

St Peter Claver School
Spanish, Ontario
March 2nd 1946

Very Reverend Dear Father Provincial. —

I find I have been
remiss, this letter should have gone in January.

Everyone in our community is well. Father
Richard's sight is failing but he still says mass on
some days. Fr Dupresne appears quite well and happy.
He has difficulty reading the mass but gets along fairly
well awaiting his indult. If there are long epistles and
gospels, he has to forego saying mass.

Fr Munster does wonders in keeping the house clean
and in managing so that our table is as it should be. He is
timid. At times I think he has too much to do, but he seems
in good health and very happy. He is the soul of charity
and it is a wonderful boon to the brothers to have his
direction, he has never had the least difficulty with
any one of them. He has excellent discipline, knowing these
boys well and a fine spirit in the house.

Fr Vossen is an exceptionally fine religious and
has done a great deal for the boys here. He took in a
very different job and has had marked success in his

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coaching of the boys. He has promoted reading among them in the evening free study. In spite of the fact that he finds them difficult (not as regards discipline, but in that they are passive, inclined to ignore precise directions - in fact showing the usual Indian traits) still he has never let down for a minute in his work. He never complains, but he has found the year very difficult. We all consider him wholly admirable.

Fr McKay is well and very busy, zealous in his mission work and very successful. His check-ups has put him in a much more normal frame of mind as regards his health. He had been worried about ulcers and as a result was often weak because of not eating.

Mr Maurice is a wonderful worker and very fine religious. He is absolutely devoted and co-operative. It will seem a shame to lose him this year but we expect to as it has been the custom and a very laudable one to give the scholastics a year in a college - it is something which was done for me for which I was very grateful. There is much to learn in the way of organization and much to be gained in teaching for a year.

Fr Sullivan is as usual - he does nothing but say his mass on ordinary days and hear confessions here and at the convent for a half hour space on Wednesday & Thursday. He seems content to do nothing and resents the slightest extra work - confessions for feasts etc. He goes to Gaudin River as usual two Sundays a month leaving on Saturday and returning Sunday evening. He looks well, takes a great deal of pleasure weeping about, eats well - but is a definite thorn

in the side of everyone in the house who is busy all day. He is very critical of food and picks over everything. It is hard on the community. We have the two old fathers who are more or less helpless - we are glad to have them because the majority of the boys have them as confessors, but the total of four is hard to assimilate in a small community.

Father Jordan is difficult. He was to my mind sent here as a sort of "outside ministry" man and was seldom called. He resented his being sent here and often lets us know it. With teachers sick and everybody doubling their work he sat severely in his room. He dislikes the boys, definitely can not teach and is very much out of place here and very unhappy. The parish consists of fifty eight families and offers no real occupation for a very healthy vigorous young man. The main difficulty is that he was sent here, here volunteered, feels he was rail roaded here and is just waiting for his release - at least he gives that impression. His ordinary day is spent reading or resting - no class, no Prefecting three classes of catechism ^{at the convent} which I discovered last week he had neglected for months, the confessions as Fr. Sullivan's schedule calls for - hour after hour doing nothing. If we force him to teach he will disrupt the class and cause difficulty. Fr. Premeau tried it last year. If we insist on his

taking recreation he has endless difficulties with the boys. This year I insisted he take the two half hour studies. He escapes as often as he can.

I do not wish to be better but it seems to me that he at least might do better somewhere else, in some college or parish where he would not feel he had been put in punishment. We should easily be able to say the mass in the parish church, as a matter of fact we each do take our turn. The mass at the convent could be looked after, such a man is a stumbling block, chiefly I think because he is very unhappy here.

Our brothers are very industrious and good religious - a fine example for the boys. They are a source of inspiration to us and a consolation. We pray our Lord may find means to send us more.

I do not think there is anything else Father about which I should write. I hope the picture is not too dark. We are happy and working hard with our boys, trying to send them out with a good knowledge of things and a habit of going to the sacraments.

It has been the custom to have the house retreat during Holy Week - should I write Father Cormier? As a rule Bro O'Keefe makes his during the summer since he has class and must continue

during that time. Will this be all right? He usually gets permission for retreat at Sulphur during the summer. One of the pupils makes the retreat with the brothers since the other must also carry on the work helped out at the time by the rest of us.

Asking your blessing on our community

Servus in X^{to}

Raymond Olive SJ

St. Peter Claver School
Spanish Ontario
March 2nd 1946.

Very Reverend Father Provincial.

Dear Father. P. C.

I forgot to mention Father Monaghan in my letter which is already gone. He seemed more relaxed after a few days here but got very taut again. He seems worried about his studies and yet does not feel as if he could do much at them. He goes out a great deal around the farm and worked at the hauling of ice for three or four days. I suppose he will write to you for direction. He goes into recreation a great deal and says it does not tire him. If he can get to sleep enough and really relax he should be well.

Another point which caused a little excitement here. Joe Savoie returned from the States and demanded to live here again. I consulted with the fathers in the house and all agreed it would be the beginning of trouble. It was difficult when he left to make people see that we were not responsible for him. They took it for granted he was still a brother. He lives in town and sent Father Jordan a letter to the effect that if the latter did not stop going to movies on Saturday night in the village here that he would write the Father Provincial.

