

Msgr. Brown

Notes 25 Years

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The Rt. Rev. Msgr. Anthony M. Brown, who celebrates his silver anniversary in priesthood this month, describes himself as an educator, a community activist and a religionist who is not much of a knee bender.

The monsignor, who has been president of the College of Great Falls since 1971, graduated from high school in Anaconda in 1938, and earned a degree in Latin from the University of Notre Dame.

Of the 25 years since his ordination on April 2, 1949, only four have been spent in parish work. During two years at St. Peter's in Anaconda he also was principal of Anaconda Central High School. The rest of his parish time was in St. Mary's in Butte. His brother, the Rev. Patrick Brown, is a priest at Immaculate Conception Church in Butte.

Msgr. Brown considers himself somewhat a liberal when it comes to changes in the Catholic church, especially regarding optional celibacy for priests and laicization.

"I think it's a good thing the church has recognized the fact

that laicized priests can do well in another profession. After all, many people have changed professions. It seems logical and reasonable that a priest should be able to change too."

Msgr. Brown hopes to see the day when celibacy is optional.

"I've never been able to figure out why the sacraments of marriage and the priesthood can't be combined," he said. "Celibacy is an offering and a sacrifice, and it's not an original law of the church. Some priests are natural bachelors, but others may be better priests if they are husbands and fathers too."

"People who say that a man who is married can't give enough time to his church are giving a real slap in the face to a minister who is doing a fine job."

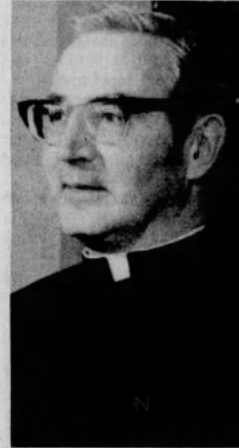
Msgr. Brown became involved in college education after he earned a master's degree in education from St. Bonaventure University, Olean, N.Y., and started teaching at Carroll College in 1953, where he stayed until 1969. During those years he took time out to earn a doctorate from the University of Montana.

Administration duties for Msgr. Brown started in 1958 when he was named academic dean at Carroll College. At the same time he was diocesan superintendent of schools and taught 12 hours of education for four years.

He was appointed president of Carroll in 1962, a position he held until 1969.

Being a college president has both its good and bad moments, according to the monsignor.

"My experiences at both CGF and Carroll have been mostly



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enjoyable," he said. "Of course, you are always subject to criticism, but if I can live with what I've done then I feel I've done the right thing."

His first Montana assignment was at St. Peter's in Anaconda. That year he really got into community action, on local and state levels. He was appointed to the State Board of Regents, only the second priest to serve. He recently resigned from the State Board of Public Education. Msgr. Brown also has been on the State Merit Commission, the five-year plan of the superintendent of public instruction's office, the Midwest Research and Development Program, which does research on industry and education and on a fact-finding committee for former Gov. Tim Babcock.

"Part of what I consider my Christian apostolate is to help other people," he said.

In Great Falls his activities include being a board officer for the United Fund, the Red Cross and chairman of the Salvation Army drive. He is also on the Higher Commission of the Northwest Accrediting Association.

Msgr. Brown is deeply devoted to Christian schools from the elementary level up. He feels the closing of Catholic Schools is a tragedy.

"It seems silly to me to send a child to school for 180 days to learn math and English, and then send him to church 12 times a year and expect him to grow equally spiritually," he said. "I'm not making an odious comparison between Catholic and public schools, but I do think we've missed the boat on religious education for our young people since so many schools are closing."

The college president was named a monsignor in 1964.