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FOR THE ST. BONAVENTURE ATHLETIC HALL OF FAME.

I. REVEREND JAMES DOLAN, O.F.M. (1861 - 1897)

Material from The Laurel, Vol, 26 (1924 - 1925) inclosed:

He was the founder of Athletics at St. Bonaventure, particularly of baseball, and A close friend of John J. McGraw and Hugh Jennings.

In 1894 he founded the James Dolan Literary Association, which still exists on campus today under its Greek Letter name: Iota Delta Alpha.

From 1894 until 1897 he was Vice President of St. Bonaventure College, and Professor of Rhetoric and Belles-Lattres.

From an interview with Fr. Maurice Scheier, O.F.M., who remembers ^{CONCERNING} him:

At that time there were three classes of student at St. Bonaventure: The Prep School students, the Collegians, and the Seminarians. Thanks to Father James' inspiration, each class had its baseball team. That meant that there were twelve teams competing (four from each group, according to classes), and that there were baseball games every afternoon, weather permitting. Our beloved Father Joseph Butler, O.F.M., the College President, was an enthusiastic spectator at those games.

The prominent position baseball held at St. Bonaventure brought the College to the attention of John Mc Graw and Hugh Jennings.



THE LATE FATHER JAMES DOLAN, O. F. M.

Autobiography of Father Dolan

By JOSEPH BITER

IF one were to glance over the annals of St. Bonaventure College, he would find there written the lives of men which contain many sacrifices in connection with the Franciscan Fathers. And by dwelling a short time he would find there recorded, the deeds of men that are indeed true Heroes, yet their deeds are not written on the pages of history, unknown to the world. And why? Because they worked for their one Great Master, their God.

Such a man then was Father James Dolan, O. F. M. the founder of the modern James Dolan Literary Association, of this College. Founder also of Athletics at St. Bonaventure, particularly baseball, he enjoyed an intimate acquaintance with John J. McGraw and Hugh Jennings, both of whom are famous in the baseball world.

The Life of Father Dolan like that of all great men was all too short. He was born in the Village of Allegany, N. Y. that lies hemmed in by the Allegany mountains. Educated in the Parochial school, he came to St. Bonaventure College where he later joined the Franciscan Order, where he was ordained to the Holy Priesthood in the year 1886. Shortly after his ordination he was appointed to one of the Franciscan Churches in New York city. There he served until the year 1893. He then returned to St. Bona's College where from the year 1894 until 1897 the time of his death he was Vice President of St. Bonaventure and occupied the chair of Rhetoric or Belles Lettres, succeeding the Hon. Joseph Scott, L. L. D.

It was in the year of 1894 that Fr. Dolan founded the James Dolan Literary Association which today stands forth very prominently as one of the leading societies of St. Bonaventure's.

Father Dolan was a man of wonderful personality; was of large rugged physique; and possessed a character surpassed by

none. He died at the early age of 36 years, universally beloved and lamented.

He sleeps among the Alleghany Hills where he was born, cradled, reared, and educated. And there above that grave, the summer's sun shines brightly and tho the winter's snows may pile above him yet his deeds and Spirit will always live about this College that was his home.

Fr. Dolan, true thou art passed away, and thy voice which in years gone by had taught many, is forever stilled, but thy glorious deeds, and the Society which you founded stand to-day as a loving memory.

True thou art dead. But your deeds and spirit will live forever in our hearts, and in the hearts of all that knew you.

There indeed may we quote the lines of Fr. Kelley's:

*"Thou hast fallen asleep, O Priest of God
With the blood in thy veins still warm.
Thou has laid thy load
By the very road
Thou didst travel in sun and storm.
'And the western glow
That we all shall know
Has shrouded thy rested form.*

*Thou hast journeyed afar, O Priest of God,
On the road that thy love had claimed;
And the way was long
And the storm was strong
With the fury of Sin unchained.
But thy soul shines bright
In thy Master's sight
As it comes to his feet — unstained."*



Man is the noblest work of God

—POPE



FR. THOMAS COSGROVE

legany, Humphrey, N. Y., and Wanaque, N. J. Fr. Thomas passed through life doing his duty as obedience ordered it without fanfare. His fidelity, as is alone important, is recorded in the Book of Life.

He died in St. Mary's Hospital, Hoboken, N. J., August 9, 1930, at the age of 62, kindly remembered by all who knew him.

