

Twenty Statesville Boys Billeted at Fort Bragg

Fort Bragg — Chaplain (Capt.) Conrad J. Loftus, Catholic chaplain of the 82nd Airborne Division's 1st Brigade, was talking recently to Father Allen Foran, OFM, the pastor of St. Pius X parish in Statesville, when Father Foran mentioned that a group of boys from his parish had been guests of the U. S. Marines at Camp Lejune last year. Not one to be outdone by the Marines, Chaplain Loftus set about to arrange with the Ft. Bragg Youth Activities Center for a group of 20 boys from Father Foran's parish to visit the U.S. Army at Ft. Bragg.

The boys, aged 7 through 14, arrived at Ft. Bragg on a Thursday and were billeted at the Post Personnel Center. To keep track of his charges, Chaplain Loftus divided them into two platoons and assigned a commanding officer, Danny McCurdy, age 14.

Up at 6:00 and in bed at 10:30, sleeping in barracks and eating in an Army mess hall, the boys lived like soldiers, almost. For one thing soldiers don't usually try and see how many people can get in a pile on top of one individual, and for another, they don't make a beeline for the candy counter when they enter a PX.

Chaplain Loftus' assistant, Specialist Four Israel Pina, stayed in the boy's barracks Thursday night; Friday morning he was heard mumbling about a lack of sleep. Friday and Saturday nights Chaplain Loftus took barracks duty and patrolled the aisles until the boys went to sleep.

After they arrived the boys were taken to Normandy Drop Zone on Ft. Bragg to watch parachute jumps. Friday, they toured the 82nd Airborne Division's parachute packing shed, visited the 82nd Museum and toured Pope Air Force Base which is located at Bragg.

At the 82nd Museum the boys received a lecture on the division's history and were shown trophies captured during World War II. Afterwards they were turned loose to wander around the museum.

Saturday, Chaplain Loftus herded them into Lee Field House on post to go swimming. A Sky Diving demonstration which they were scheduled to watch had been rained out. Saturday night one platoon went to see "How the West Was Won" and the other went roller skating.

The boys attended Chaplain Loftus' 11:00 Mass Sunday morning; two of them served as altar boys and several others helped set up the altar and pass out prayer books.

Sunday afternoon, wearing PFC

For A Better World

By Father Cranor F. Graves

When I wrote last week, I hadn't finished reading Pope Paul's Encyclical, "His Church."

Now that I have read all of it, I am more impressed than ever. If you don't have a copy, please order ten copies for your study club this fall, for your adult discussion groups — at twenty cents a copy from Our Sunday Visitor Press, Huntington, Indiana.

There are three parts to the encyclical: the Church's awareness of herself, the Church's renewal, and the Church's dialogue with various categories of others.

It was prudent Pope who waited a year after his election to write this discerning document, expressing so careful an understanding of desires and dangers today.

Listen to the Holy Father speak about dialogue:

"And before speaking, it is necessary to listen, not only to a man's voice, but to his heart. A man must first be understood; and, where he merits it, agreed with. In the very act of trying to make ourselves pastors, fathers and teachers of men, we must make ourselves their brothers.

"The spirit of dialogue is friendship and even more, is service. All this we must remember and strive to put into practice according to the example and commandment that Christ left to us.

"But the danger remains. The Apostle's art is a risky one. The desire to come together as brothers must not lead to a watering-down or subtracting from the truth. Our dialogue must not weaken our attachment to our faith. In our apostolate we cannot make vague compromises about the principles of Faith and action on which our profession of Christianity is based.

"An immoderate desire to make peace and sink differences at all costs is, fundamentally, a kind of skepticism about the power and content of the Word of God which we desire to preach.

"Only the man who is completely faithful to the teaching of Christ can be an Apostle.

"And only he who lives this Christian life to the fullest can remain uncontaminated by the errors with which he comes into contact."

Thank you, Lord, for Pope Paul, for his wisdom in guiding us these days of dialogue.

One final wise word from the Holy Father: "For the lover of truth discussion is always possible."



PARACHUTE PACKING DEMONSTRATION — Pfc. James W. Cowley of the 82nd Airborne Division packs a T-10 parachute for the benefit of twenty young visitors from Statesville, N.C. — (Photo by Hollingsworth)

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