

Rev. Donal Ward Considered Career In Philosophy

Perhaps because Rev. Donal Ward, of St. Mary's Church in Middlebury has been so outstanding in many ways during his short stay at St. Mary's, not only a leader in the Ecumenical Movement, but also gracious and responsive to those not in his parish, many of his fellow-citizens have wondered about his early life and education.

He was born and educated in New York City. After graduation from Manhattan College, he volunteered for army service. He was assigned to personnel work in Pisa, Tuscany, not far from Florence. At the end of his tour of duty, he spent a year at the University of Grenoble to perfect his French; then went to the University of Louvain, where all instruction is in French and studied Philosophy for three years.

He had thought of a career as a philosophy professor, but during the summer following his separation from the army, he had met in Perugia, Italy, a middle-aged Chinese gentleman, a graduate of Oxford, and before World War II a professor of English in his homeland. The two became close friends, and Rev. Ward eventually decided to follow the example of the Chinese student, who had already spent some time at the Pontifical Beda College at Rome, preparing for the priesthood.

This College, across the street from St. Paul's Basilica, is known as a "late vocation" seminary, since many of the students have been in some other profession before deciding to enter the priesthood. The instruction is in English.

Rev. Ward was ordained at St. Paul's Basilica in March of 1963. When the academic year ended in June, he came home to this country, served briefly as interim curate in Rutland, and began his first real assignment here in August. In addition to his regular parish duties, he works with Catholic students in the Newman Club, and has many contacts with high school boys and girls.

He writes, "You may be interested in learning that upon retiring, my parents purchased an old farm in East Calais, Vt., where they now spend the summer months. It was during a summer at home from Europe with my parents that I was first introduced to Vermont and her way of life. Bishop Joyce graciously accepted me as a candidate for the priesthood of the Diocese of Burlington.

S. B.