandling, but I thought better not to. I ended up at the airport chapel and asked to see the priest in charge. He was used to hearing all kinds of stories, but a priest on the bum was something obviously new for him. He gave me a fish-eyed look of suspicion before he parted with his \$10, and I was on my way to New York. My wallet had been found at O'Hare Airport in Chicago, and it was returned to our office minus the cash I had been carrying. I thought of all the odd stories I had listened to over the years as a priest, but never once did I run into a priest without money; that sort of thing just couldn't happen. Priests don't lose their wallets, and if they do, they always carry an extra \$5 or \$10 in their right shoe. That advice is probably in some obscure place in canon law. I should have read it.

During one of those trips to New York, I stopped off at CBS to see our friend David Lowe, then in charge of programming for that network. CBS was preparing material for Ed Murrow's *Harvest of Shame*. We felt sure that much of the material on the farm labor problems in California would be included in that documentary, but David told me that CBS had decided to limit its material to migrants on the East Coast. My cynical conclusion

was that the big growers in the West had gotten to CBS, but this was only a suspicion. Lowe sensed my disappointment and took me to lunch at a very swank restaurant. I think it was the 21 Club. During lunch he pointed out some of the famous people in the restaurant, and afterward he showed me around the CBS studio. He introduced me to Johnny Carson, who was then beginning his famous show. This was in 1962.

My job also included frequent trips to the national capital, where we were concentrating our efforts on doing away with Public Law 78. Liberals, labor, and religious groups were united in this struggle, and in 1964 we finally ended this nonsensical law. Senator Harrison Williams of Abscam fame led us in our fight. For us, he was a hero.

CHAPTER 14. MARCHING WITH MARTIN LUTHER KING

Life in Chicago made me aware of the sufferings of Black people in a way I had never realized in the West. It was in Chicago that I first saw Martin Luther King, and like many others, I was deeply moved and impressed by this great man. Parishes on the south side were then being taken over by black people, and to its merit the archdiocese was ready for this transition. Priests, nuns, and Brothers were working for this new direction in the Church, and I was in admiration of how quickly Blacks were welcome and brought into the Church. There was little arm twisting for the purpose of conversion, but the Church was present to serve people in all parts of the city, regardless of color or creed. My specific work had little to do with the black community, but I was aware of their needs and recognized that progress for one social group could not be brought about without the progress of all groups. This was the way most Chicago priests and people thought and acted; at least this was the impression that I had received from my work in Chicago. When Martin Luther King marched and spoke in Washington, it seemed that half of Chicago was present to hear him. I was too involved in Texas at that time to attend the Washington march, but when the Selma march to Montgomery, Alabama, took place, I was there, with a great number of Chicago priests, nuns, and others. I was proud to be present; it was the Christian and human thing to do.

I had never experienced racial antagonism until that day in Montgomery, and I never knew how much fear a prejudiced mob could engender until I participated in that march. We were protected by the military, but the sullenness, anger, and jeering on the sidelines of the march were frightening. As Martin Luther King and his official group reached the steps of the Alabama capital, we all wildly cheered, but the reception was short and sour, to say the least. That did not change the oratory of King, and his words on that occasion were as inspiring as they had been in Washington and elsewhere.

We had flown into Montgomery without too much trouble, but once there, services and food were difficult to find. We all were pretty hungry at the end of the day. On leaving Montgomery, our difficulties increased. At the airport news reached us that one of the organizers, Mario Luizo, had been shot. Furthermore, it looked as if our stay at the airport was going to be a long one. We were informed that there were not enough planes available

to take us back to our points of origin. Fortunately, President Johnson used his influence to commandeer the necessary planes to get us out of Montgomery without further incidents. I was happy and relieved to arrive back in Chicago.

CHAPTER 15. PAPAL VOLUNTEERS IN LATIN AMERICA

Another memorable part of my time spent with the Bishops' Committee for Migrant Workers was the chance it offered me to understand Latin America and its people. Pope John, in the short time that he lived, appealed to the rich church of North America to help the poor church of Latin America. The bishops of the United States responded to this appeal with what they called "the Papal Volunteer Program." The effort was well meaning in intention, but it was poorly conceived in substance, and in application it was something of a disaster. That it succeeded in some small part was due, in my opinion, to the contributions made to it by Illich and Mahon, who had a good realization of the meaning of the Church and the needs of Latin America. The majority of the American bishops were of the opinion that what they had accomplished was next to the last word in what Jesus Christ wanted; Illich and Mahon were of another opinion entirely.

Father John Considine of Maryknoll, and my boss, Monsignor Quinn, were chosen to direct the operation of the Papal Volunteer Program, and Illich saw the possibility of working his ideas through these two. Early on, Considine became difficult for Illich to manipulate, and he then concentrated his magic on Quinn. By this time Ivan had burnt many of his bridges, and even the believing Quinn began to have his doubts about the great Ivan.

At first Illich and Mahon succeeded in convincing Considine and Quinn of the necessity for a series of conferences to be held in Chicago that would be attended by the bishops, priests, and laity of both North and South America, which we all accepted as a good idea. The arrangement of these conferences was made by Quinn and Considine, and Bill needed my help with many incidentals. Quinn explained my part of the operation as a simple matter of changing hats.

The first Latin American Conference took place in Chicago in January of 1962, and it was an eye-opener for me. Illich and Mahon played a large part in the formulation of the agenda, most of which seemed to me to be pointed toward education of the American bishops, but the bishops didn't seem to accept the message. Mahon and Illich stressed the strength of the Latin American Church. The laity and many of the clergy reacted positively to what was being said, and the Latin Americans were so encouraged with what they were hearing that they boldly responded that they didn't need Papal Volunteers; what they needed, they said, was money. Many Americans were not too happy with this response, but Considine and Quinn were too committed to their Papal Volunteer Program to change direction. Illich and Mahon saw the drift of things and set their sights on operating in South America henceforth. Illich found his way to Cuernavaca, where he founded his own

program, and Mahon shortly after landed in Panama. For those who know how, there are always opportunities for new methods of spreading the gospel.