Now on Saturday night confessions are heard in the town. As a rule from what I gather there are never more than two or three or rarely more. Father Jordan insists that there may be more at some time, I do not feel convinced of that since Father Primeau had them all the time he was here with the same results. There is ample time on Sunday morning for the few that wish to go. So Father Jordan has been going for confessions regularly Saturday nights. He has always denied knowledge of shows when asked by the others, for example by Father Hannin who on two or three occasions sent the older farmers as a treat for special hard work well done. Fr Jordan came in for a certain amount of ribbing about it. His answer in regard to the letter was that he sometimes popped in, and so forth but I have every reason to believe that he rarely missed. None of the others go, it is not just the right thing to make

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a practice of among these people who are very critical. Father Jordan unfortunately went to the house where Joe is staying and discussed it with the people so that it has become a town topic, with bets I should imagine as to who will win out. I have let Fr Jordan know that it is not our place to go there to movies. His attitude is that he is not really going. I despair at following his argument. Shall I simply stop the confessions on Saturday night which are not necessary. In this town I should be inclined to stop all going out at night among the families. This would affect only Father Jordan who seems to think it absolutely necessary. The men are always at home on Sunday afternoon and the parish is very small. Certainly the whole thing has done no good since Joe Savoie makes a great deal of noise and advertises his wares all over the place. Fr Jordan feels that he would lose face if he did not as he says "put his foot in there" or just pop in and out etc. I should be of the opinion that he should not go to town on Saturday night at all.. that the excuse of confessions be taken away. I was going to do this and then felt that it might be rather high handed since I know that he finds me hard on him at times when he proposes some extravagant scheme for the parish. Would you please let me know what to do?

With a request for your blessing for all of us

- Servus in Xto.

Father Shover 09

Spanish, Ontario.
May 13th, 1946

Reverend Dear Father Provincial;

I realize that at this time you must be particularly busy, still when problems are pressing it is good to pass them on.

All the members of our community are well. Father Belanger of course is quite weak at times. Yet there are days when he is around most of the time. He is giving music lessons to two of the boys and is holding quite lively discussions with Fr. Richard or Fr. Dufresne quite frequently. As both the doctor in Sudbury and our own here have given him little time, we have small hope of his recovery. Brother Laflamme looks after him and is very good to him.

Father Tim Dwyer visited us last week and wanted to make arrangements whereby Father Jordan would replace him on his mission line indefinitely while he worked at the Garden River business of moving the house and of the building of the new church. I told him his best bet would be to write to Father Provincial and if the matter was approved then have us notified. I know it is not in my power to make such an arrangement, Father Tim was very tired and is carrying too much. Either of the two, mission line or Garden River itself (as Garden River is now) would keep a man very busy.

We are again in difficulties as regards cooks. In the four years during which I have been attached to this house there has been a succession of ten cooks, men women and a couple of our brothers. Our cook left on Saturday as a result of difficulties with his wife who left him some time ago. We have a boy doing the job somehow or other. It means a great deal of waste and work half done and is not fair to the boy. I talked the matter over with Frs McKey and Fr. Minister and they agreed that it might just be possible to get a brother. I had Brother Westaway in mind. I understand that he is not cooking and wondered if by any chance he were available. The type of cook we have had here has been of the poorest since there is not much attraction

for people in Spanish. The last lad was an exception and he was forced to live here because his wife would not go else-where. I hope that there may be some chance of Brother Westaway coming. The cooking here is simple and not nearly as much work as in our colleges.

There has been a fair amount of ministry lately and Father Jordan has been kept busy. He seems happier.

Father Hourigan did a great deal of good when he was here. The brothers liked his retreat very much and he gave us some splendid Holy Week sermons. He was very much appreciated by the boys towards whom he was very kindly. Would it be possible to have him here for the boys and girls' closing retreat which would start on Sunday evening June 16th and end on the 20th. If possible we would very much appreciate having him for our procession the following Sunday June 23rd. This retreat means a great deal to the boys and girls leaving school and is really of more importance than the retreat at the beginning of the year which is given to the whole group at once.

Asking your blessing on our community,

In corde Jesu,

Raymond Blive SJ

Indian Residential School,
Spanish, Ontario.
May 18th., 1946.

Very Reverend Father Provincial,

Reverend Dear Father Provincial;

We most sincerely hope there has been a happy solution to our cook problem! We shall mark time and wait for further news.

We shall move our retreat days to the 20th etc. to suit Fr. Hourigan's schedule, expecting him on the morning of the 19th. The Thursday holiday will simply be moved ahead. We are delighted that he is coming since he made such an impression on the boys.

All are well in the community, according to each one's health. Father Belanger is able to get around and speaks of going back to Wikwemikong, which seems to indicate better condition. However he is not able to say mass yet since he is very weak in the morning. He is contented and Brother Laflamme is very kind to him.

With a sincere thank you for your interest in our latest difficulty and assuring you of our prayers

Sincerely,
Servus in Xto.

Raymond Oliver 29