

Soldiers of a Different Cloth: Notre Dame Chaplains in World War II

John F. Wukovits

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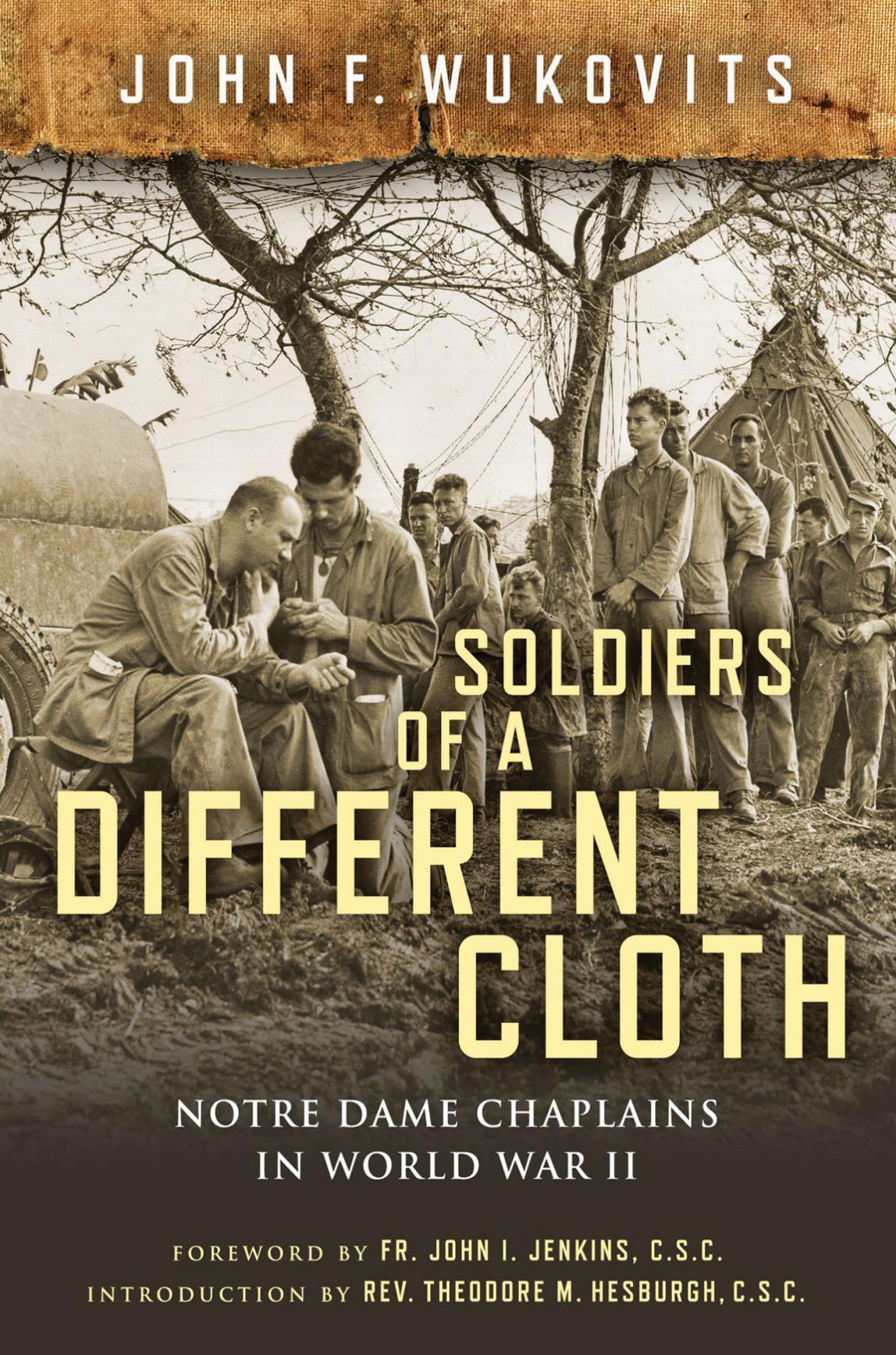
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JOHN F. WUKOVITS



SOLDIERS
OF A
DIFFERENT
CLOTH

NOTRE DAME CHAPLAINS
IN WORLD WAR II

FOREWORD BY FR. JOHN I. JENKINS, C.S.C.

INTRODUCTION BY REV. THEODORE M. HESBURGH, C.S.C.

Soldiers of a Different Cloth

SOLDIERS
of a
DIFFERENT CLOTH

Notre Dame Chaplains in World War II

JOHN F. WUKOVITS

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*To my father, Tom, ND '38, and my mother, Grace
Their spirituality was matched by
their love for Notre Dame.
A starting guard on the
1936 National Championship basketball team,
Tom married Grace in the
university's Log Chapel.
They never lost their love for each other
or for Notre Dame.*

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FOREWORD

Moments before they were to engage in the Battle of Gettysburg, the Civil War's bloodiest battle with 51,000 casualties, the mostly Catholic Irish Brigade knelt to receive absolution from Father William Corby, C.S.C., a Holy Cross priest from the University of Notre Dame and the brigade's chaplain. Although absolution was common on the fighting fields of Europe, this was the first time it had been given on an American battlefield.

Union Colonel St. Clair Mulholland, attached to the Irish Brigade, gave this eyewitness account:

The brigade was standing at "order arms," and as he [Corby] closed his address, every man fell on his knees, with head bowed down. Then, stretching his right hand towards the brigade, Father Corby pronounced the words of absolution. The scene was more than impressive, it was awe-inspiring.

Near by, stood General Hancock, surrounded by a brilliant throng of officers, who had gathered to witness this very unusual occurrence and while there was profound silence in the ranks of the Second Corps, yet over to the left, out by the peach orchard and Little Round Top, where Weed, and Vincent, and Haslett were dying, the roar of the battle rose and swelled and echoed through the woods.

The act seemed to be in harmony with all the surroundings. I do not think there was a man in the brigade who did not offer up a heartfelt prayer. For some it was their last; they knelt there in their grave-clothes—in less than half an hour many of them were numbered with the dead of July 2.

Fr. Corby would later recall, “That general absolution was intended for all—in quantum possum—not only for our brigade, but for all, North or South, who were susceptible of it and who were about to appear before their Judge.”

Of the hundreds of monuments erected at Gettysburg to commemorate leaders of the South and North, only one is dedicated to a chaplain, Father Corby. However, he would not be the last of his Holy Cross brethren to leave the classroom to answer God’s call in war. I recently had the privilege to recognize Father William Dorwart, C.S.C., who served as a navy chaplain in Korea, the Philippines, and Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm in Iraq, as well as on the U.S.S. *Ronald Reagan* and finally at Arlington National Cemetery.

Holy Cross priests have served God in many ways during peacetime and war. Considering Notre Dame’s historic links with the military, it is of no surprise that members of its founding order would volunteer as chaplains, especially during World War II.

The writer, John Wukovits (ND ’67), a renowned military author, has in these pages revealed remarkable contributions of thirty-five C.S.C. religious—mostly priests, but brothers and sisters too—in chaplaincies during World War II. None carried weapons, yet they still parachuted into Normandy on D-Day, walked shoulder-to-shoulder with American GIs on the horrific Philippine Death March, survived the bloody combat at Anzio, and prayed for and with the liberators of Dachau and its tortured victims and survivors.

The stories of these heroic members of the Holy Cross order have never been told before. John Wukovits dug deeply into the Notre Dame archives and elsewhere to bring them to light. He does it adroitly, with a historian’s care and a writer’s heart. We are in his debt.

—Fr. John I. Jenkins, C.S.C.,
President, University of Notre Dame

PREFACE

The genesis of this book came from an unexpected place. As a World War II historian, I am usually digging around in archives or scouring books and reports searching for dramatic story lines, but this emerged from a book unrelated, I thought, to that conflict. While reading a history of my alma mater, Notre Dame, written in the 1950s, I came across a paragraph mentioning that a group of priests from the university had served as chaplains during the war. The author expressed the hope that one day, someone would write their story. I agreed that a potential story existed, but only if these chaplains had experiences beyond the typical stateside posts.

I was astounded as I conducted my initial research. Far from remaining in the United States, these men served in both theaters and in many conflicts. Two struggled to survive the Bataan Death March, and others worked amid shell bursts and bullets in Italy, France, Germany, Belgium, the Philippines, Iwo Jima, Saipan, and dozens of other locales. Better yet, when I first visited one of the four valuable archives at the University of Notre Dame—one for the university itself and one each for the priests, brothers, and nuns of the Congregation of Holy Cross, the religious order that founded Notre Dame—I found a vast collection of letters, papers, records, and photographs relating to their wartime service. The chaplains corresponded with their superior, Father Thomas A. Steiner, explaining their duties and recounting what they had observed. Some, such as the powerful letters Father Joseph

Barry wrote to Father Steiner, moved me with their descriptions of battle and of the painful letters all had to write to the parents of slain young soldiers. It did not take me long to conclude that I would have more than enough material to proceed.

I started with the first of numerous visits to the four archives at Notre Dame and its sister institutions, Saint Mary's College and Holy Cross College, both directly across the street from Notre Dame. I spent hours scanning and reading the letters of Father Barry and the other Holy Cross chaplains held at the Congregation of Holy Cross's U.S. Province Archives Center, where Father Christopher Kuhn, C.S.C., and his assistant Deb Buzzard—two of the most skilled and cooperative archivists a historian will ever meet—went out of their way to locate pertinent records and photographs. Sister Catherine Osimo, C.S.C., at the Congregational Archives and Records, Sisters of the Holy Cross, and Brother Larry Stewart, C.S.C., at the Archives, Brothers of Holy Cross, directed me to valuable material pertaining to the stories of the six religious from Notre Dame—two priests, two brothers, and two nuns—trapped in the Philippines with the onset of war, while Sister Mary Nadine Mathias, Diocese of Toledo, Ohio Archives, opened the vast collection of material relating to Father John E. Duffy. I obtained additional material from archivist Corey Stewart at the National Archives and Records Administration in St. Louis, Missouri; curator Michael Gonzales of the 45th Infantry Division Museum in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; and from the U.S. Army Chaplain Corps Museum in Fort Jackson, South Carolina.

Other people offered immense help. The late Father Theodore Hesburgh, former president of the University of Notre Dame, provided his insights about the chaplains during our interviews and lent his encouragement to what he deemed a valuable project. My history adviser at Notre Dame, the late Dr. Bernard Norling, and the late Thomas Buell, biographer extraordinaire, provided encouragement and advice to a novice writer when he most needed it. My agent, Jim Hornfischer, who has penned fascinating World War II books of his own, lent his expert comments at every stage of the process. I will never forget their wisdom and patience.

As always, the love and support offered by my family has been invaluable. My brother, Tom, also a graduate of Notre Dame; the memory of my late brother, Fred; and my three daughters, Amy, Julie, and Karen,

boosted me during those difficult times during the writing process. I breathed easier knowing that Terri Faitel, my companion of more than two decades, would scrutinize every paragraph of my manuscript with the same skill and professionalism she exhibits in her work as an unparalleled mathematics coordinator in Michigan. The exuberance and joy of my grandchildren, Matthew, Megan, Emma, and Kaitlyn, add an extra bounce to my step (or else I'd never keep pace with them!).

Finally, the unquestioned love of my parents, Tom (ND '38) and Grace, who were married in the Log Chapel adjoining the beautiful Saint Mary's Lake on Notre Dame's campus, have been with me all my life. Although they passed on long ago, I think of them every day. It is only fitting that I dedicate this book to two people who so deeply cared for the university.

John F. Wukovits
Trenton, Michigan
January 12, 2018

INTRODUCTION

Of the many blessings that have come my way during the course of my half-century association with the University of Notre Dame, including serving as its president from 1952 to 1987, one of the most rewarding has been the friendships formed with the people with whom I have come into contact. Prime ministers, presidents, civil rights leaders, educators, and financiers have crossed my path, most of whom have amassed sterling public reputations.

I am especially proud of my association with the individuals historian John F. Wukovits features in this book. In powerful detail he relates the stirring feats of thirty-five individuals who, while garnering little acclaim, performed deeds worthy of the highest praise. They did not carve out fortunes or build nations. Instead, as chaplains during World War II, they aided young men who, because they faced death on a daily basis, turned to chaplains for strength and courage. Because of my acquaintances with these thirty-five, each has left an indelible impression that daily reminds me to perform to the best of my ability while retaining the humility with which these men labored.

They served wherever duty sent them and wherever the war dictated. These chaplains experienced the horrors of the Death March in the Philippines and in the filthy holds of the infamous Hell Ships. They dangled from a parachute while descending toward German fire at Normandy and shivered in Belgium's frigid snows during the Battle of the Bulge. They languished in German and Japanese prison camps,

and stood speechless at Dachau, a symbol of all that was wrong with the world.

