

Life of Brother Ernest Ryan, C.S.C.

1992-10

And the Dujarie Press

by

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Presented at the  
1992 Conference on the  
History of the Congregations of Holy Cross

June 5-7, 1992  
University of Portland  
Portland, Oregon

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank the following persons without whose help I could not have written this paper:

Father Barry Hagan, C.S.C., Archivist of the University of Portland, Portland, Oregon.

Brother Wilber Leveling, C.S.C., Archivist of the Midwest Province of Brothers.

Brother Sigismund Danieleski, C.S.C., Director of the Dujarie Press from 1963 to 1968.

Brother Flavius Ellison, C.S.C., former Business Manager for Brother Ernest at the Dujarie Press.

Brother Francis Johnson, C.S.C., Canvasser for the Dujarie Press from 1943 to 1968.

Brother Carl Shonk, C.S.C., Chairman of the English Department at LaSalle High School, Miami, Florida, who offered suggestions.

Brother John Kuhn, C.S.C., Director of the Solitude of St. Joseph, who proofread and offered suggestions.

Mrs. Martha Reynold, who did the typing of this paper.

Brother Ernest, John Ryan, was born on August 4, 1897 in Elyria, Ohio. John was one of ten children, the son of John Martin Ryan and Mary Smith.

As a child, John had a great devotion to Our Blessed Mother and built three shrines to her; each one being a little bigger than the last one. Even at this early age, John's faith meant a great deal to him.

He attended St. Mary Grade School in Elyria and was among the first of the freshmen to attend the new St. Mary High and graduated in 1915. Upon graduation, he took a position as a stenographer at the Warner & Luvassey Company in Cleveland, Ohio, a manufacturer of telescopes and astronomical instruments for scientific laboratories. Since the company was located some thirty-five miles east of Elyria, John took up lodgings with a family in Cleveland. He remained in this position until 1918.

Around 1917, John began to correspond with the Vocational Director of the Brothers of Holy Cross at Watertown, Wisconsin and after due deliberation, decided that he had a vocation to the brotherhood. He entered the Juniorate (the Postulate) of the Brothers of Holy Cross in January 1918.<sup>1</sup> He remained at the Postulate for only three months as Brother Bernard and his Council felt that John was sufficiently trained in the basics of the Catholic faith and had the qualifications necessary to enter the Novitiate located on the campus of the University of Notre Dame in Indiana. At reception, John was given the name of Brother Ernest.

Brother Ernest remained in the Novitiate for two years and during his second year, he attended the University of Notre Dame Prep School, a grade and high school, staffed by the faculty of the University. In 1919, he entered the undergraduate school of the University.<sup>2</sup> While a student here, he had the opportunity to meet and talk with a number of authors who were also in attendance at the University, either as students or as teachers. Among these was Father Patrick Carroll, editor of the *Ave Maria* magazine, who taught Ernest the technique of the short story. It was this technique that he would use in the writing of his many works before and during the years of the Dujarie Press.

Ernest also learned much from Brother Alphonsus, a faculty member at the University, who encouraged him in his literary endeavors. It was at the insistence of Brother Alphonsus that Brother Ernest turned in several of his works for publication to *The Scholastic*, the weekly student publication by and for the students at the University. Father Charles O'Donnell, Provincial of Holy Cross and later President of the University of Notre Dame, also encouraged Brother Ernest to publish some of his first novels; among them was *Little Orphan Eddie*, later changed to *Eddie of Jackson's Gang*, written during the early 1920s.

In 1920, Brother Ernest made his Temporary Vows and was transferred to Dujarie Hall, The Brother's Scholasticate on the campus of Notre Dame. Brother Aidan O'Reilly was his superior. It was common for Brothers to be sent out on the teaching session even before they received their degrees and Brother

Ernest was sent to Reitz Memorial High School in Evansville, Indiana to teach English. He also edited *The Echo*, the school paper, while here.

During the summer Brother Ernest returned to the campus of the University of Notre Dame to continue his studies and graduated in 1925 with a Bachelor of Philosophy degree.

In the fall of 1926, Brother Ernest was assigned to teach at Holy Cross High School in New Orleans, Louisiana. Here, again, he taught English and edited the school newspaper, *The Bulletin*. In 1927 he was assigned to teach at Cathedral High School in Indianapolis, Indiana and in addition to teaching English, taught religion and edited the school newspaper, *The Megaphone*. He remained here until 1932. By this time, the Provincial and his Council considered Ernest such an exemplary religious that they assigned him to head the Brothers Vocation Office at Sacred Heart College in Watertown, Wisconsin. A post he held for one year.

In the fall of 1933, Ernest returned to Cathedral High School and remained there for the next five years. He was perfect of religion and had supervision over the assignments for Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament in the school chapel for which he "has left no effort untried to further their spiritual welfare."