For my part, I liked my new hat, and as Quinn's Spanish was nonexistent, I substituted for him on a trip to Latin America on behalf of the Papal Volunteer Program in 1963. I had the opportunity of visiting Illich's school in Cuernavaca, which had become the principal training ground for Papal Volunteers. I was impressed with what I saw. I went from there to Leo Mahon's parish in Panama, and that, too, was impressive.

Father Mahon had worked out a good program in Chicago with the Puerto Ricans, and he brought this with him to Panama. He and Sister Xavier had added many good additions to the Cursillo program. Leo's comment on the Cursillos was unique and brilliant: "It's a good program, but it puts too much power in the hands of the priests, who are already too powerful." He felt that the laity had to be liberated by their religion if they were to contribute to the needs of the Church. I didn't know what he meant by that observation at the time, but I came to agree with him completely later on. Illich and Mahon had an understanding of the need of the liberating influence of Christianity (which was far ahead of their time), but they were both to learn that the Inquisition was not over. They have both suffered from the fact, but so far as I know, they have not given up the struggle for liberation and Christianity.

Quinn wasn't too specific on my assignment, but that trip did give me firsthand knowledge of the Latin American situation. I met many of the Maryknoll missionaries, most of whom had studied with Illich and had grown in their ministry; but others were too steeped in the old theology and the American approach to the meaning of the Church. In Chile, I renewed my acquaintance with Father Miguel D'Escoto, whom I had met in Chicago. He showed me around, and he was most optimistic for what was taking place in Chile. Frey was then president, and many were optimistic for the future. The Church in Chile was alive and full of optimism for what was then happening, and its spirit was contagious for me. Sister Josefa of Maryknoll was then in Chile; she had been stationed at St. Linus with Father McCullough. After the coup she returned to Stockton, where she is now working with her husband, Pedro Castex. Pedro had come close to being shot by the Pinochet government. Pedro and Gloria Castex are now doing much for the Comunidades de Base in the San Joaquin Valley. They have inspired many with their work and love for people.

Brazil, with its Hélder Câmara, was equally impressive for me as Chile had been. I had the pleasure then of seeing why he had such influence in Rome at the Council. It was in Brazil, too, that I first encountered the work of Paulo Freire. I left that country shortly before the coup of 1964, which ended much of the good work I had witnessed going on there.

The effect on me of the Latin American Church was profound and lasting. The bishops and priests whom I had met and seen in action, were, for the most part, far ahead of anything we had in America. Liberation theology had not yet come into its own, but there was a profound understanding of the nature of the Church. The laity were being given an

understanding of their role in the history of salvation, and they were carrying out their work with an enthusiasm and thoroughness that made our people seem like spiritual infants. I returned to the United States with a hope and faith of better things to come.

CHAPTER 16. ROME AND VATICAN II

On returning to America, I continued my work with the migrants, largely occupied with the plans devised by Munoz and myself, and it was about this time that my trip to El Paso to see Henry and the Teamsters became known to the San Antonio church people. That information was sent on to Rome, where Archbishop Lucey relayed the message to Cardinal Meyer and Bill Quinn that Duggan must leave Texas on the double. Quinn was then in Rome working with bishops on his Papal Volunteer Program, and the news of my latest adventure in Texas was exactly what he didn't need.

He wrote to me saying that I should leave Texas, and, to ease the blow of that order, he suggested that I come to Rome to witness the wonderful things that were then taking place. Under the circumstances, there was little for me to do without working in Texas, so I readily accepted his suggestion. Rome with Vatican II was heady stuff for me.

I had been impressed by John XXIII and the vision of the Church that he had offered the world. With many others, I deeply lamented his death but rejoiced that the council he called was taking place. It was then in its third year, and the atmosphere when I arrived was one of optimism and of expectancy of great things to come. I was enchanted by the whole thing and joyfully joined in the sessions organized by the Chicago crowd, who seemed able to gather the best minds at their evening sessions after the excitement of the day. Chicago people seemed to know how to gather other people in a way that they could not resist. Those night sessions went on long and loud, and I was enthralled by what I was witnessing. My shattered and damaged faith was somewhat restored by what I was hearing. French and German theologians seemed to be the leading lights of the council, but the American Jesuit John Courtney Murray and Monsignor George Higgins held their own in the discussions that I heard.

The keynote of the council at that time was centered on the need of the Church for open and positive dialogue with the changing world. This was the practice of the day, and the Church was ridding itself of much of its past nonsensical history. Conservative influence was still quite powerful, but this was meeting with opposition at every turn of the road. For the while, my hopes ran high for an emerging Church that could take its rightful place in a society that so needed it, but even while there, the old order began to reassert itself. As the French so neatly put it, "The more things change, the more they remain the same," and so it was in Rome.

The main thing that turned my optimism to pessimism resulted from the discussions of the bishops on the meaning of collegiality, or the sharing of the bishops in the power of the pope. The position of the bishops in relation to an infallible pope had always been a sticky

wicket, and so it was in this case. The discussions on collegiality were fine enough in theory, but apparently, they made the pope very nervous in practice, for he called an end to the discussions after they had become somewhat heated. Pope Paul VI's declaration was law, and what followed was but another example of the old dictum "Rome has spoken, the case is closed." I wasn't the only one disappointed with that development of the council, but it was on this sour note that it was to close for all intents and purposes.

I returned to Chicago shortly after that disappointment on the question of collegiality, and it was about this same time that my Chicago friends were greeted with the news that they had a new archbishop, one John Patrick Cody from New Orleans. John Patrick had a poor track record and he was far from the choice of the liberals of Chicago; but as usual in such cases, they had not been consulted in the matter. The new archbishop was not overly pleased with the Chicago environment, and for me at least, it was obvious who was going to win in the conflict that was to come. The Church is not democratic in these things. Opposition to the new man was limited at the start, and except for the spunky Andy Greeley, who now challenged everything that moved, John Cody had his way until his death.