They were present at Anzio and Iwo Jima, at Monte Cassino and Okinawa. Their service took them from the beauties of South Seas islands to the dangers of flying the Hump in Burma, from celebrating Mass aboard the decks of massive aircraft carriers to makeshift altars set up on the front hoods of tiny jeeps. They served in almost every major campaign in both Europe and the Pacific.

While soldiers and marines battled the Germans or Japanese with rifles and grenades, these chaplains dodged bullets and shells to aid the wounded and bring comfort to the dying. They volunteered for duty not to hurt, as marines, soldiers, and sailors must do, but to help their fellow man. They brought to the battlefield a sense of sacrifice, the love of their fellow man, and a devotion to assisting others that helped offset the impact of bullets and bombs. They were, in effect, soldiers, but instead of inflicting harm they attempted to bring comfort and solace to scared young men.

Making their stories more poignant is that though these chaplains were involved in separate war theaters thousands of miles apart, they were hardly strangers. Each had either graduated from or taught at the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana, and most belonged to the Congregation of Holy Cross (C.S.C.), the religious organization that founded and, to this day, operates the university. Not only did these men share an attachment from their association with Notre Dame—a place that appears frequently in their correspondence with family and friends—they also drew inspiration from their brother chaplains and strength from their days at Notre Dame that helped them endure the challenges they encountered.

On Notre Dame's campus, where I first met many of these priests, each day the students pass a saying that adorns an arch at the university's Sacred Heart Basilica. "God, Country, Notre Dame" reads the inscription. Honoring Notre Dame men who lost their lives in World War I, the words refer to the duty each Notre Dame graduate has to his Creator, his country, and his school. These chaplains not only read those words; they lived them. As such, these men inspired me and countless others throughout their lives.

They provided decency in an indecent universe and spiritual peace on a stage of turmoil. They offered a touch of home, sanity, and calm-

ness in a world that threatened to demolish all three. They learned that there were no Catholics or Baptists in foxholes, just scared young boys who wanted sanctuary from violence and a shoulder upon which to lean.

A group of men devoted to peace, they stepped into the most violent arena imaginable, the opposite of that love and brotherhood about which they so frequently preached. The university's fabled teams under Knute Rockne and Frank Leahy were called the Fighting Irish for their prowess on the football field, but this group earned their accolades on violent battlefields by declining to fight and without resorting to violence. Instead, they defended their nation by serving their fellow man in his hour of supreme need and helping those in peril on brutal battlefields, many of whom would soon die or suffer from hideous wounds.

Ranging in age from twenty-two to fifty-three, they were counselor, friend, parent, and older brother to the boys they served. They included the soft-spoken Father Joseph D. Barry, C.S.C., who said Mass in abandoned buildings and fields and gained every soldier's admiration for his dashes through gunfire to aid a stricken infantryman, earning a Silver Star in the process. They counted among their numbers the ebullient Father Francis L. Sampson, who jumped into Normandy and became known as the "Parachute Padre" for his willingness to endure the same hardships as his men. They and the other chaplains worked with soldiers who were daily at death's threshold, and in doing so they without hesitation placed themselves in the same peril.

Their motives for entering the chaplaincy varied. Some asked how they could possibly minister to young men after the war if they had not shared the sacrifices faced by those young men during the war. Others could not stand on the sidelines while millions of soldiers suffered and sacrificed. For most, it simply came down to patriotism: their country was at war, and they had to do their part in making the world a safer place. Though they detested war, they could be nowhere else, for on the battlefield was where men most needed spiritual comfort.

John Wukovits's professional background in World War II history—over a thirty-year career he has authored ten books and served as on-air commentator and adviser for television documentaries—as well as his own association with the university as a 1967 graduate, lend credence to his research and writing. His knowledge of World War II

history, combined with his ties to the university, make him ideal to tell this story of men who comprised one of Notre Dame's greatest teams.

Because of their service, they were changed individuals by war's end. Some later assessed those years as the most vibrant times in their careers because, unlike teaching school or preaching Sunday sermons, they brought succor to individuals placed in the direst of situations. While in the seminary these men hoped to make a difference in people's lives and become involved with something truly significant. World War II provided that chance.

Besides having a front-row seat to major World War II campaigns, these Notre Dame chaplains left a mark on the young men they served. Their stories offer a unique glimpse of a war that is usually viewed through the prism of military leaders and battle strategies. Enjoy their feats and, as I was, be inspired by them.

Rev. Theodore M. Hesburgh, C.S.C.
University of Notre Dame

CHRONOLOGY

1934

May 1: Diocesan priest Father John E. Duffy arrives in the Philippines for three years of duty as an army chaplain.

1939

September 1: World War II begins when Adolf Hitler's German forces invade Poland.

December: Bishop John F. O'Hara, C.S.C., Notre Dame's president, is appointed military delegate in the Military Ordinariate to manage the increasing numbers of Catholic priests entering service to become chaplains.

1940

April: Father Duffy returns to the Philippines.

1941

April: Father Joseph D. Barry, C.S.C., is posted to the U.S. Army's 157th Regiment of the 45th Infantry Division.

November 9: Six Holy Cross missionaries—Father Jerome Lawyer, Father Robert McKee, Brother Rex Hennel, Brother Theodore Kapes, Sister Mary Olivette, and Sister Mary Caecilius—board the ocean liner *President Grant* for a six-week voyage across the Pacific to their new mission posts in India.

December 4: The six missionaries arrive in Manila, intent on remaining only a few days before continuing their voyage to India.

December 7 (December 8 in the Philippines): The Japanese attack the U.S. naval base at Pearl Harbor and begin a war with the United States.

1942

January 1: In the Philippines, General Douglas MacArthur's forces complete their withdrawal into the Bataan Peninsula. Diocesan priests Father Richard E. Carberry and Father John Duffy work among those beleaguered forces as chaplains.

January 2: The Japanese enter the city of Manila, trapping the six missionaries in that city. The two priests and brothers are confined at the Ateneo de Manila, a Jesuit College in Manila, while the two nuns are ordered to Manila's Convent of the Assumption. The six remain there until July 1944.

March 11: General MacArthur leaves the Philippines after being ordered by President Franklin D. Roosevelt to do so.

April 3: Major General Edward P. King Jr. surrenders the forces on Bataan. Fathers Duffy and Carberry now face uncertain futures as prisoners of war.

April 9: The infamous Death March, in which thousands of American and Filipino forces, including Fathers Duffy and Carberry, were brutally forced to walk to prison camps miles away, begins.

April 22: On the Death March, Father Duffy is bayoneted by a cruel guard nicknamed the Shadow and left for dead. Friendly Filipino civil-

ians drag the badly wounded priest to a jungle hideout and nurse him to health.

April 23 (or later): Father Carberry is incarcerated at Camp O'Donnell, northwest of Manila.

May: Diocesan priest Father Francis L. Sampson arrives at Fort Benning, Georgia, to begin training for eventual posting with the U.S. Army's 501st Parachute Regiment.

May 6: General Jonathan M. Wainwright surrenders all forces in the Philippines to the Japanese.

June: After recovering from his bayonet wounds, Father Duffy joins and helps organize guerrilla forces in the Bataan region; traveling from unit to unit, he also ministers to different groups of American and Filipino guerrillas. The Japanese move Father Carberry to the prison camp at Cabanatuan.

November 7: Father Carberry is transferred to Davao Penal Colony in Mindanao.

1943

January: The Japanese apprehend Father Duffy and incarcerate him in Bilibid Prison in Manila, where he would remain until December 1944.

April 4: Father Carberry, believing his duty rested with the incarcerated and not with his own desire for freedom, chooses not to join ten other inmates in what would turn out to be a successful attempt to escape from Davao Penal Colony.

June 3: Father Barry and the 157th Regiment board transports for the journey across the Atlantic.

July 10: Father Barry and the 157th Regiment land at Sicily and begin combat with German forces.

September 9: Father Barry and the 157th Regiment land at Salerno on the Italian peninsula.

1944

January 22: Father Barry and the 157th Regiment land at Anzio and become involved in a bloody, months-long battle with German defenders.

February 1: Father John M. Dupuis, C.S.C., lands on Roi in the Marshall Islands with his Fourth Marine Division.

June 5: Father Barry and the 157th Regiment enter Rome, thereby concluding nine months of near-constant combat.

June 6: Father Sampson parachutes into Normandy with the 501st Parachute Infantry Regiment; the Japanese move Father Carberry back to Cabanatuan.

June 15: The battleship aboard which Father John J. Burke, C.S.C., works, U.S.S. *Pennsylvania* (BB-38), blasts targets on Saipan in the Mariana Islands. Father Dupuis lands on Saipan with the Fourth Marine Division.

July 8: The Japanese move the six Notre Dame missionaries to Los Baños Internment Camp, southeast of Manila.

August: Father Edmund J. Murray, C.S.C., arrives in Europe with the U.S. Army's 104th Infantry Division and enters combat in France. Over the coming months he also sees action in Belgium and Germany.

August 1: A Japanese document outlines the steps that prisoner-of-war camp commandants are to take if their camps are about to fall to approaching American forces. The chilling document ordered the immediate massacre of all inmates by any means.

August 15: Aboard the escort carrier U.S.S. *Tulagi* (CVE-72) as a navy chaplain, Father Henry Heintskill, C.S.C., participates in the invasion

of southern France; the carrier then departs for the Pacific. Father Barry lands in southern France with his 157th Regiment, which embarks on a drive northward toward the German border.

September 17: Father Sampson parachutes into Holland with the 501st Parachute Infantry Regiment, his second jump into enemy-held territory with the airborne troops.

September 21: The people confined at Los Baños, including the six Notre Dame missionaries, spot U.S. aircraft for the first time since early 1942. The indications that American military forces would soon invade the Philippines cause the prisoners to erupt in celebration.

October 20: The hopes of liberation for those at Los Baños and other prison camps in the Philippines intensify when General MacArthur's forces conduct an amphibious assault of Leyte, an island four hundred miles southeast of Manila.

December 13: The Japanese jam more than 1,600 prisoners, including Fathers Duffy and Carberry, onto the transport *Oryoku Maru* for shipment to Japan.

December 14–15: American carrier aircraft, unaware that the *Oryoku Maru* contains American prisoners of war, attack and sink the transport in Subic Bay, fifty miles northwest of Manila. Fathers Duffy and Carberry survive a one-mile swim to shore, but the attacks kill more than two hundred prisoners.

December 16: Father Sampson and the 501st Parachute Infantry Regiment are ordered to rush to Bastogne, Belgium, to reinforce a faltering American line and help halt Hitler's desperate December counter-offensive.

December 20: While driving into dangerous territory in front of American lines to aid wounded and dying American troops, Father Sampson is captured by German forces. He begins a trek on foot covering more than 150 miles to trains inside Germany, which take him to his prison camp north of Berlin, Stalag II-A.

January 9: American forces land at Lingayen Gulf, placing friendly units closer to Philippine prison camps and bringing liberation nearer. Unfortunately for the captives, treatment at the hands of their Japanese captors worsens.

January 14: The *Brazil Maru*, a Japanese “Hell Ship,” leaves the Philippines to take prisoners of war, including Fathers Duffy and Carberry, to prison camps in Japan.

January 26: With Father Duffy administering the Last Rites to him, Father Carberry succumbs to wounds, starvation, and disease.

January 30: The *Brazil Maru* arrives in Japan, where Father Duffy is taken to Omuta Camp #17 on Kyushu.

February 19: Three Notre Dame chaplains operate with their forces at Iwo Jima in the Pacific: Father Heintskill aboard the U.S.S. *Tulagi*, Father Francis J. Boland aboard the transport U.S.S. *Highlands* (APA-119), and Father Dupuis with the Fourth Marine Division.

February 21: After learning that the Japanese plan to massacre every person at Los Baños, General MacArthur orders U.S. Army Rangers to parachute into the camp to free the inmates.

February 23: In a daring raid, paratroopers liberate everyone at Los Baños, including the six Notre Dame missionaries.

March 17: Father Maurice E. Powers, C.S.C., approaches the German border with members of the U.S. Army’s 101st Mechanized Cavalry.

March 29: Father Powers and the 101st Mechanized Cavalry cross the Rhine River and thrust into Germany.

April: In mid-April, Father Barry and the 157th Regiment approach Nuremburg, the center of Nazism; near the end of April, the Japanese move Father Duffy to a prison camp in Mukden, Manchuria. Father

Heintskill, aboard the U.S.S. *Tulagi*, arrives off Okinawa. Father Bolland, aboard the U.S.S. *Highlands*, arrives off Okinawa, where his ship and nearby vessels come under repeated attack from Japanese kamikaze aircraft. After seeing action in the Aleutians and the Marshall Islands with the U.S. Army's Seventh Infantry Division, Father Joseph Corcoran, C.S.C., arrives at Okinawa.

April 18: Fathers Lawyer and McKee, along with Brothers Rex and Theodore, return to Notre Dame.

April 28: Soviet military forces enter Stalag II-A and liberate Father Sampson and the other captives.

April 29: Father Barry and the 157th Regiment liberate Dachau.

