

CHAPTER 4

THE ERA OF BISHOP ALEXANDER CARTER (1958-1985) , THE CONSOLIDATOR

Bishop Alexander Carter served under Popes John XXIII (1958-1963), Paul VI (1963-1978), John Paul I (1978), and John Paul II (1978-). The first two of these popes were modernizers, in stark contrast to Popes Pius XI and Pius XII, with whom their own interpersonal relations were somewhat difficult. As Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli, the future John XXIII served Pius XI as papal envoy to Bulgaria, a largely Orthodox country, during the early 1930s. There he established a friendly relationship with King Boris III—too friendly in the eyes of Pius XI—and other Orthodox Christians, but with the help of Boris, John managed to smuggle Jews from Western Europe via Bulgaria into British-occupied Palestine during World War II. In 1935, Pius XI transferred Roncalli to Istanbul, the former centre of Orthodox Christianity. Roncalli's Bulgarian and Turkish experiences strengthened his appreciation for good people whose theological beliefs were not identical with his own. As papal envoy to France after its liberation, he helped restore friendly relations between that country and the Vatican after the Vatican's wartime envoy, Valerio Valeri, had been too supportive of Pétain's Vichy régime for the liking of General Charles de Gaulle, liberator of France. In 1953, he became Patriarch of Venice, and when Pius XII died, the College of Cardinals selected Roncalli as Pope John XXIII.

As Pope, John XXIII regarded Orthodox and Protestant Christians as brothers in Christ, people with whom he and other Roman Catholics could co-operate. He even established cordial relations with Communists, receiving members of the Khrushchev family at the Vatican. Only once during his papacy had Pius XII gone outside Vatican territory, but John went frequently to other parts of Rome and elsewhere. Priests who returned to secular life, he believed, deserved sympathy and support, not condemnation. Most importantly, John XXIII organized Vatican II (Vatican I had ended in 1870), a council to examine and direct the future course of the Roman Catholic Church. One of the consequences was the replacement of

the Latin mass with services in the language of the worshipers. At last authorities had come to realize that Latin was no longer a unifying factor among Roman Catholics but a mysterious complication. The Corpus Christi processions ceased, and Roman Catholic schools ceased to close for such Holy Days as Epiphany, Ascension Day, and All Saints Day. Bishop Carter attended and played a significant role at Vatican II.¹

John's successor was his close friend, Cardinal Giovanni Montini, Archbishop of Milan, who took the name of Paul VI, after the great apostle of the New Testament. John had traveled in Italy, but Paul traveled to other continents. Vatican II and the reform movement continued during his papacy, and the Index—the list of books which Roman Catholics were not supposed to read and movies which they were not supposed to watch—ended. (The Index died almost unnoticed in the Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie where Roman Catholics by that time usually decided for themselves what books to read and what movies to watch.) When Paul VI met Michael Ramsey, Archbishop of Canterbury, he referred to the Roman Catholic and Anglican Churches as “sister churches”.² His 1967 encyclical *Populorum Progressio*, deplored the growing gap between the world's wealthy and its poor. He even addressed the United Nations, where he urged the delegates to strive harder for peace. However, Paul was not as charismatic as his friend and predecessor, and his 1968 encyclical, *Humanae Vitae*, condemned contraception—a practice which many in the late twentieth century regarded as common sense. Paul VI's stand on birth control damaged his credibility and approval ratings. It also became a matter of concern for Bishop Carter and other Canadian bishops.³

1. Carter, *Memoirs*, pp. 163-191. For further information on the Six Holy Days of the Pre-Vatican II era (the Feast of the Immaculate Conception; Christmas; the Feast of Mary, the Mother of God; Epiphany; Holy Thursday; Ascension Day) and other special occasions (including Pentecost, Trinity, the Feast of Corpus Christi, All Saints Day), see Most Rev. Louis La Ravoire Morrow, Bishop of Krishnagar, *My Catholic Faith* (Kansas City, Missouri: Sarto House, 1954 [1949]), p. 239. *L'Information's* banner headline of 1 August 1964 announced that French would replace Latin as the language of the mass.

2. Cahill, p. 267. Indeed, Cahill provided most of the information on both John XXIII and Paul VI. See also Duffy, pp. 355-362 (on John XXIII) and 362-370 (on Paul VI).

3. Carter, *Memoirs*, pp. 198-200.

Upon Paul VI's death, Albino Luciani—Patriarch of Venice—became Pope John Paul I, in honour of his two predecessors. This papacy lasted barely a month before he too died, but even John Paul I made some impact. He did not want, and he did not have, the traditional papal coronation with all its pomp and ceremony. Some traditions at the Vatican would become more modest and simple.⁴

John Paul I's successor was Cardinal Karol Wojtyla, Archbishop of Krakow, Poland—the first non-Italian to become pope for centuries. He chose the name John Paul II. Like his two immediate predecessors, John Paul II had friends—particularly Jewish friends—who were not Roman Catholic. John Paul II also traveled the world and did his best to establish friendly ties with the world's Muslims at a time when tensions between them and everyone else were on the rise. John Paul II gave moral support to Poland's Solidarity Movement, the major force in the unraveling of Communism in that country. He also undermined the kleptomaniac Duvalier family which had dominated Haiti for two generations. Gifted at languages, Pope John Paul II visited that impoverished country and gave a televised address on social justice. The speech encouraged, perhaps radicalized, the Haitian clergy.⁵ However, at a time when women demanded equality with men and men demanded greater sexual freedom, John Paul II defended the traditional. The clergy, he insisted, must remain celibate, and women could not become priests. These attitudes struck many as reactionary. Also, an encyclical of 15 August 1990, *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, demanded as a characteristic of a Catholic university “fidelity to the Christian message as it comes to us through the Church”. This requirement struck many as an attack on intellectual freedom and led to controversy at the University of Sudbury, the Roman Catholic college at Laurentian University.⁶

Bishop Carter led the Diocese through the worst years of the Cold War. The possibility of war over Berlin loomed from 1958 until 1962. In 1962, with the Cuban Missile Crisis, the

4. Duffy, p. 370.

5. Stephen J. Randall and Graeme S. Mount, *The Caribbean Basin: An International History* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), p. 131.

6. For more on John Paul II, see Duffy, pp. 370-386.

world faced its greatest danger ever of nuclear war. Although it had had commitments to South Vietnam since 1954, the United States waged a major conventional war there from 1965 until 1973. The Great Powers tested nuclear weapons in the atmosphere, at least until 1963 when the United States, the Soviet Union, and the United Kingdom (but not France or China) agreed to limit themselves to underground explosions. Yet on 12 May 1962, when Archbishop Sebastian Baggio, the Apostolic Delegate to Canada, addressed 5000 of the faithful at a Marian Day rally in Sault Ste. Marie, he could say, “Peace is not the supreme good.” The defence of moral values, faith and liberty were higher priorities. He could not bring himself to discuss the merits of nuclear tests, he said, as the issue was “too complicated”. The Knights of Columbus sponsored this event, and in the audience were choirs, Cubs and Scouts, Brownies and Guides, plus assorted ethnic groups wearing their national dress.⁷

Bishop Alexander Carter (1958-1985): The Consolidator

Bishop Alexander Carter, the third Bishop of Sault Ste. Marie, came from Montreal. Given the large number of French-speaking Roman Catholics with the diocese, many of them thought that numbers warranted a bishop who could speak their language.⁸ The Vatican agreed. Bishop Carter also had a strong command of Italian, acquired while studying Canon Law in Rome from 1937-1939. After his return, he spent years in the office of the Archbishop of Montreal and one dealing with diocesan problems in Winnipeg. So multidimensional was Bishop Carter’s career that he devoted fewer than half the pages of his memoirs to the period when he was Bishop of Sault Ste. Marie, and of those pages, many deal with the work of the Church outside his diocese—particularly Vatican II in Rome and a missionary project in Guatemala. Over and beyond his diocesan responsibilities, Bishop Carter was president of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, then National Director for Propagation of the Faith

^{7.} *Northern Ontario Register*, 26 May 1962.

^{8.} Carter, *Memoirs*, pp. 127-128.

from 1971 to 1977, and he served as President of the Ontario Conference of Catholic Bishops (OCCB). Members of the OCCB met the Ontario Premier and other provincial leaders twice each year.⁹

Bishop Carter's highly readable memoirs depict his love of the Church but his awareness of its imperfections. As much as anyone, Joseph Charbonneau, Archbishop of Montreal from 1940 to 1950, was his mentor. Given his expertise in Canon Law, Father Carter worked in the Archbishop's office and truly admired the man. Archbishop Charbonneau was a modernizer, who allowed the priests to wear suits instead of soutanes and who antagonized Quebec Premier Maurice Duplessis in 1949 by supporting the rights of striking asbestos workers. In the process, the archbishop became highly controversial, so controversial, in fact, that Pope Pius XII dismissed him from the diocese and forced him to relocate elsewhere. (Charbonneau went to Victoria, where he subsequently worked with senior citizens.) Carter was appalled, and his memoirs clearly indicate that he held Pope Pius XII responsible for a miscarriage of justice.¹⁰ Nevertheless, Bishop Carter believed that historians have been unduly critical of Pius XII's silence in the face of Nazi atrocities. During his student days in Rome, Mussolini had ordered the posting of signs which said "No Jews allowed". Pope Pius XII asked Italians not to post such signs, or, if they had already done so, to remove them. Within 24 hours, most such signs had disappeared. Bishop Carter noted that Pius XII had no choice but to calculate the risks involved with outspokenness and that he "quietly encouraged the hiding of thousands of Jewish people during the [German] occupation of Rome."¹¹ Even Cornwell agrees that "an unspecified number of Rome's ...Jews" survived because they hid in the Vatican or in "Vatican-protected 'extraterritorial' religious institutions in Rome...."¹² *L'Information*, the French-language newspaper of the Diocese from 1963 to

9. Carter, *Memoirs*, pp. 228, 245-246.

10. Carter, *Memoirs*, pp. 78-80, 105-117.

11. Carter, *Memoirs*, pp. 46-47.

12. Cornwell, p. 310.

1968, had a number of articles and editorials defending Pius XII from his critics.¹³ An editorial of 25 June 1963 blamed Nazi brutality, not Pius XII, for Europe's horrors of the 1930s and early 1940s.

The Inco Strike of 1958:

One of Bishop Carter's first practical challenges would come in the form of a strike of Sudbury workers employed by the International Nickel Company (Inco). In 1958, the very year he assumed office, members of the Sudbury local of the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers went on strike, and their union had limited resources to support them. As autumn became winter, their situation became desperate. Bishop Carter said that Popes Leo XIII and Pius XII had recognized the right of workers to form unions and negotiate collective agreements. However, he said, the immediate concern of the Church must be to prevent a "catastrophe" in Sudbury.¹⁴ A Wells Campaign early in Bishop Carter's career in the Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie established the diocese on a sound financial footing.¹⁵

Bishop Carter's position on unions was longstanding. Management of *The Montreal Star* had dismissed his father for trying to organize a union. This made a huge impression on the future bishop. During the Depression, Carter's mother shared what she had with the less fortunate, even to the point where her children had to eat less than they might have wished.¹⁶ In 1949, Father Carter worked in the office of Archbishop Charbonneau when he spoke forcibly on behalf of the striking asbestos workers. Archbishop Charbonneau believed strongly in the right of workers to organize unions.¹⁷ Bishop Carter wrote to the clergy of his diocese instructing that for major construction and repair projects, he wanted them to use

^{13.} *L'Information*, 15 June 1963, 10 Aug. 1963, 25 June 1964.

^{14.} Carter, "Secours pratiques et spirituels à apporter dans la grève de l'INCO" (1958), *Lettres*, pp. 35-37.

^{15.} Carter, *Memoirs*, pp. 138-139.

^{16.} Carter, *Memoirs*, pp. 2-4.