This was indicative of how much things were to remain the same in the new and emerging Church in America. In these last years, a new spirit seems to be showing itself with the stand of some bishops on nuclear war and their defense of the revolutionaries in Latin America, but at this time it is too early to predict whether or not Rome will go along with these things. From the more recent stands of John Paul II, it seems that things will go on as usual.

CHAPTER 17. RETURN TO STOCKTON: PASTOR OF ST. LINUS

My experience in Chicago had taught me many things, one of which was that the Church was pretty much the same everywhere. Its procedures were authoritative universally, and there was no such thing as a liberation theology, at least not yet. My return to Stockton was not greeted by any brass band, and while Bishop Donohue received me back, he did so with something of a sardonic smile that seemed to say, "I told you so." If he was saying that the Church was the same everywhere, I willingly conceded the point, but I certainly was not ready for debate. He needed priests and appointed me pastor of St. Linus, a small mission church that McCullough had started before he was moved. I accepted the appointment willingly enough, but if my escapist period was past, I was far from admitting defeat, though the shadow of defeat seemed to be stalking my path. I had problems to face, but whether that could be done as a priest within the Church or outside the priesthood, I had yet to decide.

Father William Hughes, a classmate of McCullough and McDonnell and a good friend of mine, was assigned to St. Linus with me. He had some progressive ideas on parochial reform and lay leadership, and I went along with most of his ideas, as my own enthusiasm was next to nothing. Not only was I low in spirit, but it was getting more and more difficult

for me to put in any kind of workday without becoming very tired. I was tired even in the mornings before doing anything. The situation got so bad that I went to see a doctor, and after his examination it was found that I had a serious case of diabetes. He hospitalized me for two weeks and put me on insulin, but that did not change matters. The march of Cesar Chavez was then in progress from Delano to Sacramento, and after he stopped at St. Linus, I joined in the march but I was too exhausted to go very far.

After leaving CSO, Cesar went to Delano, and it was there that he succeeded in founding his union. He knew what he wanted and he knew how to get what he wanted. The time was ripe for him and his union; he knew many people from his work with CSO, and they supported him willingly, whereas the CSO leadership had failed him. AWOC under Norman Smith was pretty much of a failure, and its faltering efforts were soon surpassed by the efforts of Cesar's union. He was surrounded by many Mexicans who recognized his rare leadership, and Larry Itliong came to him from Stockton to lead the many Filipinos in Delano's grape industry. Dolores Huerta, too, joined him, and Cesar was one of those rare people who could handle Dolores' abilities. The AFL-CIO, then cool to the stumbling efforts of Norman Smith, sent its representative, William Kirchner, to look over Cesar, and he liked what he saw, even to the extent of joining in the march. Smith attacked his new rival, but it was too late for him, for Cesar was an obvious success. By the time of the march in Holy Week of 1965, Chavez was already a force to be reckoned with by the growers in California.

He arrived in Stockton on Holy Thursday and asked to use St. Linus as a meeting place for his people. It was there that the new union voted in favor of its first big contract, and we all were happy. When the march took off the next morning I joined in, but I was the sorriest marcher of all those tired marchers. After Easter, my diabetes came to the attention of Bishop Donohue, and he kindly sent me to the U.C. Medical Center in San Francisco, and I had to remain there for six weeks. After all kinds of expert attention, doctors attributed my diabetes to what they called hemochromatosis, an oversupply of iron in my blood, and put me on weekly bleedings which lasted over a year; after that the bleedings were reduced to once a month, which still go on. I have to take insulin daily, but I am in good health most of the time.

I have found physical labor helpful to use up the sugar in my blood, and I was happy in repairing things around the place on my return to St. Linus. I have often thought that perhaps my blood condition was responsible for my sometimes ornery disposition, but I have dismissed that explanation in favor of a more flattering one. My return to St. Linus also brought some changes I had not anticipated. Cesar's march left its mark on St. Linus in more ways than one.

Two families, the Bowers and the Villanuevas, followed Cesar from Bakersfield to Stockton, and they were so impressed with the place that they decided to stay. Their choice of place was St. Linus. This was the post-Vatican period, and they had been influenced by their priest friend, Father James McGuire of Bakersfield. Their stay in his parish had been

brought to an end by their rather exceptional attachment to civil rights and the farmworker cause. Hal Bower's boss was of the opinion that Hal was no longer fit for his salesman's job, and Sally Villanueva's husband was convinced that Cesar was a Communist and worse. Sally became divorced over these issues, and she and the Bowers dug new roots at St. Linus.

I became aware of their presence when I returned to saying Mass at the church, where they and their children had taken over the liturgy. This liturgical reform was not voted in by the parishioners, and Father Hughes pleaded not guilty when I asked him what was going on. Such was my introduction to the Bowers and the Villanuevas. They were strictly of the stuff that the new Catholic right and William Buckley and others had been warning the Church about. After my initial shock and some meditation, I accepted them and even came to recognize them as the emerging force of the new Church, but "Why me, O Lord, why me?" Sally's husband showed up in the parish a short time after her arrival, and I had been made aware of his coming by the chancery office, which wanted me to do what I could to bring the marriage together again. I think I made an honest effort in that, but after coming to know Sally and hearing her side, I was wasting my time to go any further in the matter. The husband was a Stanford graduate, a Mexican who had made it on his own and all such. My prejudices were all on the wrong side of the mission I was urged to undertake. The two new families not only dominated the liturgy, but they won me over, too. They were not only at daily Mass, but they participated in every meeting we had in the parish.

Naturally, the natives were not going to allow their parish to be taken over by these new upstarts, and our hitherto peaceful parish council became a battleground. The first issue was to be the painting of the church, and the old guard was for the traditional white with something of a delicate trim; the new upstarts were for roses and colors all the way. The conservatives won, and it looked as if they would win on all other questions as they were definitely in the majority. On the question of the place of the poor old sad statues in the church, the conservatives were for things as they were. The morning after that spirited debate, I opened the church for Mass only to find there were no statues. I made no official inquiry then, nor have I to this day; neither I nor the people called the cops, so I just filed it away as the miracle or mystery of St. Linus.