May 8: V-E Day, Victory in Europe, is celebrated around the world; Father Barry ends more than five hundred days in combat since his landing in Sicily almost two years earlier.

May 21: Sisters Olivette and Caecilius return to Saint Mary's.

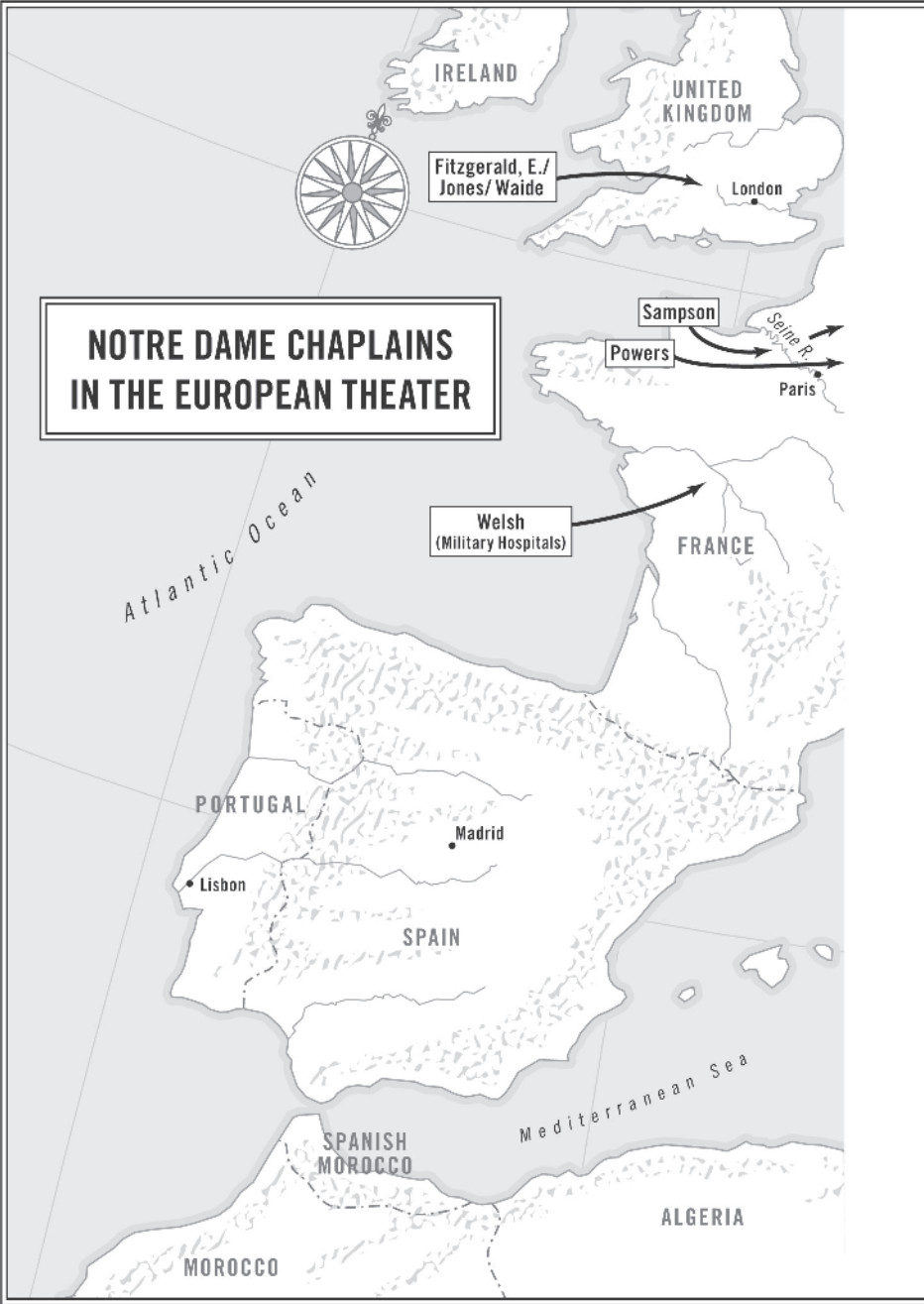
August 6: An atom bomb destroys the Japanese city of Hiroshima.

August 9: An atom bomb destroys the Japanese city of Nagasaki.

August 12: A Japanese torpedo plane launches a torpedo at the U.S.S. *Pennsylvania*, aboard which Father Burke serves as chaplain. The torpedo explosion kills twenty men and wounds another ten.

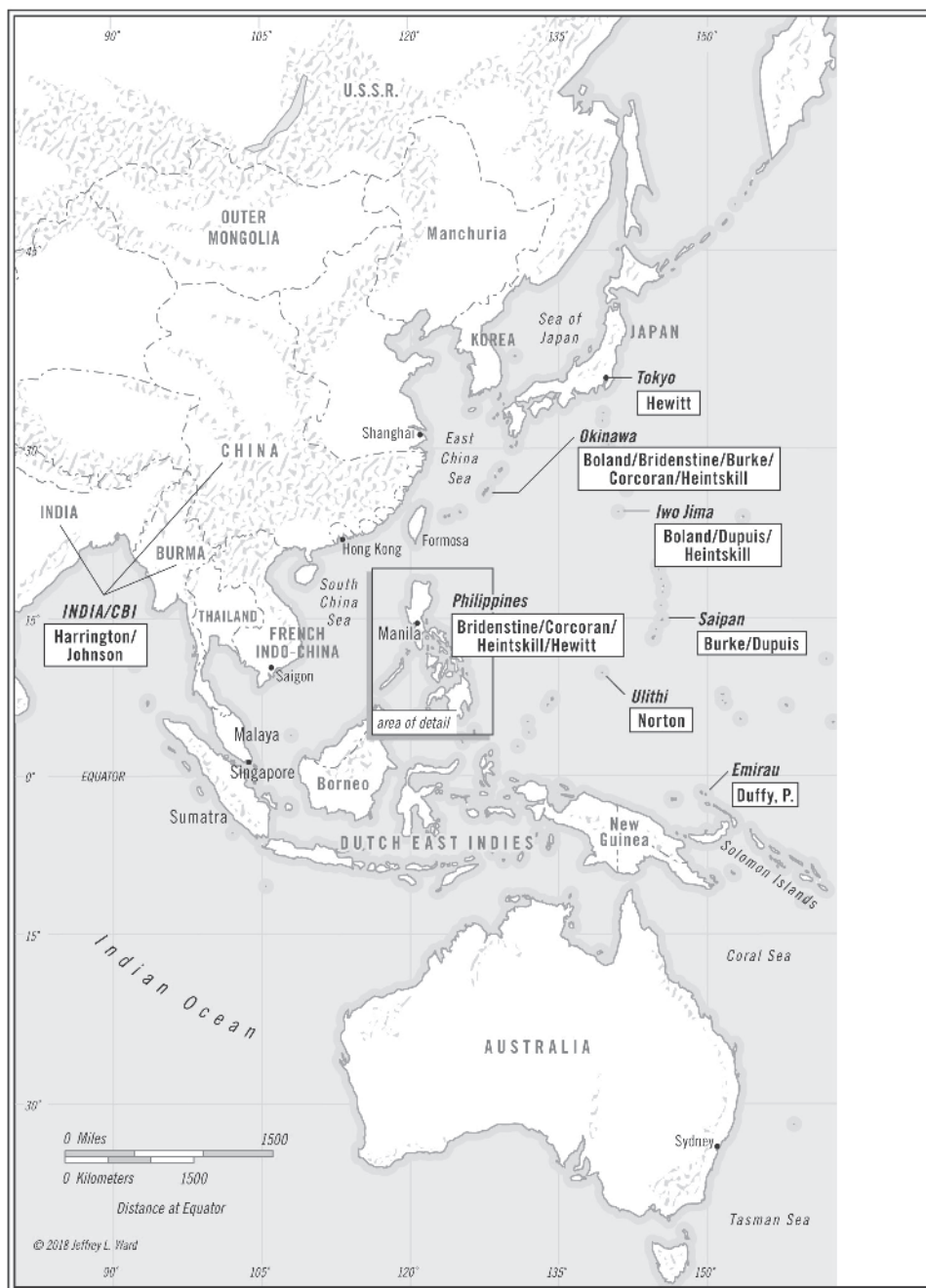
August 15: Hostilities cease with Japan and terminate action in the Pacific Theater.

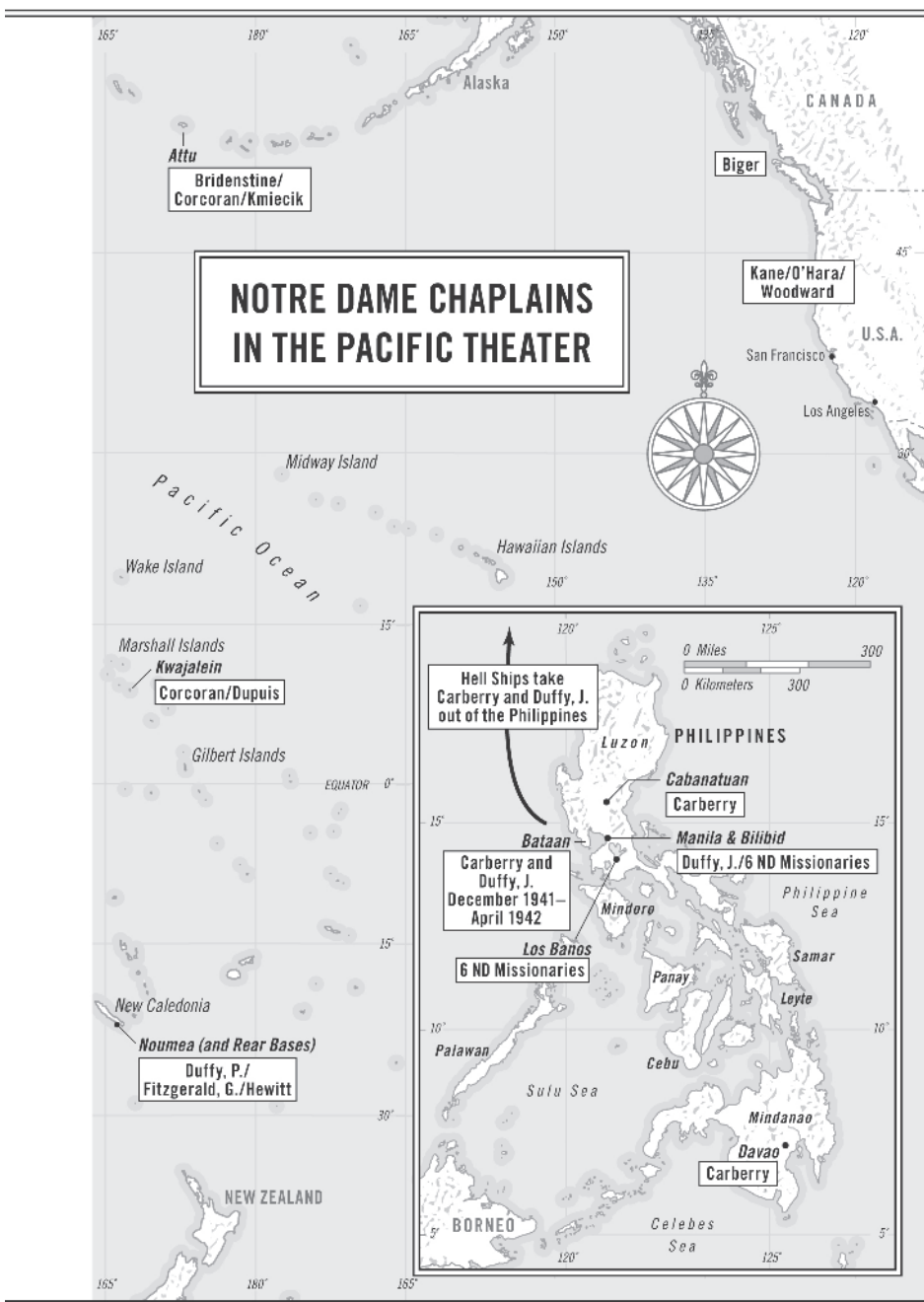
September 2: V-J Day marks the official end of the war in the Pacific, and with it, World War II; the Notre Dame chaplains gradually make their way back to the United States and to the university.





Notre Dame Chaplains in the European Theater





Notre Dame Chaplains in the Pacific Theater

P A R T I

THE CHAPLAINS HEAD TO WAR

1920s to December 1943



PROLOGUE

Even for a war that exceeded the boundaries in military accomplishments, for the United States the nine-day period from June 6 to June 15, 1944, stood on its own plateau. On opposite sides of the globe unfolded the two largest amphibious operations in history: the massive Normandy invasion on June 6, 1944, against Hitler's Fortress Europe and the second nine days later against a linchpin of Japan's Pacific defense line, Saipan in the Marianas. That same week American forces entered Rome, from ancient times the symbol of power, after completing an excruciating campaign through Italy's mountains and valleys.