^{17.} Carter, *Memoirs*, pp. 78-80, 110-113.

unionized labour.¹⁸

In connection with the Inco strike, Bishop Carter said that both union and management had an enormous responsibility to end the confrontation as quickly as possible. Management should consider the human factor and distinguish between the needs of the workers and the minerals which they extracted from the ground. Miners, he said, who had worked “faithfully and conscientiously” for many years, were losing their savings. Some with young families had no opportunity even to accumulate savings and faced misery. To prolong the strike simply in order to accumulate larger profits for the company would be quite intolerable, a mockery of justice, especially when workers were losing their homes and their families were facing hunger. The approach of winter made the situation even more serious. Bishop Carter asked landlords to show Christian charity toward the strikers, and he asked those who sold food and fuel for heat to extend credit. Everyone, he said, had an obligation to demonstrate charity. Christ had clearly commanded his followers to help the needy.

Bishop Carter had words of admonition for the union leaders. It was “inconceivable” that they had undertaken a strike without preparing for the most basic needs of the union members. For many years, he noted, members had been paying union dues—probably worth millions of dollars. In return, they deserved to know what had happened to the money, some of which surely should have been put aside to finance strikers’ needs. Years later, when he published his memoirs, Bishop Carter said that the International Union of Mine Mill and Smelter Workers had sent \$6 million to the United States to lobby Congress.

Without funds in the union treasury, there was dire poverty, and the Church had a responsibility to act. This was not the time to moralize that the workers should have saved more money before landing themselves in such a situation. On their own, the miners could not possibly have saved what in 1958 they needed to feed, house, and clothe their families. Although the Church lacked the financial resources needed for this crisis, it would create a

^{18.} Carter, *Memoirs*, p. 148.

committee to help the needy. Its directors would be Monsignor J.C. Humphrey, rector of Christ the King (Sudbury’s largest English-language parish) and Father James Delaney of Levac. They would ask the parishes, which would have sub-committees of their own, to donate food and clothing. When cases of need arose, parish priests should do what they could to supply the necessities. Bishop Carter asked parishioners fortunate enough not to be on strike to be generous, even if they had to postpone unnecessary purchases which they could themselves afford and to donate the money. Each priest should lead through personal example and make a donation of his own.¹⁹ Out of the strike arose a permanent infrastructure to assist the needy, Catholic Charities.²⁰

Distinctively Canadian Challenges:

Historian Robert Choquette, who had been so critical of Bishops Scollard and Dignan, finally found an Irish Bishop of Sault Ste. Marie whom he could admire. Choquette said, “For the first time since the creation of the Diocese, French-speaking Catholics had a bishop who was sympathetic to their interests.”²¹

Bishop Carter made administrative changes of his own. As French-speaking and English-speaking Roman Catholics were numerically equal, he thought that he should have a French-speaking Auxiliary Bishop—especially given the extent of the territory which the Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie covered. The Vatican pondered the idea, then agreed to the appointment of Father Adolphe Proulx, who was born and raised inside the Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie (at Hanmer). Bishop Carter was anxious to demonstrate that the Diocese not only was self-sufficient but had talent for export, and the elevation of Bishop Proulx through the ranks—from parish priest to Chancellor of the Diocese to its first Auxiliary Bishop—confirmed his judgment. When the Vatican transferred Bishop Proulx to the Diocese of Alexandria in

19. Carter, “Secours pratiques,” pp. 35-37.

20. *United in Faith*, p. 18.

21. Choquette, *La Foi*, p. 70.

southeastern Ontario (where many French-speaking people also live), he had a series of francophone successors: Roger Despatie (a graduate of Sudbury's Collège du Sacré Coeur who served as parish priest, then as the second Auxiliary Bishop, and who in 1973 became Bishop of Hearst); and from 1975, Gérard Dionne, from Edmunston, New Brunswick). Also in 1975, an English-speaking Auxiliary Bishop also assumed office, Bernard Pappin.²² Until then, Bishop Pappin (a native of West Meath near Pembroke) had been a parish priest within the Diocese, first as Rector of the Pro-Cathedral in North Bay, then as pastor of Christ the King in Sudbury.

From 1961 to 1968, the Diocese had an English-language weekly newspaper, first *Northern Ontario Register* which in 1963 became *Northern Ontario Record*. Also in 1963, the Diocese created its own French-language newspaper, *L'Information*, published in Ottawa until 6 May 1965 and subsequently in North Bay. Both ceased publication in 1968 when expenses soared and interest waned.²³ Both covered news of the Little Council and the Guatemala mission, but *L'Information* also emphasized the activities and interests of Franco-Ontarians.

Bishop Carter also tried to involve more of the First Nations Peoples in the life of the Church. Along with francophones and anglophones, they became a section of the diocesan Synod, free to incorporate some of their own traditions into Roman Catholic worship and practices.²⁴ In 1964, *L'Information* reported the beginning of the first **Native Praesidium** of the Legion of Mary, established on Manitoulin Island with the permission of Bishop Carter.²⁵ Also, the Diocese and the English-speaking Jesuits agreed to establish the Anishinabe Spiritual Centre at Anderson Lake, near Espanola, in a region where many Natives lived. The Jesuits supplied priests, and the Jesuits and the Diocese shared the costs. A Native People's Ministry Program,

22. Carter, *Memoirs*, pp. 184-190, 232-234; *United in Faith*, p. 3.

23. Explained by Bishop Carter in the final issue of *L'Information*, 25 April 1968.

24. Carter, *Memoirs*, pp. 202-203.

25. *L'Information*, 11 July 1964.

already operational, trained Native Deacons to assist the priests.²⁶ In 1967, Bishop Carter attended a ceremony in which the Nipissing Band of Ojibway made him an Honorary Chief.²⁷

Community Outreach:

Community outreach was a high priority for Bishop Alexander Carter. In 1957 he assumed responsibilities as Coadjutor Bishop. In 1958, Bishop Dignan retired—because of poor health—and Carter became chief executive officer of the diocese. He regretted the absence of communication between Protestants and Roman Catholics and organized annual “levées” at New Year’s to which he invited community leaders. These were informal receptions or cocktail parties, where people of many persuasions chatted and fraternized. At first some who were not Roman Catholics wondered whether to attend, but when they did they were pleased that they did.²⁸ This was but a start. During Ecumenical Week 1963 (18-25 January), Roman Catholic clergy met with representatives of the Churches on Sudbury’s Larch Street (Anglican, Baptist, Presbyterian, and United) for discussions.²⁹ Bishop Carter attended the Synod of the Anglican Diocese of Algoma, which met at St. Luke’s Cathedral in Sault Ste. Marie; in the procession was the Archbishop of Canterbury, Michael Ramsey. Both Sisters of St. Joseph and Roman Catholic lay people attended the synod as well.³⁰ In Sudbury as well, the Minister of St. Andrew’s United Church and President of Huntington College, the Rev. Earl Lautenslager, was the guest speaker at the Sudbury Newman Club’s Alumni Banquet of 1963. (President of the club was Sudbury lawyer André Lacroix).³¹ The Rev. Charles Forsyth, pastor of St. Andrews from 1970 to 1978—suggested that downtown churches should co-operate with each other. Four Roman Catholic Churches representing different language groups—Christ the King (English), Ste Anne’s (French), St. Casimir’s (Polish), and

26. Carter, *Memoirs*, pp. 242-243.

27. *Northern Ontario Record*, 26 Oct. 1967; *L’Information*, 26 Oct. 1967..

28. Carter, *Memoirs*, pp. 139-140.

29. *Northern Ontario Register*, 26 January 1963.

30. Carter, *Memoirs*, pp. 200-201.

31. *Northern Ontario Register*, 11 May 1963.

St. Mary's (Ukrainian)—became members of the Downtown Churches Association, along with St. Andrew's United, The Church of the Epiphany (Anglican), and Knox Presbyterian.³²

In March 1963, Bishop Carter addressed AOTS (As One That Serves), the men's club at Trinity United Church, North Bay. Accompanied by the Rector of the Pro-Cathedral, Bernard Pappin, he told the assembled company that Christians of different persuasions share many common values and beliefs. It is easy for strangers to fear or hate people whom they do not know; hence, Protestants and Roman Catholics should meet and talk to each other. The Bishop asked his audience to look for what is common to both. "Let us live in charity and understanding, with respect and love," he said.³³ Two months later, the Minister of Trinity United—the Rev. Bruce Hallett (who was also past-president of the North Bay Ministerial Association)—accepted an invitation from Bishop Carter to address the Holy Name Societies.³⁴

One of the priests at the North Bay's Pro-Cathedral of the Assumption, Father Brian McKee, was a hockey player. McKee traveled to Toronto every Thursday to play hockey with other priests, whom he eventually persuaded to perform in North Bay at a charity fund-raiser. The event proved so popular that "the Flying Fathers", as the media dubbed them, became a feature of the Canadian, US, and European sports or entertainment scenes.³⁵ Another sports hero who studied for the priesthood was René Riopelle of North Bay. While a student, Riopelle played football for the Scollard Hall Bears. After graduating, he signed contracts and played for the Hamilton Tiger Cats and the Montreal Alouettes. In 1965, he decided to leave football and to become a priest.³⁶

Brian McKee subsequently moved to Sudbury, where he and Charles Forsythe co-operated in the Downtown Churches Association. Father McKee assumed responsibility for

32. Frank A. Peake and Ronald P. Horne, *The Religious Tradition in Sudbury, 1883-1983* (Sudbury: Journal Printing, 1983), p. iii.

33. *Northern Ontario Register*, 2 and 23 March 1963; the quotation comes from the issue of the 23rd.

34. *Northern Ontario Register*, 11 May 1963.

35. Carter, *Memoirs*, pp. 158-160.

36. *L'Information*, 12 Aug. 1965.

Catholic Charities, which evolved into a Soup Kitchen. With the help of philanthropic Sudbury businessmen, Father McKee transformed Catholic Charities into what is now the City of Greater Sudbury Food Bank, now equipped with storage and refrigeration facilities and supported by various churches. North Bay and Sault Ste. Marie have comparable operations. An ecumenical group (which included Judge Carl Waisberg of Juvenile Court) under the direction of Father Brian McKee also operated the Sudbury and District Boys Home to assist young men who had legal problems but whose problems were not so serious as to warrant incarceration at the Cecil Facer Reformatory. Members of Sudbury's business community assisted Father McKee, and they raised funds through benefit dinners, bingos and walkathons until philosophic differences between the directors of the Boys Home and the Government of Ontario led to a complete government takeover.³⁷ Money from the Boys Home now finances annual essay writing contests in both of Canada's official languages at Laurentian University. Catholic Charities operated also clothing stores where customers paid according to their ability to pay; Father McKee persuaded the City of Sudbury to let him use empty buildings on a temporary basis. In this, Sudbury was not unique. Ida Bagno of North Bay founded a clothing store in the Gateway City.

There was also a home for unwed mothers, established in 1940 and operated from 1960 until 1965 by the Good Shepherd Sisters near the corner of Bancroft and Second Avenue in Sudbury where Holy Redeemer Church and St. Joseph's residence are now located. Faced with a shortage of recruits, the Sisters decided that they should focus their limited resources outside the Diocese.³⁸

Sudbury has long been home to one of Ontario's largest francophone community, but those francophones have suffered an absence of reading material. One French Canadian organization within the Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie was Jeunesse Ouvrière Catholique (JOC,

^{37.} *United in Faith*, p. 18; interview with the Rev. John Caswell, a colleague of the late Rev. Brian McKee, Sudbury, 7 Dec. 2002. See also *Northern Ontario Record*, 26 Jan. 1967 and 1 Feb. 1968.

^{38.} *Northern Ontario Record*, 2 Sept. 1964.

or Young Catholic Workers). In 1963, the newly established French-language newspaper of the Diocese, *L'Information*, carried a picture of two JOC members, Donald Guitard and Leo Trottier, browsing through the shelves of the newly opened JOC library on Bond Street. All members of the JOC could use that library, which indicated that it would welcome used books which anyone wished to contribute.³⁹

Corpus Christi processions continued as a sign of Christian witness for some years. The issue of the diocesan newspaper, *The Northern Ontario Record* of 16 June 1966 carried pictures of the processions of North Bay and Sudbury which had just taken place.

In 1961, one of the priests at North Bay's Pro-Cathedral, the Rev. Jack David, took action on behalf of the deaf of the parish. As the Rev. Patrick Moore delivered an address, Father David translated it into sign language. A Society of Catholic Deaf organized and elected Keith Dorschner as its first president. Other lay people who became active in the cause came from Astorville, Haileybury, Iroquois Falls, New Liskeard, Nipissing Junction, North Bay, Sturgeon Falls, and Trout Creek.