CHAPTER 18. TO BE OR NOT TO BE

My leaving the priesthood is of the stuff that makes for interesting reading, and I hesitate to include it here, but it is part of my story, and as such I include it. I made that decision in the summer of 1967.

To say that I had come to love Sally Villanueva would be the truth, but it would not have been all the truth. To say that I had lost interest in what I was supposed to be doing would be an element that should be included in my decision. Those who have followed my story thus far should realize that I had long since lost interest in what I was doing, but strangely, I still have faith in what the Church could be doing. I shall try to explain that later on.

I tried to explain it to Bishop Donohue, but we were on different wavelengths. I told the bishop that I intended to marry Sally, and his retort was kind of a wise one, to the effect that I was being led away by the wiles of a woman who needed support for herself and her children. Sally was then working as a nurse, earning more than I was able to offer her. This, too, I tried to explain, but I ended that meeting as quickly as possible. I told him that I had felt out of step with the institutional Church for a long time. I felt then and continue to feel now that religion is a powerful force for good. Celibacy and all that it demands is one of the highest forms of religious commitment, but it has to be helped by inspiration and encouragement on the part of those who exact it. The early years of seminary training, rigorous and demanding as they are, are accepted by the aspirant to the priesthood as something necessary for the battles before him. But after ordination, where are those battles to be found? With the likes of McDonnell and McDonough and others whom I admired, the demands of the priesthood were easily understood and the battle of life made sense. With me the life of the priest seemed meaningless. The real struggles of society and the world about us seemed to have little or nothing to do with what was happening in the Church; we were occupied with the selfish minor problems of people who had come to have an altogether distorted notion of the meaning of life, and much of our theology had contributed to this situation. I think this is why so many priests and nuns have opted for leaving the institutional Church and joining in the struggles of society. For the most part, the Church as an institution has lost contact with the real world. This I tried to explain to Bishop Donohue, but I was wasting my time; some years later, perhaps he would have understood what I was saying.

I have retained my faith in the Church as the family of God and the emerging Church of the present time makes much more sense than that of the old order of things. I felt then like a leaf dying on the vine. To be confined to the administration of the sacraments, which worked in and by themselves without much relation to the troubled world about us, no longer made sense, and while there was still life in me, I had to seek another way to use the time and talents that were still with me. To all this, there was little response on the part of Bishop Donohue.

CHAPTER 19. TO CESAR WHAT IS CESAR'S

To join in the struggle of the farmworker for justice made sense to Sally and me, and so after leaving Stockton I took myself to Delano to see Cesar Chavez. We had always enjoyed good relations, and it made little difference to Cesar that I had left the priesthood; he readily accepted our services. I returned for Sally and her children and we were married on our way to Delano. This happened in the fall of 1967.

As a nurse Sally was assigned to work in the Farmworkers Clinic, and I became part-time secretary to Cesar as well as an assistant to the construction crew at the new headquarters of the union. Getting a place to stay and setting up house was a new experience for me, but with the help of Sally and her children, we managed well enough. Diane, the oldest

daughter, was then out of high school and was working to support herself as a waitress; Alia, Joanie, and David were enrolled at the local grammar school. We all took the move in stride, though it made demands on us that were completely new. We rose early for breakfast at the union hall, and we went to the fields to support the picketing for several hours. This was one of the union's first big strikes, and the support of all the workers was necessary. Most of our meals were in common, but many families chose to have supper at home; this we did, too. Overall, we were as close to communal living as one can get, and in spite of minor inconveniences, the atmosphere was happy and we enjoyed our experience.

At first picketing was exciting, and initially pretty much a fun thing, but that soon wore off, and boredom and frustration ensued as the strike seemed to be going nowhere. But we kept with it until the end of the grape harvest. Our early morning cry to the scabs to come out of the fields and join us in the struggle for justice was an exciting experience at first, but that, too, wore off. Some did join us, but the majority stayed where they were as the strike became a stalemate. On the whole, violence was at a minimum; Cesar's words and example of nonviolence were far stronger than any words or actions to the contrary.

The experience of that strike had a deeper effect than the frustration and boredom it produced. It became evident to all that striking and picketing were never going to change things for the better; other solutions were necessary. So it was that boycotting grapes at the marketplace emerged as a next step in the organization of the farmworkers. This new strategy gave the union a new direction. In January of 1968, a busload of workers left for the East to proclaim the boycott of nonunion grapes. This move was demanding and expensive for the union, but it did produce results.

I wanted to go on that bus for the East, but Cesar overruled my wish; at that stage, it felt good taking orders from someone who knew what he was doing in a cause that made sense. Life in Delano those first months was indeed satisfying.

Early in February I noted a change in Cesar. From the start of his movement in Delano, things had gone well and life was exciting for all involved in the struggle, but excitement and enthusiasm are short-lived at their best. Cesar was charismatic in some ways, but he too could become bored with the nitty-gritty of running a union, which, no matter how noble its principles, could become engulfed in boredom and impatience.

Cesar was in a class by himself when it came to inspiring people, but he was not one to face the humdrum business of running a union. Being in the office with him made me aware of this. Appointments and contracts were piling up, and it was my job to call these to his attention, but he balked at this like a wild horse to the bridle. He was caught in a trap and he needed to escape, and to me, that escape was his fast of 1968. The occasion for his proclamation of the fast was what he termed the violence that was entering into the union. Now there was some violence at the time, but it was minuscule. Unfortunately, Cesar determined that this devil of violence could only be cast out by prayer and fasting.

So it was that early in February, Cesar called a special night meeting and announced that because of the increasing violence of the membership of the union, he was going to go on a fast. He would begin the next morning at the Forty Acres, where the new hall of the union had just been completed. That announcement had an electrifying effect on all present, but the effect was not the same on all. A vocal minority, myself included, were opposed to this announcement, and we strongly voiced our opposition. Working in the office, I knew what the situation was that needed daily and constant attention if the union was to face its responsibilities, and I vigorously stated my opposition to Cesar's action. Others joined in my opposition, but the majority were all for the fast of their leader, and many proclaimed that they too would join the fast. I suspiciously noted that many of his top officials were at the forefront of those who supported their leader; and I felt sure that they had been primed and readied for support prior to the announcement. This thing was too well orchestrated to have been Cesar's doing alone, as he had first announced it to be, and once begun it was obvious that this fast represented the new strategy of the union.