That the United States could simultaneously mount complex campaigns at three diverse locations around the world was testimony to the astounding outpouring of American industry. American infantry, sailors, and marines waged war armed with the weaponry produced by their civilian factory and shipyard workers back home.

AMONG THE participants of these events were four men united by common bonds. At a British airfield on June 5, 1944, Captain Francis L. Sampson inspected his equipment along with his buddies in the 501st Parachute Infantry Regiment of the 101st Airborne Division. He double-checked his main parachute and auxiliary, knowing that an oversight now could lead to a lethal ending in France's farmland from a faulty apparatus.

Before leaving for Normandy, Sampson stood in formation with his unit and listened as the hard-nosed commander of the 501st, Colonel Howard R. Johnson, replete in battle gear that included his trademark Bowie knife strapped to his waist, delivered a fiery talk on the eve of battle. The words gushed out of the veteran officer, each phrase stirring the young soldiers before him who were about to engage in combat with Adolf Hitler's vaunted military. Johnson ended by brandishing his Bowie knife and shouting, "I swear to you that before the dawn of another day this knife will be stuck in the foulest Nazi belly in France. Are you with me?" When the men, Sampson included, shouted, "We're with you!" Johnson added, "Then let's go get 'em! Good hunting!"

As his aircraft approached Normandy, Sampson leaped into the darkness, hoping to catch the Germans by surprise. One second later he dropped all illusions. "Our jump was a surprise all right—for us. The Germans were waiting for us, and they sent such a barrage of bullets at us that it will always remain a mystery to me how any of us lived."¹ Sampson, a novice to combat, wondered if he would perish in his harness before he even reached the ground.

AS CAPTAIN Sampson jumped into Normandy, nine hundred miles to the southeast Captain Joseph D. Barry walked into Rome. The man who had already lived through three horrific amphibious landings—at Sicily, at Salerno, and at Anzio—and had survived hundreds of bombardments and strafings, had no time to enjoy the accolades or flowers from adoring Italians that rained down on him and the men of the U.S. Army's Forty-Fifth Infantry Division. They still faced difficult fighting against a skilled foe that had made Barry's division pay in blood and death for every foot of advance up Italy's hills and through its valleys, forever scorching the names Anzio and Monte Cassino in Barry's memory.

"I can say that every day and night on this battle-front is a constant reminder of Death," Barry wrote to a friend about his experiences in Sicily and Italy. He added of the bombardments from German artillery, "Each shell came a little closer, and each prayer became a little more fervent."²

SEVEN THOUSAND five hundred miles distant, on June 15, Navy Lieutenant, Junior Grade (jg) John J. Burke watched from the U.S.S. *Penn-*

sylvania (BB-38), one of the battleships damaged during the war's opening attack at Pearl Harbor, as the rebuilt vessel methodically blasted targets on Saipan. A part of the Mariana Islands in the Central Pacific, the island was a prime objective standing on the long route toward Tokyo and victory.

The sight of the American flotilla gathered to seize Saipan impressed Burke. Under the overall command of Admiral Raymond A. Spruance, victor of Midway, 535 ships transported 127,571 troops to the target islands in two groups. He watched marines who had, mere hours before, stepped into landing craft as they now inched toward shore, exposing themselves to heavier fire from Japanese mortars and guns with every yard they advanced. Even at the seemingly safe distance of ten thousand yards, enemy shells splashed uncomfortably close to the *Pennsylvania*. Admiral Spruance's flagship, the cruiser *Indianapolis*, reeled from a hit, and near misses endangered others. Still, Burke felt safer than those marines huddling in the amtracs (amphibious tractors) then churning shoreward.

NAVY LIEUTENANT (jg) John M. Dupuis rode in one of those amtracs. Intent on depositing Dupuis's Fourth Marine Division on Saipan, the landing craft churned forward as shells screeched over Dupuis's head and direct hits flipped amtracs into the air. Military observers, recalling that one prominent general predicted the invasion would produce many dead marines, hoped that the senior commanders knew what they were doing.

So terrible was the fire that Dupuis questioned whether he would survive the landing attempt and make it to the beach, where he could begin executing the tasks for which he had so intensely trained. He later wrote that the marines of the Fourth Division with whom he worked left Pearl Harbor in fourteen ships, but when they had completed their tasks, only four shiploads remained.

THOUGH INVOLVED in separate operations conducted thousands of miles apart, Sampson, Barry, Burke, and Dupuis were hardly strangers to each other. While soldiers and marines battled the Germans or Japanese with rifles and grenades, these four—chaplains all—dodged bullets and shells to aid the wounded and bring comfort to the dying. Even more, a second bond united the quartet, for each had either

graduated from or taught at the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana.

They were four of the twenty-nine chaplains and six missionaries, most belonging to the Congregation of Holy Cross (C.S.C.), who served the country's fighting forces in every theater of the war. That these priests mirrored American families sending sons off to war can be seen in the letters to each other and especially to their religious superior at Notre Dame, Father Thomas A. Steiner. As the order's provincial, Father Steiner managed the day-to-day activities of Holy Cross religious in the United States and decided which posts the priests and brothers received. Just as did sailors in the Pacific or army privates in Europe in their letters to parents or wives, they asked Father Steiner how their fellow chaplains were doing and where they were stationed, and inquired about the latest events at home, which in their case was Notre Dame. A sense of family percolated among these chaplains.

They headed to war as neophytes to war's brutality, but like the infantrymen and marines they served, they adapted and performed their tasks under horrifying circumstances. They may have been assigned the specific mission of tending to the Catholic boys, but they gave comfort to all—Protestants, Jews, atheists—in religious and nonreligious ways.

The world was their parish. They ministered on oceans and battlefields, in hospitals and barracks. They tended battalions and regiments at jump-off points for battle, and repair and supply crews at minuscule island outposts. "Our chaplains are pretty well scattered over the face of the earth," wrote Father Steiner from Notre Dame in 1944. "They are on all fronts except the Russian front. When they all get back there will be no country and no island that some one of them have not been on, or at least, have had a close look at. It may be a good thing for the University to offer a class in geography."³

No matter their age—thirty-one years separated the oldest from the youngest—they brought comfort to frightened young men, often with bullets nipping at their feet and mortar shells exploding nearby. They may have been men of God, but they were in equal measure soldiers and priests. Father Barry's crawling under fire to reach the wounded and dying matches the bravery of men storming a machine-gun nest and earned chaplains praise from Pope Pius XII, who called them the best of the best.

More than chaplains, they were soldiers of another cloth, no different than the men they served except in the accoutrements of battle, and to them, the accoutrements meant a Bible and a crucifix, a Rosary and a religious medal. "I take my hat off to those fellows," one infantry officer said of chaplains. "They go into action unarmed. Good God, think of entering battle with a Book for a weapon."⁴

At the Holy Cross Cemetery at Notre Dame, American flags often adorn the gravesites of the chaplains buried there. This simple, yet powerful, gesture attests to the esteem with which these men are still held by their congregation and university, and to the World War II service that stamped their priestly careers as remarkable.

CHAPTER I

“OUR FIRST BAPTISM OF BLOOD”

War Opens in the Philippines

Whether the chaplains were Holy Cross or diocesan priests, they benefited from the rigorous training and austere lifestyle they willingly chose before joining the military. Demanding seminary classroom work and rigid schedules occupied them from morning until night. Periods of silence and frequent religious services, including daily Mass (twice on Sundays) and recitation of the Rosary, yielded moments for reflection and introspection, all intent on preparing the men for the taxing life offered by the priesthood.

Those who joined the Congregation of Holy Cross took vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, while the diocesan priests promised at their ordination ceremonies to observe celibacy and obedience. Beginning in 1933, Holy Cross seminarians spent one year at the order's farm in Rolling Prairie, Indiana, a small community of six hundred people thirty miles west of the Notre Dame campus, where they learned that, beyond praying and preaching, a call to the religious life required physical and mental toughness as well. “In many ways, Rolling Prairie was our boot camp (not unlike the Marines’ Parris island, perhaps),” wrote Father Theodore M. Hesburgh, C.S.C., who later became the university’s president. He added that Rolling Prairie was “complete with rigorous physical training and a hard-nosed drill instructor.”¹

At the six-hundred-acre farm, Brother Seraphim, a former German soldier who immigrated to the United States after the Great War (1914–1918), was the taskmaster who, minus the litany of profane words, matched the scowls of the sternest U.S. Marine Corps drill sergeant. Long hours laboring at the farm tested the youths who emerged from high schools and forced them to examine whether they possessed the dedication and capacity for sacrifice to be a priest. By the end of Hesburgh's first year at Rolling Prairie, for instance, twenty of the twenty-nine men who entered with Hesburgh had dropped out of the arduous program.

Following that year the students switched to Notre Dame, where they lived at Moreau Seminary on the campus's northwest side and joined the other students attending classes. They wore street clothes rather than a conspicuous cassock, and while they could not date, correspond with high school girlfriends, or join campus social clubs, they could form their own athletic teams and scrimmage Notre Dame clubs. The diminutive Joseph D. Barry of Syracuse, New York, played short-stop for the seminary team and for years relished that his squad defeated an opponent that included some of Notre Dame's most acclaimed athletes. With a touch of hyperbole, his army division newspaper later stated of its chaplain, Barry "takes special pride in recounting that his team beat the famous Four Horsemen at baseball."²

Once the men completed their years in either a diocesan or Holy Cross seminary, they were ordained as priests and given their initial assignments. Many entered parish work. Those with oratorical skills joined the Congregation of Holy Cross's Mission Band, a group of Holy Cross priests who journeyed to parishes around the nation to conduct religious missions, while the priests who exhibited classroom skills and management talent remained on campus, where they taught classes, worked as prefects in student dormitories, or served in the university's administration.

"If Anything Ever Broke Here, We Would Definitely Be Up against It"

While the priests commenced their religious careers, volatile world events threatened to drag the nation into war. A clash between the

United States and Japan had appeared almost inevitable since the mid-1800s, when American politicians proclaimed that it was the nation's "manifest destiny" to expand beyond its continental borders into the Pacific. Bounteous natural resources in the Philippines and eastern Asia were there for the taking, and American manufacturers longed to offer their products to an untapped Asian market. Emotions intensified after a victorious United States acquired the Philippine Islands following the 1898 Spanish–American War. The United States stationed a garrison army in the islands, standing 1,400 miles southwest of Japan.

Japan simultaneously cast covetous eyes toward the same region. Minimal farm acreage in the small island nation forced Japan to import vast amounts of food and other items to satisfy its population. Almost 70 percent of the country's supply of zinc and tin came from outside, as did 90 percent of its lead, and all of its cotton, wool, aluminum, and rubber. In order to decrease its dependency upon other nations, Japan had to control the rich natural resources of the Philippines and of the Asian mainland. As long as moderates in the Japanese government balanced the militants who urged expansion, hostilities with the United States seemed unlikely, but should the militarists gain the upper hand, war loomed large.

FATHER JOHN E. Duffy and six Notre Dame missionaries found themselves in the midst of that turmoil. Born June 28, 1899, in Lafayette, Indiana, a community northwest of Indianapolis, Duffy attended Saint Mary's Parochial School and Notre Dame Preparatory before enrolling at the University of Notre Dame, where he gained renown as a skilled speaker. He later claimed that two men at Notre Dame most influenced him: the university's president, Father John W. Cavanaugh, C.S.C., for whom Duffy was secretary and from whom he learned how to diplomatically manage influential people, and famed football coach Knute Rockne, who helped nurture in Duffy a love of sports and a desire to excel at whatever he did.

After receiving his bachelor's degree in 1923, Duffy spent one year teaching and coaching at an Indianapolis high school before opting for the priesthood. Since he was familiar with the Congregation of Holy Cross from his time at Notre Dame, he considered joining that organization, but instead enrolled at a diocesan seminary, Mount Saint Mary's of the West in Norwood, Ohio, so that he could work in Ohio parishes.

After his ordination in June 1928, Duffy served parishes in three Ohio cities, including Toledo, before inquiring about duty as a chaplain. In October 1933 officials at the Diocese of Toledo approved his request and granted Father Duffy a ten-year leave to become an army chaplain.

After training and a brief stint as an assistant division chaplain in Texas, in May 1934 Duffy departed for three years' duty as assistant post chaplain at Fort Stotsenburg in the distant Philippine Islands. A three-year interval at a military post in the United States preceded Duffy's return to Fort Stotsenburg in April 1940.

He stepped into a hotbed of international developments. Seven months earlier, President Franklin D. Roosevelt had shifted the Pacific Fleet's home base from San Diego, California, to Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. He took this step as a caution to the Japanese government that he planned to oppose any overt military action by Japan against Asian states and the Philippines.

Roosevelt reacted again when Japanese troops moved into Indochina in July 1941. He severed trade with the aggressor nation and vowed to continue the embargo until Japan withdrew from both China and Indochina. Japanese leaders could either yield to Roosevelt's pressure and reestablish the flow of goods from the United States, or they could ignore it and risk war with a nation that possessed vast amounts of natural resources.