From 1936-1938, Ernest taught library science at Catholic University of America at the invitation of the Director of the summer sessions, Mr. Roy J. Deferrari. Specifically, he taught the Teaching and Use of Books and Libraries

and the Organization and Administration of Libraries. Also, while at the Catholic University, Brother Ernest earned a degree of Bachelor of Library Science. When it came time for Brother Ernest to depart from Cathedral High School, the school paper, *The Megaphone*, paid him the following tribute:

For over twenty years, Brother Ernest has distinguished himself for his many and varied capabilities as a teacher. Without doubt, he is one of the best qualified teachers in English to be found in any school.<sup>3</sup>

His next assignment was at Columbia University, now the University of Portland. Ernest taught Senior English in the Prep School of the University. In addition to English, he also taught music appreciation. During his tenure at Columbia Prep, the Catholic Library Association of Portland, Oregon held a Catholic Book Fair. At the fair each day there were various speeches by different authors. Among those who spoke was Father Charles C. Miltner, President of Columbia University and his topic was: "A Masterpiece a Month to Form a Catholic Mind." Brother Ernest spoke and his topic was "Library Vitamins."

While teaching at Columbia Prep, Brother Ernest gave a lecture on the teaching of religion to high school teachers on Easter Monday, 1939. The lecture was received very enthusiastically, so much so, that the President of Maryhurst College in Oswego, Oregon asked Brother Ernest to give a series of talks during their summer session of that year. The President, Sister Mary

Oliviera, offered to arrange the college's schedule so that Brother Ernest could teach at the hours that were most convenient to his schedule. He was quick to comply with her request.<sup>4</sup>

In June of 1939, Ernest received a letter from Sister Mary Frederick, head of the Religion Department at St. Mary's, asking him to give a paper on the methods of teaching religion at St. Mary's College, Notre Dame, Indiana. Of course, he complied with this wish also.<sup>5</sup> His fame was spreading not only as a teacher of English and author, but also as a teacher of religion.

One can generally judge the popularity of a teacher from the universal knowledge that the students have of some of their teachers. Thus, for example, in *The Columbia Crusader*, the 1942 graduating class made a list of questions, each beginning with: "Do you remember...?" Among the questions was: "Do you remember when Brother Ernest first came to Columbia?"<sup>6</sup>

Father Barry Hagan, the University of Portland Archivist, recalls that one of the older alumnus told Father that none of the members of Brother Ernest's religion class had ever had a divorce. The gentleman attributed this to Brother Ernest's excellent moral inculcation.<sup>7</sup>

For the 25th anniversary of religious profession, *The Columbia Crusader*, the school newspaper, ran the following headline in its March 1943 issue:

"BRO. ERNEST CELEBRATES JUBILEE"

*The Crusader* then goes on to say:

The 19th of this month marks Brother Ernest's silver jubilee as a



Brother of the Congregation of Holy Cross. Therefore, this would seem to be an appropriate time, to congratulate Brother not only upon his anniversary but also upon his scaling the heights of established literary excellence.<sup>8</sup>

In addition to his teaching load at Columbia Prep, Brother Ernest continued to write novels. Among these was an historical work entitled *Days of the Covered Wagons*. It was about the life of the pioneers who hiked along "The Oregon Trail" soon after the Lewis and Clarke Expedition of 1804. Ernest had done quite a bit of historical research on this book, mostly from the Historical Archives of the City of Portland, Oregon. For this work, Brother Ernest received an honorary membership in the Eugene Field Society of the National Association of Authors and Journalists, chartered by the State of Missouri.<sup>9</sup>

Ernest remained at Columbia Prep until the end of the term in 1943, at which time he returned to Indiana to teach at Catholic Central High School in South Bend, Indiana. Here he taught English, religion, and art. He remained at this post until 1945. At this time, he retired from the classroom. *The Trail*, the Catholic Central school paper, sums up very neatly Brother Ernest's accomplishments as a distinguished teacher:

An intellectual solidier of God's fortune, Brother Ernest has taught, before he came to C.S., in seven high schools and colleges, has written a dozen or more books, and has been in forty-five different



states. Graduated from three universities—Notre Dame, Catholic U., and the University of Portland, Oregon. Brother uses a part of the alphabet in abbreviating his degrees: Ph.B., B.L.S., and M.A. His hobbies are diversified as his travels and as his accomplishments; he is a stamp collector, collector of classical music, author, and photographer, artist, and a pisciculturist (the breeding and rearing of fish). Born in Ohio, the state of leaders (four presidents came from Ohio), he displays his leadership in his interest in scholastic publications, glee club, and dramatics—shows true adherence to his vocation in his enthusiastic preference for teaching religion.<sup>10</sup>

Prior to founding the Dujarie Press, Brother Ernest wrote three serious religious works: *Our Brothers*, *Equipping the Teacher of Religion*, and *Religion and Living*.

