

Father Therry

A Pioneer Priest in Australia - 100 Years On.

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The Convict Cart.

Through the streets of Cork in 1818 there rumbled a wagon load of convicts. Bound for Botany Bay, the twenty or thirty prisoners were in irons on their way to the docks. A young priest stopped the driver and learnt of their destination. On the spur of the moment, he ran into a neighbouring bookshop, bought a bundle of prayer books and threw them into the cart, vowing to follow his countrymen to the ends of the earth, if needed, to save their souls.

In retrospect, that handful of books was the scattering of his first seeds of Catholicism in Australia, for the young priest was John Joseph Therry, secretary to Bishop Murphy of Cork. Such an act was typical of the warm-hearted and impulsive young man ordained only three years earlier. Born in the City of Cork in 1790, he was able to enjoy the luxury of a private tutor with his brothers, James and Stephen and his sister, Jane Anne, during his early years. As a seminarian at Saint Patrick's College, Carlow, he seems to have been a thorough if not brilliant student.

His family was hit by financial losses in those years. "The course of my college studies was interrupted at an early stage by family embarrassment," he wrote in 1819. At his own request, he was ordained prematurely by the Archbishop of Dublin in 1815. Even before Father Jeremiah O'Flynn (sometimes known as 'Flynn') had sailed on his ill-fated mission to New South Wales, Father Therry had seriously considered volunteering for that mission field. But now, three years had gone by, and he had not made a move.

Bound for Botany Bay.

The impression caused by the sight of the convicts in Cork and the furore aroused by Father O'Flynn's deportation were still fresh in his mind when an explicit invitation came from the Bishop of Mauritius and New Holland, Dr. Edward Slater. He accepted cheerfully, despite doubts of his own worth. A portrait of this year, 1819, reveals his features. "Of middle size in build, his countenance is at once fine and manly . . . in manner he is dignified and commanding. There is nothing of show or vanity about him." Father Therry would need all these qualities for the work ahead.

His Bishop was sorry to lose such a fine secretary. Yet, besides his blessing, he gave practical help in the shape of vestments, books and money.

With Government sanction this time, to prevent a repetition of the O'Flynn incident, Father Therry sailed from Cork in the convict ship "Janus" on December 5th, 1819. With him sailed a fellow volunteer in Father Philip Connolly.

They landed in Sydney nearly five months later.

Sydney Town.

The news of their arrival spread like wildfire. Without Mass and the Sacraments now for nearly two years, the Catholic stalwarts, such as William Davis, James Dempsey and Michael Dwyer, vied with each other in offering hospitality to the new priests. Father Therry's first Mass on Australian soil was on May 8th, an auspicious day for one who would be as militant as Saint Michael in defending the faith.

They got to work quickly. A public meeting in June adopted a resolution to build a permanent church in Sydney town. It met with an enthusiastic reception in Catholic circles, and with financial support in most of the Protestant community.

There was little time for the priests to find their land legs. Missionary work had heaped up to chaotic proportions in the two years since Father O'Flynn's arrest. There were Baptisms by the score, marriages to be blessed, instruction classes to be organized, and, most difficult of all, centres to be set up for the celebration of Mass.

Governor Macquarie.

Although an officially accredited chaplain on a token salary of £100 a year, Father Therry soon ran foul of Governor Macquarie. The autocratic highlander had brought some semblance of order to the colony after the chaos of the rum traffic, but in laying down impossible conditions for the Catholic chaplains in celebrating Masses and Marriages, he had overstepped his authority. Father Therry could not and did not abide by them.

Flying in the face of the Governor's restrictions, he did celebrate Mass on other days besides Sundays and holidays; he did make converts, and he did not always give a month's notice for prospective marriages.

But it was the religious education laws that Father Therry openly, and at times violently flouted. Macquarie had instructed him in 1820, "that you do not interfere with the religious education of orphans in the Government charitable institutions of this colony; they are to be instructed in the faith and doctrine of the Church of England".

A Catholic sailor's case was typical. He had begged Father Therry to baptize his child, dying in the public orphanage. Refused admission, the priest scaled the walls, baptized the child, and was surrounded by a swarm of Catholic children.

"Oh, Father Therry, we are Catholics, help us." For nearly 20 years, Father Therry was to do battle for such souls in a war of wits against red tape that was lined with hostility.

Clerical Friction.