Also at the Pro-Cathedral, there were at least two other significant projects. In 1969 and 1970, parishioners worked with the Lutheran World Relief Organization and the IODE (the Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire, a patriotic women's group) to establish and operate the North Bay Crisis Centre. Victims of abuse could stay at the Continental Hotel on Main Street until part of the former St. Mary's Academy became available. Residents included a homeless sixteen-year-old young man who wanted to go to school; two teenage girls who were trying to wean themselves from narcotics; victims of spousal abuse; an evicted family of eleven. Monsignor Pappin and the Sisters of St. Joseph, particularly Sister Jane Frances, managed the operation, to which the Children's Aid Society, the Research Addiction Foundation, the Halfway House, and others made referrals.⁴⁰

^{39.} *L'Information*, 4 May 1963.

^{40.} Sister Mary Beattie, "North Bay Crisis Centre," *St. Mary's*, pp. 44-45.

Five years later, as Communist forces completed their occupation of South Vietnam and political dissidents fled, parishioners sponsored six refugee families. The Rev. Rick Prashaw was the organizer, and his father was chair of the committee which raised funds to pay the rent, provided furniture, and introduced the new arrivals to the wonders of shopping in a supermarket. Parishioners helped the families find jobs, doctors, dentists, OHIP cards, and schools for the children. Two of the involved parishioners, Ida Bagno and Velma Bonany, recall that none of the families was Roman Catholic. Mrs. Bonany also remembers a family with two young girls and a baby. Despite adequate furnishings in their apartment, all five members slept in one bed. After all their experiences, they could comfort each other that way. In short order, all the Vietnamese families adapted readily to life in this country and moved to larger Canadian cities.⁴¹

The Daughters of the Heart of Mary—who had attracted the attention of Bishop Dignan—assumed new responsibilities. In September 1962, they closed their school at Spanish—the successor to one founded at Wikwemikong in 1862—because of a lack of English-speaking teachers and a change in government policy. By this time, the Government of Ontario wanted the First Nations peoples to integrate into the public schools of the province. Six Sisters of the Order continued to work in Sudbury, where four operated a residence for young women attending Laurentian University and two worked at Villa Loyola, the retreat **centre** on Long Lake.⁴² Jesuits also became involved in adult education among the First Nations.⁴³

Also, during Bishop Carter's tenure of office, the Stigmatini—whom Bishop Dignan kept out of the Diocese—established a presence at Sault Ste. Marie. The order both pre-dated and survived Italian Fascism. Founded in Italy in 1816, it went to the United States (with its growing Italian population) in 1905, Brazil in 1910, China in 1925, and Thailand in 1952. In

41. Interview with Ida Bagno and Velma Bonany, North Bay, 16 Jan. 2003.

42. *Northern Ontario Register*, 16 Feb. 1963.

43. *Northern Ontario Record*, 12 Nov. 1964.

1961 it launched the Catholic Information Centre on Albert Street East in Sault Ste. Marie, and it engaged in youth work.⁴⁴

Education:

Within his first four years of office, Bishop Carter outlined his views and priorities in a series of addresses and pastoral letters.⁴⁵ He believed strongly in religion-based education, not only at the primary level (where it already existed) but at the secondary level (where above Grade 10 it lacked financial support from the Government of Ontario until 1984) and at the university level. What he had seen during his months in Winnipeg–Roman Catholic schools which not only received no public funding but which had to pay taxes to the province–shocked him. Although privately funded, the alumni of Sudbury’s Collège du Sacré-Coeur, he noted, included clergy and other professionals, not to mention people involved in business, all of whom worked across Northern Ontario and Northwestern Quebec.⁴⁶

Given the lack of public funding for Roman Catholic secondary schools until 1984, the Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie resorted to a Pot ‘O’ Gold Lottery as a means of fund raising. The Province of Ontario granted a licence in 1980; the Diocese sold tickets throughout Ontario; and the Lottery held its first draw and announced its first winner 1 January 1981. Two people from Sudbury’s business community, Ted Szilva and Dan Newell, directed the Pot “O” Gold during the four years of its life. With full government funding of the schools, the Pot ‘O’ Gold became the Bishop Alexander Carter Charitable Fund, which would finance charities instead of schools. Ted Szilva and Dan Newell continued to serve, along with Francis Donnelly, a

^{44.} *Northern Ontario Record*, 27 Oct. 1966.

^{45.} Alexander Carter, *Lettres et Allocutions* (Sudbury: La Société du Nouvel Ontario), 1962.

^{46.} Carter, “Lettre pastorale sur deux problèmes: vocations et éducation” (1958), *Lettres*, pp. 7-11; “Role du Collège du Sacré-Coeur et celui de l’Université dans la formation du clergé” (1958), *Lettres*, pp. 20-22; “Droits de l’Église et devoirs contribuables catholiques en éducation” (1958), *Lettres*, pp. 23-28, “Droits et devoirs de l’Église en matière d’éducation dans la société contemporaine” *Lettres*, pp. 47-55. See also Carter, *Memoirs*, p. 91.

lawyer from Sudbury. The Bishop and his successors would serve ex officio as members of its board.⁴⁷

Meanwhile, there was good reason for satisfaction with the Catholic schools. In 1965, Scollard Hall produced four (Peter Brown, John Loch, Alphonse Orlando, Ronald Parker) and St. Joseph's College one (Mary Lynn Hammond) of North Bay's six Ontario scholars. These young people had obtained a minimum of 80% on their Grade 13 examinations and were eligible for \$400 university scholarships.⁴⁸ That same year, "bilingual schools" constituted one-third of the entries into Sudbury's Music Festival. Six thousand in all competed, and those French-language schools did very well: first year, St. Louis de Gonzague, 85 points; second year, St. Dominique, 88 points; third year, St. Joseph, 90 points; fourth year, Lapalme, 86 points; fifth year, St. Louis de Gonzague, 92 points; sixth year, St. Albert, 90 points; seventh year, Immaculée Conception, 90 points; eighth year, St. Pierre, 88 points.⁴⁹

During Bishop Carter's tenure of office the Diocese would establish the University of Sudbury which, in 1960, federated with the United Church's Huntington College to create Laurentian University. Laurentian would have its headquarters in Sudbury but affiliated colleges in Hearst, North Bay, and Sault Ste. Marie, and professors from those locations would travel throughout northeastern Ontario and supervise correspondence courses. The University of Sudbury would be a Roman Catholic institution modeled on St. Michael's College at the University of Toronto. Jesuits from Collège du Sacré Coeur would transfer their library and faculty. The University of Sudbury would function and offer courses in both of Canada's official languages, and it would co-operate with (federate with) the United Church's Huntington College and the Anglican Church's Thorneloe. Collectively they would have a voice in Laurentian University, which would offer most of the courses in most of the subjects. However, each of the Church colleges would have responsibility for courses in religion, and

^{47.} Carter, *Memoirs*, pp. 239-242.

^{48.} *Northern Ontario Record*, 26 Aug. 1965.

^{49.} *L'Information*, 11 March 1965.

any other subject which the Senate of Laurentian University designated as the responsibility of one of the colleges. While Sudbury would host the main campus, there would be local campuses (affiliated colleges) in North Bay, Sault Ste. Marie, Hearst, and perhaps Timmins. (The Timmins campus never materialized.) Bishop Carter discussed these plans with Vatican authorities while there on an episcopal visit in 1959 and with the Bishop of Hearst, Louis Lévesque. There were objections from people who feared too much Protestant influence upon young people and from the University of Ottawa, which Bishop Carter suspected wanted for itself a monopoly of French-language Roman Catholic higher education in Northern Ontario. Bishop Carter persevered and personally wrote part of the Laurentian University Act. Ontario Premier Leslie Frost (1949-1961), with whom he discussed Laurentian University on several occasions, accepted verbatim what Bishop Carter had drafted.⁵⁰

Four years after the Inco strike and with the University of Sudbury legally a federated college of Laurentian University, Bishop Carter instructed the faithful on their responsibilities. As Chancellor, he addressed the Board of Regents 1 April 1962. The University of Sudbury, Bishop Carter told the Regents, served both anglophones and francophones. Not everyone could become a professor, but large numbers of people had every right to a university education. Church teaching and influence were an important part of that education. Society would judge the Church and its members by the quality of the graduates of the University of Sudbury. If they served society well, the University would have fulfilled its mission.

Bishop Carter thought that the University of Sudbury had a special role to play in the lives of Franco-Ontarians. Until its creation, francophones had suffered unique educational disadvantages, which, in turn, made them less affluent than others. Hopefully, they would henceforth enjoy better opportunities.⁵¹ Again, Archbishop Charbonneau was to prove influential. While still Archbishop of Montreal, Charbonneau disapproved of a system which

^{50.} Carter, *Memoirs*, pp. 141-146.

^{51.} Carter, "Devoirs des catholiques envers l'Université de Sudbury" (1962), *Lettres*, pp. 68-70.

prepared a relative handful of French Canadians for professions as doctors, lawyers, or priests, and left the vast majority to work as “waiters, tradesmen, and clerks.”⁵² At the same time, Bishop Carter—speaking Italian—commended the Italians of his Diocese for their generosity in financing the University of Sudbury.⁵³

When Laurentian University granted him an honorary degree 28 May 1962, Bishop Carter addressed the Convocation. Laurentian, he hoped, could be a model for Canada itself as a place where francophones and anglophones could work together in a constructive manner. Quebec nationalism (separatism) had gained a high profile in the early 1960s, and Bishop Carter thought that the splintering of Canada into two separate countries would be most unfortunate, above all for francophone minorities outside Quebec. Perhaps Laurentian University could help to keep Canada together.⁵⁴

By the time of Bishop Carter’s address to the Board of Regents, the University of Sudbury had federated with Huntington and Thorneloe. Such ecumenicity was new, a phenomenon of the papacy of John XXIII who, like Bishop Carter, had assumed office in 1958. Bishop Carter noted that there were many who regarded such co-operation as dangerous, but he disagreed. There were enough safeguards in place, he believed, and enough reasonable people among the other denominations that young people of different religious persuasions could benefit by associating with each other. In any event, the debate over ecumenical education was purely academic in the narrowest sense. Whatever the merits (or otherwise) of inter-denominational education, financial realities dictated that there was no choice. Given government policy, a purely Roman Catholic university in Northern Ontario was impossible. The choice was between an ecumenical university or none at all.⁵⁵

Finally, the altar boys at North Bay’s Pro-Cathedral of the Assumption learned some

^{52.} Carter, *Memoirs*, pp. 100-101.

^{53.} *Northern Ontario Record*, 29 Feb. 1964.

^{54.} Carter, “Discours de S. Exc. Mgr A. Carter, hors de la réception d’un doctorat honorifique décerné par l’Université Laurentienne” (1962), *Lettres*, pp. 74-80.

^{55.} Carter, “Devoirs”, pp. 70-71.

lessons in self-help. Forty-five of them went as a group to Expo' 67 in Montreal, the World Fair which proved a high point of Canada's Centennial celebrations. With them traveled Father Raymond J. van Berkel and a teacher from Scollard Hall, Jim Mallory. To finance the trip the boys washed cars, sold raffle tickets, and had other projects.⁵⁶

Hospitals:

Another interest of Bishop Carter's was medical care. Sisters of Charity (Grey Nuns) from Ottawa operated the St. Joseph's Hospital (which evolved into the secular Laurentian Hospital) in Sudbury. Grey Nuns from Pembroke managed the Sault General Hospital. The Sisters of St. Joseph directed St. Joseph's Hospital in North Bay, the Sudbury General Hospital (now the St. Joseph's Health Centre), as well as hospitals in Little Current, Elliot Lake, and Blind River. The Daughters of Wisdom had another in Sturgeon Falls. Bishop Carter told the Congress of the Association of Catholic Hospitals that for Pope John XXIII, health care was a high priority. Christians had cared for the sick since the time of Jesus Christ Himself, said Bishop Carter, and it was appropriate that they should continue to do so.⁵⁷

The Federal Election of 1963:

The federal election of 1963 was bound to have a significant impact on North Bay. Early in February of that year, John Diefenbaker's government lost a vote of confidence in the House of Commons over its defence policies. The Governor General dissolved Parliament, and new elections took place 8 April 1963. The key issues were whether Canada's armed forces should fulfil commitments made by Diefenbaker and Defence Minister George Pearkes to adopt nuclear weapons. The outcome would affect members of the Royal Canadian Air Force stationed in Europe, many of whom had lived in North Bay, and it would determine whether Bomarc-B missiles near North Bay (as well as LaMacaza, Quebec) would have

^{56.} *Northern Ontario Record*, 31 Aug. 1967.

