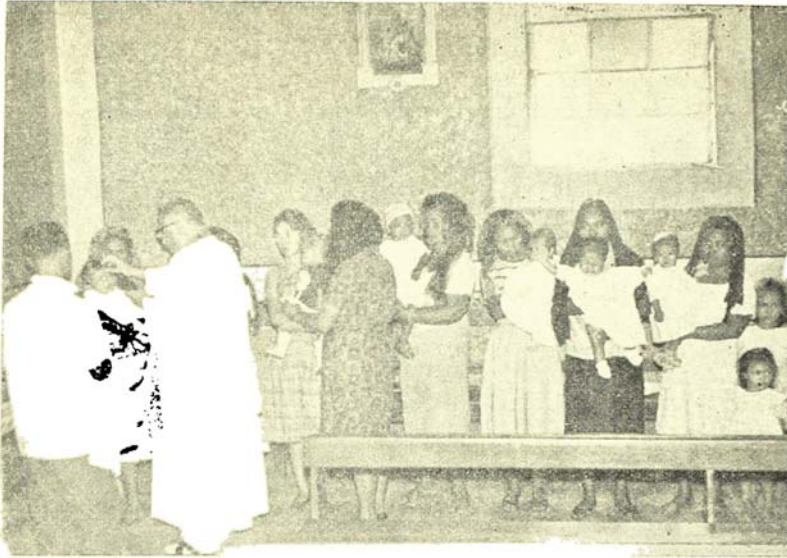


EXIT



"In nomine Patris..." the outgoing Rector administers the Holy Sacrament of Baptism.

A DAY TO REMEMBER; May 5, 1964. . . the fifth rector of the University of San Carlos is gone. Some 6,000 Carolinians and many a thousand poor people of Cebu have lost one of the noblest ambassadors of God!

Rev. Fr. Harold William Rigney entered office as Rector of the USC on February 27, 1960. He joined the Divine Word Missionaries at Tech, Illinois in August, 1918 and was ordained a priest in the same seminary on April 19, 1930 by the Most Reverend George Weig, SVD, Bishop of Tsingtao, China. If there have been any significant years in

the life of this man, it could have been those between the years 1951-1955, and 1960-1964.

The month was July, the date was the 25th and the year was 1955—it was quite clear. He was taking a noonday nap when the dragging of heavy feet outside his cabin disturbed him from his slumber. And when he rose to see who were there, he knew immediately that the time of his arrest had come.

Fr. Rigney, the last American "imperialist-missionary" in Peking had waited thus for two and a half years since the Communist Government took over Peking in February,



A Send-off party tendered by members of the San Carlos Center in honor of the founder.

1949. Thus, his life-adventure inside the enemy camp began. He was accused of being an imperialist agent from Washington to take over the German Gestapo of East Asia; that he was to set up a Tito government in Asia; that he resisted the People's Revolution. Of which, of course, Fr. Rigney had never the least intention.

He was given a courtroom trial that lasted for three years and two months. And many times during his trials, the judges, who were merciless young men, would pound the table, curse him, abuse him physically, threaten to shoot him, or torture him. When he refused to follow their wishes, the accusers applied rough, sharp-edged, rusty and filthy, wide iron rings that were fastened tightly about his wrists, joining his arms and hands behind his back. This cruel punishment resulted in swollen arms and hands. The handcuffs became imbedded in the swollen flesh.

Mealtime was another version of communist initiation. He ate his food in a kneeling position with his hands cuffed behind his back. This however, was not, the least of the inconveniences and mortifications he endured in the course of an ordinary punitive routine.

In the summer of 1954, Fr. Rigney was taken to a labor camp where he worked in a match factory. After ten months he was returned to the first prison and placed in solitary confinement. To be alone was a great relief. He was given rice daily and some money which some friends in the United States had sent him. With this amount he was able to buy a pint of milk and two raw eggs. He also received some food which had come through the Red Cross.

Came September 11, 1955. An officer came into his cell and took him before a judge who after a few minutes said, "I declare you released." Then he was taken back to his cell to get his few belongings.

A Great Rector

by Rogelio A. Deñalosa

"In the past four years, I found my work here at the University of San Carlos heavy but extremely pleasant. It has been not only an honor but a deep pleasure to have worked with all of you. I look upon this as a singular grace that God has granted to me."



Before he knew it, he was inside a comfortable room in a Peking hotel. It was a memorable moment. For the first time since his incarceration he was able to recite his breviary, say his rosary on beads instead of on his fingers as he had done inside his prison cell.

A week later, Fr. Rigney arrived in Hong Kong where he began his long program of recovery, but the physical and brain-corrupting tortures were still so fresh in his mind that he could poignantly describe them in his book, "Four Years In A Red Hell."

Two years later, Fr. Rigney assumed office as Regional Superior (Provincial) of the Anglo-Irish region of the Divine Word Missionaries. Three years later, while in England, he volunteered to work either in Japan or in the Philippines. The latter was given to him. On February 27, 1960, a big and curious crowd of Carolinians welcomed him as the University's new Superior.

Fr. Rigney began his work in the University, first by being a researcher. He looked around, observed the students and the staff. He found them very pleasant, competent, and hardworking. Then, he went out into the city and studied different places and people, and said to himself, "Something must be done for these poor and neglected citizens of the city."

In the same year, Fr. Rigney founded the San Carlos Center. Attention was focused on the poor inhabitants of Murio-murio district, who, because of abject poverty, have lived too far from society and from God. Slowly and patiently, the new rector was able to construct a chapel for the people through the help of other SVD priests. There, mass is offered, baptism administered, and catechism taught to the children as well as to the adults. Couples who had lived together without the sacrament of matrimony were validly married in the Church. Foods, clothes and medicines, the money to buy which comes from generous people in the city and often times from his friends, relatives and family in the United States were distributed. Sometimes, through the assistance of Mrs. Amparo Dorotheo and some civic minded Carolinians, the Center would earn a considerable amount to be given to the poor, especially during the Christmas season.

Within a few years his missionary work doubled when he directed his help to the lepers of Bagongbuhay and the people of Ponce compound. For the first time in their lives these people were freed from the belief that they are the outcasts of society because of their dreadful disease.

In addition to the Chapel, playgrounds were erected and the rudi-



"How are you today?" Father Rigney seems to be asking an old leper.

ments of an education imparted to lift them up to a better and more normal life, and to enjoy even to a small degree, the things others have. To develop the talents of the children, programs are held regularly. On Sundays, Fr. Rigney would sometimes invite them for
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Photo shows Fr. Rigney in one of his visits to the squatters' section of the city.