Even at present, I do not classify myself as an irreligious person; I think fasting has its proper place in religion, and prayer and the religious activities that surrounded Cesar and the union have some legitimacy, all things considered. But what happened at Delano at the time is beyond all rational explanation. If Cesar wanted to go on a fast, he should have gone to the nearby mountains, and those who wished to follow him could have been excused from their work, but the business of the union should have been carried on by the others. I expressed my amazement to Jerry Cohen, the lawyer of the union, the day the fast began, and he explained that the fast could become a great propaganda instrument; in a very short time I saw what he meant.

The first day of the fast, all departments of the union ceased to exist. Tents were pitched on the Forty Acres, and very shortly the place resembled a Muslim pilgrimage taking a long rest. I thought this was a hell of a way to run a union, and I told this to Cesar as early as I could. He received me patiently but was obviously not impressed with my reaction to the fast. I returned to the office to keep it going and to do things I thought had to be done, but this was foolish, too. Disgustedly, I went to the fast thinking the old bromide that if you can't whip them you have to join them. My participation was minimal, but from the looks of things, the scene was impressive. The faithful came to Delano from far and near; and not only simple workers but many who should have known better. The auto workers were there with financial help for the cause, and the AFL-CIO was delighted with what it saw. Catholic and Protestant representatives were well in evidence, and in all, the spectacle was something to remember. The media carried daily coverage, and the success of the fast was obvious to all but a few like me. I felt that labor and religion were in need of a quick fix, and I still find it hard to forgive them. Need for support to their flagging fortunes partially explains their strange conduct on that occasion, but only partially. Good public relations people for the growers should have been at Delano depicting this circus for what it was, but they missed the opportunity, and that farce continued to its ultimate end, with the entrance of the politicians on the last day of the fast. That was held at the Delano City

Park, and was attended by thousands, including the late Robert Kennedy, who was assassinated in Los Angeles shortly after.

I realize what I say here may strike some as a bitter and one-sided treatment of a noble cause, but I think too much of the poor farmworker, of organized labor, and the cause of religion to have had them abused by a mishmash of propaganda such as went on at Delano at that time. Farm labor deserves a union worthy of the name, and Chavez came closer than anyone to bringing that about, but he still had a long way to go to achieve his end. It cannot be achieved by boycotts (though they may have their place), nor by religious propaganda, nor an inconsistent effort on the part of those who don't know what their job really is. Unions have their limitations, and they have been subject to abuse and corruption on more than one occasion, but what they did at Delano on the occasion of the memorable fast of Cesar Chavez was far from their finest hour. They had no place at a religious spectacle engineered by propagandists (however well intentioned).

Religion, too, should take its share of blame for what went on at that time. Justice is impartial, and the farmworker has certainly received little of it in our time, but however well intentioned, the religious people who then joined with Chavez set back the cause of farm labor a good deal. It is to their merit that they supported Chavez in his quest for justice, but that support cannot be given without question and examination. Cesar's requests should be granted when they are on the side of justice and right; but a union is not a religious circus, nor should it ever use religion for an end which can only be achieved by hard work and judicious planning.

CHAPTER 20. THE CHALLENGE OF A FAMILY

It should not come as a surprise that I left the union after the fast. This was a joint resolution on the part of Sally and myself, and while we still support and respect the efforts of Chavez that are for justice, our enthusiasm is controlled, to say the least. After moving to Tracy, we participated in many union activities. We housed the marchers who passed through Tracy on their way to the Gallo Winery in Modesto, and Cesar then had a meeting at our house for his organizers. This was in 1969. We worked a good deal with local farmworkers in the Tracy area, and we became deeply involved with the union's efforts to pass Proposition 14, and we went twice to San Francisco to urge voters' support for that proposition. The union set up an office in Tracy, and things were looking up for farmworkers for a while, and many of our friends became very excited with the prospects of a strong farm labor movement in Tracy, but this was not to be. After the defeat of Proposition 14, the union moved out of Tracy with scarcely a word to anyone.

On arriving in Tracy in March of 1968, we moved into a small house that I owned as a part of a housing cooperative, which we had organized while I was there as a priest. The two older girls, Diane and Alia, came with me, while Joanie and David stayed with Sally until school finished in June. I still owned three of the five acres I had bought for the housing cooperative. That cooperative died in birth after they moved me to Stockton, but now the

chickens had returned to roost. I drew up plans for our new house and obtained the necessary permits for construction, and with the help of the girls, began the work. Diane, the oldest girl, was as strong as I, and could do much of the work with me. When Sal and the other two children arrived, we had already finished the foundation and were ready for the plumbing and flooring. We all stayed in the little house until the coming of winter, which brought such flooding that we were forced to move to our new house, incomplete though it was. The county permitted our move, and we were henceforth much less crowded. We finished the house in the first months of 1969, and we were proud of what we had done. There were still some odds and ends to be finished, but with the approval of our work by the county, they could wait until later.

By now I had come to the conclusion that raising and caring for a family was no easy job; in many ways it was harder than building a house, for its demands never seemed to end. Sal and I had had no children, but her four were a challenge to me as well as to her. My views on raising children were pretty standard stuff: spare the rod and spoil the child, children should be seen and not heard, and such. I have learned a great deal from Sal; her methods were entirely different from what mine would have been had I taken over their training. Communication was her secret, and to my knowledge, she has yet to strike any of them. They offered her little or no trouble and all did well in school.