^{57.} Carter, "Mission de l'hôpital catholique" (no date indicated), *Lettres*, pp. 81-84.

nuclear warheads. Despite the emotion which this issue raised across Canada, it does not appear to have attracted the attention of the Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie. Almost every week since it began in 1961, *Northern Ontario Register and L'Information*, the Diocesan newspapers, had carried an item about the dangers or horrors of Communism, but on nuclear weapons they were silent. Issues preceding Election Day, 8 April 1963, carried advertisements for candidates of all parties, including Lester B. Pearson. (Pearson, the Liberal candidate in Algoma East, would lead his party to victory and become Prime Minister.) The Liberal Party had said that it would fulfil the Diefenbaker government's nuclear commitments. The *Register* also carried an advertisement for NDP candidate Ossie Godin of Nickel Belt, whose party opposed Canada's acquisition of nuclear weapons. The advertisements made no mention of the nuclear issue.

In a sense, this was not altogether surprising. The Roman Catholic Church had had bad experiences with Communist governments. Joseph Stalin, the Soviet leader from 1924 to 1953, believed that Roman Catholics had a divided loyalty, to the pope in Rome as well as to their own country and its leaders, and he wanted a monopoly of the loyalty. As many of the Soviet Union's Roman Catholics were ethnic Ukrainians or Poles, Stalin feared that the Church might be a destabilizing factor. (Indeed, there is evidence that at a later date the Polish Pope John Paul II would destabilize Communist rule in Poland.) Also, doctrinaire Communists disliked all religion on the grounds that they placed too much evidence on a happy Hereafter and too little on improvements in this world. One estimate is that when Stalin's predecessor, Vladimir Lenin, died in 1924, there were approximately 200 Roman Catholic priests in the Soviet Union. By 1938, that number had fallen to two.⁵⁸ KGB archives opened after the collapse of the Soviet Union confirm that Stalin's police arrested Roman Catholic nuns, students, and laity and accused them of less than patriotic activities, even plotting Stalin's assassination and scheming to restore the Czarist monarchy.⁵⁹ Two

^{58.} Alvarez, p. 142.

^{59.} Alvarez, p. 228. Alvarez's source was a book written by Antoine Wenger, *Catholiques*

Cardinals who lived in Communist countries, Mindszenty of Hungary and Stepinac of Yugoslavia, subsequently spent years in prison.

The Diocese and Vatican II:

Bishop Carter involved the people of his Diocese in Vatican II Council. As it met in Rome, a “Little Council” studied the same issues within the Diocese and forwarded its findings to the Bishop. The Diocese consisted of five deaneries, three English-speaking (North Bay, Sudbury, Sault Ste. Marie) and two French-speaking (Nipissing and Nickel Belt), which met separately and whose clergy and laity prepared recommendations on liturgy, the role of the laity, vocations, and the media.⁶⁰

Vatican II did not remain in continuous session. When he returned to Canada, Bishop Carter would hold meetings of the “Little Council” in Sudbury. Some 200 lay people and most of the clergy attended, heard what the bishops had been discussing in Rome, and read and debated summaries of the position papers. Bishop Carter thought that the “Little Council” meetings made the changes more acceptable when they happened, and he received correspondence from other bishops who thought that it might be wise to hold similar sessions.⁶¹

World Outreach:

Pope John XXIII appealed to Roman Catholics in the United States and Canada to assist the Church in Latin America, and Bishop Carter had a strong sense of responsibility toward the less fortunate parts of the world. There was a shortage of clergy, he thought, but if the needs of the Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie were “great”, the needs of parts of Latin America were “desperate”. Bishop Carter consulted bishops from the United States and Latin America,

en Russie d'après les archives du KGB, 1920-1960 (Paris: Desclée et Brouwer, 1998), pp. 78-79.

^{60.} *Northern Ontario Record*, 5 Oct. and 7 Dec. 1963; 25 Jan. and 30 May 1964.

^{61.} Carter, *Memoirs*, pp. 183-184.

and he also discussed the matter with the Scarboro Foreign Missions Society, based in Toronto. He also authorized one of his priests, the Rev. Conway McKee, to make a reconnaissance trip to Central America. Father McKee had long wanted to go to Latin America, and Bishop Carter allowed him to undertake an exploratory trip to Panama, Honduras, and Guatemala. In Guatemala, Father McKee talked with the Bishop of Quetzaltenango and the Bishop of Zacapa. Bishop Carter then went to Guatemala and talked to the two bishops and decided that Zacapa was the more needy of the two dioceses. The cool climate of mountainous Quetzaltenango would have been more comfortable for Canadians than the torrid heat of Zacapa, but from a practical standpoint, Zacapa had a major advantage. Spanish was the common language throughout that diocese, but work in Quetzaltenango would have required fluency in Quiche.

While Bishop Luna would live in Zacapa, Gualán would be home to most of the Canadians. The Vatican had created the Diocese of Zacapa in 1953 and four years later appointed its first bishop, a Franciscan named Constantino Luna.⁶² Luna had served as a missionary priest in China and was there when Mao's armies triumphed. The Communists imprisoned him, and after his release the Vatican sent him to Guatemala.⁶³ As long as the Canadians were within his diocese, Bishop Luna—who could speak English—would be their superior. As every parish in the Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie supported the Guatemalan project, Bishop Carter visited Gualán and La Unión every year but one. As Auxiliary or Assistant Bishop of Sault Ste. Marie, Roger Despatie also visited the Diocese of Zapaca.

In his memoirs, Bishop Carter noted that there already were ties between North Bay and Guatemala, as some wealthy Guatemalans were sending their children to St. Joseph's College, a secondary school for girls operated by the Sisters of St. Joseph on the shores of Lake Nipissing. Near Espanola on Lang Lake, Father Brian McKee directed a Youth Camp

^{62.} *L'Information*, 29 June and 7 Dec. 1963, 4 July 1964; *Northern Ontario Record*, 11 April 1964.

^{63.} *L'Information*, 14 Dec. 1963.

financed by the Knights of Columbus. One of the campers in 1964 was a twelve-year-old from Guatemala City, Rodolfo Peña, whose ambition was to attend Scollard Hall in North Bay but who had to learn English in order to do so. The Youth Camp offered an opportunity for learning English.⁶⁴ According to *L'Information*, Peña—whose older sister was already a student at North Bay's St. Joseph's College—arrived knowing three words of English: Yes, No, Hello. A francophone, Jean-Marie Charbonneau of Hanmer—who was fluent in English and French and who had some command of Latin—taught Peña English over the summer. The Peñas were not poor people; their father owned an estate some 500 kilometres from Guatemala City.⁶⁵ The Diocese of Zacapa occupied the lowlands between Guatemala City and the Caribbean coast, not far from the Inco colony which would develop at Lake Izabal in the 1970s.

Father Conway McKee left Corpus Christi parish in North Bay to go to Guatemala for five years and others followed: Fathers James Cashubec, Jean-Marie Paiement, Harris Mulcahey, David Cresswell, Frank Farenzena, Jack David, Frank Folz, Norm Fortier and Donald Tait. Even teenage parishioners became involved in fund-raising for the Guatemalan mission. The 11 April 1968 issue of *Northern Ontario Record* tells of a 50-member group in Sudbury, Operation Amigo, which staged a tea-fiesta. Pictured as hostesses were Mary Lou Evans, Noreen Hogan, and Betty Feick.

In order to understand the context in which the priests and Sisters of St. Joseph from Northern Ontario operated, some knowledge of Guatemalan history is essential. Tikal (in the Petén District in the northeast) was the site of the highest structures (pyramids) constructed by the Maya, arguably the Western Hemisphere's most advanced people at the time, whose civilization flourished from roughly 300 to 900 A.D. What is now Guatemala became part of Spain's Empire in the sixteenth century, which disintegrated in the nineteenth. After almost two decades as part of Mexico, then as part of a Central American Federation, Guatemala

^{64.} *Northern Ontario Record*, 27 June and 15 Aug. 1964.

^{65.} *L'Information*, 15 Aug. 1964.

achieved independence in 1839. There were basically three groups of people within its boundaries: a few families of Spanish extraction, many Ladinos, and a huge underclass of Amerindians, many descended from the Maya. Ladinos were Amerindians who had abandoned their culture and adopted European ways, speaking Spanish and wearing Western-style clothes, or people of mixed Amerindian and European extraction.. One theory as to the origin of the term “Ladino” is that those who merited it understood Latin sufficiently well to follow the mass.

Late in the nineteenth century, President Manuel Lisandro Barillas (1885-1892) began to recruit immigrants from Germany, many of whom became *patrones*—estate owners—of coffee plantations. The new arrivals hired a huge Amerindian labour force, usually paid at or below the subsistence level. It would be unfair to attribute this unfortunate situation entirely to greed or racial prejudice. Europeans left Europe in search of better opportunities than they could enjoy at home, usually to new homes in the United States, Canada, Australia, southern Africa, or temperate parts of South America. They did not migrate in order to live as peasants or paupers. If Guatemalan authorities wished to attract Germans, they had to offer them a lifestyle comparable to what they would have enjoyed elsewhere. The Germans had technical and organizational skills which had been sadly lacking in Guatemala, and by 1914, 170 plantations owned by Germans produced roughly half Guatemala’s coffee. Unfortunately, the price of coffee was not something which anyone in Guatemala could control. It rose and fell according to such extraneous factors as weather conditions in Brazil, and, when the price dropped, the Amerindian labour force absorbed much of the shock. Meanwhile, the Guatemalan army maintained the socio-economic system.

From 1944 to 1954, Guatemalans had their first experience with democracy. The governments of Presidents Juan José Arévalo (1945-1951) and Jacobo Arbenz (1951-1954) had been more responsive to the needs of the Amerindians than their predecessors had been. Arévalo stressed schools, hospitals, housing, literacy, and unions for plantation workers. George Britnell, an economics professor at the University of Saskatchewan, suggested many

of the reforms which Arbenz wanted to implement.

Decree 900 of the Arbenz presidency provided for the distribution to the landless of uncultivated lands and of lands cultivated by the workers themselves on a land-for-wages basis. Historian Walter LaFeber has estimated that in 1952, 72% of Guatemala's arable land was owned by 2% of the population. Professor Jim Handy of the University of Saskatchewan has written that in 1950, 53.5% of Guatemala's 2,937,748 people fell into the category of "Indian". Of the 348,647 farm operators, almost 65% were Indians, and slightly more than 35% Ladinos or Europeans. The Ladinos and Europeans controlled 81.3% of the land. Only two of the largest 54 estates belonged to Indians. Despite Decree 900, plantation owners could continue to own the productive lands which served the plantations themselves. Some owners, nevertheless, did not agree with Arbenz's reforms, in part because the Amerindians lacked the knowledge to produce as much as the plantation owners could. Among the unhappy was the United Fruit Company, which had powerful connections in Washington. Moreover, Guatemala's small Communist party, the Partido Guatemalteco de Trabajadores (PGT or Guatemalan Workers' Party), supported Arbenz and, in the eyes of President Eisenhower and Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, weakened the credibility of Arbenz's government.

How serious was the Communist threat to Guatemala? Fifty years after the events in question, Professor Handy—probably Canada's leading academic authority on Guatemala at that time—wrote that only five of the 58 deputies in the Guatemalan Congress belonged to the PGT, and that no cabinet minister was a declared Communist. However, among those who had significant influence upon President Arbenz and his government were José Manuel Fortuna of the PGT and María Cristina de Villanova, the second of whom Handy identified as "considered to be both a communist and an important influence on the president...." At the local level, Communists won some victories in municipal elections in urban and suburban Guatemala City and Escuintla. Both Archbishop Mariano Rossell of Guatemala City and members of the US government perceived a Communist threat, and Professor Handy thinks that their fears, while "exaggerated", were real and not entirely without foundation.