A clash of personalities soon developed between the two pioneering priests. Father Connolly, easy going and compliant, must have found it hard to bear with his vigorous and outspoken colleague. It was decided that Father Therry should transfer to Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania). Providence decreed otherwise. After ten days at sea, a southerly buster forced the ship to return to port. When it sailed again in 1821, it was Father Connolly who was aboard, leaving Father Therry the more extensive mission of New South Wales.

Saint Mary's Cathedral.

Left alone on the mainland, Father Therry turned to his great dream. He had to build a Church on a scale that would match the startling growth of Sydney town. No petty wooden structure, no temporary chapel for him.

Optimism was to be his architect and hope his builder. When influential Catholics, such as James Meehan, balked at its size, Father Therry turned to Macquarie. Luckily, the old Scot too had seen the vision splendid, and encouraged him in his project. The site was chosen. A more undesirable plot would have been hard to find, whether by design or accident, but it turned out to be the pick of Sydney sites in later years. James Meehan, the Catholic Deputy Surveyor, was the man who picked the site.

Help came from unexpected quarters. Had it not been for the interest and generosity of the more prosperous Protestant citizens, Saint Mary's would never have been started, let alone completed. John Campbell, the non-Catholic Provost Marshal, for example, not only headed a subscription list with £20 but acted as Treasurer of the Church appeal among Protestants. Many Catholics, in their poverty, could give only gifts in kind. Mr. John Ready agreed to give "a cow in calf as a subscription," we read. Francis Greenway, the famous emancipist architect, was, it appears from a letter to Father Therry, responsible for the plans.

Weeds in the Walls.

Governor Macquarie himself laid the foundation stone. The Governor wiped the trowel with his own handkerchief saying, "You must know, Mr. Therry, that, although I never laid the first stone of a Catholic church before, I am a very old Mason, and I shall keep this trowel as long as I live". This genuine goodwill the Governor crowned with a gift of £21, but within the year, he was to leave his office under the cloud of the 'Bigge report' and under the needling of the "pure merino" squatters.

Even on board ship for England, he did not forget Father Therry. He promised, on arrival, to win support for Saint Mary's from Earl Bathurst. Like Father Therry, Macquarie had been short on diplomacy but strong on principle.

With him, at least, Father Therry knew where he stood, for the old soldier was a straight-shooter.

Work on the great church soon stopped. Weeds began to grow in the foundations and walls of Saint Mary's.

When the Government refused to help, the Catholic pundits were very vocal. He had gone out of his depth; he had delusions of grandeur; his Bishop should step in.

With the clouds of failure gathering ominously, Father Therry proffered his resignation to Bishop Slater in Mauritius. Encouraged by fatherly advice "not to quit his chosen vineyard," he did not think again of leaving his mission until his death.

Friend of Convicts.

It was easy to acquire the tag of "convict" in the early nineteenth century. This was particularly true in Catholic Ireland. The average farmer, working on poor soil for an absent landlord, would find an embargo placed on most goods he tried to sell. Blighted potato crops added to his poverty. He was expected to pay tithes to an Established Church he did not believe in, and then swallow the injustice of having no Catholic member to plead his cause in Parliament. And, all the time, there hung over his head the threat of eviction. Such penal laws led to a nation of either crushed men or "convicts".

It was to these men in New South Wales, above all, that Father Therry's care extended. His missionary activity among the convicts became a legend in the colony. The following incident is typical of his zeal. A message had reached him on a bush mission that a convict was dying in Sydney. A flooded river barred his path so that no horse born could ever make it. He called to the other bank "to help him cross in the Name of God and a departing soul". A stone was thrown across tied to the end of a rope, which he tied around his waist.

Willing hands dragged him through the flood to the other bank, where without changing his clothing he mounted a borrowed horse and brought the Sacraments to the dying man in the nick of time.

"I have heard that every day his gig was ready at the door to start for wheresoever he was required," Dean Kenny tells us, with a seventy-mile trip taken as a matter of course.

Social Justice.

We cannot whitewash the character of all the convicts. Even to the most desperate cases, Father Therry was always God's minister. He was, above all, a shepherd, and only secondarily interested in penal reform.

More than once, he had to race the clock or the hangman to plead for a pardon or to bring the Sacraments. An outline is drawn for us in the Centennial Magazine of 1888.

At the back of the George Street prison, the condemned man stood on the scaffold, awaiting his doom. Father Therry was convinced of the man's innocence and ran to Sir Thomas Brisbane, the governor. The gloomy group waited, till the law at last was about to take its course. Just then, Father Therry was seen issuing from the gate of Government House waving his hat and holding up the reprieve.