She herself had come from a family of nine, raised on the plains of McIntosh, South Dakota. Her father, George Seiler, had been firm with his four boys, and was not overly lenient with the five girls, but love prevailed in that home. The mother, Millie, was wise and loving, too. The demands of farming and the harsh winters of South Dakota were the means of strengthening the bonds of family life, so Sal was ready for family life when she married. Her first husband, the father of Diane, was killed in a truck accident when Diane was still a baby. Sally's second husband permitted her three children by him little or no leeway, and when she first arrived in Stockton with her children, she tried to give them all that they had missed while with their father. At the time I entered the scene, they had a dog and several cats, all of which had general run of the house. Tinker Bell, the dog, came to know and respect me, after our first skirmishes. We shared a love of master and dog, and she seemed to understand my wishes. I missed her deeply when she was shot by someone. My acceptance by that dog was perhaps my greatest contribution to the training of the children. Tinker's pups knew their place, as did the cats who deeply opposed my intrusion at our first encounter. They became creatures of the outdoors, and we all lived in peace and harmony.

Sal was a pacifist by nature and by conviction, and I have yet to see her angry except on those rare occasions when I had differences of opinion with the children. On the whole, her system of "positive reinforcement" and frequent conferences was far more effective in raising the children than anything I could have hoped to achieve. My only opposition to the conference method was that it generally took place on one of the children's beds, and as it was open to all comers, it put tremendous demands on the beds, which protested by breaking down.

As David, the only boy, grew into youth and manhood, there arose those inevitable conflicts with the neighboring swains. Had he listened to me, he would have been swinging at the opposition without much ado; as it was, his mother's advice was the peaceful one. He remembered the training of his early years, when a little gang of neighboring kids were challenging him to fight. His mother had advised him how to handle this situation, and he did as he had been advised: he gave them the peace sign, and behold, the enemy retreated. Whatever its effect on them, it made a believer out of me. To this day, I don't think he has ever had a fight; I think he could have handled it if it were forced on him.

The oldest daughter, Diane, left home before Sal had been divorced; she left to escape what had become a tyrannical and despotic situation. This led her into a number of unpleasant experiences at an age when she needed her mother's love and guidance. During our year in Delano she returned to her mother and our family and grew into maturity to enter into a happy and stable marriage. She profited immensely from long and sympathetic sessions with Sal.

The other two girls had few if any problems in growing up and are now happily married also. Sal is now the grandmother of four and she gives them all the love and patience she gave her children. It is all too easy to say that without her I could not have done what I have done, but however corny and expected that may be, it still must be said. Besides her many accomplishments which I here omit, I can never forget her loving devotion to our milk cow, Chichara, who provided us with beef, milk, butter, and cheese for some 14 years before going to her rest. Whatever accomplishments I can claim, milking a cow is not one of them.

After building our home, I taught one year in Oakland in a project administered by my good friend Jim Delgadillo, who became a political force in his community. I succeeded in getting a job with Tracy High School our next year. This was the Title One Program, a federally sponsored program for the handicapped.

Title One was concerned with those students who were unable to enter into the regular educational classes for one reason or another; they were not mentally handicapped, though they were thought to be by the uninformed. Most of the students I dealt with were Mexican immigrants who had come here with their parents to work in agriculture. Left to themselves, they could not be expected to catch up to the regular students. Many others were Mexican Americans who had fallen behind the regular classes because they had entered grammar school without knowing English; by the fourth grade they were lost, and without special teaching and tutoring they became dropouts by the time they reached high school. Many of these became frustrated and angry with school, their parents, and the community. Others included in the Title One Program were those who were far behind the regular program for reasons other than culture or language. I enjoyed this teaching experience, and it became another stage in my development.

CHAPTER 21. SEPA AND ADULT EDUCATION

Before going into Title One, I worked for a year with the Work Incentive Program (WIN), the goal of which was to teach English to a group of Spanish-speaking adults in hope that thereby they could enter the job market with success. We succeeded in teaching them English, but the problem was that there were no jobs for these people, other than agriculture, in the Tracy area. This was obvious to everybody but the government. I became quite close to many of these people, and when the government canceled the program of WIN after a year, I went into Title One at the high school, but what was to happen to the poor people whom I had been teaching? The answer to that question came with the organization of SEPA. In Spanish, “*sepa*” is the subjunctive for “that you may know” and it was around that word that I built our new adult educational program. I became its teacher, counselor, and organizer all in one.

The Spanish-speaking field workers not only needed English; they needed a great deal more besides. They had health problems, work problems, housing problems; all things that embraced their economic, social, and political life. SEPA came to stand for all those needs, and for the next 15 years I devoted myself to addressing them. My primary job of supporting the family was answered by teaching in the Title One program at Tracy High School, but there was still lots of time for SEPA. I had long been convinced that little people had power to change the political, social, and economic limitations which surrounded them, but they needed union and organization for this. This was the message of Saul Alinsky and Fred Ross: the people had power they were ignorant of; they had to be taught to use it for their benefit, and this was a challenge that always attracted me, and it was what I spent most of my time trying to achieve while in Tracy. Years before, as a priest, I had started the Tracy CSO (Community Service Organization), but it fell apart when they moved me to Stockton. Now there was a new opportunity, and I was ready for it.

The education of SEPA was not theoretic, but eminently practical. We first of all used the initials of the word to spell out Salud (health), Education, and Political Action; this had meaning for the Spanish speaking. In English, we told the people that the letters meant Self Education Program Association. In those 15 years we did not work miracles, and there were many disappointments, but there were also some wonderful things. Education for our people meant awareness of what was taking place around them. Economic and social reality had to be transformed into political action, and that meant confronting the powers of the opposition: the school, the police, the chamber of commerce, the political powers of the city, the county, the state, and the nation; this is what government of, by, and for the people meant. Leaving Delano was frustrating and sad, but the educational effort of SEPA was most satisfying.

I had learned that education was not the mere passing of knowledge from one person to others; it had to become alive to the receiver. In the terminology of Paulo Freire, it had to

result in dialogue, and that took boredom out of teaching. The knowing process had to result in action; mere dialogue was not enough.