As the drumbeats of war intensified, Father Duffy keenly followed international developments. General MacArthur's presence as commander of U.S. Army and Philippine forces in the Far East brought welcome reassurance that steps were being taken to improve American military might in the islands, but Duffy thought that the still-inadequate defenses existing in the Philippines—an underequipped U.S. military backed by an undertrained Philippine military—invited an attack. He noticed arrogance and apathy among some of the American military, who failed to understand recent developments and dismissed the Japanese as a threat that they could readily dispatch. Servicemen's wives had been sent home, but each evening soldiers and sailors continued to enjoy sumptuous dinners at the Polo Club and entertainment at the Jai-Alai Club. Duffy was "convinced that if anything ever broke here, we would definitely be up against it. That was because of the apparent impossibility of getting any of the new officers to realize the seriousness and precariousness of the position of the handful of Americans that

were on hand for even a token resistance against the military might of the Rising Sun.”³

An alarming number of military still considered duty in the Philippines as a pleasant alternative to the more rigorous conditions found at most military outposts. “We had an easy life out there, with frequent parties and dances,” said Staff Sergeant William Nolan, who worked at Fort Stotsenburg with a coastal artillery unit. “Talk about preparedness for war. Those men in the Philippines were no more an organized Army than the man on the moon.”⁴

The outlook improved in October and November 1941, when American B-17 bombers flew into Clark Field and reinforced MacArthur’s arsenal. Their arrival “filled us with a great deal of pride,” wrote Duffy. “It was considered the best battle plane in existence at that time and the longest range bomber.” However, he and a handful of his officer friends “commented on the lack of discipline in the Air Corps and the ease with which the whole place could be wiped out and how a paratroop landing of a surprise nature could be made in the vicinity of Stotsenburg.”⁵

“Japan Would Not Dare Attack Us”

The next month a group of nineteen missionaries from the United States, six of whom were Holy Cross from Notre Dame, arrived in the Philippines. Father Jerome Lawyer had been devoted to the Holy Cross Congregation since his teenage years, when he entered the Little Seminary at Notre Dame on September 1, 1926. He loved the communal feeling he shared with the other young men, an attitude he described as family. “I use the word family because that was the first word given to me to describe Holy Cross when I entered.” He said, “It was love at first sight. That love brought me happiness.”

That feeling was reinforced after supper on his first day when the group filed into the chapel to visit the Blessed Sacrament. Before entering, each man received a piece of paper bearing the name of a deceased Holy Cross member. They then walked to the cemetery a short distance away and recited a prayer at the gravesites. “This touched me emotionally,” he said, referring to the tradition and to the rows of white crosses marking the graves of Holy Cross priests and brothers who had gone before him.

Lawyer was ordained June 24, 1939, at the campus's Church of the Sacred Heart (which would be designated in 1992 as the Basilica of the Sacred Heart). He studied Arabic, as he planned to devote his time as a missionary in areas such as Bengal (now Bangladesh), heavily populated with Muslims. "From age 13 on I was obsessed with the idea of going there as a missionary."⁶

Lawyer's classmate, Father Robert McKee, and four Holy Cross companions accompanied Lawyer to the Philippines, a temporary stop along the route to their mission destinations. Brother Theodore Kapes and Brother Rex Hennel, who had been a star guard on the 1935 Indiana high school state championship football team, and Sisters Mary Olivette Whelan and Mary Caecilius Roth (hereafter referred to as Brother Theodore, Brother Rex, Sister Olivette, and Sister Caecilius), planned to labor as missionaries alongside Lawyer and McKee in Dhaka, Bengal.

In late October 1941 the group left South Bend aboard a train bound for San Francisco, where they would settle in on a passenger ship for the lengthy voyage across the Pacific. The group toured San Francisco for a few days, and that Saturday they listened via radio broadcast as Notre Dame's undefeated football squad took on unvanquished Army in a game held in New York. In the bitterly contested clash, the rivals played to a scoreless tie, the only blemish that year for coach Frank Leahy's boys on their way to a third-place finish—behind Minnesota and Duke—in the Associated Press poll of top college football teams.

With Hitler already embroiling Europe in war and the Japanese creating rumbles in the Pacific, on November 9 the group boarded the liner *President Grant* for the six-week ocean voyage to the other side of the world. Concerns that they might be wandering into an area about to erupt in flames intensified with the air of intrigue surrounding their departure. "After much secrecy about the time, pier and date of sailing," Sister Olivette, a broad-smiling, wiry dynamo, wrote to Mother M. Vincentia, her superior general at Saint Mary's, "we finally got away at 6:00 P.M. Sunday 'unheralded and unsung.'" She called the transport "a missionary ship," as the complement included nineteen Catholic and twenty Protestant missionaries, but because their Protestant companions brought aboard wives and children, "We're outnumbered though

three to one.” A look at the lengthy passenger list however, dispelled their concerns that war might flare while they were on the high seas. Those businessmen and consular officials, thought the Notre Dame contingent, would never endanger their families by inserting them into a maelstrom. Sister Olivette felt confident enough that she discussed Christmas and wrote home that she would “send our Merry Christmas to you from Manila,” and Father McKee commented that, “If there was danger, why had the State Department issued us passports for travel in this area?”⁷

The presence of their escorting ship, the light cruiser U.S.S. *Boise* (CL-47), also reassured the group. “Our cruiser was like a mother hen to our five merchant vessels,” wrote Sister Olivette, “skirting around us, sometimes in front, sometimes in the rear but always on the alert sending out scouting planes which it was our delight to watch being catapulted from the cruiser and later picked up with a crane. The pilots knew we were an appreciative audience and usually flew low and close to give the *Grant* passengers a cheery wave.”⁸

An uneventful six-day trip delivered the six to Honolulu, Hawaii, on November 15, 1941. When an army officer took them on a tour of the military installations on Oahu, including Pearl Harbor, the weaponry posed an impressive spectacle. The sisters marveled at the array of battleships, cruisers, submarines, and torpedo boats that filled the harbor, which Sisters Olivette and Caecilius described as “the pride of the Pacific Fleet.” They scanned the thousands of mines neatly lined up and the aircraft that constantly arose from or landed on a massive aircraft carrier that dwarfed nearby vessels, and “were comfortably confident that no nation in the world would ever dare attack America, or Americans, no matter how far we might go.”⁹ The six sensed a heightened awareness among the soldiers that hostilities with Japan might soon occur but believed that if war erupted, it would never happen at the American naval bastion at Pearl Harbor.

Three days later the group gathered their belongings for the next leg on their journey, the Philippine Islands, which would be their final stop before reaching India. A convoy of four ships, again escorted by the cruiser U.S.S. *Boise*, lifted anchor on November 18, but military restrictions introduced a mood more somber than that of the pleasant trip to Hawaii. Passengers were required to adhere to a rigid blackout

each night and refrain from smoking on deck after dusk. Rather than approach Manila from the usual northern route, which placed the ships between Japan and the Philippines, the convoy entered through the San Bernardino Strait hundreds of miles to the south.

On December 4 the convoy passed the military stronghold of Corregidor, an island that safeguarded the entrance to Manila Bay, and docked at Pier Seven in Manila. Each day the missionaries left the ship to visit Manila's attractions, but returned with the other passengers every evening to spend the night aboard ship.

On one of their jaunts into the city, Brother Rex and a few others shared a leisurely evening stroll through the city's avenues with a Filipino engineer named Mr. Lim, a daily communicant who worked for the Philippine government. When their conversation turned to the possibility that Japan and the United States would soon be at war, Mr. Lim expressed his fear that hostilities between the two governments were likely to erupt. "Of course," explained Brother Rex, "we told him that Japan would not dare attack us. And if they were so silly, the American fleet would sail boldly up and let loose with guns, and that would be the end of that."¹⁰ A practice air raid on December 6 hinted that rather than being a distant specter, war loomed near, but the six missionaries remained confident that they would reach their postings in India.

AFTER FAILING to convince President Roosevelt to lift the embargo on oil and other products, the Japanese prepared for war. Tension mounted in Washington and Tokyo, and Father Duffy, now promoted to major and named force chaplain, Northern Luzon Force, by MacArthur, saw little prospect for continued peace. The military canceled all leaves and placed its forces on alert.

When American codebreakers intercepted a Japanese message to diplomats in Washington ordering them to destroy sensitive documents and to present a note to the United States at 1:00 p.m. on December 7, Roosevelt knew that war was imminent. Warnings raced to every American military post in the Pacific, cautioning that hostile action by Japan could be expected within days. Most observers believed war would start either in the Far East or in the Philippines and discounted Pearl Harbor as a likely target. In the event of war, the United States would have time to organize its navy in Hawaiian waters before sending it across the Pacific to engage the enemy.

“It Was the Bloodiest and Goriest Mess I Have Ever Seen”

In the Philippines, Father Duffy tried his best to maintain a normal schedule. With war clouds gathering, Father Duffy figured that a typical sermon for his Mass on December 7—December 6 at Pearl Harbor, which rested on the other side of the International Date Line—focusing on charity or on treating one another with decency would miss the mark. His congregation, all of whom might be dodging bullets and bombs before Christmas, required more.

Father Duffy reminded his audience that both he and they must be prepared to meet God, “for we know not when God would call us.” He emphasized that “some of us might not be here tomorrow for we know not the day nor the hour when we would be called to give an account of our stewardship,”¹¹ and reminded them that he would be available at any time to hear confessions.

Father Duffy had just finished his morning Mass on December 8 when he heard over the radio that the Japanese had attacked the Hawaiian naval base. The men around him reacted calmly, as they had long assumed war with Japan was inevitable, but the location for the opening assault surprised most. Duffy met with two officers, and the trio agreed that the Philippines would soon be attacked.

They were correct. Fifty-four Japanese bombers and thirty-six fighters from Taiwan struck Clark Field shortly after noon. Men leaving the mess hall after lunch gazed skyward at the noise and, for a moment, marveled at the stunning V formation of the incoming aircraft. Their reverie ended when the fighters dropped bombs and strafed the neatly parked American aircraft. The announcement, “Tallyho! Bandits over Clark!” shot through the base. Don Bell, a popular radio news commentator, somberly told his audience, “There is an unconfirmed report that they’re bombing Clark Field.”¹²

Duffy grabbed his helmet, jumped into his car, and raced toward headquarters, eluding the bullets and bombs that at one point forced him to abandon the vehicle and take refuge in a trench. Smoke and fire enveloped nearby hangars and buildings, and smoldering heaps of mangled steel were all that remained of those shiny fighters that once gleamed on the runway.

Duffy ran to the field, littered with dead and wounded, to hear confessions and administer Last Rites. He then rushed to the Fort

Stotsenburg Hospital, where he again administered Last Rites to any dying serviceman he came across, opting to avoid wasting precious moments by checking about the soldier's faith. "I knew it would be effective for the members of my faith & that it would do the others no harm," he explained later. "There wasn't sufficient time for inquiry about religious tenets of the wounded."¹³

The attack ended in minutes, leaving Clark Field in shambles. Every American fighter and all but three of the large Flying Fortress bombers lay in ruins, a total of ninety-six American aircraft now resembling crushed metallic spiders more than weapons of war. Combined with the successful raid against Pearl Harbor, the Japanese had neutered the two main American military bastions in the Pacific.

Tension dominated the ensuing hours. Soldiers slept next to their weapons so they could be ready to repel the Japanese invasion force expected to follow. Father Duffy comforted the wounded at the hospital before hurrying to the morgue, where he anointed the Catholics and participated in a multid denominational funeral service for almost one hundred dead. Father Duffy had witnessed much in his time as a priest, but nothing compared with the bodies of men so disfigured that they had to be buried without identification. "It was the bloodiest and goriest mess I had ever seen up to that time," he later wrote.¹⁴

After an exhausting day, Father Duffy returned to his quarters, where he shared a quick drink with two officers and tried to comprehend the day's stunning events. A phone call from headquarters informed Duffy that because the navy had sustained such devastating damage at Pearl Harbor, the likelihood of reinforcements or supplies filtering through to MacArthur's forces in the next six weeks was negligible. He would not have much time to think about food or additional troops anyway, as over the next four days he buried 112 soldiers and Filipino civilians.

THE LACK OF reinforcements was dire news for another Notre Dame graduate, Captain Richard E. Carberry, who served with the Forty-Fifth Combat Team, Philippine Scouts, not far from Duffy. After completing graduate studies at Notre Dame in 1931, the native of Panora, Iowa, turned to the priesthood and became an army chaplain in 1940. Born October 15, 1905, he came from a long line of Domers: his brother, John, played offensive end on Knute Rockne's 1929 undefeated national

championship team, and his two other brothers graduated from Notre Dame. Carberry was well respected in his unit by officers and enlisted, Catholic and Protestant. He enjoyed working with the elite scout unit but, like Duffy, feared that the forces then in the Philippines would be inadequate to counter any Japanese assault. No matter what, Carberry intended to be with his combat team, tending to their spiritual needs on the front lines while the soldiers handled military matters.