Other cases were not so dramatic. A letter, abridged, from Sydney Gaol in 1826 speaks for itself.

"Reverend, Sir, Wee Poor unfortunate Men under the sentence of death is very anxious for you. I Samuel Cliff that is under Sentence of death Concerning the Murder of the Black Native I am resolved to embrace the Roman Catholic Faith As soon as you Come to Me."

Of the inhuman Transportation system and outmoded Penal Code, Father Therry was well aware. He had to be content, under pressure of work, with the direct apostolate to souls, with an occasional plea for the mitigation of sentences, and leave to later priests, such as Bishop Willson and Dr. Ullathorne, measures for direct social action and official penal reform.

Governor Brisbane's Help.

There was a time of comparative peace for the church under Governor Brisbane. Not only did he give £200 to swell Saint Mary's funds, but he seconded Father Therry's plea for more priests to be sent to Australia from England.

Two Catholic schools were up and Father Therry had others in mind. It was, however, the calm before the storm.

Governor Darling's Attitude.

The new Governor, Governor Darling, arrived in 1825. Then out of the blue came the Church Lands Charter.

By it, the Church of England was to receive one-seventh of the lands in each county of the colony. Nearly half a million acres went to the Established Church, setting up "clergy reserves" similar to those in Upper Canada of the time.

Now the official screws tightened. A bigoted triumvirate in Governor Darling, Colonial Secretary McLeay and Archdeacon Scott, almost ruined the early inter-Church harmony. They drew a tighter ring around all Orphanages and public institutions in an endeavour to keep Father Therry out. To add to the tension, his letter to the Gazette, in which he stated his intention to establish a Catholic cemetery and a Catholic Education Fund, was printed incorrectly. It was misconstrued to read as an insult to the Established clergy. As a result, his meagre salary was suspended, and he was deprived of his official status as Catholic chaplain.

Hell Bars the Way.

Father Therry's next twelve years as a minister of religion were unrecognized and unpaid by the Government.

He was doing the work of seven chaplains without a penny allowance, while Archdeacon Scott was receiving a thumping £2,000 a year in a chair-ride chaplaincy. Prison gates and hospital doors were slammed in the priest's face, yet he went on. He was not the man to let anyone stand between a departing soul and the Sacraments.

The stories of this period are legion. On one occasion, a guard's bayonet blocked his way to the hospital. Father Therry brushed the bayonet aside.

"I come not in the name of the Governor but in the Name of God."

When another hospital guard refused him entry, he demanded to speak to the assistant surgeon. There was just enough time for the priest to enter and hear the patient's confession before the guard returned to tell him that his request had been refused!

Public opinion, Protestant as much as Catholic, was mounting in his favour. The injustice to a dedicated clergyman was all too clear. Redress was so long in coming that another man would have abandoned the field, but, fortunately, for the history of the Australian Church, Father Therry was made of sterner stuff.

A Fresher Climate.

With Catholic Emancipation in 1829, a fresh breeze blew throughout the English-speaking world. Its effects were soon felt in the colony. Catholics could at last fill positions of authority. Roger Therry came out first as Commissioner of The Court of Requests; then John Hubert Plunkett, the Solicitor General of the Colony, followed. Both were to prove pillars of the Church in the colony. In the new Governor, Sir Richard Bourke, too, Catholics were to find one who would at last give them a "fair go".

Then again, the load on Father Therry's shoulders was eased a little with the arrival of three more priests.

Unfortunately, his independent character estranged him from two of them, but the third, Father John McEnroe, was to remain his life-long friend.

The Benedictine Period.

Most of the spadework was already done when a new era — the Benedictine era — began. Its forerunner was the newly-appointed Vicar General, Father Ullathorne. His immediate task was to smooth out the crisis that had arisen with the Governor over the ownership of Saint Mary's land. Father Therry had neglected to obtain title deeds.

This task Father Ullathorne completed in a masterly way, being a born diplomat. The Benedictine's task was one of consolidation. His first impressions of Father Therry were not favourable, but later he was to change his opinion. He wrote of Father Therry as "a truly religious man who rests neither day nor night". But the youthful Vicar General often forgot, especially in moments of success, that he was reaping where another man had sown.

No one had a greater hold on Father Therry than the new Benedictine Bishop, John Bede Polding. From his arrival in 1831, he handled the rather thorny missionary with an admirable blend of kindness and severity. His transparent goodness won Father Therry's heart. It was a winning move to grant Father Therry, from church funds, a salary equivalent to the government salary for chaplains.