In 1954, the Central Intelligence Agency (led by Allen Dulles, brother of John Foster Dulles) engineered the overthrow of the Arbenz government, and the new government—led by General Carlos Castillo Armas—reversed the land reforms of Decree 900. Also, the Castillo Armas government forced the coffee workers’ unions to dissolve themselves. Given the new realities, many who had benefitted from Decree 900 became more radical, even Communist, and after Fidel Castro’s triumph in 1959, some of them went to Cuba to learn to fight.⁶⁶

By 1961, when Father Conway McKee began to serve in Guatemala, the political situation was tense. In 1962, Guatemalan Bishops lamented Guatemala’s “grave and sorrowful situation” and called for the implementation of the Church’s social teachings. They could not ignore, they said, “the cry of sorrow that reaches our hearts from the cold and wretched huts and hovels in which thousands of our Guatemalan fellow countrymen are living.” Earlier in the year, those same Bishops criticized those who had attempted to overthrow the government of President Miguel Ydígoras (1958-1963, successor to Castillo Armas), which they regarded—with some justification—as the best Guatemalans could expect at the time. Writing in 1975, Professor Ralph Lee Woodward, Jr., one of the leading academic writers on Central America in the United States, noted that Ydígoras had won the presidency in 1958 through a reasonably honest election and that he avoided “harsh measures”.⁶⁷

^{66.} One of the most recent sources on Guatemalan history is the book by Daniel Wilkinson, *Silence on the Mountain: Stories of Terror, Betrayal, and Forgetting in Guatemala* (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 2002). For a brief but excellent synopsis, see Benjamin Keen, *A History of Latin America* (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1996), especially pp. 443-446. See also Jim Handy, *Revolution in the Countryside: Rural Conflict and Agrarian Reform in Guatemala, 1944-1954* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994), especially pp. 8-9, 39, 41, 46, 63, 107-110, 130, 175, 178; Walter LaFeber: *Inevitable Revolutions: The United States in Central America* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1993), pp. 76-80 and 113-127; David F. Schmitz, *Thank God They’re on Our Side* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, pp. 193-198) LaFeber’s estimate regarding ownership of agricultural lands appears on p. 117.

^{67.} Ralph Lee Woodward, Jr., *Central America: A Nation Divided* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975), pp. 238-240.

Communists, the bishops warned, were exploiting the unrest.⁶⁸

Nor were the Guatemalan Bishops the only ones concerned about Communism in Guatemala. In 1964, Robert J. Keir—managing editor of the Diocesan newspaper *Northern Ontario Record* which in 1963 had replaced the *Northern Ontario Register*—visited Gualán and noted the challenges with which Bishop Luna had to contend: an illiteracy rate of 78% in the Diocese of Zacapa, poverty, the indifference of the Guatemalan government, and “a battle against Communism”. Of the 344 priests in Guatemala, all but 57 were expatriates. Keir noted that Bishop Luna had visited Northern Ontario during the summer of 1963.⁶⁹ In his valedictory article of February 1966, Father Conway McKee wrote that a Communist threat two years earlier had prompted the army to install Colonel Enrique Peralta, whom he considered “a fine administrator”. Father McKee thought that elections which the Colonel was arranging might restore democracy to Guatemala. “There are some terrorists in some parts of the country,” he said, “and in these sections no one goes out after 9 p.m. The militia patrol with machine guns in the streets to keep order.”⁷⁰

Given what followed, Father McKee’s optimism about President Peralta seems naïve, but what is obvious now was not obvious then. The chaos and violence were all too apparent to anyone living in Guatemala in 1966. From the safety of his home in Louisiana nine years later, Woodward would explain that the army had overthrown Ydígoras for being too soft with those who had resorted to violence. Peralta believed that without brutality, he could not resolve Guatemala’s problems, and he killed, imprisoned, or exiled his opponents. Through ruthlessness, Peralta did manage to eliminate much of the violence. Even in 1975, Woodward could not confirm a rumour that one of Peralta’s opponents, Victor Gutiérrez, was “dropped from an airplane 20,000 feet over the Pacific.” Peralta did organize the elections mentioned by Father McKee in 1966, but according to Woodward, victorious candidate Julio César

^{68.} *Northern Ontario Register*, 10 Nov. 1962.

^{69.} *L’Information*, 29 June 1963; *Northern Ontario Record*, 11 April 1964.

^{70.} *Northern Ontario Record*, 10 Feb. 1966.

Méndez Montenegro, had little authority while in office (1966-1970). The army governed. Father Jean-Marie Paiement had an experience which supports Woodward's assertion.

On 27 March 1968, a helicopter filled with officers and other soldiers landed on school property in the village of Tasharté, near La Unión. The very next day, Father Paiement sent a telegram to President Méndez Montenegro. Father Paiement charged that the soldiers had grabbed and terrorized innocent peasants and children, accusing them of collaboration with the rebels. There was no need for this, he indicated. The village was peaceful, and the school had good management and played an important role in the promotion of literacy. His appeal appears to have had little impact, for more than two weeks later, twelve villagers submitted testimony—recorded by Father Paiement—about what had happened. José Concepción García Súchite, age 42, said that the army had removed his 49-year-old sister, Felipe de Jesús Súchite, from the school and her son, Guillermo, from his home. As of 12 April, there was no sign of them, nor of Felipe's husband or three younger sons. Jerónima Pérez Martínez Matías, age 25, said that the army had taken her 35-year-old husband from the school, then ransacked her home. One soldier manhandled her. Dorotea Ramírez Alonzo, age 30, said that soldiers vandalized the home of her sister, struck the sister, and took the sister and her daughter away. The daughter had not returned. Mercedes Vega Esquivel, age 24, testified that 30 soldiers invaded her home. One charged that Mercedes' husband, José Tomás Morales, was a guerrilla and said that they had orders to kill him. When she did not tell them where he was, they threatened to kill *her*. They ransacked the house, inside and out, as they searched for the arms which her husband supposedly had but which she denied that he had. They even threatened to kill her three-month-old baby if she would not tell them where her husband was. Her husband fled and on 12 April, as she submitted her statement, still had not returned. Feliciano Pérez y Vasquez, age 55, said that soldiers had entered her house and taken her husband's civil documents and her daughter's towels, then broken a thermos bottle. She had not seen her husband since that day. The husband of Carmen Vasquez Ramos also vanished after soldiers snatched him from his own home. Mrs. Vasquez Ramos thought that they wanted to kill her.

In an interview 22 March 2003, Father Paiement told the author that as far as he was aware, none of those people removed by the Guatemalan army 35 years earlier had reappeared.

A few villagers were more fortunate, but “more fortunate” is a relative term. Jesús Morales López, age 36, lived across the street from the school, and his son was a student there. When he saw the soldiers invading the building, he crossed the street to protect the children. Four soldiers attacked him, knocked him to the ground, and said that they had come to kill. However, they released him and his son. The soldiers assaulted and threatened Manuel Mejia Herrera, age 26, but did not kill or remove him. Adelaide Súchite, age 25, said that soldiers had invaded her home, threatened to kill her, then left. Reina Olivia Morales, age 28, charged that soldiers had invaded her house several times to look for her husband. She had the good sense to flee and he to hide, but the army broke down the door and stole many of the family’s possessions. Transito Almazán, age 25, reported that three armed soldiers had entered his home, threatened his wife, stolen photos of himself and his wife, and otherwise vandalized his house. They falsely accused Almazán of having a pistol and a shotgun. Eulogio Súchite, age 27, husband and father of three sons, was another victim of harassment, but he lived to file his own protest with Father Paiement. At least three of the people who filed testimonials with Father Paiement could identify many of their assailants by name.⁷¹ More than 200 of his parishioners (some of whom could not write their names and had to leave thumb prints) prepared a petition which accused the army of killing catechists. Irving Stahl forwarded the petition to a colonel, who replied that (a) the petition was an exaggeration; and that (b) the foreigner (Father Paiement) should be quiet.

In 1970, 1974, and 1978 elections took place, right on schedule, but the declared winners were army officers—Colonel Carlos Arana (1970), General Kjell Laugerud (1974), and General Romeo Lucas Garcia (1978). Arana and Lucas Garcia acquired reputations as

^{71.} Father Paiement retained copies of his telegram and other correspondence of 28-30 March 1968 to President Méndez Montenegro and army officers, as well as of the testimonials of the victims. The author saw these in Sudbury, Ontario, in March 2003.

brutal killers, and Fodor's tourist guide to Central America says that Arana was particularly brutal in the province of Zacapa and the adjacent province of Chiquimula. Fodor says that Arana's nickname was the "Butcher of Zacapa" and says that he "massacred more than 10,000 rural Guatemalans" in the two provinces. His goal was to "pacify" the area.⁷² Amnesty International—which began to publish its *Annual Report* in 1974—depicted Guatemala under Laugerud as less than a paradise. "In January 1975 alone," said the *Annual Report* of 1974-1975, "the daily newspaper of Guatemala City reported the apparently motivated killing of 41 persons and the disappearance of seven." In May 1975, Amnesty International wrote to President Laugerud about 135 political murders which had taken place between Laugerud's inauguration 1 July 1974 and 31 January 1975. (The *Annual Report* of 1975-1976 reduced this number to 134.) The 1977 *Annual Report* estimated that since 1966, Death Squads had been responsible for some 20,000 "extra-judicial executions and 'disappearances'". The 1978 *Annual Report* accused the National Police of participating in the Death Squads. Following Lucas Garcia's inauguration in mid-year, Amnesty International found, the situation became even worse than what it had been in Arana's time. According to the 1979 *Annual Report*, some Guatemalan journalists had termed 1978 Guatemala's most violent year ever.⁷³

Years after his return to Canada, Father David Cresswell recalled the subtlety with which the Canadian clergy had to deal with the political situation. To have criticized the Guatemalan army, he said, would have been suicidal. It would also have been inappropriate given that the Canadians were guests in the country. On one occasion, a freelance journalist who wanted to study guerrillas asked whether he might stay at the rectory. The response had to be negative, for once the journalist was safely out of the country and in a position to publish his articles, the army might well take serious reprisals against his hosts. However, the priests could indicate Jesus's opinions on a wide range of topics and leave listeners to draw their own

^{72.} Fodor's *Central America* (New York: Random House, 2001), p. 173.

^{73.} Woodward, pp. 238-240; Amnesty International, *Annual Reports*, 1974-1979.

conclusions.⁷⁴

The Canadian priests did the normal work of priests, often making their rounds by horse or mule, but they did more than that. It was Father Conway McKee, the Canadian pioneer of the Diocese of Zacapa, who summarized his accomplishments before returning to Canada in 1966. He did not need fancy clothes in Gualán, he said. His suit remained in Guatemala City, whose climate he enjoyed and where friends of the project, Irving and Gladys Stahl, opened their homes to the visiting Canadian priests and allowed them to take baths. (When the Sisters of St. Joseph went to Guatemala City, they stayed with the Maryknoll order or with travel agent Maria Luisa Hayter.) Irving Stahl, a Guatemalan of German extraction, had the General Motors franchise; Gladys was his American-born wife. Others, not Father McKee, have noted that the Archbishop of Guatemala City, Mario Casariego, was no help at all. He sided totally with the military régime and had no sympathy for socially active priests who found themselves in trouble.⁷⁵

It was from Guatemala City that the Canadians transported their drinking water in containers, to Gualán where most of them worked and to La Unión, home to Father Jean-Marie Paiement. (Father Paiement lived in a community of 2000 people but served 15,000.) UNESCO and other aid agencies trusted the priests to distribute commodities from powdered milk and corn meal to medicine. As few parishioners had refrigeration, it was unfeasible to distribute milk in its liquid form. In the absence of doctors and dentists, the priests substituted. Staples of the peasants' diet were tortilla (a pancake made with ground corn) and black beans. Most people lived in houses made of adobe, and the electrical system—powered by diesel—was

^{74.} Interview with the Rev. David Cresswell, Coniston, 26 April 2003. Cited hereafter as Cresswell interview.