“Her Days of Suffering Were at Hand”

Aboard the *Grant*, the Holy Cross missionaries also experienced a torturous first day of war. Fathers McKee and Lawyer turned on a radio after enjoying supper in a Manila rectory. A Dutch news broadcast out of Indonesia described the fragile Pacific situation, and when the commentator explained that communications in that area with Japan had been severed, one of their hosts muttered, “That means war in this part of the world.”¹⁵ Father Lawyer relayed the news to Brothers Rex and Theodore, who reacted with stunned silence.

After witnessing the assemblage of naval power at Pearl Harbor only a few weeks earlier, Sister Olivette had trouble digesting the information. “I think maybe we were even more shocked because having just been there and seen the mighty array of ships and planes and the defense preparation it never occurred to us that such a thing could happen,” she wrote in a letter to her friends at Saint Mary’s. “It seemed like we were so well prepared.” Sister Olivette and her companions hurried to the radio, hoping to learn more about the calamity. “But sudden fear was soon overruled by confident indignation. America, we knew, would settle the attack vigorously, promptly, effectively.”¹⁶

That afternoon the captain of the ship assembled the passengers and told them that for their safety, they had to leave the vessel and find quarters in the city, as the ship would likely be a prime target for Japanese bombers. He added that once they had found quarters, they should leave the address with him so he could contact them when the ship was ready to depart. McKee, Lawyer, and the two brothers found housing at a Jesuit college, the Ateneo de Manila, while the nuns took refuge with a group of Maryknoll Sisters at St. Paul’s Hospital. The six missionaries assumed they would only temporarily be at their new quarters,

as, according to Sister Olivette, “we all thought it would be only a few weeks and our army and navy would settle this upstart of an enemy!”¹⁷ They decided to send one person from the group back to the ship each day for updates.

Their journey from the vessel to their new quarters in Manila, now blacked out, provided an eerie introduction to war. Gunshots interrupted the calm, guards manned posts, and buses collected Japanese residents to take them to holding centers. When Sisters Olivette and Caecilius arrived at the hospital, they had to use flashlights to find their way in the blacked-out building. Illumination emitted only from the surgical and delivery rooms, but workers had painted the windows black to prevent light from shining outside.

Tension heightened during the night, when two Japanese air attacks lambasted military installations. “At midnight the siren sounded its first mournful wail,” wrote Sister Olivette, “warning Manila that her days of suffering were at hand.”¹⁸ The nuns gathered the Filipino nurses in the chapel adjoining the first-floor patient wards, where the group recited the Rosary to keep their minds off the bombings.

At the Ateneo, the bombing of Nichols Field two miles to the south knocked Brother Rex and his companions from their beds on the third floor. When Japanese aircraft arrived for a second air attack an hour later, Rex and a large group rushed to a bomb shelter, where they remained for the rest of the night. The next day sixty Japanese aircraft flew over Manila and bombed the massive navy yards at Cavite ten miles distant, while other planes dropped leaflets informing Filipino residents, “We are here to finish the war and liberate the Filipinos from American rule.”¹⁹

The four male Notre Dame missionaries offered their assistance to the wounded and dying, now tending to bodies disfigured by bombs and sliced by shrapnel instead of ministering to civilian parishioners in India as planned. “We had our first baptism of blood as we walked among the many Cavite victims brought from that raid to nearby Philippine General Hospital,”²⁰ wrote McKee.

Their spirits rose when they listened to the radio broadcast of President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s powerful speech asking Congress to declare war. “Our patriotism and sense of injustice done were stirred by a rebroadcast of President Roosevelt’s speech,”²¹ wrote Sister Olivette of Roosevelt’s “Day of Infamy” address.

Sisters Olivette and Caecilius treated numerous patients pouring in from the Cavite naval base as well as civilian families injured in the bombings. One Chinese family, consisting of an aunt, a grandmother, two young boys, and an infant, hobbled in to be treated for lacerations. Despite witnessing the recent death of the mother of the three children, the group impressed Sister Olivette with their stoic demeanor as the sisters mended their wounds. "They were so wonderfully patient I marveled at them," wrote Sister Olivette, "even the little children didn't utter a sound and they all had shrapnel wounds."

The grandmother, in particular, stood out. "The old lady was a marvelous study of patient, resigned suffering and seeing her one realized that the Chinese would never be conquered by bullets, that anyone who could take pain and suffering like that would conquer in the end." The elderly woman served as an example for Sister Olivette as to how she might deal with issues she had never imagined she might one day face.

While Fathers Lawyer and McKee visited as many hospitals as possible to comfort the wounded and dying, at the U.S. Army's invitation the sisters and staff of St. Paul's Hospital commenced a move to a building of the Philippine Women's University being used as a military hospital. Throughout December 13 the staff moved every item from St. Paul's to their new location, a three-story structure offering patient wards, operating and X-ray rooms, administrative offices, and a chapel on the first floor, a second floor for patients able to climb the stairs, and dormitories on the third floor. In scouring the walls, windows, and floors, the sisters encountered roaches so large that one soldier told Sister Olivette, "If we had those in Texas we'd saddle 'em and ride 'em."²²

"Nobody Seemed to Know If They Were Coming or Going"

Despite the gloomy outlook, MacArthur and his top aide, Major General Jonathan M. Wainwright, had to mount an effective defense and hope that they could hold off the Japanese until reinforcements arrived. The island of Corregidor, thirty miles from Manila and two and a half miles south of Bataan Peninsula, stood guard at the approaches to Manila Bay. The "Rock," as the island was called, housed artillery and machine-gun emplacements along with Malinta Tunnel, a vast,

labyrinthine complex able to hold supplies, hospital wards, and ten thousand soldiers. MacArthur counted that his forces on Corregidor could prevent enemy shipping from entering Manila Bay and give his land units time to hold off any Japanese assault until help appeared.

Father Duffy doubted MacArthur could succeed. Troops meandered about Clark Field with little apparent guidance, and “nobody seemed to know if they were coming or going.”²³ Shorn of his air force by the Japanese on the first day, MacArthur possessed little with which to prevent further bombing raids.

By the middle of December Father Duffy had joined Wainwright’s Northern Luzon Force, situated near Rosales, north of Manila. MacArthur had posted forces to that area to counter the expected Japanese landings in Lingayen Gulf to the north and ordered Wainwright to hold at the beaches as long as possible before falling back to the second line of defense along the Agno River, one hundred miles north of Manila.

Three days before Christmas, 43,000 Japanese troops of Lieutenant General Masaharu Homma’s Fourteenth Army stormed ashore in Lingayen Gulf. Homma outfoxed Wainwright, who expected them to arrive near the mouth of the Agno where he and his men waited, by landing forty miles up the coast where few defenses existed. Within twenty-four hours Wainwright informed MacArthur that he could not hold the Lingayen beach area against Homma’s fast-moving forces and asked permission to withdraw behind the Agno River. MacArthur approved and implemented the war plan that called for an orderly retreat of American and Filipino forces into Bataan Peninsula, where they would hold out until reinforcements arrived.

Wainwright named Duffy chief of army chaplains for the First Philippine Corps and assigned him to a tent with Colonel Frank Nelson, a member of Wainwright’s staff. Much as he found elsewhere, however, the enemy controlled the skies, and most of the inexperienced Filipino troops had been rushed to the front with little training.

Conditions deteriorated December 24 when a second Japanese force landed in Lamon Bay, southeast of Manila, and hammered MacArthur’s line on another front. Combined with Homma’s men near Lingayen Gulf, a Japanese pincer closed from the north and southeast on the already weary American and Filipino units. Realizing he could do little to halt the enemy, MacArthur hastened the withdrawal into

Bataan, established his headquarters on Corregidor, and hoped that he could collect enough supplies in Bataan and extricate all his units before the Japanese cut across the peninsula's top and sealed the door.

Stationed with Wainwright's forces in the north, Father Duffy faced a 150-mile retreat through dense jungles laced with streams. Their task was to hold the enemy along the Agno as long as possible before falling back to three more defensive lines standing between Homma and Bataan, mounting a defense at each barrier to impede the Japanese before withdrawing to the next line. Realizing he might not have a second chance to contact family in the United States, Duffy sent a hurried cable: "Well. Merry Christmas."²⁴

Father Duffy worked around the clock tending to his men and looking after some of the thousands of Filipino civilians hoping to evade Homma's soldiers and reach Bataan. Parents grasping children struggled to keep pace with the stream of soldiers, trucks, and ox carts as the forlorn columns meandered along dirt highways and jungle paths toward Bataan. Clouds of dust and silent prayers from despairing parents spiraled heavenward amid the chaos.

MacArthur ordered Wainwright to delay Homma until January 8, at which time the final units would have reached Bataan and the main bridges could be blown. When the Japanese crossed the Agno River the day after Christmas, however, Homma enjoyed a clear path to Manila. In hopes of preventing further damage, MacArthur declared Manila an open city, meaning he did not intend to make a stand in the urban center. He revised his plan and ordered the key bridge at Calumpit and other locations destroyed on January 1.

MacArthur's army, including Father Duffy and Father Carberry, was now sealed in a peninsula, with the sea on three sides and Japanese on the fourth.

"We Were Well Aware That We Were Prisoners"

In the meantime, the six Notre Dame missionaries made certain that each day one of their number journeyed to the harbor to check on the passenger ship due to transport them to India. They recoiled in dismay when, one day, the individual discovered that, without notice to anyone, the ship had departed and stranded the missionaries in Manila. They

could now do nothing but help the burgeoning number of wounded, hope that American relief forces rushed to their rescue, and attempt to get word home that they were unharmed. "Greetings," Sister Olivette and Sister Caecilius wrote in a December 22 telegram. "Safe. Army nursing with Maryknolls."²⁵

To pass the time and to improve morale, Brother Rex and Father McKee joined a choir organized by the Jesuits that moved from hospital to hospital singing Christmas carols to the patients. Brother Rex had attended many Christmas Midnight Masses and other celebrations set amid the beautiful surroundings of Notre Dame's Church of the Sacred Heart, but he could not think of one that topped his Christmas in Manila that year. He was overjoyed that "they were able to help the wounded boys thrill once more to the songs that they had grown up on." As the choir sang, Rex scanned the crowd of wounded and noticed tears coursing down their cheeks while they listened to "the strains of 'Silent Night,' and the other songs they knew so well." The image moved him, and "it made us feel good to know that we had brought a little bit of Christmas to the poor boys." As a youth he had reveled in the family Christmas tree, bedecked with shiny ornaments and bulging with gifts underneath, but "Christmas of 1941 will live in my memory as one of the happiest I have ever spent. With all the tinsel taken from it, one had to go back to the real spiritual meaning of the feast."

Dismal news soon dispelled the joy. On Christmas morning army officials informed the group that Japanese forces would enter Manila some time that evening. Tanks and trucks, accompanied by lines of retreating American and Filipino soldiers, coursed through Manila on their way to Bataan Peninsula, thirty miles west of the city across Manila Bay. "It was a discouraged and saddened group of priests and brothers who waited through the long Christmas afternoon," wrote Brother Rex. "Not much was said, but the general atmosphere was one of discouragement and fright. We had heard of the rape of Shanghai, and other acts of the Japanese, and all of us made sure that we were ready to face the worst when the Japanese arrived."²⁶

The stories of Shanghai, Nanking, and other conquered regions, where raucous troops plundered the towns, slaughtered thousands of civilians, and raped the women, had widely circulated. The missionaries hoped for fair treatment but feared the worst, especially for Sisters Olivette and Caecilius. Even before the Japanese arrived, looters had

turned once-proud Manila into an orgy of crime and mayhem. "Wholesale looting continues," Sister Olivette recorded in her diary. "Army gone. Constabulary disarmed."²⁷

The Japanese failed to enter the city that day as warned, but the missionaries, remaining by the side of their civilian patients, concluded that incarceration by the Japanese was imminent. Ignoring the risks, the priests and brothers left the comparative safety of the hospital to search for wounded and dying among the rubble of destroyed buildings, a mission of mercy that revealed some of war's most hideous images. They found one man pinned beneath a huge wooden girder with one leg almost totally severed, and another man so badly burned that when they tried to move him his skin slipped off "like the peeling coming from a boiled potato." Brother Rex wrote, "It was the first time that any of us had come so close to death, and the experience was upsetting." He added that "it was pitiful to see the poor people carrying their few belongings from their homes. Bundles of clothing; sewing machines; a pan or two. They never had much. Now they had nothing. I was beginning to understand the meaning of war."

He described MacArthur's designation of Manila as an open city "a shattering blow" but held onto the slim hope that help might yet arrive. When on December 29 American military forces systematically destroyed anything the Japanese might be able to use, setting afire reservoirs of oil and destroying facilities at the naval base at Cavite, "Spirits were down, tempers were short, and depression was great."

The Japanese arrived in the early morning darkness four days later. With daylight, Brother Rex saw that Japanese soldiers manned machine guns and stood behind sandbag barricades in front of their building. "We were interned,"²⁸ he gloomily concluded.