FR. JAMES DOLAN

Fr. James was born in Allegheny, N. Y., March 4, 1862. I first met Fr. James when he was assistant in St. Anthony's Church, my parish, Sullivan St., New York City. I used to serve his Mass. His personality awakened in me the Lord helping, a desire to be like him, a Franciscan ideal and to take his name, James, when I became a Franciscan. Fr. James was tall and well built. He was not lacking in humor. I remember him describing in mimicry, in word and action, an Italian boxer who in broken English showed

how he would fight John L. Sullivan.

He taught First Rhetoric, as it was called in those days at St. Bona's. The J. D. L. A., which he founded, was named after him.

Fr. James brought Jennings and McGraw to St. Bona's. These famous ball players were looking for some educational polish, a place to relax between major league ball schedules and to show the students how to play first class baseball. I was a student at St. Bona's at the time and was more or less in the midst of the great ball players' activities at the College.

Another of their exercises to keep in physical shape was playing handball. In back of the old Alumni Hall, in those days, was a fine frame handball court. Jennings and McGraw, with me a short alley, would play match games with student teams. The court floor was maple hardwood, very fast. The ball, called a Casey after a famous handball player whom I met on shipboard as I came back from Rome, was about the size of a golf ball, very hard, with a cork or rubber center, rounded with catgut and hid covering. When being served in a game, it would come back and forth from the wall of the court like a streak. Father "Pat" Wilson, a secular, one of our professors, while umpiring a game, was hit in the mouth by the ball and was really stunned.

I remember the morning Jennings and McGraw left St. Bona's for the last time. They attended the morning Mass of the seminarists in the old St. Bona Church.

Fr. James died April 12, 1897, age 35, while vice president of St. Bona's. He was also on the governing board of the Custody of the Immaculate Conception. I understand the cause of his death

was catarrh of the stomach. As he lay in his coffin in old St. Bona's friary, I paid my last respects to my old friend and model. He is buried in St. Bona's Cemetery on the hill in Allegheny.

FR. FIDELIS REYNOLDS

Fr. Fidelis Reynolds, the tenth President of St. Bona's was born in Brooklyn, November 8, 1873. He succeeded in the presidency of St. Bona's Fr. Joseph Butler of hallowed memory. Fr. Fidelis was tall and lanky. He strode along in long steps and a quick pace, especially when out walking. Some of us friars who went on a walk with him would have to ask him to shorten his pace. He spent some time in a law office, intending, no doubt, at first, to follow the legal profession. But like St. Alphonsus Liguori, he received a higher call, a Divine invitation to the religious life. He entered the Order of St. Francis, July 25, 1901. He taught mathematics at St. Bona's in which subject he was especially well trained, and was prominent as a teacher. When appointed President of Bonaventure's in 1911, he began to make efforts to advance and perfect the curriculum of the College. Being of a legal turn of mind, he was exact and perhaps somewhat fixed and unbending in discipline and in bringing about an approved course of studies. Some spoke of him as a "reformer" at St. Bona's. But "order is Heaven's first law," and this order at the College he strove to uphold and perfect in a reasonable way. Wishing to perpetuate the memory of Fr. Joseph Butler at St. Bona's, the Alumni inspired and led by Archbishop Gannon of Erie, started a

movement to build a gymnasium at the College. Fr. Fidelis, President at the time, and myself as a kind of consultant, brought about the building and completion of the gym. Of course there was, as usual, an architect and a contractor to do the job.

After his tenure of office as President of St. Bona's, Fr. Fidelis held positions of trust in the Province of the Most Holy Name of Jesus.

In 1925 he succeeded Fr. Vincent Kelly, as pastor of Holy Cross Church in the Bronx. This was a very difficult assignment. It was a parish in the sparsely settled, squatter-like part of the Bronx. The debt on the combination church and school and property was very heavy, but Fr. Fidelis very expertly managed the financial and material needs of the parish.

He also gave missions and retreats in which fields of the vineyard of the Lord, his efforts were spiritually very fruitful.

In all that he did, whether in College or parochial work, in missions and retreats, Fr. Fidelis followed the advice of St. Paul in his Epistle, "doing the truth in charity."

Human respect or false timidity did not keep Fr. Fidelis from saying what should be said to all, whether lay person, secular priest or religious.

At times he indulged in humorous remarks and conversations. But beneath it all there was a seriousness that kept him ever in mind of the priestly and religious purpose of his life.

At the age of 64 years, he died in St. Francis Hospital, Miami Beach, Florida, May 26, 1937.

(To be Continued)