The first of these works, *Our Brothers* was written in 1931 and consists of historical sketch and a brief account of the specific works of the various communities of brotherhoods throughout the United States. The book gives vital, concise information concerning sixty-three different orders or communities or congregations. He wrote the book for two purposes: 1) to indoctrinate the Catholic laity of just what Brothers are and 2) to inform young men of the different Orders and Congregations of Brothers, with the hope that knowing about their specific mission in the church, they would make inquiry and perhaps

might receive a vocation to the brotherhood of that particular community. In the book *Brother Ernest* shows that, even in our comparatively new country, this wonderful spiritual vitality is manifested in the surprisingly large number of religious Brotherhoods.<sup>11</sup>

The second work, *Equipping the Teacher of Religion*, shows Brother Ernest's philosophy of religious education. He felt the teaching of religion was the main reason for the existence of the Catholic school system and that the teachers of religion should be thoroughly impressed with their great dignity, the dignity of the soul of the children they are to develop for heaven.

This manuscript was sent to the Bruce Publishing Company, New York for publication. He received a letter from William Bruce, the editor, who stated that many laymen and even some priests believe that religious sisters and brothers do not have the ability to write works of theology (see Appendix A). The editor suggested that Brother Ernest have a priest co-author the manuscript.<sup>12</sup> Brother Ernest's reply to Mr. Bruce's suggestion is unavailable; however, Ernest did not take the editor's suggestion of a co-author and the book was published in 1937 with only Brother Ernest as author.

The final work that Ernest published in the genre of serious theology was *Religion and Living*. The Forward of this work explains, to some degree, Brother Ernest's methods of teaching religion. He felt even though facts of memory were important, "the real effectiveness of teaching can be judged only by the lives of the students we turn out from our schools. If our teaching does not

make our boys and girls better Catholics, live-wire Catholics, we have taught in vain. . . ."<sup>13</sup>

Ernest's desire and chief reason to begin a publishing business was because he wanted books published that have a moral as well as an informational influence on the lives of youths so as to make them stalwart Christians, active in the life of the Church. Examples of this moral influence are given in the following books written by Ernest, *Captain Johnny Ford*, *And the Winds Blew*, *The Adventures of Tommy Blake*, *A Star for All Eternity*.

In *Captain Johnny Ford*, Ernest portrayed Johnny as a humble religious boy in spite of the praise and adulation he received. In this same work he speaks about Johnny Ford becoming a brother and the responsibilities entailed in becoming one.

In a review by *The Voice* of Ernest's work, *And the Winds Blew*, it was stated:

The story is liberally woven with remarks about the morality of problems and activities confronting the youthful Jerry (Donahue).

We might almost call it a camouflaged simplified catechichism.

The high praise for vocations, moreover, worked in through references to teaching Brothers, and through Tom's part in the tale, might easily put ideas and ideals in some young dreamer's head.<sup>14</sup>

The following is a review of *The Adventures of Tommy Blake* by Cletus Monroe in the magazine:

The youthful reader finds himself in the very center of the adventures, and is made to think and plot toward the solution of the problems that arise. He actually lives out these adventures, which will help develop his character. The example of Tommy Blake, brave, courageous, and upright, cannot help leaving a deep impression on the young. His sufferings consequent on being born of an atheist father, whom he was fortunate enough to bring back to God, are well calculated to stir the noblest sentiments in the hearts of youthful readers.<sup>15</sup>

Among the praises that were sung of Ernest's works were those he wrote of the members of the Brothers of Holy Cross with whom he lived. In *A Star for All Eternity*, the life of Brother Aidan O'Reilly, he tells of Aidan's years as first Superior of the scholasticate, Dujarie Hall, and his years of teaching, especially the years that Brother Aidan spent at Cathedral High School in Indianapolis.

When Brother Aidan died, Brother Ernest sent Brother Aidan's obituary card to Archbishop Joseph E. Ritter, Archbishop of St. Louis, and later Cardinal, who has been Archbishop of Indianapolis when Brother Aidan was teaching at Cathedral High School. The Archbishop wrote a thank-you letter to Brother Ernest with the following observations on Brother Aidan:

It (obituary card), recalled pleasant memories, indeed, of all of you, and especially of Brother Aidan. He was a grand character—scholarly and truly religious. I held him in high esteem, and, of course, appreciate your saying that it was mutual. I shall give him a Mass in the next few days and, having the picture of him, will keep his memory fresh in my mind.<sup>16</sup>

Then the Archbishop goes on to say:

You are continuing to do very well with your writings, as I notice from time to time that your books are singled out for very fine commendation. Just recently, on the occasion of a Library Meeting of the Saint Louis area, I had the occasion to see your name and books displayed. This is, I know, gratifying to you because of the good you are doing among our Catholic youth.<sup>17</sup>

On the receipt of *A Star For all Eternity*, Father Christopher J. O'Toole, Assistant Provincial of the Indiana Priests Province, and later Superior General of the Congregation of Holy Cross, gave the following accolade to the work:

I like the booklet very much indeed. You tell the story of Brother Aidan's life in a very interesting way. At the same time it is fairly brief and will be read throughout the community and by all the friends of Brother Aidan. This is an excellent record of one of our best religious and hardest workers. We need more of this in C.S.C., to say nothing of the wider circulation it will have, so that

we can keep our traditions alive and so that the wonderful lessons of a talented and holy religious such as Brother Aidan will not be lost.<sup>18</sup>