Such, in brief, was the theory of SEPA, as it evolved in my thinking. Its rules and regulations were few and far between, but if it was working, it should produce leaders, and that it did. Not too many, but enough to make me realize that this is the kind of education that democracy demands if it is to have any real meaning in society. Democracy for the little people is meaningless, and elected representation is a kind of hypocrisy as it is now practiced. After years of working out this kind of theory, it was a great discovery to find that Paulo Freire had been teaching this way in Brazil for many years. The theory behind SEPA was not as well defined as that of Freire, but in many essentials it was very similar.

Over those years there were many who profited from SEPA (too many to mention here), but these few stand out in my memory in a special way: the Beltrans, Lupe and Adela; the Guerreros, Richard and Isabel; David and Martha Hernandez; Filemon and Petra Dominguez; Norma and Howard Halsenberg; Fernando and Lupe Simental. These and many others may show the way toward a new kind of society. It was good knowing them and working with them.

The majority of these meetings were held at our home in Tracy, which also served as the center for the many actions that followed the discussions. Some of these were the emergency food bank, legal assistance, counseling for students, and advice for Welfare rights. The Mexican women who had previously been confined to their homes were now involved with Sal in fighting for their rights along the line of health, education, and housing. All of our meetings were in Spanish; bilingual only if there were English-speaking-only people present. Sal worked as a nurse for the Agricultural Workers Clinic, which cared primarily for farmworkers, for most of our years in Tracy. We are a good team.

CHAPTER 22. TRACY HIGH AND TITLE ONE

The organization and development of SEPA was simultaneous with that of my teaching career at Tracy High School, and in many ways the two overlapped. As a federal program, Title One was supposed to be directed by a book of guidelines that I found interesting and instructive. The funding of the program as originally conceived in Congress was heavily weighted in favor the low-income families of an area. Its funding was supposed to be allotted on the basis of the number of low-income children who were receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children. Somehow, politicians wanted this money more widely distributed in education. They contended that while AFDC was the way the money should be obtained, the program was not necessarily limited to the children of the poor. Once the program was established in a district, the money could be used for any children who were low achievers, regardless of economic background. This was puzzling to me for a while, but after fighting it I found out that the majority of low achievers were the children of the poor, and many of the better off families with low achieving children did not want their children placed in Title One.

My more serious disagreement with the way Title One was administered was its conflict with the guidelines, which stated that Title One was to supplement the regular program of the school; its children were to receive help over and above the regular school program. As our program was obviously violating this directive, I protested this to the administration and to the board of trustees, and I included in my protest that the parent advisory group was little more than a rubber stamp for those who were running the program. This, of course, did not endear me to the authorities, but I went beyond this and reported my observations to state and federal authorities. I was told by the chief of the program that my conduct could cost me my job, but that only added fuel to my fire. As I had previously told Bishop Donohue, I told him I regretted that I had only one educational career to sacrifice for the sake of justice. This was all stated before a meeting of the administration, the heads of the program, and a representative from the state of California.

My job was saved by SEPA, which stood by me and threatened suit against the state for what was taking place. The people were magnificent. Many of our members were limited in their use of English, but they well made up for that with their enthusiasm. David Hernandez and Isabel Guerrero were strong and eloquent, and the Black people, Le Roy Hawkins and Jewel Williams, were equally strong and persuasive. The overall result of that meeting was a complete victory for our side; my job was secure and I became something of a power in questions of social justice and minority concerns thereafter.

Teaching made me aware of the need of educational reform, about which much has been written and said in these last years. My viewpoint in this matter relates to my conviction that education is necessary for democracy. As much as I was interested in adult education, reform at the elementary and secondary level is also necessary. The most exciting reform that took place at Tracy High School while I was there was introduced by Mr. Frye, the principal of the school, who began by interesting us in Glasser's *Schools Without Failure*. This led to a series of meetings of teachers and principal which introduced some real changes in our methods of teaching. Glasser's main point was that if students are to succeed in school, they must first be shown that they are cared for by their teachers. This may sound sentimental and unimportant, as it did to many of those we were trying to reach. Personal interest in students by teachers is easier to say than do, but many students are turned off from education because they see it as unnecessary and boring. Once a teacher shows them interest and care, they begin to develop. Just as workers can become alienated from their work because of the impersonal nature of the job they are doing, so, too, students lose interest in school when education becomes impersonal and foreign to them.

Glasser's reforms go deeper than stressing this fundamental fact. Once a teacher gets a student interested in school, the student must be made to face himself and his failures. This is what Glasser calls "reality therapy." Our group of teachers at Tracy High School achieved some remarkable changes in students previously turned off.

To me, Glasser was a great help, and his principles were useful to our SEPA program as well. I remember a number of students who were turned around by the Glasser method. One student in particular stands out in my mind. Luis first came to my attention in our Title I classes. At the time I met him, he was a nonreader; the written word was a mystery to him. After I got to know Luis and becoming involved in his problems, he made a complete turnabout in school; he learned to read and eventually graduated from high school. There were many others who succeeded because of Glasser and what he had taught us. Of course, there were others who refused to face themselves and continued in failure, but nothing is 100 percent effective.

Tracy High School, while I was there, was frequently involved in student unrest. The cause of much of this was the conflict between Mexicans and white students. The same Luis who succeeded in learning to read was involved in many of these conflicts, but once he knew I was his friend, he faced these problems and brought about a change in his attitude toward those he considered enemies.

EPILOGUE

I retired from teaching in February 1980, and since that time I have been doing a great deal of reading and some writing; enough of both to realize the truth of Bacon's statement that reading makes the full man and writing makes the exact man. Many of us read, but few write. I believe now that if only for our own benefit and even if no one reads what we write, we should all try to make ourselves exact. Only by this means can we realize the kingdom of the mind that is within us.

Intellectually, I have found the pursuit of the Great Books that I bought several years ago very satisfying. Public television and public radio I have also found helpful and enjoyable. I have learned to appreciate the uses of dissent and to be aware of its abuses, and I have tried to make the students of SEPA aware of the great potential of the mind they have been given.