"The city was ringed by fire, ships in the nearby bay burning, buildings all over the city on fire," wrote Father McKee. "We waited for the Japanese, hoping for some sort of peace and order. Finally on January 2, 1942, in the dark of the night, we heard trucks and tanks as the Japanese Army entered the city."²⁹

Sister Caecilius first noticed the Rising Sun emblem when a troop carrier came into view a block away. "We waited in anxious suspense for the first contact with the enemy," she recalled. At 2:00 a.m. Japanese soldiers stood outside their front gate, demanding to be let in. Upon opening it, a squad rushed into the courtyard but neither entered the

building nor molested anyone. However, when the soldiers searched the missionaries and everyone else, “We were well aware that we were prisoners.”³⁰

Eager to gain the cooperation of the Filipinos, who as fervent Catholics were devoted to the priests and nuns, the Japanese at first refrained from mistreating the missionaries. Japanese officers met with the priests living at the Ateneo and decided that, instead of being confined with the American civilians interned at the University of Santo Tomas campus, the priests would remain at the college, where they could continue to assist nearby parishes. The Japanese gathered the Holy Cross and Maryknoll nuns at the Convent of the Assumption, then operated by a French order of sisters. The missionaries, who had earlier expected a quick resolution to the conflict, had now begun what would turn out to be a lengthy incarceration.

“What lay ahead of us?”³¹ wondered Father McKee.

“I Held Mass in a Different Place Each Day”

From January until early April, American and Filipino forces on Bataan battled the numerically superior and better-supplied Japanese. Although President Roosevelt had promised to send reinforcements, MacArthur could count only on the 15,000 American and 65,000 Filipino troops, most exhausted and hungry, already mounting defenses in Bataan, and on the supplies they brought into the fifteen-mile-wide and thirty-mile-long peninsula. The general hoped that Bataan’s mountainous terrain and thick jungles would impede the enemy long enough for him to strengthen his line of defense. Wainwright’s units, including the men served by Father Duffy and Father Carberry, occupied the western half of the peninsula.

Like the soldiers around him, Duffy went on half rations—approximately two thousand calories a day—to stretch the meager food supplies. Dry cereal, canned fruit, and onions provided the main sustenance, prodding soldiers to scour the jungles for other edible items.

Despite heroic efforts to halt the enemy from January 18 to 19, Wainwright had to pull his weaker forces back toward the peninsula’s southern half. Father Duffy accompanied the soldiers as they trod over rocky terrain and through jungles. He heard confessions and said Mass

for Filipino troops, and one night, when alerted that the Japanese were flanking the line, he volunteered to hurry back to an ammunition dump and arrange for bullets and artillery shells to be brought forward. The officer in charge of the artillery, Major A. L. Fitch, later told Duffy that his artillery shells helped detain the Japanese until the men could fall back to other positions. When Father Duffy asked how, the major replied, "Padre, it was an artilleryman's dream. There were targets in front of me, targets behind me and targets on both sides of me and we really had a field day until all the ammunition was expended. Thanks to you we had all there was in the area. We expended a lot of Japs."

By January 26 the weary soldiers had dug in along another defense line farther down the peninsula, hoping to slow the military juggernaut heading their way. Japanese snipers infiltrated the area, and the nonstop fighting littered the region with bodies. "Six weeks after," Duffy recalled, "the entire area stunk to high heaven tho we had buried everything we could recognize as a human."³²

As January waned, soldiers began to realize the futility in pinning their hopes on a reinforcement convoy. They scoffed at MacArthur's mid-January message that thousands of troops and hundreds of aircraft rushed their way from the United States and laughed when the general claimed that if they could hold on awhile longer, assistance was certain to arrive. Father Duffy later said that they were so short of everything, the men used to joke that "we ought to send Roosevelt a message and tell him our P-40 [fighter] was about worn out, and wouldn't they please send us over a new one." Conditions grew so desperate that in the middle of the month, in Washington, D.C., Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson could see no way that the nation could transport enough men and material to save the trapped men in the Philippines. Stimson concluded of the fighting, "There are times when men have to die."³³

WHILE SOLDIERS battled the Japanese and the hunger and malaria that daily ground them down, Fathers Duffy and Carberry faced one overriding duty: to bring God's comfort to those men. More accustomed to the peace and calm of a sacristy and pulpit, they made the jungles of Bataan their church and the infantry fighting and dying on the front lines their congregation. As head chaplain, Duffy told those he supervised, including Father Carberry, to be with the men at the

front rather than spending time behind the lines. Duffy could have remained at headquarters or at one of the two hospitals set up in Bataan, but he also chose to labor in the combat zones, knowing that location was where he was most needed.

"I held Mass in a different place each day,"³⁴ Duffy wrote of his attempts to make himself available to as many soldiers as possible. His churches ranged from small huts to open fields, where he celebrated Mass on altars made from used crates and broken wooden tables. He buried the dead, marked and registered grave sites, heard confessions from young men soon to face death, delivered orders under fire from commanders to troops, walked miles through the heavy jungle to join men at the front, and used a shortwave radio to relay hurried messages from soldiers to family back home. He was parent, friend, and confidant to young men in their time of greatest peril, and he remained with the men even after suffering minor wounds on January 1, for which he received the Purple Heart. He performed so capably that he earned praise as the World War II counterpart to World War I's acclaimed Father Francis Duffy, whose exploits with the Rainbow Division in Europe were legendary.

A United Press feature on the chaplains of Bataan stated, "Before a crude altar of stacked-up ammunition boxes over which a shelter tent had been placed as a cover, a middle-aged slightly-built American priest celebrated the Roman Catholic Mass." The article added that Father John E. Duffy of Toledo was now laboring somewhere in Bataan, "close enough to the front so that the rumble of guns provided an accompaniment for the priest's words." The article continued, "The chaplains on Bataan have many duties," a statement that was true for Father Carberry and the other chaplains for whom shell bursts and bullets became commonplace. "They aid in burials, operate aid stations and even deliver messages under shellfire as well as aid in bringing up supplies."³⁵

Father Duffy's work became so celebrated that the *New York Times* profiled him in an article and *Time* Magazine lauded his work in its February 23, 1942, issue. "Father Duffy, World War I chaplain of the famed Fighting 69th, has a namesake in Bataan, Father John E. Duffy of Toledo, who received the decoration of the Purple Heart for 'singularly meritorious action' when slightly wounded in action on New

Year's Day. He celebrates Mass at the front on an altar of ammunition boxes."³⁶

The noted magazine correspondent John Hersey mentioned the work of Father Duffy and other chaplains in his 1942 book *Men on Bataan*, published not long after the fighting in the peninsula had ended. Hersey explained to his audience in the United States that these religious individuals "did not just visit the fronts, but stayed there, bound by a duty which they considered just as imperative as military orders." Hersey added that "The things they did were many. They held divine services and said mass. They gave men decent burial. They comforted the wounded and cheered up the whole. They helped doctors at aid stations. When necessary they delivered messages under fire and pitched in on chores of supply. And they shared every peril."

Hersey singled out Father Duffy for praise. "There was a famous Father Duffy with MacArthur in the Rainbow Division in France; there was another with him on Bataan, Major John E. Duffy of Toledo, Ohio. This Father Duffy, of middle age, slightly built, and with a little gray among his blond hair, was a graduate of Notre Dame and of the Seminary of Mount Saint Mary's at Norwood, Ohio. He had been in the Army nine years when war came." Hersey continued, "You could see this Father Duffy, on a Sunday morning, saying mass in the jungle with some ammunition boxes for an altar and a shelter tent for a cathedral. Or you might find him taking the fingerprints of dead men, putting one set in a sealed container to go into the grave and keeping another for the records. Or you might find him with just one boy, away from the crowd, hearing the lad confess that he had cursed, that he had been afraid, that he had killed men."³⁷

The men who escaped the day's fighting, however briefly, to kneel at Mass and receive Holy Communion gained a sense of peace and comfort. "Went to church this morning to 8:30 mass said by Fr. Duffy in a leafy covering of jungle," Captain Tom Gerrity wrote in a February 15 diary entry that appeared in home-front newspapers. "During mass I pondered over the many masses I've heard under other circumstances, and yet how peaceful was this one even with gunfire and the drone of enemy planes."³⁸ Gerrity was able to elude the war, including the ear-splitting artillery exchange that flared during the Mass, while Father Duffy intoned the familiar Latin words and lifted the host and

wine during Consecration. Those moments forged a connection with home, with all that was familiar, with religion and decency.

By February 10, subsisting now on one-third rations, battling the sapping effects of malaria, and placing their dwindling hopes in a reinforcement convoy that seemed more mirage than real, morale slumped. “We were down to some rice and salmon, plus anything you could shoot and skin,” recalled Staff Sergeant William Nolan. “It was right about this time I began thinking our situation was hopeless, although a lot of the guys wouldn’t admit it and kept hoping for the convoy. We were thousands of miles from the States, on a peninsula being attacked on land by Japanese units and surrounded at sea by the Japanese Navy. Morale started to get lower and lower as soldiers got weaker and weaker. We had no cover from mosquitoes at night because we slept at our positions, and guys were so sick they couldn’t do a hell of a lot.”³⁹

NOT FAR from Duffy, Father Carberry fended off exhaustion to aid his weary, famished men. “I am on my way to Corregidor to see if I might get a few cigarettes for the officers and men,” he wrote on February 16 to his family. “I think no one will argue about the brand anymore so will not have to get a few of each kind.” Carberry admitted that the last few months, during which he had helped almost 900 dependents of soldiers evacuate the islands and had anointed 230 dying troops at aid stations near the front lines, had taken a heavy toll. “There have been times when I have longed for the hills of Guthrie County [Iowa], but have always thanked God daily for the jungle of Bataan as that has been our friend daily since the start of the war.” The priest lost all his belongings when Manila fell into Japanese hands and, he noted, “I killed a cobra snake one night with my bolo when I was about to pitch my blanket,” but he termed the fighting by United States and Filipino troops “our glorious stand.” While he wished that he had news from home—he had heard nothing about his ailing father since November—he told family, “Do not worry about me. I am saying Mass here for the troops and really liking the war.”⁴⁰

Father Carberry followed the men of the Forty-Fifth Combat Team wherever they moved, whether to a static defensive line or into combat. When danger was at its greatest, Carberry inspired the men not with a stirring Knute Rockne speech, but with his actions. When the column of vehicles in which Carberry rode came under intense

mortar, machine-gun, and small-arms fire, Carberry repeatedly ran up and down the length of the convoy, ignoring shell bursts and bullet ricochets to help the wounded and calm the others. He lent hope “at the height of danger,” according to the citation for the Silver Star he received for this valor, with his “utter disregard of his own safety”⁴¹ in ministering to the men.

“At Last, the Blow Fell”

In their Manila convent, Sisters Olivette and Caecilius kept track of developments by surreptitiously listening to broadcasts over a radio left behind by an army nurse. Each evening, alone in the dark and with the radio tuned to a low volume, the nuns heard daily reports from Corregidor and prayed that Japanese guards did not burst in and remove their sole contact with the outside world.

Their morale at first remained high, as they believed that a relief force rushed to their rescue. “We were sure that reinforcements from home would arrive,” wrote Sister Olivette, “that MacArthur was winning all the battles, that it was only a question of time, and not too long a time, before the tide turned.” The sisters, along with thousands of other civilians trapped in the Philippines, failed to grasp that MacArthur’s military units fought a hopeless cause. “That a desperate beleaguered garrison was ‘whistling in the dark’ to keep up its courage and that of its listeners did not occur to us,”⁴² Sister Olivette later wrote.

Little by little, however, their hopes dissipated as first one American-Filipino unit, and then another, yielded. With defeat almost a certainty, on February 22 President Roosevelt ordered MacArthur to leave the Philippines, reestablish his command in Australia, and organize American forces for future offensives against the Japanese. On March 11, one day after he handed command of all troops on Luzon to Wainwright, the general and his family departed. Upon arriving in Australia, MacArthur uttered his famous words, “I came through and I shall return!”⁴³

Six days later Father Duffy alerted his superior in Toledo, Bishop Karl J. Alter, that he was holding up under the trying conditions. “Just a line to let you know I’m still among the living and continuing daily to do the work assigned me among our Catholic men.” He informed Alter

that he had been wounded in January, "but only slightly. It was taken care of by a medical officer but I did not have to go to a hospital." Despite inadequate food, enemy assaults, exhaustion, and diarrhea, he kept busy administering the Sacraments and saying Mass, and added that "Everything is going along as well as we could hope for under the circumstances."⁴⁴

Conditions deteriorated in the face of swift advances by the numerically superior Japanese. At one location Duffy came upon Japanese bodies piled forty high. "Constant feints at our front lines in both corps," he wrote of this desperate time. "Continuous daily air raids with little effect. Starvation diet of 6 ounces of food per day per man doing most damage. Hospital filled. Men down with malaria, dengue, dysentery, in the lines so weak hardly had strength to pull triggers on guns but constant artillery fire kept enemy off balance."⁴⁵ In early March the chaplain sustained a second wound, which required hospitalization for ten days, after which Duffy returned to the front lines.