Another book written by Ernest was the life of the saintly and cobbler Brother Columba. The work is entitled *These Two Hearts*. The title is very apt for the work speaks of Brother Columba's great devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and how he used to ask the Sacred Heart for cures of those who asked for his prayers. Brother Ernest sent a copy of *These Two Hearts* to James E. Armstrong, then the Director of the Notre Dame Alumni Association. Mr. Armstrong writes as follows:

I was particularly interested in the suggestion that we ask Brother Columba to aid the Notre Dame Foundation. I think that has a very great deal of merit and we will certainly do it. The University has unquestionable over the years prospered from the spiritual strength of its members. Remembering, however, that Brother Columba continued to make and mend shoes throughout his life, we shall continue to work hard on the physical side of Foundation as well.<sup>19</sup>

In addition to the Eugene Field honorary membership mentioned earlier, Brother Ernest was awarded another distinguished literary award, that of indoctrination into the International Mark Twain Society located in St. Louis Missouri. The Certificate reads "This certifies that Brother Ernest is an



Honorary Member of the International Mark Twain Society." It is signed by the then President of the Society and the Executive Vice-President. On the Certificate of the International Mark Twain Society, the statement expresses the purpose of the Society: "A Society whose province is to unite the whole world in bonds of Cultural peace."<sup>20</sup> The American Representative of the Mark Twain Society at that time was Booth Tarkington, and the English Representative was the Rt. Honorable Winston Churchill. Brother Ernest was certainly in the company of the literary greats of the world.<sup>21</sup>

Ernest's importance as a writer is attested to by his inclusion in *Catholic Authors*, a work comprising contemporary biographical sketches of famous Catholic authors, edited at that time by Father Matthew Hoehn, O.S.B., B.L.S. of St. Mary's Abbey, Newark, New Jersey. The biography of Ernest gives a short account of his early life in Elyria, Ohio, his religious life, a brief sketch of his teaching years, the title of his works, and the last section speaks of his hobbies and membership into the Eugene Field Society and the International Mark Twain Society.<sup>22</sup> In a letter dated April 2, 1948, Father Hoehn informed Brother Ernest of the following fact: "Do you know that you are the only Brother in the book!" Father goes on to say that there are also seven Holy Cross priests in *Catholic Authors* as well.<sup>23</sup>

Ernest was frequently called upon to lend his expertise to C.S.C. projects. In 1951, Father Theodore Mehling, the Provincial of the Indiana Priests Province, approached Ernest to seek his assistance in aiding Father Dan



O'Neill in setting up a library of those priests of Holy Cross who had written and published their works. He gladly accepted Father Mehling's request.<sup>24</sup>

In 1950 Ernest was a delegate to the General Chapter in Rome. After the Chapter, there was a need to revise the Constitutions of the Congregation of Holy Cross. Father Christopher J. O'Toole, the Superior General of the Congregation of Holy Cross, asked Brother Ernest to be on a committee that would revise the Constitutions for later publication. Ernest, again, offered to assist in this vital work.<sup>25</sup>

Prior to the founding of the Dujarie Press, Ernest stated that he firmly believed that one of the most effective ways of reaching the minds of the young and molding them into fine upright Christians is to present to them, in readable, attractive form, the lives of the saints or of individuals thoroughly endowed with the spirit of Christ. He felt that much of the good that was accomplished in religion classes was lost because students were reading poor books. Because of his desire to have children read religious books, Ernest founded the Dujarie Press.

#### The Founding of the Dujarie Press and Its Development

##### "The raison d'être for the Dujarie Press."

In 1943 Brother Ernest founded the Dujarie Press. In the early 1940s, students were taken up with the comic strip, "Superman." Ernest got the idea that he would write about the real "supermen and women," the saints, in a way that would be more interesting than the lives of the saints then available.

It can be said that he was the first to use the idea of writing the lives of the saints in modern narrative manner.<sup>26</sup>

For a time Ernest had some difficulty finding a publisher willing to undertake the task, however, the idea of a Dujarie Press and the writing of the lives of the saints was given the whole hearted approval of the Provincial, Father Thomas Steiner. It was agreed from the outset that the Brothers of the Province would also be writers for the Dujarie Press.

Brother Sigismund Danielewski, successor of Brother Ernest of the Dujarie Press, made the following observation:

It is interesting to note, that after receiving permission for the project, he, (Brother Ernest), printed a life of a saint and called his publishing house the Josephite Press. He was called to task by the Society of St. Joseph, who pointed out that they had prior claim to that title. Not wanting to challenge the historicity of their claim, Brother Ernest chose Dujarie Press instead.<sup>27</sup>

All monies that would accrue from the Dujarie Press were to be allocated to (existing or new) brothers for their education.

Some of the publishers of the Dujarie Press books were: The St. Anthony's Guild Press of New Jersey, the Saint Paul Catechetical Guild, and the St. Meinrad Press of Indiana. All the printing of the Dujarie Press was done at the Ave Maria Press of Notre Dame, Indiana. The binding was done by the Hammond Company.<sup>28</sup>

In the running of the Press and in his dealings with his writers, Brother Ernest was not authoritarian even though he did require that things be done in a particular fashion. If one had a good point of view and that point differed from that of Ernest's, he would concede your point. However, it took a lot of convincing to get him to change his mind.