I remember Henry Anderson, Father McCullough's old friend, telling me somewhat jokingly of a letter he had received. The writer of that letter, whose name I can no longer recall, said something like this: "Henry, you are very good at negative criticism, but you do little to create positively. The needle of the mind is like the needle we use to sew and stitch. The needle can be used to prick and jab, but it was intended to create and put things together. So, too, with our minds; we can criticize, and that is necessary, but we are also intended to create new reality, and this is much harder." Dissent by itself can be purely negative, but our minds are intended to inspire and construct new ideas. My life has been largely critical and negative, but of late I see the necessity of being positive, and with SEPA I feel that it has become that.

Politically, educationally, and religiously, there is much yet to be done. We call ourselves a democracy, but there is little democracy in our society. Writers and the media furnish us

with a great deal of food for thought, but the vast majority of us pay little attention to it. Even at its best, much of this material has only touched the surface of the problems facing our society. Outside of talk shows and call-in programs, there is little opportunity for dialogue on the part of the common man.

Politically we are urged to vote for someone on the basis of a sign or a poster, but why should we vote for Joe Blow, whose name has been plastered on signs in our neighborhood? Such appeal is destructive of the best interests of democracy.

Which brings us to the point of educational reform for adults. What we try to do with SEPA for adult education is satisfactory from one point of view, but from another it is weak and limited to the needs of the poor. The efforts of Mortimer Adler and what he has done through the Great Books movement is addressed to a higher segment of society, but his appeal is far above the reach of the masses of the people. But educational appeal must be made available to all. The work of the Blacks for the education of their people and the efforts of Chicano leaders for the Spanish speaking are indeed encouraging, but if much has been done, much more remains to be done. Our society has never produced any kind of adult process of education, and without this, our democracy can never succeed. This brings me to the work of Paulo Freire and what he has done for the poor people in Brazil.

In his book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Paulo Freire has done something for the education of adults that I think is most necessary for democracy in the United States. In Latin America Freire divides people into the oppressed and the oppressors, and while this may seem to be a repetition of the class struggle of Marx, it goes far beyond Marx in facing the needs of the proletariat if they are to govern society. He says the oppressors are the possessors of the land and capital, and it is they who have controlled all things in Latin America for so long. The oppressed are the landless and the poor who have so little of their own. Justice demands the reform of this terrible situation, but mere economic revolution is not enough to right the wrongs of injustice. The oppressed must be taught to rule, but they can never do this without education. But education as it stands in Latin America is all mixed up in bad methodology and worse practice.

The teaching process has been linked altogether too long with the theory of pouring knowledge from one mind to another. Freire says that knowledge in education must go hand in hand with the practice of dialogue. The teacher and the taught must constantly act and react on each other, and only in this process of dialogue will knowledge result. Now this is nothing new; it was practiced by Socrates, by Jim Hagerty, by Adler, and by all teachers worthy of the name. It is the basic meaning of liberal education, but its application to me is that this process has to be applied to adult learning if democracy is to have any meaning, and the major question of our time is: is this being done, and if so, how can it be done better? Adler and the Great Books movement have tried this type of adult education, but they have not reached the masses of our people; for the most part, their efforts have not even reached the schools and colleges.

Freire's theory goes beyond this: if dialogue results in knowledge, that knowledge must result in action, and that action must result in the reform of society. Marx's theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat seemed to be going in this direction, but for me it did not quite achieve what Freire seems to have come to. His theory has carried over into politics and religion. What is presently happening in Latin America is proof of this. Nicaragua is a good case in point. Its revolution is not limited to an overthrow of the oppressors, but it has gone into a process of education for the masses of the poor that is outstanding in our day. In religion, it has resulted in the practice of a liberation theology that is indeed amazing. Reform in education, politics, and religion are the great needs of our time, and these have begun in Latin America.

Here in the United States we are far behind in these reforms, but where there is life there is hope. Who can say what the future may have in store for us? Politically and educationally, reforms seem far away, but religiously, I feel hopeful. The reforms of Vatican II have done much to bring the Catholic Church into the modern world. The American bishops are facing up to the demands of justice and equality and peace, but there is still much to be done. Nuclear warfare and its threats to civilization have been addressed by bishops; the threats of Communism to individual freedom have been frequently spelled out, but there remains to be addressed the problem of capitalism in a world where so many are lacking the necessities of life. It is not for the Church to dictate or solve these questions by herself, but what she has done thus far in the United States is promising.

It may be too optimistic to think that the Church's present involvements are a prelude to the vision of Teilhard de Chardin or an evolving Church in an evolving society, but who can tell? Teilhard De Chardin has been an inspiration for me, and I hope he may become so to others who read these lines from his *Hymn to the Universe*:

"Receive, O Lord, this all embracing host, which your whole creation, moved by your magnetism, offers you at this dawn of a new day. This bread, our toil, our pain, is no more, I know, than a draught that dissolves. Yet in the very depths of this formless mass, you have implanted, and this I am sure of, for I sense it, a desire irresistible, hallowing, which makes us cry out, believer and unbeliever alike, 'Lord make us one.'

"Because, my God, though I lack the soul-zeal and the sublime integrity of your saints, I have not received from you an overwhelming sympathy for all that stirs within the dark mass of matter; because I know myself to be irremediably less a child of heaven than a son of earth; therefore I will this morning climb up in spirit in the high places, bearing with me the hopes and the miseries of my mother; and there empowered by that priesthood, which you alone, as I firmly believe, have bestowed upon me, upon all that the world of human flesh is now about to be born or die, beneath the rising sun, I will call down the fire."

Would that my spirit could gather up more of this inspiration and vision of Teilhard de Chardin, but alas, we must live with our limited reality, and the few gifts that we possess. Much of my life has been one of protest and rebellion, but our quest of knowledge and

wisdom has to begin with that. The writing of my life may strike some as an exercise in futility, but to me it has been helpful and even enjoyable. Looking at its bulk at this point, maybe Brother Alfred should have never challenged us to write the story of our life.

(Kathleen Lawrence was the copy editor for this essay)