^{75.} Keen, p. 446; interview with the Rev. Jean-Marie Paiement, Sudbury, 4 February 2003. Cited hereafter as Paiement interview. Also, Father Paiement sent the author a lengthy fax 24 Feb. 2003, and it provided invaluable insights into the Guatemalan project. Also, Cresswell interview. Also, interview with Sister Emilia (Shirley) Caicco, North Bay, 28 April 2003. Cited hereafter as Caicco interview.

unreliable. The Alliance for Progress, launched by US President John Kennedy, established a television station which residents could receive. The normal temperature was 32 degrees Celsius, but it could go as high as 46. Average wage around Gualán was 50 cents per day; hence, the projects depended upon the people of the Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie. Nevertheless, the Canadian clergy encouraged a work ethic and insisted on payment (of sorts) for what they provided. They would trade milk for work or medicine for corn.⁷⁶

As Fathers Harris Mulcahey and Jean-Marie Paiement left Sudbury's Christ the King and Verner respectively for Guatemala in 1963, *L'Information* noted that before the Canadians arrived, Bishop Luna had a grand total of six priests for 500,000 Roman Catholics, a ratio of 1:22,000.⁷⁷ On arrival, the road from the Atlantic Highway to the river before Gualán was next to impassable because of the region's formidable rainfalls. In the darkness they could not even see Gualán until they were there.⁷⁸

With the permission of Bishop Luna, Father Conway McKee returned briefly to Canada to persuade the Sisters of St. Joseph, not only from the Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie but also from Toronto and Hamilton, to go to Guatemala. Some from Hamilton agreed to do so, provided that a Canadian priest would head the parish. As Father Cashubec was by this time working in Gualán, Father McKee moved to Teculután to prepare for the coming of the Sisters from Hamilton. In August 1963, Fathers Paiement and Mulcahey arrived from the Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie, but an attack of hepatitis landed Mulcahey in the hospital in Quetzaltenango, and when he left, he could tolerate no more than light duty in Gualán. At that time, Paiement knew no Spanish but became parish priest at Teculután, where he could celebrate the mass in Latin. After language studies in Mexico the following year, he assumed responsibility for the parish of San Francisco in La Unión.

The accomplishments of the Northern Ontario clergy were formidable, despite the

^{76.} *L'Information*, 6 Jan. 1966; *Northern Ontario Record*, 10 Feb. 1966.

^{77.} *L'Information*, 29 June 1963.

^{78.} *L'Information*, 2 and 23 Nov. 1963.

physical hardships. One of Father Mulcahey's responsibilities was to travel through the countryside conducting open air masses for those who could not conveniently make their way to a church building. It was then his great pleasure to return to the rectory, take a cold shower, and wash away the flees.⁷⁹ Indifference could be a problem. Father Paiement described a visit to El Jute, a village some fifty kilometres from Gualán. No priest had visited it for a year, and hardly anyone had bothered to take the one-hour walk to Usumatlán, where he had celebrated mass every Sunday for the previous two months. Accompanied by Dr. Murray Pace, a medical doctor from North Bay, Father Paiement baptized twenty-eight people during that visit to El Jute; of the twenty-eight, only two had parents who were married to each other.⁸⁰ The job could also be frustrating. What little they knew of the Catholic faith, said Father Paiement of some of the local people, they did not know very well. Unfortunately, their pride was such that they did not want to admit to their ignorance. What much of Latin America needed, he said, was a programme of "rechristianization".⁸¹

The Church at Teculután became Father Cashubec's responsibility. Within a year, he managed to build a convent and a primary school, but illness forced an early return to Northern Ontario. Father Mulcahey had recovered to the point where he could become pastor at Teculután, where he remained until a priest from Hamilton, the Rev. James Beaudry (a friend of Conway McKee's) arrived to replace him. Father Mulcahey spent the rest of his five-year term at the Cathedral in Zacapa.

All the priests trained Guatemalans as catechists, who had responsibility for Catholic education, preparation of parents for baptism of their children, and visitation of parishioners' homes. When his term expired, Conway McKee returned to Canada and David Cresswell, his successor, organized a group of young men responsible for co-operatives, agriculture, health, and literacy. This group adopted the acronym CASA, which meant: Cooperativa-Agricultura-

79. *L'Information*, 1 Feb. 1964.

80. *L'Information*, 22 Feb. 1964.

81. *L'Information*, 13 June 1964.

Salud (Health)-Alfabetización (Literacy). Father Francis Farenzena, who arrived about the same time as Cresswell, reorganized the building of the Church in Gualán and established the Christian Family Movement. Sister Nona Dennis, a Registered Nurse, opened a public clinic. With the help of American dentists, Father Farenzena also organized and furnished a complete dental clinic.

In Gualán, Father Paiement organized a Housing Co-op, for which the Guatemala City Housing Co-operative assumed responsibility. In the aftermath of the 1976 earthquake, the Canadian International Development Agency sent \$11 million worth of construction materials to Guatemala, one million of which went to the Canadian clergy in the Diocese of Zacapa. In La Unión, Father Don Tait built various schools and homes. In Gualán, Paiement arranged for the construction of 18 schools. During his five years in La Unión, Father Tait opened a number of roads, which later became public responsibilities. He undertook construction of a large community centre which became a place for meetings. On land originally intended for a coffee mill but too far from water to be practical, Father Tait organized construction of more than a dozen homes for peasants after the coffee co-op donated the land. He also introduced the charismatic movement into his parish.

Father Paiement organized a coffee co-op at La Unión. Before going to Guatemala he had served in Verner, which had a significant co-op of its own. While living in Verner, he had studied co-ops and gained considerable knowledge of the way they operated. When he arrived in La Unión, coffee was selling for four or five cents per pound. Anxious that his parishioners should receive a decent price for their product, Father Paiement found a man in Guatemala City who assisted him. As there were no Sisters of St. Joseph in La Unión, the two of them organized literacy classes.

The co-op, Father Paiement explained in a lengthy article in *L'Information*, offered its members an escape from poverty. In order to survive, he said, families often needed instant cash. Too often, the only way for the father to feed and clothe their families was through the sale of their coffee crop as much as four or five months before it was ready for market. Under

such circumstances, the buyer would pay rock bottom prices. The only solution Paiement could envision was to provide loans to the needy so that they could sell their crop when the price was right. Unfortunately, commercial banks were not interested in small loans to poor risks. The only guarantee he could offer, said Father Paiement, was good will and the sincere desire of men to live like men. Hard and fast dates were impossible to enforce.⁸²

Happily, there was an abundance of good will at La Unión, Paiement wrote, and this made possible the opening of a coffee co-op on 2 July 1965. People descended from the surrounding hills twice a month to attend mass. While they were there, Father Paiement organized lectures on co-ops and credit unions. From the beginning he worked with two Guatemalan bodies: the Federación Campesina de Guatemala (Peasant Federation of Guatemala) and the Asociación Nacional de Café (National Association of Coffee, known as Anacafé). They provided an instructor, Alfredo Hernández, who was knowledgeable about both co-ops and coffee production. By December 1965, the co-op at La Unión had 406 members, and twice a month these people deposited what they could afford: five cents, ten cents, sometimes twenty-five cents, very rarely a full dollar. Yet this was better than nothing. Father Paiement also invited readers of *L'Information* to send donations.⁸³

Alfredo Hernández worked for Anacafé. He organized 60 coffee co-ops for producers of 500-1000 pounds of coffee and taught the producers how to take care of the product. Father Paiement applied to the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) for money to build a coffee mill, and CIDA provided the funds. The mill peeled, washed, and dried the coffee, after which it went to markets in Germany, where Hernández had studied and had connections. There it sold for \$35 per 100 pounds. Irving Stahl advised that it was wisest to sell when the always fluctuating price seemed acceptable. Sometimes it would continue to rise after the sale, and sometimes it would fall, but such occasions balanced each other.

Unfortunately, there were problems in this respect. If the after-sale price rose by more than 20

^{82.} *L'Information*, 30 Dec. 1965.

^{83.} *L'Information*, 6 Jan. 1966.

per cent because of problems in Brazil, some farmers abandoned the co-op for an outlet which offered them a better price. This happened often enough that the co-op was not always able to fulfil its contracts, and it became temporarily moribund. However, it revived and by July 2002 had 40 members.

The Sisters of St. Joseph followed and established a school, a medical clinic, and a credit union at Gualán. Early in 1964 Bishop Carter celebrated his seventh anniversary as Bishop while in that community, where he blessed the foundations of the school.⁸⁴ In *L'Information*, Father Paiement described Guatemala's school situation. Although the term would not begin until mid-September, registration, he said, took place early in January. Guatemala had a population of four million people, but barely 15 per cent of the school-age population could attend school. The result was an illiteracy rate of 72 per cent. By December 1965, 4,873 teachers—eighty per cent of whom were women—sought employment in government-financed schools, but seventy per cent of these people wanted to teach only in Guatemala City. In Teculután, Gualán, and La Unión, said Father Paiement, there were 60,000 residents but not a single secondary school, and the primary schools offered what would amount to a Grade VI level of education in Ontario. The government offered scholarships for prospective secondary school students, but not enough of them. At the time of the 1966 registration, he said, 2500 applicants were competing for 604 positions. Another problem was the attitude of the parents. Too ignorant themselves to understand what was happening in the schools, they did not offer what teachers considered an adequate level of support, and the teachers became frustrated.⁸⁵

It was to deal with illiteracy that the Sisters of St. Joseph became involved. In 1962, one year into the life of the mission, Sister St. Camillus, Superior of North Bay's St. Joseph's General Hospital, and Mother St. Andrew went to Gualán for a feasibility study.⁸⁶ A few

^{84.} *L'Information*, 1 Feb. 1964.

^{85.} *L'Information*, 10 Feb. 1966.

^{86.} *Northern Ontario Register*, 13 Oct. 1962.

months later, Sister Emilia (Shirley Caicco of North Bay), Sister Helen (Jeanne Castonguay of Sudbury), and Sister Suzanna (Kathleen Roy of Britt) left North Bay for Gualán, where they arrived 19 November. Later Sister Stephanie (Doris Tosato of Sudbury) and Sister **St.** Kevin (Mary O’Neill from North Bay) joined them, as did ⁸⁷ Sisters Patricia Dennis (a teacher), Nona Dennis (a nurse), Carol Spencer, Patricia Devlin, Diane Guertin, and Marguerite Cushman. People in the Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie sent money and, on 2 February 1964, Bishop Carter –who was visiting Gualán – officiated at dedication services for the school, Colegio San José.⁸⁸ Father McKee undertook a project which involved making cement blocks by hand in order to have an eight-room school which, unlike the adobe buildings of the town, would not wash away during the rainy season (June-December). The school included all six grades of primary school, but far too many children could not go beyond Grade 3.⁸⁹

Both the Sisters of St. Joseph and the Canadian priests left a legacy. Gualán is site of the Colegio San José as well as a highly successful credit union. The credit union owes its origins to Sister Shirley (Emilia) Caicco, whose photograph hangs in the beautiful new building near the heart of town, opened in 2002. That year its assets totaled 63,917,907.93 Quetzales (more than US \$8 million or Canadian \$12 million).⁹⁰ Sister Shirley left Guatemala one winter to study credit unions at the Cody Institute of Antigonish, Nova Scotia, and then put theory into practice as parishioners contributed what they could afford after Sunday mass.⁹¹ The priests recruited Guatemalans who would become priests and replace the Canadians, as two of them did. The last Canadian, Jean-Marie Paiement, returned home from Guatemala in 1979, but one of the Guatemalan priests, Anibal **C**asasola, occasionally visits

^{87.} *Northern Ontario Register*, 24 Nov. and 22 Dec. 1962; *Northern Ontario Record*, 10 Feb. 1966.

^{88.} *Northern Ontario Record*, 1 Feb. 1964 and 2 March 1967.

^{89.} *Northern Ontario Record*, 10 Feb. 1966, 27 April 1967.

^{90.} Cooperative de Ahorra y Crédito Integral “San Miguel Gualán, R.L.”, XXXVI Asamblea Ordinaria Anual, *Informe al 31 de diciembre de 2,002* (Gualán, 2003).