Among the Brothers for the Dujarie Press were Flavius Ellison, Germain Fadoul, Raymond Fleck, Roberto Mueller who wrote well over seventy-five books, Sabinus Hebert, and Garnier Morin, to mention but a few.

In order to facilitate the writing of the lives of the saints, or any other work, Ernest had a set method to which each writer was to strictly adhere to. The writer researched the life of the saint he or she was writing about and due credit was given to the author's sources in the appendix of each work. All writers were strongly urged to follow this method.

1. There is to be a set number of words on each line of the page; generally nine to eleven.
2. There was to be a set number of lines to a page, generally around twenty.
3. The writer was to do one chapter at a time, after which he is to present that chapter to Brother Ernest for his observations, such as corrections, suggestions, omissions, etc.

Brother insisted that each sentence have good rhythm. To accomplish this, Brother suggested that the writer read aloud the sentence to see how it would "flow".

The average size of a book was approximately ninety-six pages; depending upon the amount of information one could garner from other sources. The print was in a very large type and intended for children ages four to fourteen.

Just as there was a format for the writing of the Dujarie Press books, so, too, was there a format for the illustrations of the book. Ernest insisted that the illustrations be drawn to the exact size and form as they would appear on the printed page. No condensing or enlarging of size was permitted to the artist. The reader was to see exactly what the illustrator drew, nothing smaller, nothing larger.

Among those who did illustrations for the Dujarie Press were Miss Carolyn Lee Jagodits, a graduate of St. Mary's College, Notre Dame, Indiana, and now a well known artist in the South Bend-Mishawaka area in Indiana. Others were Brothers Hilarion Brezik, Estienne Cooper, John Duffey, Herbert Heywood, Bernard Howard, Sister Mary Edna, and Lucielle Conroy.

In speaking of the Dujarie Press one must not fail to mention the canvassers who played a very important role in the life of the press. Brother Sigismund has pointed out that:

Just as the *Ave Maria* Magazine could not have been a financial success without the work of Brother canvassers who went from house to house seeking subscription and renewals, so neither could the Dujarie Press have reached the Catholic young people without the help of the Brother canvassers for the Dujarie Press.<sup>29</sup>

Among the Brother canvassers were: Francis Johnson, the first canvasser, Fernand Hickey, Lionel Light, and Vitus Schwartz.

Although the Dujarie Press books were written for children, many adults found them most interesting as well. Brother Flavius Ellison gives the following account of an adult reading the Dujarie books. In 1952 he received a letter from a marine in a Korean rest camp stating he had read Brother Flavius' book *A Star in the East*, the life of St. Catherine of Alexandria. The marine said it was the only good reading in the entire camp. How this particular book got to that Korean rest camp is beyond anyone's knowledge.

Brother Flavius also gives another similar account. One day he received a call for a Colonial John Elting of West Point Academy. The Colonial told Brother Flavius that he would like six copies of his book, *Father of the American Calvary*, the life of Casimir Pulaski, the Revolutionary War hero. Brother hastened to inform the Colonial that this book was a book for children. Colonial responded by stating that he knew this fact, but he said that there was enough material in that little book for a cadet to give a talk on the life of a cadet at West Point. The Colonial then invited Brother Flavius to spend three

days with the cadets at the Point. Brother took him up on the offer, and while visiting gave a talk to all the cadets assembled in the main hall of the Academy. This was certainly an honor for Brother Flavius and for the Community of Holy Cross. This was the kind of influence that Brother Ernest wanted his books to have.<sup>30</sup>

#### The Daily Running of the Dujarie Press

Brother Ernest was the editor-in-chief. He oversaw the order of books from the publishers; went over the galley proofs with the printers at the *Ave Maria Press*; filled out orders that came from the various schools and institutions; took care of the financial running of the press; saw to it that a catalogue of the Dujarie books in print was sent regularly to his clients. When one received this catalogue, one checked off the name of the books wanted and how many. When this catalogue was sent out, generally in January and again in July, Ernest had the Chaplain of Columbus Hall bless it with the hope that there would be a lot of orders placed for the books.

Often times Brother would send complimentary copies to important and influential people. For example, he sent a copy of each of the following works: *A Story of Pope John (XXIII)*, and *Lead My Sheep*, a story of St. Peter, to Pope John XXIII, for which he received an acknowledgement of receipt of the books by an archbishop in the Office of the Secretary of State for Vatican Affairs. In appreciation, the Holy Father bestowed his Apostolic Blessing upon Brother Ernest and the community of Holy Cross.<sup>31</sup>



Brothers Finbarr Buckley and Flavius Ellison did much of the typing correspondence for Ernest. Also, Ernest kept a regular correspondence with the authors of the Press books. At times there were memos sent out from the Dujarie Press office for a quick and immediate response from the author. I recall such a note being sent to Brother Franciscus (Robert) Willette in the form of a telegram demanding from him how a certain sentence should read, since this particular sentence was crucial to the meaning of an event in the life of the saint of whom Brother Franciscus was writing.<sup>32</sup>

When one went to work for Brother Ernest in the Dujarie Press office, one was reminded that one did not go there to have fun. One was reminded that this is the most serious work of the apostolate of the Church, and therefore, deserves one's utmost concern and attention.