Later that month Wainwright informed Washington that he had only enough food to last until mid-April. In the few moments when Father Duffy was able to visit his friend behind the lines, he and General Wainwright discussed the swirl of events, "and legion are the times that I have seen his eyes fill and the tears roll down his strong manly face for the men lost in that day's battle." One night Wainwright told Duffy about the two officers he dispatched with orders to stem a Japanese assault threatening to break the lines. Both died carrying out the order, "and that night as we sat around our headquarters, the tears streamed down the General's cheeks because those men had been lost. In fact there was not a day during the dark days in northern Luzon and the darker days in Bataan that the General did not worry about his wounded and his dead." While General MacArthur received the lion's share of praise, Duffy contended that Wainwright's calm presence and simple decency "did more to encourage the men and give them a will to fight, and was more responsible than any other single factor for the courageous stand that a handful of Americans and some untrained Filipinos made against the invading hordes of Bushidoists."⁴⁶

As Wainwright prepared to leave Bataan to succeed MacArthur on Corregidor, Duffy told Wainwright that, like MacArthur, he would likely be ordered out of the Philippines as well. "No, Duffy, I will never leave my men," replied Wainwright, who vowed to continue to fight from the island fortress until either help, death, or surrender came.

While his friend relocated to Corregidor, Father Duffy remained in Bataan with two of Wainwright's aides, knowing there was nothing anyone could do but wait for the inevitable: surrender and likely an indeterminate stint in captivity. The priest, however, remained defiant. "Lack of food, disease and death finally defeated us, not the Japs."⁴⁷

DURING THE first week of April, General Homma sent a message asking Wainwright to surrender all forces on Bataan and Corregidor. After receiving the American general's refusal, on April 3, Good Friday, Homma unleashed an assault that six days later forced Major General Edward P. King Jr., commander of the Luzon forces following Wainwright's move to Corregidor, to capitulate and relinquish the men under his command, including Fathers Duffy and Carberry.

"At last, the blow fell. Huddled in the darkness about our radio we heard the ominous words: 'Bataan has fallen!'" wrote Sister Olivette. Soldiers on Bataan reacted with a mixture of incredulity and resignation. Though it was a bitter pill to swallow, most had already accepted that their predicament would end either in death or captivity. "Actually, the surrender came as kind of a relief," remembered Staff Sergeant Nolan. "We'd no longer have to fight, and we thought we'd be treated halfway decent, maybe even be swapped for Japanese diplomats. There was a feeling of, 'Oh boy, this is over!' Little did we know how much worse it was to get."⁴⁸

While the Japanese celebrated with parades through Manila's streets and salutes to their emperor, Father McKee refused to yield the slim hope for an American relief expedition, dimmed though it had been with the fall of Bataan. "Our question now was: could the small force now left on the tiny island of Corregidor, two miles south of the tip of Bataan, hold out until help would come from America?"⁴⁹

"Lord, Have Mercy on Your Servant"

With word of the surrender quickly spreading, on the dusty, winding roads that inched along Manila Bay on Bataan's eastern coast there occurred a ten-day atrocity that would soon be labeled by a shocked world as the Bataan Death March. Hastily drawn Japanese plans for prisoner evacuation produced chaos and brutality for the priests and soldiers.

According to those plans, the prisoners would be gathered at San Fernando after a march of up to fifty-five miles and then transported thirty-three additional miles by truck and train to Camp O'Donnell, seventy miles northwest of Manila. Four food stops existed along the route, supplemented by rest stations with water and sanitary facilities every mile, and the Japanese established two hospitals for those too weak or injured to move.

Unfortunately, plans never became reality. The Japanese, already logistically stretched by their advances in British Malaya and the Netherlands East Indies, lacked enough food to share with the American and Filipino captives. They underestimated the physical condition of the prisoners, many of whom were in no shape to walk the miles asked of them, and the Japanese assumed they would have to care for only 25,000 to 35,000 prisoners, one-third of the actual number.

What was to be an organized movement of prisoners quickly disintegrated. As men shuffled north along the peninsula from Mariveles on Bataan's southern edge on April 10, Japanese troops advancing in the opposite direction looted and beat the prisoners. Father Carberry learned to be especially wary of trucks filled with Japanese soldiers, who made a gruesome game out of smacking prisoners with their rifles. The captives trudged along hour after hour on the dusty road, stumbling without water to quench a thirst aggravated by the ninety-five-degree heat. More than once, a parched prisoner dashed from the line toward muddy water along the road, only to be shot dead before he reached the puddle.

"Extreme Unction, Baptism, Confessions administered daily on march," wrote Father Duffy. "Death, pestilence, hunger, exhaustion, depleted all. Beatings, decapitations, executions beleaguered an exhausted, defeated army that had fought three months on seven ounces of food per day until there was no more food, medicine, or ammunition. In disgrace, exhausted, we were driven like cattle along that march, and the weak, exhausted and sick were slain or left to perish."⁵⁰

"It was terrible to keep walking when you were barely able to lift your feet above a shuffle," said Staff Sergeant Nolan. "Those who fell on the side of the road were either bayoneted, shot, or trucks ran over them. I kept going by focusing on what I was doing and not thinking about the atrocities. More men died each day, but they gradually became simply more men dead—I was alive and concentrated on that."⁵¹

At one point Reverend Robert P. Taylor, a Baptist chaplain and one of Father Duffy's closest friends, rushed over to assist men to their feet before guards could beat them. He heard a familiar voice say, "Down but not out, eh, Preston?" When the cleric realized it was his fellow chaplain, also helping men rise, he replied, "Never out, Duff. Never out."

Taylor glanced at the priest, normally bedecked in a crisp uniform and priestly accoutrements, and realized how much of a toll the recent weeks had been on Duffy. The tattered pants of the now-barefoot priest hardly covered his legs, and the usually clean-shaven man sported a thick, matted black beard. "If your bishop catches you without your robes, he'll excommunicate you," joked Taylor, trying to lighten the misery a bit. "If he saw me now, he'd vomit, I stink so bad,"⁵² answered Duffy.

The lengthy line of men sometimes walked through dust so thick that they could barely see ten yards ahead. They discarded packs, helmets, and other items to lighten their load, but nothing could block out the bloated, decaying bodies, bayoneted earlier by Japanese guards, that lay by the roadside and emitted a sickening stench.

Guards stationed every twenty to thirty feet prodded the captives with their bayonets to maintain a steady pace. One guard, nicknamed the Shadow by other prisoners, glared so often at Father Duffy that Taylor warned him to immediately obey any order, but the Shadow seemed to have selected Duffy as his personal target. On one occasion, the guard stared at the crucifix dangling from a chain around Duffy's neck, thrust the tip of his bayonet toward Duffy, severed the chain, and flung the crucifix into the dust. Any time Duffy slowed his walk, the Shadow battered the priest's face with the butt of his rifle, so Taylor purposely started to walk behind Duffy so he could help support his friend should he begin to falter.

The Japanese often made the prisoners stand in the tropical sun for ten to twelve hours and then resume marching to see which of the exhausted men collapsed. Failure to keep pace with the line usually resulted in a bayonet thrust to the back. Duffy said later that at that time, "it was all that I could do to carry my own freight."⁵³

Duffy's group reached the first stop midway up the peninsula within two to three days. For the first time since surrendering, the men enjoyed a little rest, water, and a small portion of rice and salt. Duffy

used the time to administer Last Rites to a group of twenty-five Americans teetering on the brink of death. Though three other stops stood along the route, they offered little comfort. A rice paddy enclosed by barbed wire housed the prisoners at Orani, but by the time Duffy reached the town, the stench from human waste and dead bodies from earlier arrivals was more than anyone could bear.

Five days after he started the excruciating march, just above Orani, Father Duffy witnessed charity and compassion from the least-expected place. When Duffy again stumbled and fell, a group of guards beat and kicked the exhausted priest. After they left, another guard lagged behind and asked the prone Duffy what he might do to help. When Duffy pleaded for a drink, the guard left, but soon returned with a cup of tea. The Japanese soldier helped Duffy take a few sips, handed him biscuits, and cautioned him to catch up with the group ahead before other guards bayoneted him. Duffy, refreshed by the tea and biscuits and uplifted by the guard's humanity, struggled to his feet and, with agonizing effort, rejoined Reverend Taylor and the other fatigued men. He avoided certain death due to what Duffy later described as "one Jap's act of kindness."⁵⁴

The unforgiving sun intensified as the morning hours stretched into the afternoon and transformed the roads into suffocating, dust-covered paths. Dirt matted their hair and clogged their nostrils, and the perspiring men trod paths littered with the human waste left by dysentery-stricken captives. Duffy kept pace by placing one foot in front of the other, focusing on one step at a time while blocking out the brutality so shockingly evident along the road.

"We plowed along like cattle, and played mental tricks with ourselves by thinking that something better waited for us just up the road," said Staff Sergeant Nolan. "Every once in awhile, if the guards weren't looking and there was some water by the road, we'd try to quickly scoop some up, even though we could see dead Americans lying in it."⁵⁵

The ragged line of prisoners meandered past ditches clogged with American and Filipino bodies—many beheaded. One American officer counted twenty-seven headless bodies before forcing himself to keep his eyes fixed on the man in front of him to banish the gruesome sights.

Reverend Taylor slowed his pace to rejoin Father Duffy and encouraged the obviously weakened priest to keep moving. "It'll soon be night, Duff. Then they'll let us rest." The priest complied but asked the

Baptist minister to recite the words of the Catholic Last Rites over him, should he be unable to continue. "Don't think about it, Duff," the chaplain replied. "Think of night and rest."⁵⁶

On April 22, eleven days after the march began, between the towns of Guagua and Bacolor, an elderly Filipino woman risked the guards' anger by offering water to Father Duffy. He had started lifting the cup to his mouth when his nemesis, the Shadow, smashed Duffy's face with his rifle butt, thrusting the cup inward with such force that the priest spat blood and teeth. Duffy dropped to his knees and was uttering a prayer when the Shadow ran his bayonet through Duffy's side, put his foot on the slumping priest, and yanked the blade out.

Neither knowing nor caring how the guard would react, Reverend Taylor knelt beside his friend and held Duffy's head in his hands. "Lord, have mercy on your servant," said Taylor of the priest he assumed was dying. "He's a good man who served you well. Receive his soul."⁵⁷ A Paulist priest, Father Thomas Scecina, came upon the scene and, also thinking the priest was dying, anointed Father Duffy.

Taylor left his companion when the Shadow threatened to do the same to Taylor if he did not rejoin the line. Before he had gone far, though, Taylor glanced back to see some Filipinos dragging Duffy, still alive, into the jungle. Taylor hoped that Duffy might somehow survive but doubted he would ever see the priest again.

While kind Filipinos carried Father Duffy away, at another point in the line Father Carberry reached the final resting place at San Fernando, an important rail center nine miles from Lubao. A twenty-five-mile train ride from San Fernando to Capas preceded an eight-mile march into temporary quarters at Camp O'Donnell. Guards crammed Carberry and one hundred captives into boxcars designed to carry forty and heated by a blistering midday sun. "We had to stand up because there was no space to sit down," said Staff Sergeant Nolan. Soon, as vomit and fecal material from dysentery sloshed about the floor, some yielded hope. "Guys were so sick and weak," explained Nolan, "that they didn't care anymore"⁵⁸ and perished in the oppressive heat of the boxcars.

The Death March ended in late April 1942, by which time an estimated 600 to 650 Americans had succumbed. Any slim hopes of rescue disappeared on May 6 when General Wainwright, realizing the futility of the situation and hoping to save American lives, announced

the surrender of all forces in the Philippines to the Japanese. The general sent a message to President Roosevelt which included the moving words, "With broken heart and head bowed in sadness but not in shame, I report to your excellency that today I must arrange terms for the surrender." He added, "There is a limit of human endurance and that limit has long since been passed."⁵⁹

For Fathers Duffy and Carberry, as well as for the missionaries in Manila, the war would now be fought in a series of prison camps while the United States geared up for a lengthy and bloody march across the Pacific. The soldiers on Corregidor had comprised their last shred of hope, but its surrender doomed them to isolation in a Japanese-controlled country. "Finally, on May 6th," wrote Sister Olivette, "we listened in helpless silence as the voice of General Wainwright read the order to his forces on the Philippine Islands to join him in surrender. We were prisoners of war!"⁶⁰

AT THE same time that Duffy, Carberry, and the six missionaries disappeared into prison camps, America's military opened the doors to millions of young men and women who rushed to serve their nation in its battle against Germany and Japan. Among those millions were twenty-seven other Notre Dame priests, each wanting to minister in the arena where soldiers most needed their services: the battlefield.

American military units were commencing the long road to victory in Europe and the Pacific. Rescue at some distant point was on the way, but would it arrive too late for Notre Dame's eight religious held captive by the Japanese?