In the meantime, Father Therry was appointed parish priest of Campbelltown. It says much for the gigantic humility of the man that he threw himself into his new task with enthusiasm. As Archbishop Eris O'Brien, in his monumental "Life of Archpriest J. J. Therry," comments, "The one-time priest of the parish of New South Wales was made parish priest of a little country district". In 1838, he was sent to Van Diemen's Land.

Father Therry's Family.

What of Father Therry's family ties? When he left his native Ireland, it would seem that he cut them all asunder. Not really. When his good parents struck bad times, Father Therry sent them money he could ill-afford in the early years. A nun writing to him from Cork in 1826 complains that "your silence occasions your family much uneasiness". They could not guess at the extent of his labours.

His father died in 1827 and his mother in 1833. On the day after hearing the news he wrote, "I can no longer cherish the fond hope I had for many years of seeing once more my native land, as the principal inducement I had to visit it no longer exists; my dearest Mother is no more. Requiescat in pace" (May she rest in peace). The silent strength and heartfelt feeling are apparent. In his last will and testament, his brothers and sister were to receive during life £ 100 per annum each.

A Man of God.

All observers, both friendly and unfriendly, agree on his genuine piety. We can build a composite picture from various testimonies. "He was truly religious, never omitting to say Mass daily even in difficult circumstances. He said the Rosary in public every evening, gathering as many people as he could." Or again, "he sat with his breviary in the right hand, and his left in and out of his pocket for alms". He was the "most faultless human character" a Protestant clergyman had ever met. "I was baptized by Father Therry," was the highest boast of pioneer Catholics for years, and the people had already canonized him in their minds. "Had he not been a holy priest," Archbishop O'Brien concludes, "his work would not have been so blessed by Divine assistance." He moved and breathed in an atmosphere of prayer, as the Irish monks of old.

There was a lot of clay, however, in the idol's feet, for no man is perfect. Some future Devil's Advocate could well make capital out of Father Therry's obstinacy, his reluctance to hand over the

title deeds of Church land, his tendency to cut corners off Canon Law, and his obsession in later years with financial investments. Over all his faults though, was the cloak of all-embracing charity.

"To make enquiries into the character of this man I would go to the house of mourning and to the public hospitals. I would ask the widow and the orphan where they found friendship and charity." This contemporary character sketch of Father Therry could well out-live all his documented faults.

Troubles in Tasmania.

In Van Diemen's Land, Father Therry had to fight all the old battles on new soil. The exhausting trips to the bush, the clash with gaol and orphanage authorities over rights of conscience, the bickering with fellow clergy — all these he had known in his Sydney days. As Vicar General for a short time, he had a free hand and turned it to erecting Saint Joseph's Church in Hobart. In a year or two, however, Van Diemen's Land was to become a separate diocese with a new Bishop, Robert Willson.

Bishop Willson and Father Therry were the two parties in a dispute that threatened to put a crack in the foundations of the Church in Australia. It was as serious as that, and as complex. To try to put it as simply as follows is a risk, but space compels it.

On arrival, Bishop Willson, quite justly, asked for the title deeds of Saint Joseph's Church and lands. Father Therry, quite justly, requested that the Bishop take over the debts from himself and the trustees. Neither would yield. Both characters were cut from the same flint rock. Even though the final decision, as well as public opinion, was on Father Therry's side, it is not the prettiest page in his life. For once, his greatness of soul deserted him. His priestly duties were restricted. A fellow priest remembers how Father Therry, not permitted to celebrate Mass, would kneel at Mass, morning after morning, in a hidden corner of Saint Joseph's Church he had built, and how the smaller children would flock to kneel by the old pioneer priest whom they had learnt to love. After two years of this, he was transferred to Melbourne.

Final Years.

Time had taken its toll. An oil painting of Father Therry done towards the end of his life shows the changes time had worked. The weather-beaten features, etched and lined from long hours in the saddle or the gig, had taken on the rugged look of an outcrop of granite. The manly mouth, always firm, had become under stress firmer still.

Yet there is not a trace of bitterness in that countenance. The eyes are serene and benign as of one who possessed his soul patience. It is hard to recognize the young priest who had chased the convict wagon over the cobblestones of Cork some forty-five years before, but he had kept his promise to follow them to the ends of the earth to save their souls.

After a brief stay in Melbourne as parish priest, Father Therry acted as a "freelance missionary" in New South Wales. Then came his final appointment as parish priest of Balmain, in the growing west of Sydney. There could be no twilight retirement for such an apostolic man.