### The Junior Books

At about the time Brother Ernest started the Dujarie Press, around 1943, he got the idea of publishing a magazine in which he and some of the other Brothers would review works of other authors who wrote books for youngsters. Ernest presented his idea to Father Thomas Steiner, the Provincial of the Province, in a letter dated October 21, 1943.

There has come a demand on the part of overworked religious teachers as well as public librarians for a review of some sort upon which they could rely for their choice of books. Since they have not the time to read the books, they would have to take the



risk and buy blindly. That is a dangerous thing these days! Frequently the work of our religion classes is negated by the very books in our libraries.<sup>33</sup>

*Junior Books* (as the magazine was eventually called) is to be issued six times a year. The review is to be by volunteer priests, brothers and sisters working in the high schools. Many have offered their services, knowing the great value of the cause.<sup>34</sup>

After a committee meeting of the members of the Provincial Administration, Father Steiner gave his permission in November of 1943. Ernest made his first presentation of *Junior Books* in the late fall of 1943. He received a fine commendation from the Devin-Adair Company, Publishers of New York City. They commented: "We are very pleased with your first copy of *Junior Books*. You especially are to be commended for the layout and presentation."<sup>35</sup>

Brother Ephrem O'Dwyer of the Provincial of the Brothers' Province had high praise for the *Junior Books* reviews. He writes as follows:

Frankly, I think they are excellent reviews. They are just what the reader thinks of the book, and there is a definite plan carried through each review, a precaution which keeps the reviewer on the track. I can see that you have not gotten the range down to a restricted choice yet, but no doubt that will come as more books come.<sup>36</sup>

The *Junior Books* continued to be published until about 1946 (according to Brother Sigismund's calculation) and was sold to a publishing firm in Minnesota.<sup>37</sup>

During the late 1950s, Brother Ernest began to have a heart condition and was in constant touch with the doctor at Holy Cross House on the campus of the University of Notre Dame. These visits increased through the years 1961 and 1962. Due to his illness and the press being a one-man operation (Brother Ernest), in 1962 Brother Donatus Schmitz, the Provincial of the Midwest Province decided that some action should be taken in regards to running the Dujarie Press.

Brother Donatus felt that the work should be divided; separating the business operation from the editorial work. He hesitated to make this suggestion to Ernest personally for fear that he (Ernest) might interject something into the idea such as taking the activity away from him gradually, and thus perhaps causing a relapse in Ernest's already precarious health. Brother goes on to say:

I could handle the matter directly but think it unwise. He might get the idea that I am trying to put him out of a job, and I know that the work has therapeutic value for him. To be frank, he lives for it.<sup>38</sup>

The bottom line was that Brother Donatus had written to Ernest's doctor to suggest that perhaps Ernest should give up the directorship of the Press and

let others take the load from him. Ernest could "look in" on the project once in a while but he should not be actively engaged in the work of the Press.

So, in the summer of 1962, Brother Donatus appointed Brother Charles Rymarowicz as acting director of the Press. An advisory board was formed for the Dujarie Press, consisting of Brothers of the Mid-West Province.<sup>39</sup>

#### Brother Ernest's Life After the Press

Now somewhat retired and living at Columbia Hall on the Notre Dame Campus, Ernest made trips to Indianapolis for diagnostic testing. On one of these visits, it was discovered that he had a tumor on the brain. It was in the fall of 1962 that Brother Ernest was confined to Holy Cross House. His health began to fail quite rapidly after that. Brother Flavius stated that Ernest was in a great deal of pain during his last illness. Brother Ernest died on Monday, March 4, 1963 at the age of sixty-five.

Obituaries of Brother Ernest were placed in *The South Bend Tribune* and in *The Indianapolis Star* newspapers. Both acclaimed Brother was a writer of books. *Our Sunday Visitor*, a Catholic weekly out of Huntington, Indiana, paid the following compliment to Brother Ernest:

Brother Ernest was one of the pioneers in supplying books to Catholic young people to acquaint them with lives of the saints and others. He was named to the International Mark Twain Society and to the Eugene Field Society as well.<sup>40</sup>

The Dujarie Press sent out a notice giving his degrees, and stating the

institutions that Brother Ernest had taught in and their years. The notice also stated that Ernest was survived by three sisters and one brother, who reside in Elyria, Ohio, and by a brother who resided in California.<sup>41</sup>

#### Last Days of The Dujarie Press

Around 1964, Brother Sigismund Danieleski took over the running of the Dujarie Press from Brother Charles Rymarowicz. Sigismund made some minor changes with the Press books. He no longer used the large type and did not insist that the authors of the books follow the format they had to under Brother Ernest. Sigismund allowed Carolyn Lee Jagodits to make the illustrations for the Press the size that suited her. Under his editorship, Brother Sigismund, a number of popular best sellers were reissued such as, *Theresa Martin*, *Father Pio*, and Chet Grant's *Before Rockne at Notre Dame*.<sup>42</sup>

As the Dujarie Press entered the 1960s, the cost of publishing and the printing of books were rising. It was also a period of change in the Church, the teachers were looking for more "sophisticated" works for their students. Also, other publishing houses were now producing more interesting titles with illustrations in color, but the Press could not afford to use color elsewhere in the books.