^{91.} Caicco interview.

the Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie, which continues to send money to the project.⁹²

Service in Guatemala required stamina and courage, imagination and a sense of humour, a willingness to suffer hardship, and grim determination. Father Cashubec described his trip from the airport near Guatemala City to Gualán. Father McKee met him at the airport at 3 p.m. Together they traveled in the Scout International, the vehicle which Sudbury's Christ the King had provided, from the highlands toward the coastal lowlands for five hours. The sun set at 7 p.m., and an hour later, they left the paved highway for the side road to the Río Motagua. The rain, which had been heavy, held off, but bolts of lightning illuminated the sky. In the words of Father Cashubec, the river was "swollen and swift", but they had to load their luggage and themselves into a *cayuco*, which he described as "a twenty-foot canoe hewn from a single tree". The men who directed the "ferry" did their jobs well, but the following day Fathers McKee and Cashubec learned that another canoe had upset and a man had lost his life in the tempestuous water.⁹³ Their centre of operations was the Church of San Miguel, which, as is common in Latin America, shared the perimeter of the town square with government buildings. Father Cashubec estimated that Gualán's population was 6,000—of whom some 400 to 500 attended one of the three Sunday Masses. "There has not been any real parish life for the past 40 years or so," he commented.⁹⁴ However, he could not always stay there. Within weeks of his arrival, a catechist from Llando Redondo in the Motagua Valley told him of an old woman who was dying and required the last rites. Together the priest and the young man boarded the mixed train (passenger and freight) at 9:15 a.m., accompanied by the son of the sick woman who was carrying a machete. "Some of our people have at times been attacked by robbers, who come up from the seaport towns, and lie in wait on the back roads," Father Cashubec explained. Hence, the young man had his machete for protection. The train reached Vainilla at 10 a.m., after which followed a trip of two hours by road to the woman's home.

^{92.} Carter *Memoirs*, pp. 150-156; Carter, "Le 25e anniversaire d'ordination de Son Excellence Mgr Carter" (1961), *Lettres*, p. 64.

^{93.} *Northern Ontario Register*, 4 Aug. 1962.

^{94.} *Northern Ontario Register*, 11 Aug. 1962.

Father Cashubec administered Extreme Unction, ate with the crowd which had gathered, returned to the station for the non-too-punctual train, boarded it at 6:15 and returned to Gualán forty-five minutes later.⁹⁵ These hardships did not deter others from visiting them, among them Father Brian McKee (Conway McKee's brother) and Dr. Murray Pace. Dr. Pace contributed a substantial quantity of medical supplies to the cause.⁹⁶

The priests who went to Guatemala wrote frequent reports for *Northern Ontario Register*, as did the Sisters of St. Joseph and visitors from North Bay. Father Jean-Marie Paiement wrote for *L'Information*. According to *Northern Ontario Register*, Guatemala, with a population of five million Roman Catholics, had only 150 priests. Around Gualán, there were 20 priests for 600,000 people—a ratio of 1:30,000. Most of the people there were agricultural labourers who produced sugar, coffee, and bananas.⁹⁷ Most of them lived in dire poverty.⁹⁸ Father McKee estimated that his parish covered 40 square miles of the hottest part of Guatemala. He had a four-wheel drive International Scout so that he could travel the primitive roads in both wet and dry seasons, but his own living conditions were spartan. Father McKee's bed was a cot, and he shared his house with fleas, cockroaches, lice, and bats. The United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) provided powdered milk, as the local people lacked refrigeration; Catholic Relief Services of the United States provided corn meal, cooking oil, and medicine, but the local parish had to pay for transportation from Puerto Barrios on the Caribbean coast to inland Gualán.⁹⁹ Father McKee estimated that 99% of the parishioners were illiterate.¹⁰⁰ By May 1963, the Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie had four priests at Gualán (Fathers McKee, Cashubec, Mulcahey, and Paiement). Writing in *Northern Ontario Register* that month, Father McKee noted the absence of schools and electricity, the high death rate (10% before the age of 10 because of disease, malnutrition, and neglect), and the

^{95.} *Northern Ontario Register*, 24 Nov. 1962.

^{96.} *L'Information*, 11 Jan. 1964.

^{97.} *Northern Ontario Register*, 1 July 1961.

^{98.} *Northern Ontario Register*, 4 Nov. 1961.

^{99.} *Northern Ontario Register*, 14 April 1962.

^{100.} *Northern Ontario Register*, 5 May 1962.

flaunting of a pencil as a status symbol. The literate, he said, displayed pencils to advertise their literacy.¹⁰¹

Guatemala was not Canada, and the Canadians were sufficiently flexible to adapt to local conditions. The Canadians did not expect the government of Guatemala to finance schools and hospitals, and it did not. Under the circumstances, the Canadians' only hope was that Guatemalan authorities would leave them in peace. This did not always happen. Jean-Marie Paiement complained that whenever parcels arrived by mail from Canada, the Guatemalan government imposed tariffs, sometimes as high as 10 per cent. On one occasion, the government wanted to charge the Sisters of St. Joseph \$900 for nineteen boxes of used clothing. On that occasion, Father McKee had used his influence with a government official to have the payment dropped, but there was no guarantee of such success in future, said Father Paiement. If the goods accompanied a visitor, there was a better chance that there would be no tariff. Unfortunately, concluded Father Paiement, money sent through the mail too often disappeared, and it was best to send the mail to Bishop Proulx at the Chancery Office in North Bay. Honesty was not a virtue universally observed.¹⁰²

Father Cresswell's successor in Gualán, Father Frank Folz, organized about two dozen families who had been living and working on large estates or *fincas*. In the eyes of the Canadian priests, those *fincas* were relics of the Middle Ages and the feudal system. Folz thought that his people deserved a decent standard of living. To that end, he tried to buy large abandoned *fincas* and established families there, where they could be less dependent on *patrones* and assured of greater dignity and freedom. He also offered courses on ways to achieve self-sufficiency. The earthquake of 1976 delayed the project; Father Folz's term ended, and for reasons beyond his control, the land reform project failed. The Government of Guatemala seized the land on the grounds that taxes were owing. Folz's successor, Father

^{101.} *Northern Ontario Register*, 11 May 1963.

^{102.} *L'Information*, 6 June 1964.

Normand Fortier, served less than a year before returning to Canada. For his part, Father Jack David served five years as assistant pastor at La Unión.

After the earthquake of 1976, Father Paiement worked with the Canadian International Development Agency to rebuild 18 public schools. The Colegio San José, whose building was a casualty of the earthquake, suspended services until it revived as an adult education centre. To this day it offers adult education, even on Sundays when workers are free to attend class. After the Sisters of St. Joseph returned to Canada, some of the alumni of the Colegio San José who taught in and received salaries from the public school system volunteered to work an afternoon shift unpaid at their *alma mater* so that young people could appreciate the kind of Catholic education they had had. In 1995, Colegio San José re-opened as a primary school with two pupils. By May 2003, it had 64 at the pre-primary level, 204 primary school students, and 112 secondary-level students.¹⁰³ By then San José had become one of the finest schools in the area, whose well disciplined students dressed in neat, clean uniforms studied under highly qualified teachers. Father Paiement continued to raise funds through Catholic schools of the Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie. In the 15 years after his final return to Canada, Father Paiement placed tins cans throughout those schools as Halloween approached and managed to raise \$100,000 US. After *his* return to Canada, Father David Cresswell served for a time at Sudbury's Christ the King, at which point he became a member of the Sunrisers Rotary Club. At time of writing (spring 2003), the Sunrisers Rotary Club is raising \$100,000 to purchase equipment for Colegio San José.¹⁰⁴

The Sisters of St. Joseph also promoted health and hygiene. Sister Shirley (Emilia) Caicco, supported by a local doctor, nurse, and sanitation inspector, offered an eight-week course in nutrition and cleanliness. Many mothers managed to attend.¹⁰⁵ Also in 1966, the Sisters of St. Joseph organized Gualán's first mid-wifery programme, a five-month course.

^{103.} Figures supplied by the Director during an interview in Gualán, 5 May 2003.

^{104.} Interview with the Rev. David Cresswell, Coniston, 26 April 2003. Cited hereafter as Cresswell interview.

^{105.} *Northern Ontario Record*, 11 Aug. 1966.

Until then, they noted, Gualán had only two mid-wives, neither of whom seemed to know much about basic hygiene. Students would go to the Zacapa Hospital for practical training.¹⁰⁶

The priests too took an interest in hygiene. Twice a year, peasants flocked to Gualán for a fiesta, during which they would take their newly born babies to the Church of San Miguel for baptism. The fiestas took place in the town square, where there were no toilets and few places for the disposal of garbage. Father Farenzena was disgusted and considered the fiestas a threat to public health. He thought that they should take place on the outskirts of Gualán, not in the central square, and threatened to close the Church of San Miguel during any future fiesta which might occur on the adjoining square. When tradition prevailed, and the fiestas continued outside San Miguel, right in the heart of Gualán, he carried out his threat. With the Church closed, there could be no baptisms. After that, fiestas took places on Gualán's outskirts.¹⁰⁷

Medical care remained a high priority for the mission, and others assisted the priests and sisters from the Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie. Decades after his return to Canada, Father David Cresswell persuaded Sudbury's Sunrisers Rotary Club to become involved. A Gualán doctor, Victor Gómez, who spent time each week at the hospital in Zacapa, compiled a list of medical equipment which the hospital could use. The Sunrisers then raised \$150,000 for medical equipment, including a resuscitation machine, an incubator, and a ventilator, and sent them there.¹⁰⁸ One Guatemalan dental surgeon named Asensio donated his services to operate on children with hare-lips, and the money from Northern Ontario provided the pharmaceuticals and medical equipment which he needed.

Father Paiement even managed to involve the Guatemalan army in medical care. A resident of Guatemala City, Maria de Bonilla, helped Father Paiement attract doctors from the military hospital in Guatemala City. Every Thursday for eight weeks, Father Paiement would

^{106.} *Northern Ontario Record*, 24 Nov. 1966.

^{107.} Cresswell interview. Also interview with Rev. Anibal Casasola, Gualán, 7 May 2003.

^{108.} Interview with Otto Najera, Director of the Zacapa Hospital, 6 May 2003.

go to the capital, and on Saturday he would return to the Diocese with three doctors, one dentist, one nurse, and two lab technicians. Then their Colonel discovered what they were doing and threatened to dismiss them if, in his words, they continued to go Absent without Leave. Father Paiement went to the Colonel, accepted full responsibility for their actions, apologized for misleading them, and praised their work. The Colonel thereupon *ordered* the medical officers to go to the Diocese and sent a large supply of iron pills.

In 1967, Father Paiement returned briefly to Canada and expounded at great length to interviewer Denise Bourgeois of *L'Information* on various aspects of the Guatemalan mission. He estimated that 30 per cent of Guatemalan children died before their tenth birthday. When he had arrived in that country, La Unión had absolutely no medical services, and people were dying by the hundreds. Two people came to the rescue: Señora de Bonilla and a doctor. With their help, Father Paiement managed to organize a reasonably complete medical team. Father Paiement made frequent trips to Guatemala City, where he spoke to doctors as well as to the Minister and Deputy Minister of Health. He believed that the ultimate responsibility for the health of the Guatemalan people rested with them, not with the parish. Eventually a clinic for the poor people from the hills materialized. Gualán, said Father Paiement, also lacked amenities, but its situation was better than that at La Unión. Sister Alma of the Sisters of St. Joseph, a registered nurse, had begun to work at Gualán. Already, since the opening of the clinics, some 2,000 patients had seen doctors or dentists, he reported, and there had been three “major” operations.¹⁰⁹

Father Paiement told the readership of *L'Information* that donations of \$25 would purchase a radio which in itself would assist the cause of adult education. He could use 100 radios. (Some 40-50 materialized.) As of February 1967, Belgian priests at Jocotán in Guatemala had financed educational broadcasts. One of Father Paiement's catechists said that he was aware of 432 parishioners who had registered for the radio school. The system worked

^{109.} *L'Information*, 22 June 1967.

in this way. One adult would go to Guatemala City for a month of instruction. When he returned to his village, he would work with adults and young people who had some literacy, albeit very little. Each then assumed responsibility for a group of twenty, 432 in all. These 432 would learn to read and write over a period of roughly three months, after which they could follow instructions from the radio-teacher. Between 4 p.m. and 8 p.m., the radio offered courses in literacy, agriculture, hygiene, and catechism.¹¹⁰

Father Paiement thought that the achievements of the co-op and credit unions had been “extraordinary”. The main purpose of the credit unions founded by Sister Emilia in Gualán and by himself at La Unión, he said, was to create both a sense of social responsibility and an awareness that improvements were possible. Guatemalans should learn to be self-reliant, he said, not permanently dependent on Canadian leadership. At La Unión, he estimated, the credit union had 252 active members. Since January 1966 it had made 302 loans worth a total of \$2,735. In April alone, it had made 32 loans, worth \$348.