Under his prayer and guidance, Saint Augustine's was a living parish. For a priest in his seventieth year, his official programme was more than a full one:

"Programme Rev. J. J. Therry, Arch-Priest. On Sundays, Mass at 9.00 and 11.00 with instruction at each. Catechetical instruction at 3.00. Evening services with Benediction and Sermon at 7.00. On weekdays, Mass at 7.00. Rosary every evening at 7.00 and on Friday with Benediction. Confessions

are heard on Friday and Saturday evenings and Sunday mornings and whenever persons present themselves.”

His name lived on in Balmain. His former altar-boys would delight, in later years, narrating how they had provoked the good-natured old lion to a growl or even to a cuff in the ear for tardiness in changing the book, or for some misdemeanour in the sacristy; or again how they had regularly received a payment of sixpence a week from parish funds. Carrying laundry baskets for old women in public, keeping an open account at the storekeeper's for all the district's poor, surrounded by a troop of swarming children in the main street — these were the "lasting graffiti" chalked on the walls of memory in the Balmain parish concerning their homely hero.

In the evening of his life, Father Therry was raised to the dignity of an Arch-Priest. Again, it speaks volumes for his simplicity that he was delighted, almost as a schoolboy, with this recognition of his life's work. In gratitude, he gave £2,000 to Archbishop Polding for Saint Mary's. Twelve months after his death, his beloved Cathedral was to be reduced to ashes by fire.

Death of Father Therry.

The Cathedral of Our Lady, Help of Christians, ‘Saint Mary’s’ had been his life's inspiration. Our Lady's feast on May 24th had been instituted in the year of his ordination in 1815. This title, at his suggestion, had been chosen first as that of the colony's Mother Church, and later, again at his suggestion, as the Patronal title of Australasia. Both he and Archdeacon McEnroe used the title frequently. It symbolized his whole life — Mary defending and extending the rights of the Church in history because this mission had been confided to her at the foot of the Cross: Mary, Help of the Christian Church.

Now it was May 24th, 1864. (It is 100 years ago.) He would honour the Mother of the Church by founding a branch of the Guild of Saint Mary and Saint Joseph at Balmain. Then "I will die content," he remarked. He remained at the Guild meeting until 10 o'clock that night, when he retired to bed.

About midnight he woke suddenly to find that the burden of his years had caught up with him at last. He complained of the cold. "Send for Arch-deacon McEnroe," he said. "Tell him that I am 73 years old." Before his friend could come, and while the bystanders recited the prayers for the dying, John Joseph Therry gave up his soul to God.

Father Therry's Legacy.

He was buried in the old Sydney cemetery with the entire city in mourning. In 1901, his remains were removed to the crypt of the new Saint Mary's. A memorial, in the shape of the Altar in Our Lady's Chapel, had already been erected by Archbishop Vaughan, but Archbishop O'Brien has reminded us that a greater memorial is the Australian Church itself.

This we cannot measure in bricks and mortar or in statistics, however impressive. The Church in any country carries the indelible impress of its pioneer's character for centuries. Our outspoken Catholic press, our laymen keenly aware of Catholic action, our taste for fine churches, a respected Catholic nucleus on academic staffs, and above all an influential voice in demanding Christian principles and justice in social life, especially in education, are all part of the legacy left us by Father Therry.

In a more express way, his name is perpetuated in Australia. The Therry Society is keeping its twenty-first year in 1964. It is fitting that such celebrations, by coincidence, should be in Father Therry's Centenary Year.

When George Walton and his associates found inspiration for founding their Catholic Dramatic Society in Father Therry's name, they must have been looking even beyond the Irish dramatic instinct and flair for impression in Father Therry's character. Could it have been his vision, his vigour, his zeal? Or his touch of genius in being able to present vital truths so limpidly to as wide an audience as possible? Or was it just the plain humanity of the man they admired? At all events, the title was well chosen, and Father Therry would be more than content to lend his name to such a dedicated and artistic group in the Church here. (The group is now formally known as the Therry Dramatic Society of South Australia".)

An Estimate.

The infant Church in Australia was something of a child prodigy. While the ancient Church in England was still reticent behind the manor gates of country Catholics at the start of the nineteenth century, and while the older Church in Italy and France was fighting to survive against the secular wing of Liberalism, the new Catholics here were blithely erecting a fine Cathedral and their own schools, waiting to welcome their first Bishop, and holding public meetings that vigorously denounced any shadow of discrimination against them. On the whole, with notable exceptions, they were well received into the community.