In 1968 the advisory board and Brother Sigismund met with the Provincial Council and suggested that the Dujarie Press cease to operate; the Council agreed. In a letter dated February 24, 1992, Sigismund stated the reason for the suggestion:

I suggested the closing of the Dujarie Press simply because I knew we could never produce titles to compete on the open market. Money was NOT a concern in this. It was my decision ALONE. Dujarie Press books could not compete on the open market, as I said above. That is that. Without canvassers, Dujarie Press would not have had any success. Other publishing houses were producing books with colored illustrations. That would have been too expensive (for us).<sup>43</sup>

And so after twenty-five years, the Dujarie Press came to an end. In its 25 years of existence, the Press had published more than 110,000 copies.<sup>44</sup> After the closing of the Press, the remaining copies of the books were sent to the Eastern Province of Brothers for their distribution and sale.<sup>45</sup> Brother Wilbert Leveling, the Archivist for the Mid-West Province of Brothers, said that today there are still teachers requesting the Dujarie Press books.<sup>46</sup>

There are various opinions among the Brothers as to the success of the Dujarie Press. Some thought the Press as a superb product; others thought otherwise, believing that the Dujarie Press was not a first-rate operation. Brother Sigismund makes this evaluation:

Though some of the criticism of Dujarie Press might be justified—the formula method devised by Brother Ernest, the lack of dramatic detail, the use of over large type—the enterprise must have helped stimulate young people to virtue and to read more.

In this field, Brother Ernest was a pioneer, but it could have succeeded financially only because of the work of Brother authors and Brother typists, such as Brother Flavius Ellison, and the Brother canvassers on the road.<sup>47</sup>

Perhaps in closing the Dujarie Press that Brother Ernest Ryan had founded, the Provincial Council was fulfilling the motto of the Ryan clan: "Death rather than disgrace."

Personally, I feel the Dujarie Press helped the Brothers to be known, not just the Brothers of Holy Cross but all Brothers. Who knows how many vocations were the result of a boy reading one of the Dujarie Press books?

## APPENDICES



# THE BRUCE PUBLISHING COMPANY

524-544 N MILWAUKEE ST.  
MILWAUKEE WISCONSIN



OFFICES IN  
NEW YORK AND CHICAGO

June 4, 1937

Venerable Brother Ernest, C.S.C.  
Cathedral High School  
1416 North Meridian Street  
Indianapolis, Indiana

Dear Brother Ernest:

We have very carefully considered your manuscript, *EQUIPPING THE TEACHER OF RELIGION*. We should have written you more promptly, but we wanted to hold it up until the first of June, in order to consider it in connection with our program of work for the fall and coming winter. It appears now that we shall not be able to accept any manuscripts which have been received in the past two months, for the reason that it will be necessary for us to catch up on the work undertaken last fall and during the winter. Until our boards are entirely cleared, we feel that we should not be taking on any additional professional books.

Your manuscript involves one very interesting problem which I think we should call to your attention; not because we have any feelings or opinions in the matter, and what I am writing represents no idea of my own, but it is an unwelcome fact which involves, to my mind, an injustice.

It has been our experience that books on Religion, written by Brothers and by Nuns, do not have the success which they deserve, because there is a prejudice, largely unconscious, against works written by others than priests. I wish I might tell you of some of the opposition we have been obliged to meet concerning some of our texts in Religion done by others than clergymen. The lay people have been quite as bad as others in their quiet, passive resistance to these books.

With these facts in mind, I would suggest that you consider the advisability of having a priest associate himself with you as co-author of your book. I do not write this as a recommendation, but as a matter to be seriously considered. You have in the Holy Ghost Order a number of outstanding priests, both in the field of Education and of teaching Religion, and I would suggest your considering the advisability of having one of these men associate himself with you as co-author. Such a man would probably want to introduce some of his own ideas and would probably insist that certain sections of the work be modified or at least rounded



Venerable Brother Ernest, C.S.C. - 2

ent. His connection with the book perhaps would improve it not one bit from the standpoint of teaching or use-value.

May I ask that you consider this letter not as containing a request or a recommendation of my own, beyond the point of discussing the problems which I raise with some of your associates and probably with some of the Fathers of your Order.

I shall greatly appreciate your kindness if you will come back strongly with your own opinion, and write me frankly.

Very truly yours,

*Ames Mue*  
Editor

WCB:DHB  
Ms. ret'd.  
Under sep. cover.

