

# Paulist Father's work 'public relations'

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By David Scanlan  
Citizen staff writer

Rev. Thomas Marshall could have been a successful, and profitable, evangelist. But though the Paulist Father is on a mission, he isn't raising money or curing the deaf and dumb.

"What I do is very close to it (evangelism), but I don't go for that full-scale television stuff," says the 59-year-old Marshall, who is finishing a two-week mission in Ottawa.

His goal, as it is at all his mission stops in Canada, is to give Catholics a greater understanding of what it means to be Christian. It's also to get Catholics back into the church to hear him.

For Marshall, this means adjusting his mannerisms and sermons to please a diverse, and increasingly indifferent, Catholic audience.

"I have to appeal to all age groups and lifestyles," says the bubbly Marshall, who describes his Paulist order as the church's public relations arm, which is trying to revive Catholic teachings in followers and non-believers.

Marshall's busy schedule brings him to Ottawa almost every year. He spoke this week at the Sunday masses, plus four evening masses, at St. Theresa's on Somerset Street. He did the same at Resurrection of Our Lord in Elmvale Acres the week before.

"My sermons are never written out. When I walk out into the pulpit I have to eyeball the congregation, to see who is out there," says Marshall, as he eyeballs a visitor to the cramped office in St. Theresa's rectory.

His goal at both parishes is to reinforce the value of each person, in the eyes of God. But Marshall seems to deliver this simple message in a way few forget.



Rev. Thomas Marshall  
Has to appeal to all ages

He screams. He stammers. He opens his eyes wide and enunciates his words clearly enough to make a primary school teacher weep with joy.

"He's an excellent speaker. He's vivacious and he knows what he's talking about," said Pauline Furmanczyk, who came from Nepean with her mother, Lydia, to hear him.

Marshall's energy hasn't always been focussed heavenward. Growing up in Newport, R.I., he set his sights on politics, while his father pushed him towards law.

When his father said he would only pay for his son to study at an Ivy League school, he searched

for a way to get into Harvard. Marshall decided music was the ticket, and a victory at a New England saxophone contest won him a scholarship at the Cambridge campus.

In his second year, with the Second World War just finishing, Marshall says he and his peers began looking for solutions to post-war problems. The paranoia of McCarthyism particularly bothered him, and he was convinced he had to start with people's hearts, minds and souls.

"How do you change the person? That's religion."

Marshall, who was raised an Anglican, then scoured for the right religion. After tampering with Mohammedism and Hinduism, he became permanently attracted to the stability and structure of Catholicism.

After ordination, he spent two years at a UCLA medical and neuropsychiatric clinic, before working for the U.S. army in Chicago.

This stint led him to Vietnam, where he tried to reconcile a God with the confusion and horror of that war.

His approach was to convince the soldiers to remember who they were at all times, despite the

atrocities.

"Some felt, 'Well, I can do anything I want because no one knows where I am. Because I don't see the things around me that remind me of God.'"

After coming to Canada in 1966, Marshall's challenge was to reinforce Christ's teachings to people who have met their material needs, but don't have any spiritual ones.

"People are saying, I have a good home, a steady job, who needs religion?" says Marshall, who is the mission director for the Paulist Fathers and lives at St. Peter's Church in Toronto.

Similarly, he says he tries to maintain high spirits among a priesthood that also is dwindling. This week, he leads a retreat for priests at St. Augustine's Seminary in Toronto.

"If there is no need (among lay Catholics) young men and women will say, 'I'm not going in there.'"

Marshall, who says the need is not pressing enough to warrant married or female priests, says morale in the priesthood is not as low as the public likes to believe.

"Though I know one way to get more in. We could offer them \$65,000 a year. But I'm not sure that would be very comforting."

## PRESBYTERIAN

### St. Timothy's

2400 Alta Vista Dr., 733-0131  
Ministry, Rev. Garry Morton  
Music Director: Cathryn Carter  
Organist: Peter Jowsey  
10:30 a.m. Morning Worship  
Church School, Infant and Nursery Care  
Coffee following the service  
ALL WELCOME

### St. Stephen's

Parkdale at Sherwood Dr. 728-0558  
Minister, Rev. Graham Kennedy, B.A., B.D., Th.M.  
Organist: David Piper, Ph.D., Mus.B., G.R.S.M.  
Organist: David Piper, Ph.D., Mus.B., G.R.S.M.

### Knox Church

in downtown Ottawa  
Elgin and Lisgar Streets (238-4774)  
Minister: The Rev. Dr. Donald F. Collier  
Christian Educator Elizabeth McCuaig  
Director of Music: Denise Hawkins  
11:00 a.m.—Worship  
"THE LOVE THAT IS CALLED CHARITY"  
Nursery and Church School classes  
For a ride call: 733-5399 or 235-6657  
Saturdays between 6 and 9 p.m.  
Wheelchair access off Elgin St.  
Loop system for hearing impaired  
All welcome