During his furlough, Father Paiement sought personal donations through the readership of *L'Information*. He thought that the credit unions functioned rather well given the low level of finances. For a cost of \$5, hopefully contributed by a Canadian benefactor, one could become a member and take the necessary instruction. A gift of \$100 would purchase a sewing machine and quantities of cloth so that mothers could clothe their children. He sought 20 machines. For \$300, a teenager could attend a Catholic secondary school. For \$50 or \$100, attendance at another type of secondary school might be possible.¹¹¹ As a result of this appeal, one sewing machine became available.

Father Jean-Marie Paiement served the Diocese of Zacapa from 1963 to 1974 and again from 1976 to 1979. He spent five of those years as the only Canadian in La Unión and yet, during a 2003 interview in Sudbury where he was serving as pastor of the Paroisse Saint-Dominique, he said that he never felt personally endangered. Only once did anyone threaten

^{110.} *L'Information*, 29 June 1967.

^{111.} *L'Information*, 20 July 1967.

him, and the cause was a misunderstanding. For years he had done the preparatory work for a procession through the streets, carrying a statue of Jesus. Eventually Father Paiement decided that the procession was more trouble than it was worth. Nobody else wanted to do the preparatory work, and it appeared that there would be no procession. A doctor and an accountant approached him to complain, and Father Paiement replied that if both of them would contribute \$5, Jesus would appear on the street. They gave him the money, which he used to buy a supply of black beans, which he then divided into small bags and distributed among the poor. Later, the doctor and the accountant returned, ready to kill him because Jesus had not appeared on the street. Father Paiement referred them to the Gospel of St. Matthew, 25:35, 39-40. In that passage, Jesus told some righteous people that when he was hungry, they had fed him. They asked when they had done that, and he replied that whenever they fed the needy, they had also fed him. Therefore, Jesus had appeared on the street after all. The men put their weapons away.¹¹²

Yet even if Father Paiement felt safe, he realized that others did not—and for good reason. He arrived months after Colonel Peralta seized power and, with benefit of hindsight in 2003 said of him:

(i) The constitution which he provided remains Guatemala's constitution. (ii) He served less than one full term himself and insisted that any successor should serve no more than one term. None has. (iii) Guatemala was at peace. (iv) The Canadian clergy were unaware of the abuses. Father Paiement is not as complimentary about Peralta's successors. Méndez Montenegro (1966-1970) was helpless when the army killed parishioners at Tasharté. Of Méndez Montenegro's immediate successor, Father Paiement says, "Arana was a butcher." Regarding the two subsequent presidencies, those of Laugerud and Lucas Garcia, Father Paiement says, "They were killing left and right."

Even the very young became involved as assistants to the Fathers and Sisters. In 1964,

^{112.} Paiement interview.

Father Mulcahey reported, the parish had organized a Legion of Mary. It consisted of five subdivisions known as praesidia (singular: praesidium). Sister Emilia organized the first praesidium, for young girls, who would assist at the school in Gualán. (First they had to learn lessons on punctuality and discipline.) The fifth praesidium was for altar boys, who doubled as catechists in the surrounding villages. Other praesidia served men (nine members) and girls of various ages. Members of the Legion of Mary staffed a library which the Mission station had established, and they visited parishioners. Father Mulcahey expressed the hope that the Legion of Mary would promote both literacy and cleanliness.¹¹³ (Father Cresswell said that masses and school openings began punctually, whether or not everyone was there, and Guatemalans learned to be punctual when dealing with the Canadians.¹¹⁴)

For most of the 1970s, Inco had a presence at El Estor, beyond Gualán on the Atlantic Highway and across Lake Izabal—but in the Diocese of Puerto Barrios, not the Diocese of Zacapa. Father Paiement found the Inco people, many of whom came from Sudbury or from Thompson in Manitoba—“most friendly”. After the earthquake of 1976, they provided trucks to transport wood so that those who had lost their homes could rebuild. Inco Supervisor Bill Taylor, he said, “was magnificent.” When Inco ceased its Guatemalan operations in 1980, almost all its local employees lost good jobs and had to become agricultural workers.

By 1979, however, Father Paiement had become convinced that the time had come to terminate the mission. Guatemalans, not Canadians, ought to be directing the Guatemalan Church. After Father Paiement’s seven-year term in La Unión, another Canadian, the Rev. Donald Tait, had replaced him, and Father Tait had arranged for a Maryknoll Brother with access to a bulldozer to construct a road along what had been a footpath. The Guatemalan government subsequently assumed responsibility for the road. Father Tait’s successor was a Guatemalan who as a child had received an education through the Mission. Indeed, between them, Gualán and La Unión produced five priests. The Canadians could leave with a sense of

^{113.} *Northern Ontario Record*, 15 Oct. 1964 and 13 April 1967.

^{114.} Interview with Rev. David Cresswell, Coniston, 26 April 2003.

accomplishment.

This is not to suggest that everyone lived happily ever after. Fighting between military governments or governments dominated by the military on the one hand and insurgents on the other continued until 1996. The estimated number of violent deaths since 1960 is 200,000, and the 1996 agreement between the Guatemalan government and the insurgents did not resolve all problems. On 26 April 1998, Bishop Juan José Gerardi—head of the Archbishop’s Human Rights Office—died violently. The murder of a bishop attracted international attention, and President Alfonso Portillo—who assumed office in January 2000—promised justice in the case. Three army officers were charged, and in June 2001 a court convicted them and sentenced them to thirty years imprisonment. They appealed at once, and Amnesty International reports that there are doubts as to whether the court convicted the right people.

Meanwhile, others suspected of involvement in Bishop Gerardi’s murder remain free, even uncharged. Six homeless people who were sleeping near the bishop’s home the night of the murder and who could have become witnesses, plus three actual witnesses, were murdered. Dozens of lawyers, prosecutors, and judges associated with the case—as well as employees of the Archbishop’s Human Rights Office—have received threats. Three prosecutors, among others, decided that it would be wise to flee the country.¹¹⁵

On 10 March 1999, President Bill Clinton visited Guatemala and apologized for assistance which successive United States governments had given to those who “engaged in violence and widespread repression.”¹¹⁶ United Nations figures indicate that the richest 20% of the Guatemalan population (European and Ladino) has 30 times the wealth of the poorest 20% (mostly Amerindian). At the end of the conflict, 3% of the population owns 70% of the agricultural land.¹¹⁷ Yet, more Guatemalans have greater access to quality education and

^{115.} Amnesty International, *Annual Report 2002* (which covers events of 2001); taken from the web: <http://web.amnesty.org/web/ar2002.nsf/amr/guatemala>.

^{116.} *World Almanac, 2002*, p. 801.

^{117.} David Holiday, “Guatemala’s Long Road to Peace”, *Current History* (February 1997), p. 68.

medical care than ever before, and more Guatemalans enjoy more of this world's goods than at any other time. In part, this is a result of the growth of the Guatemalan economy, especially since the 1996 peace agreement. In the area around Gualán, La Unión, Zacapa, and Teculután, the Canadian priests and Sisters of St. Joseph also deserve some of the credit.

Even before assuming the responsibility in Guatemala, the Diocese was already supporting a priest in Mexico, Father E. J. Weaver at Puerto Vallarta. Also, in 1959, the Sisters of St. Joseph—some of them from the Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie—had established a school at Nassau in the Bahamas (at the request of the Bishop of Nassau). The Sisters also worked with prisoners¹¹⁸ Nassau was home to some of the world's wealthiest tax-dodgers, but it also had slums, and the school served—and continues to serve—the Bahamian poor. There was minimal blackboard space, and the four Sisters and their two Bahamian colleagues taught 220 boys and girls from kindergarten to the Ontario equivalent of Grade 8 in six rooms. The children sat on benches, but the Sisters of St. Joseph laboured successfully to replace them with desks, a dozen or two at a time. For recreation, the girls skipped or sang, and the boys hit a tennis ball with whatever sticks of wood they could find.¹¹⁹

Greater Lay Involvement:

Given the shortage of clergy, two priests—Fathers Don Ordendorff and Chester Warendá—suggested a programme to train lay people as deacons. Deacons performed a number of roles in the Early Church, but as the centuries passed, the diaconate became a transitory stage. Before young men became priests, they served a period of time as deacons. The Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie arranged for permanent deacons, men who had other employment but worked for the Church on weekends. Sudbury lawyer Victor Vere was one deacon; Roger Crichton fed the hungry in a soup kitchen (as did his wife Kaireen). Aspiring permanent anglophone deacons went to Espanola once a month for three years, and when they

^{118.} Carter, “Le 25e anniversaire”, p. 64; *United in Faith*, p. 11.

^{119.} *Northern Ontario Register*, 10 Feb. 1962.

finished their course, they could conduct baptisms, marriages, and funerals. In the absence of a priest, they could serve communion. They led Bible studies. Some visited jails and hospitals. There was a similar programme for training francophones, in Ottawa. Wives and children participated in the programme so that they would understand why their husbands and fathers spent so much time away from home. When widowed, some of the deacons underwent further study and became priests, among them Jack Goldie of Lively, Russ Gardiner of Sudbury, and Raymond Sullivan of North Bay.. (Once they became deacons, the men in question continued to live with their families but could not remarry if widowed.) Bishop Carter also organized a Diocesan Order of Women (DOW), later known as the Diocesan Order of Service, to train women as leaders within the Church. In all, there were more than 100 deacons and more than 60 members of the DOW.¹²⁰

During Bishop Carter's episcopate, the Diocese organized other programmes for the laity. The purpose of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal was to deepen one's faith. The Christian Family Movement and Marriage Encounter Movement organized marriage enrichment programmes. There were Scripture-reflection groups and prayer-ministry teams. The Cursillo movement began in Spain, moved to the United States, and crossed the St. Mary's River to the Canadian Sault in 1969 and moved eastward to Sudbury in 1970 and later to North Bay. The name indicates "short course", and it organized mixed weekend retreats, where men and women could learn about their faith. The Youth Encounter Movement catered to young people, and Retrouvaille:Reconnecting emphasized marital reconciliation.¹²¹ Father Cresswell became chaplain to the Cursillo groups.

Church Extension:

Despite labour disputes (especially at Inco, which had one strike which lasted from

^{120.} Carter, *Memoirs*, pp. 234-237; interview with Rev. John Caswell, Church of Christ the King, Sudbury, 29 November 2002..

^{121.} *United in Faith*, p. 16; *St. Mary's*, p. 83.

September 1978 until May 1979, and other shorter ones), economic setbacks (which became more acute in the 1980s than in the earlier years of Bishop Carter's episcopate), and the need for funds at the University of Sudbury and in Guatemala, there was also money for the creation of new parishes. These included St. Alexander, Azilda (1962); St-Étienne-Martyr, Dowling (1963); Ste-Cécile, Dubreuilville (1969); Our Lady of the Highways, Sault Ste. Marie (1962); St. Andrew Bobola, Sault Ste. Marie (1960); St. Gerard Majella, Sault Ste. Marie (1965); St. Joseph the Worker, Sault Ste. Marie (1963); Ste-Marie-du-Sault, Sault Ste. Marie (1999); Lord of the World, Sudbury (1968); Sveti Marko, Sudbury (1981); La Paroisse Universitaire, Sudbury (1971); St. Kevin, Val Thérèse (1963). Sveti Marko served Sudbury's Croatian community; Universitaire met in the University of Sudbury building and served mainly people associated with Laurentian University.