

# CATHOLIC STANDARD

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53rd YEAR

FIRST QUARTER

MARCH. 1957

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Published for the Bishop of Georgetown  
by the Sword of the Spirit.

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*Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam*

**One Hundred Years with  
the Jesuits in British Guiana**

**1857, – 1957**

**Part I: Catholic Standard First Quarter March 1957**

# DIOCESE OF GEORGETOWN

COMPRISING THE WHOLE OF BRITISH GUIANA, SOUTH AMERICA

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MEADOWBANK, East Bank, Demerara River, (Our Lady of the Mount) : Rev. G. W. Crimp, S.J. Serves La Penitence, East Bank to Atkinson Field.

MALGRETOUT, West Bank, Demerara River (Annunciation) : Rev. F. Edgecombe, S.J. Serves Hague (West Coast, Demerara) and Leguan Island, (Essequebo River).

KITTY, East Coast, Demerara (Holy Rosary): Rev. P. Britt-Compton, S.J., Rev. A. V. Ellis, S.J. Campbellville and Bel Air Park served. (Tel Qn. 2981).

BARTICA, Essequibo River (St. Anthony): Rev. F. Shorrocks, S.J. Serves Potaro.

PLAISANCE, E.C., Demerara (St. John Baptist): Rev. R. Bulbeck, S.J. Serves Beterverwagting.

CHARITY, Pomeroon River (St. Francis Xavier): Rev. G. Cooney, S.J., Serves Martindale, Marlborough, St. John's and Siriki.

BUXTON, E.C., Demerara (St. Anthony): Rev. E. da Silva.

MORUKA RIVER MISSIONS: Rev. J. Sumner, S.J., Santa Rosa, Moruka River.

VICTORIA, E.C., Demerara (Immaculate Conception): Rev J King S J.

NORTH-WEST DISTRICT Missions: Rev. L. Buckley, S.J., Rev. W. Paterson,

Serves Ann's Grove and Enmore.	S.J., Hosororo, N.W.D
MAHAICA, E.C., Demerara (St. Paul): Rev. W. Banham, S.J. Serves Dantzic and Mahaicony. Address: Leprosy Hospital. Mahaica.	PAKARAIMA MTS. : Rev. G. Wilson-Browne, S.J., Kurikabaru. Airmail <i>via Orinduik.</i> ( <i>Parcels to Brickdam</i> ).
NEW AMSTERDAM, Berbice (Ascensian: Rev. G. McKernan, S.F.M., Rev.L. Wall, S.F.M. Hopetown, Belladrum and Kwakwani served.	RUPUNUNI DISTRICT Missions, Northern Savannah: Rev. J. Quigley, S.J., Rev. H. Mather, S.J. Airmail: St. Ignatius Mission via Lethem. (Parcels to Brickdam).
PORT MOURANT, Berbice (St. Francis Xavier): Rev. Joseph Moriarty, S.F.M., Rev. W. Chisholm, S.F.M. Alness and Tarlogie served.	RUPUNUNI DISTRICT South Savannah: Rev. B. McKenna, S.J. (Sand Creek <i>via</i> Wichabai).
SPRINGLANDS, Berbice (St. Joachim): Rev. R. Reeves, S.F.M., Rev. F Thornley SFM, serves Siparuta, Corentyne River.	ST. STANISLAUS COLLEGE, GEORGETOWN: Rev. B. Scannell, S.J., M.A. (Principal), Rev. T. Lynch, S.J., M.A., Rev. S. Boase, S.J. .. B.A.. Rev. C. Byrne, S.J., B.A., Rev. O. Earle, S.J., Rev. H. Feeny, S.J., M.A., Rev J. Marrion, S.J., Ph.D. Address: The Presbytery, Brickdam. At present out of the Diocese: Rev. A. Marques, S.J., A. Gill, S.J., H. de Caires, S.J. and B: Singh Procurator of the Jesuit Mission in England: Rev. J. O'Hea, S.J., Loyola Hall, Rainhill, Lancs
MACKENZIE. Demerara River (St. Joseph, the Worker) Rev. H. Hale, S.J, serves Dora and Ituni	
SUDDIE, Essequibo Coast (Christ the King): Rev. B. Brown, S.J., Serves Henrietta.	



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## Prayer for Vocation

*"Our problem No.1 is still the shortage of priests, and even more priests will be required in future to run the Diocesan Seminary."*

So said His Lordship the Bishop to the gathering at the Annual Conference of Catholic Societies in the Georgetown Parochial Hall on February 17th last. The public intention for the Diocese, approved by the Bishop, for the Novena of Grace to St. Francis Xavier this month was: "For more local vocations to the priesthood."

Below we reprint the prayer for local vocations that His Lordship issued on the Feast of Corpus Christi in 1955, which he had declared a Eucharistic Year in this country. Thousands of copies have been circulated. Are *you* saying it-with your family?

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### Prayer for more Vocations

O Lord Jesus Christ, who hast deigned to share with men the work of Thy Apostolate, inspire the hearts of Guianese Youth with the desire of labouring for Thee and for the advance of Thy Kingdom.

Eternal High Priest, inspire our Guianese Boys to offer themselves to share in the work of Thy Priesthood. May thy Love, too, make Guianese Girls eager to devote themselves to working for Thee in the Religious Life.

May the intercession of Mary and Joseph obtain for us that Guianese Parents may be proud to give their children to Thy Service and that, through a great increase in local vocations, the One True Catholic Church may be enriched and secured here in British Guiana.

Amen.







*Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam*

# One Hundred Years with the Jesuits in British Guiana

1857 – 1957

**24<sup>th</sup> March 1857.** *Fr. James Etheridge, S.J., first Jesuit Superior in this country, arrived in British Guiana with two companions, Fr. Clement Negri and Fr. Aloysius Emiliani, S.J. They had been sent by the Father General of the Society of Jesus at the express wish of the Holy Father to take over the mission of British Guiana, and were gratefully welcomed by the hard-pressed Vicar Apostolic of the time - Bishop Hynes, O.P.*

## **Background**

The earliest beginnings of the Mission go back to 1771, but it was not until 1837 that Bishop Clancy was appointed first Vicar Apostolic. He resigned in 1843, and was succeeded by Bishop Hynes in 1845.

The great problem of those early days was the difficulty of obtaining priests. As the mission had not been entrusted to any missionary order, there had been no continuity. The Bishop had to find his priests from wherever he could. None of them remained very long, many less than a year, what with illness and other pioneering difficulties.

In 1856, the year before the arrival of the Jesuits, things had got to such a pass that there were only five priests in the whole Vicariate, two in Georgetown, one in New Amsterdam; one in Essequibo; and one - Fr. Andrew Mc Namara, sick and almost blind, who died at the end of 1856 - at Malgretout. The Bishop himself, sick and worn, could never preach and was seldom able to celebrate Pontifical Mass. Although there were 14,000 Portuguese in the Colony at the time, there was little religious life apart from Baptisms and funerals. Communions were very few, even at Easter.

All this was reported to Rome and the Holy Father turned to the Society of Jesus to take over the mission. Bishop Hynes hailed the advent of the Jesuits, only awaiting their arrival to resign. So it was that Fr. Etheridge of the English Province of the Society of Jesus, and his first two priests - one a Neapolitan and the other a Roman, neither of whom could speak a word of English - arrived in March 1857. They had met in London in February, and sailed for British Guiana one month after receiving their orders from the Father General. Fr. Etheridge was immediately appointed Vicar General by Bishop Hynes and installed in the pro-Cathedral in Georgetown.

And what of the mission he was so soon to administer? There were five churches: the Church of the Resurrection or Pro-cathedral in Georgetown, and the churches at New Amsterdam, Malgretout, Abram Zuil (Essequibo) and Santa Rosa (Moruka River). Bishop Hynes himself lived at Meadowbank

in the heart of the large settlement of Portuguese immigrants who comprised most of his flock. Here it was that Fr. Etheridge met him to arrange for taking over the mission.

In Georgetown there was also the Ursuline Convent with its chapel. The Ursuline nuns had come just ten years before, in 1847, and already there were established - St. Rose's secondary school for girls and St. Anne's Orphanage with its accompanying elementary school - St. Angela's.

In June following his arrival, Fr. Etheridge was sent by the Bishop to visit the mission in Barbados where there had not been a priest for the previous three or four years. (Barbados was added to the Vicariate of British Guiana in 1850).

### **Departure of Bishop Hynes**

Little progress however could be made in the Vicariate until the arrival of more priests. The English Provincial of the Society, Fr. Johnson, was endeavouring to secure the necessary help, and wrote to Fr. Etheridge that six more Fathers would arrive in the Colony in October. Accordingly, Bishop Hynes made arrangements for his departure, with the intention of handing over the administration entirely to the Jesuits, and in the hope of being soon relieved of his office as Vicar Apostolic.

But when the English Mail arrived on October 25th instead of the six Fathers expected, Fr. Etheridge received a letter from the Provincial informing him that they had been detained in London and that they might be expected the following month. The Bishop and his three priests, the Revs. D. Lordan, J. Fitzgerald, O.P., and F. Hayden, had got everything ready for their departure by the same steamer. Fr. Etheridge urged His Lordship to proceed as arranged, since the new arrivals were expected in a few weeks. And so, leaving Fr. Etheridge in full charge of the Mission, but still retaining his jurisdiction since Rome had not yet appointed a successor, Bishop Hynes and his party bade farewell to British Guiana.

### **New Priests Arrive**

A month later, on November, 25th, arrived Fathers Peter Sherlock, Henry Segrave, James Jones, Frederick de Bethem, Benedict Schembri and A. Pavarelli, S.J. Father Segrave was sent by the return steamer to take charge of the mission at Barbados. The staffing of the other missions could now be attended to. Fr. Negri was appointed to New Amsterdam, Fr. De Bethem to Abraham Zuil, Fr. Favarelli to Malgretout; whilst in Georgetown Fr. Etheridge kept to assist him Frs. Jones, Sherlock, Schembri and Emiliani, the last named having charge of the convent and its schools, besides the care of the out-stations on the East Coast Demerara as far as Mahaica..

The Mission soon had its first loss- early in 1858 - in Fr. Sherlock who had to return to England invalided, but towards the end of the year he was replaced by Fr. Woollet, S.J.

In 1858 a great change was soon brought about by the vigorous exertions of the Fathers, especially of Frs. Emiliani and Schembri among the Portuguese, for whom there were regular sermons and instructions in their own language, a special Sunday Mass and services to which they had been accustomed in Madeira. These two Fathers still knew little English, but were able to preach in Portuguese. The Easter Communions in Georgetown district this year were 1,850 compared with 604 in 1857 which had included Malgretout.

### **Italian Fathers**

It is of interest to note here how the mission came to get these Italian Fathers, whose early work has meant so much to the growth of the Church in this country. Time and again in history, the world's political upheavals have been responsible for the immediate spreading of Christ's Church and so it was

now. Expelled from their own country through the disturbances that were to culminate in the seizing of the Papal States by Garibaldi in 1870, these Italian Jesuit Fathers became available for the new work undertaken by the Society in British Guiana. Their lack of English was of comparatively little consequence then. Of far greater importance was the fact that they could make themselves understood to the large Portuguese speaking communities of the day.



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