

(Eulogy given by the Reverend Theodore M. Hesburgh, C.S.C., President, University of Notre Dame, at the Wake Service for the Rev. Vincent J. McCauley, C.S.C., Wednesday, November 3, 1982)

When I reminisced last night about the times and places I had been privileged to visit with Vince McCauley, two strange facts emerged: <sup>we</sup> ~~it~~ had <sup>met</sup> ~~generally been~~ more often than not in a hospital and mainly overseas. In a strange way, that characterizes his life. He was the opposite of a hypochondriac. While a hypochondriac mainly worries himself to death, mostly about imaginary illness, Vince McCauley was afflicted with very real <sup>painful</sup> illnesses all his priestly life, but neither did he worry about being sick nor did he allow these painful afflictions to interfere with his zeal, his concern for others less afflicted than himself, his deep sense of priestly service to the Kingdom and all God's people. Not only did his spirit transcend his bodily ills, he did it with a wonderful sense of serenity and equilibrium. I find it difficult to remember him without a smile on his face, even when he was stretched out in a hospital bed.

The second remarkable fact about Vince McCauley's priestly apostolate is that, despite his perennial bad health, his work carried him, by his own preference, to some of the most difficult places on the face of the earth. One could always predict that within hours of his release from the hospital, he would be boarding an airplane for some distant spot where, as St. Paul said so well, "The charity of Christ urged him." No discouragement, no whining, no playing it safe for a few weeks, back he would go as soon as

possible, to re-engage the ancient enemy with all he had to offer humanely and even more from his deep spiritual reserves, always overexpended, never exhausted. One might wonder how he would have done if he had enjoyed good health and had worked in an easier apostolate. Anyway, there he was, always the same, always in the Lord's hands, serenely moving ahead and generally beset by difficult political problems and sick as a dog.

Vince was born in America's heartland 76 years ago. He joined Holy Cross ~~a bit older than most of us~~ <sup>in 1924, made his first vows in 1926,</sup> was ordained in 1934. He was at first given gentle service, <sup>studying English at Boston College, and</sup> teaching in the new seminary in the newly created Eastern Province for two years. ~~Still it was pioneering.~~

Then came the assignment that he really wanted -- to Bengal and the foreign missions, as we then called them. Eight years later, towards the end of World War II, Vince was very sick, this time with phlebitis. There was no possible way that a civilian trapped in the East Asiatic War could get out. All the ~~motion~~ <sup>Movement</sup> was in the other direction. But Vince McCauley had, in his usual generous way, not only cared for his Bengali flock, but also went the extra mile in caring for his military countrymen as well.

When they heard of Vince's predicament, they began to bend the rules as citizen soldiers are famous for doing. Vince received military orders from Major General C. R. Smith, later to become a great friend of this University, to return to the United States, *as if he were a wounded soldier, or in fact, he was.*

Father Gus Fell met him when he landed with the U. S. Army Air Transport Command. Gus, in his typically terse style, described how Vince looked as he debarked: "Like a skeleton."

For the next fourteen years, Vince, still in precarious health, served his beloved missions in the best way he could, preparing future missionaries at the Foreign Mission Seminary, six years as Superior.

In 1958, Vince was allowed to return to Bengal, now East Pakistan, for a kind of last hurrah visit lasting several months. Many thought him terminal at that time, though he seemed to give it not a thought. I suspect that the visit set his adrenalin running because when he arrived in Rome<sup>or</sup> his return, the day before Easter, he was so full of energy that Chris O'Toole, the General, asked him to accompany Gus Fell, also returning from months in East Pakistan, to <sup>inspect a prospective mission apostolate in</sup> Uganda in East Africa, then a veritable terra incognita to Holy Cross.

I remember reading their report recommending that we accept the invitation of the French Bishop Ogez of Mbarara that we locate in Fort Portal to help the overburdened White Fathers. I passed through Fort Portal and traversed the future diocese in August of 1958. It looked delightful to me, but even more so to Vince McCauley when he arrived there a few months later with four Holy Cross Deacons, and many more young Holy Cross priests yet to come.

Three years later, everyone cheered when Vince became Bishop McCauley of the newly created Diocese of Fort Portal.

None cheered more than the missionaries who were working with him, and the new people of God there who were flocking to the Church. Bernie Mullahy and I spent a few days with Vince in the early sixties. One could almost feel the love that flowed inwardly and outwardly in that diocese. Oh yes, there was a new cathedral built, too, after the earthquake in Virika.

In one of the most selfless acts of his life, Bishop McCauley, reading the signs of the times in Africa, groomed a successor, Seraphino Mugambu, and turned the diocese over to him ten years after founding it. Of course, the Holy Father agreed. It should be said that the number of Christians had tripled during Bishop McCauley's episcopate.

With more reasons than most men would need, Vince could easily have opted for the rocking chair in 1971. Instead, as he had done in 1958, he courageously took on an impossible situation and founded in Nairobi, Kenya, again to the cheers of his fellow Bishops, now mainly African, the Association of Members ~~of the~~ Episcopal Conference<sup>s</sup> of East Africa, comprising mostly new bishops in six newly independent countries.

He forged what is, by all odds, the most successful Episcopal Conference in Africa. Passing through Nairobi for a quick visit with Vince and the Holy Cross brethren four years ago, I was amazed to find over a hundred bishops, 80% of them black, attending a plenary conference organized by Vince and addressed by Cardinal McCann of far off Capetown, South Africa.

Again, Bishop McCauley did the typically generous thing. He prepared a young African, Father Joseph Mukawya, to succeed him in AMECEA. To demonstrate how well he chose and prepared, Father Joseph has just been appointed Archbishop of Kampala, the federal capitol of Uganda. Africa will long bear the imprint of Bishop Vince McCauley. I remember seeing the first black African Bishop ordained in Rome in 1940. In his twenty-two African years, Bishop McCauley led in the complete Africanization of the episcopacy after more than a century of all white bishops and he did it as a white bishop himself, beloved by his adopted people as they were beloved to him.

I find it significant that when his poor old body gave out, at Mayo's where he had undergone more operations than anyone can number, it was on the Feast of All Saints. None of us really know who all of these <sup>that we celebrate each year</sup> saints are, but I suspect that when November the first rolls around again next year, those of us in and out of Holy Cross who were privileged to call Vince McCauley a brother and a friend, will know that we appropriately celebrate <sup>the day of</sup> his passing into the company of all those other saints.

May he finally now, at long last, rest in peace. And may Our Lady, his dearest Mother, <sup>Mary</sup> welcome him home, <sup>or I'm sure</sup> she already has.