Dad:

W12... JS Robert P. R. [unclear] Author [unclear]

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup>Copy of Membership Date (Form 52MD), Brothers of Holy Cross.
- <sup>2</sup>Copy of academic record of students-The University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, Indiana.
- <sup>3</sup>The Megaphone, Cathedral High School, Indianapolis, Indiana, May 1, 1938.
- <sup>4</sup>Letter from Sister Oliviera of Maryhurst College, May 6, 1939.
- <sup>5</sup>Letter from Sister Mary Frederick, C.S.C., St. Mary's College, Notre Dame, Indiana, June 1, 1939.
- <sup>6</sup>The Columbia Crusader, p. 36, June, 1942.
- <sup>7</sup>Letter from Father Barry Hagan, C.S.C., Archivist of the University of Portland, to Brother Donald Johnroe, C.S.C., January, 1992.
- <sup>8</sup>The Columbia Crusader, March, 1943, Columbia University, Portland, Oregon.
- <sup>9</sup>Certificate of the Eugene Field Society, Signed by President, John George Hartwig, April 22, 1940.
- <sup>10</sup>The Trail, Catholic Central High School, South Bend, Indiana, 1944. The South Bend Public Library, South Bend, Indiana.
- <sup>11</sup>The Annals of Our Lady of Lourdes, Review Section, March, 1932.
- <sup>12</sup>Letter from William C. Bruce to Brother Ernest, June 4, 1937. The Bruce Publishing Company, New York.
- <sup>13</sup>Forward to Religion and Living, Bruce Publishing Company, copyright, 1933.
- <sup>14</sup>And the Winds Blew, by Brother Ernest, C.S.C., St. Anthony Guild Press, New Jersey, Copyright, 1948, 228 pp. Reviewed by The Voice, by Donald M. Enderbrock, February 1949.

<sup>15</sup>The Adventures of Tommy Blake, St. Anthony Guild Press, Paterson, New Jersey, Copyright, 1940, p. 21. Reviewed by Cletus Monroe in the magazine.

<sup>16</sup>Letter of Archbishop Joseph E. Ritter of St. Louis, dated February 27, 1948.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

<sup>18</sup>Letter of the Assistant Provincial of the Indiana Priest province, dated June 18, 1948.

<sup>19</sup>Letter of James E. Armstrong, University of Notre Dame, Alumni Secretary, dated June 19, 1948.

<sup>20</sup>Certificate of the International Mark Twain Society, dated July 14, 1945.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

<sup>22</sup>Catholic Authors, Father Matthew Hoehn, O.S.B. (Ed.), 1947 edition.

<sup>23</sup>Letter of Father Matthew Hoehn, O.S.B., St. Mary's Abbey, Newark, New Jersey, dated April 2, 1948.

<sup>24</sup>Letter of Father Mehling, Indiana Province of Priests Provincial House, dated April 27, 1951.

<sup>25</sup>Letter of the Very Reverend Christopher J. O'Toole, Superior General of the Congregation of Holy Cross, dated January 26, 1951.

<sup>26</sup>The Columbia Crusader, Columbia University, March, 1943.

<sup>27</sup>Letter of Brother Sigismund Danieleski, C.S.C., dated January, 1992.

<sup>28</sup>Contract of Agreement between Brother Ernest Ryan, C.S.C. and the St. Anthony Guild Press of New Jersey.

<sup>29</sup>Letter of Brother Sigismund Danieleski, C.S.C., dated January, 1992.

<sup>30</sup>Taped conversation with Brother Flavius Ellison, C.S.C., November, 1991.



<sup>31</sup>Letter from "Segreteria Di Stato Di Sua Santita, N. 58613, Vatican City, March 29, 1961.

<sup>32</sup>Taped conversation with Brother Flavius Ellison, C.S.C., November, 1991.

<sup>33</sup>Letter of Brother Ernest, C.S.C., to Father Steiner, Provincial of the Holy Cross Province in the United States, dated Notre Dame, Ind., October 21, 1943.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid.

<sup>35</sup>Letter of Devin A. Garrity of the Devin-Adair Company, Publishers, New York City, dated January 31, 1944.

<sup>36</sup>Letter of Brother Ephrem O'Dwyer, C.S.C. Provincial of the Province of Brothers, dated April 27, 1944.

<sup>37</sup>Letter of Brother Sigismund Danieleski, C.S.C., dated January, 1992.

<sup>38</sup>Letter of Brother Donatus Schmidt, C.S.C., Provincial of the Mid-West Province to Dr. Rolland Camblee, dated April 17, 1961.

<sup>39</sup>Letter of Brother Sigismund Danieleski, C.S.C., dated January, 1992.

<sup>40</sup>Our Sunday Visitor newspaper, March 5, 1963.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid.

<sup>42</sup>Letter of Brother Sigismund Danieleski, C.S.C., dated January, 1992.

<sup>43</sup>Letter of Brother Sigismund Danieleski, C.S.C., dated February 24, 1992.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid.

<sup>45</sup>Letter of Brother Francis Johnson, C.S.C., dated January 23, 1992.

<sup>46</sup>Clipping from the Archives of the Mid-West Province of Brothers, entitled "Brother in the Book Apostolate."

<sup>47</sup>Letter of Brother Sigismund Danieleski, C.S.C., dated January, 1992.