This phenomenal rate of growth to a respected stature, if not to maturity, cannot be ascribed simply to Father Therry's endeavours. It may have been due partly to the unformed shape of religious and social affairs in the colony.

Under the Southern Cross, Father Therry had found no unchanging laws of social tradition that had ruled the older world. As a consequence, there had been no time for any Established Church to put down its roots, despite copious government irrigation, and this more liberal atmosphere had allowed the Catholic Church to develop openly, with a far-reaching influence on every aspect of social and intellectual life. Father Therry, it was though, who first sensed a change of wind. An appeal to the democratic instinct of governor and people, not to statutes, always followed upon any restrictive attempts on the Church.

Catholic history and Australian history, as a result, did not proceed along different paths but merged. So we find Caroline Chisholm's work for migrant girls took on a more Christian form than that of the contemporary humanitarians in England; it was not as revolutionaries but as defenders of social justice that Catholic leaders in Peter Lalor and Rafaello Carboni took up arms at Bakery Hill which led to the Eureka Stockade; it was Cardinal Moran the striking seamen and wharf labourers cheered as they marched in Sydney in 1890. The coming of Federation, the formation of the Commonwealth Bank and the Australian Labour Party found Catholic leaders to the fore.

Despite this, studies in recent years have pointed the finger at Father Therry and his successors. Most criticism runs along these lines. . . . The early settlers isolated themselves in "Catholic ghettos," under the thumb of the Irish clergy, where they adopted a hostile attitude to others — now aggressive, now defensive — while they nourished their faith on a saccharine diet of sentimental practices, and not on solid liturgy. Let us look at historical facts.

We have just seen how educated Catholic laymen, on their own initiative, rubbed shoulders with everyone in a pluralistic society. If at times unwanted friction did occur, they never for a moment withdrew from the thoroughfare of public affairs. To label them as isolationists, or to see a chip on their shoulders, is both unfair and unjustified. Reflect, for a moment, on Europe of the time.

The charge has been levelled at Father Therry and at his fellow Irish clergy, again, that they marred the purity of Catholic worship at an early stage in this country by introducing a multiplicity of devotions. Again history speaks. If anything looms large out of the early years, it is the towering monolithic structure of the Faith they established here. There was no trace of splintering or fragmentation in that solid rock of Catholic doctrine and devotion. Let us look at it in the light of those times, if we wish to be fair.

The liturgy Father Therry loved. The Mass was his life. His sermon notes abound in Scripture quotations. Even the most liturgically-minded parish priest of today would be envious to know that Father Therry regularly held the Holy Week Ceremonies in all solemnity, Tenebrae included, to overflow congregations, and that at the children's Mass, congregational singing was a feature. (Tenebrae was the solemn 15 psalm recitation or singing of 'Matins' and 'Lauds' {Morning Prayer and Readings} accompanied by the extinguishing of candles on Good Friday and Holy Saturday, using the rubrics of Saint Pius V.) No liturgical purist, on reading of Father Therry's well-integrated Marian devotion — with the Rosary to the fore — can forget that our pioneers were being no less orthodox than the first Christians who waited for the Church's development "in prayer with Mary, the mother of Jesus," the Mother of the Church (Acts 1:14).

If today too the Church in Australia has a better public-image in a less emotional climate — with more dialogue and less polemic — then let us spare a thought, at least, for Father Therry and those with him who cleared the air. That an Australian clergy, native-born and native-trained, should eventually have brought a new spirit to the Church in this country was not only understandable but desirable. But the smoother, centralized efficiency of today should not blind us to the rough-hewn, apostolic foundations of yesterday. "Had there never been a priest here," Governor Brisbane wrote grudgingly of our pioneer "perhaps the Roman Catholic worship might have dwindled away."

A Final Word.

Let Archbishop Polding have the final word on Father Therry. "He has made a good name with the Government; he has raised a zeal among the people; he has pioneered, roughly it is true, but still effectually." —

So effectually, that his work prospers today, a century after his death.

PRAYER FOR THE CONVERSION OF AUSTRALIA.

O God, Who has appointed Mary, Help of Christians, Saint Francis Xavier, and Saint Teresa of the Infant Jesus Patrons of Australia, grant that, through their intercession, our brethren outside the Church may receive the light of faith, so that Australia may become one in faith under one shepherd, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Mary, Help of Christians, pray for us.

Saint Francis Xavier, pray for us.

Saint Teresa of the Infant Jesus, pray for us.
