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A Priestly Profile of the First Navy Chaplain to Receive the Medal of Honor

Ernest F. Passero S.J.

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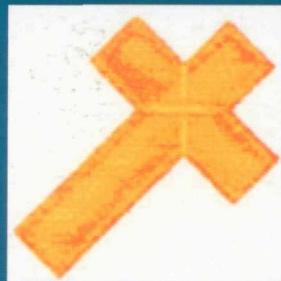
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First Navy Chaplain to Receive
the Medal of Honor**



Fr. Joseph T. O'Callahan, SJ

1905-1964

By Ernest F. Passero, SJ
Cdr., USN
Chaplain Corps Retired

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Joseph T. O'Callahan, SJ
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Campion Center
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Weston, MA 02493

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PREFACE

We sit on the shoulders of the chaplains who have gone before us. To know and appreciate what these military servants of God have done is to prepare ourselves to respond likewise to the needs of our own present congregations.

Father Joseph T. O'Callahan was an outstanding chaplain in that he gave completely of himself in faith and love. He was Christ incarnate or an "alter Christus" to those for whom he was ordained to serve in the name of Christ. It would be very difficult to separate the person and the vocation in the case of this first chaplain ever to receive the Congressional Medal of Honor. He was what he lived, and lived what he was. He was more than a spiritual leader. His leadership flowed from his person and infiltrated every aspect of his military calling. His military vocation was a part of his priestly vocation. It was this particular apostolate to which God had called him and as he responded freely to that call he fulfilled God's plan.

Preparation for what Chaplain O'Callahan did is a lifetime undertaking. Both family upbringing and religious training of Joseph O'Callahan as a Jesuit priest prepared him "ad longum" for the task that lay ahead of him.

The receiving of the highest decoration our country awards to any of her citizens, and the many additional honors that followed for this chaplain, is proof that he did respond to the greatest graces that God can give to anyone.

"No greater love has a man than that he give his life for an-

other." This is ultimately what we all strive for in perfection. This total giving, sometimes even to death, as Christ Himself did, is the essence and culmination of this chaplain's life.

It is humbly hoped that those who read this tribute to Father Joseph O'Callahan, S.J. will be inspired to follow God's plan in their own life and thus, too, fulfill the potential given to all of us.

June 1984

USS Dwight D. Eisenhower CVN-69

The author

DONE FROM FAITH

The Story of Fr. Joseph T. O'Callahan, S.J.

way he could systematically factor algebraic expressions" an indication of a proclivity he would turn to good advantage in later life. Joe was a boy of excessive energy both mental and physical and it was no surprise to find him on a smaller boys basketball team called the 'tyro's' and running anchor man on a relay team. On the intellectual side, in addition to his gift for things mathematical, Joe was on the publication board of a news sheet called, "high-o." With this wide spectrum of interest one would expect Joe had a myriad of friends. However, one of his contemporaries writes kindly: "I am at a loss to name anyone who was Joe's "buddy." He seemed to have a very even regard for all." Joe was never an altar boy or sang in the choir. Maybe this is an indication that spiritual growth is not always linked to externals. In his senior year in high school he was so caught-up in extra-curricular activities that his marks suffered. When he decided to apply for entrance to the intellectually orientated Jesuit Order there was some question of whether he could qualify. One of his classmates later wrote: "Extra-curricular activities at BCH almost caught up with Joe in senior. I know that after his decision to go to St. Andrew's (Jesuit House of Novices in Poughkeepsie, New York) in the Spring of 1922 he did have some worry about his final acceptance." But the Jesuits did accept him and he began his Jesuit career as he had hoped.

Jesuit training covers a period of fourteen years. Joe entered the Jesuit Novitiate on July 30, 1922 at St. Andrew-on-Hudson in Poughkeepsie, New York and took his first simple vows of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience on July 31, 1924, Feast of St. Ignatius of Loyola, founder of the Society of Jesus. At this same ceremony Joseph O'Callahan, S.J. received his vow crucifix. During these two years Joe made a three day retreat before accepting the traditional black habit of the Jesuits. This was followed by the famous thirty day Ignatian Exercises under the direction of the Master of Novices. For one month of silence, fasting and prayer the young novices

are tuned into the depths of the inner life and the Jesuit spirituality upon which their future lives will be built. This intense period of communion with God and getting to know oneself is repeated fifteen years later in the last year of Jesuit training called tertianship.

The two years of novitiate are routine days of prayer, manual labor and a minimum of study. This study included Latin, Greek, Church History, Jesuit History and Spirituality. During this same period every Jesuit Novice is under the personal spiritual direction of the Master of Novices. This included a weekly colloquium and a private confession. Family members were allowed to visit only twice a year and contact with the outside world was kept to a minimum. It was a monastic existence.

After these first temporary vows are taken the Jesuit is no longer a novice but is referred to as Mister and is allowed to write S.J. after his name instead of the N.S.J. (Novice of the Society of Jesus). He is technically a scholastic of the Society of Jesus and is now in the Juniorate phase of his training. At this point Joe studied the basic college two-year program from 1924-1926 still residing at St. Andrew-on-Hudson. Successfully completing the Juniorate, Joe returned to Weston, Massachusetts to earn his AB degree and to study scholastic philosophy, pre-requisite to Catholic Theological studies. These philosophical studies lasted from 1926-1929 culminating in an MA degree from Boston College. It is at this point of Jesuit training that one enters the regency period. Here the vowed Jesuit is put in a more worldly situation where he teaches an academic discipline in a Jesuit staffed high school or college.

Joe did his regency, or teaching years, at Boston College from 1929-1931 on the staff of the physics department. Here he worked with Father John Tobin, S.J. and Father Joseph Daly, S.J. Father Daly had developed some new radio circuits

which were later patented by RCA and Joe wrote some articles in the *Jesuit Science Bulletin* concerning them. It was during this same period that the Boston College Physics Department was coming into its own and Father O'Callahan was deeply involved in its organization and the bolstering of the quality of the Bachelor of Science courses being offered by the college.

In September of 1931 Joe reported back to Weston College to begin his formal study of theology. After completing three years of theological studies and earning a theological degree Joe was ordained a Jesuit priest on June 20, 1934 by Bishop Thomas A. Emmett, S.J., then Bishop of Jamaica, B.W.I. Father O'Callahan celebrated his first public Mass in June 1934 at Saint Mary of the Annunciation Parish in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Then followed one more year of the study of theology in the status of what Jesuits term, a Fourth Year Father. In the fall of 1935, Father O'Callahan, entered St. Robert's Hall in Pomfret Center, Connecticut for his final formal year of Jesuit training called Tertianship. It is at this time that the famous thirty-day Ignatian Exercises are once again undergone. Complete silence is enforced and a routine of prayer and meditation, spiritual conferences and normal manual labor make up the daily routine. It is the opportunity to blend the long years of intellectual training with the deeper spiritual training and the many long years of daily meditation. The active-contemplative life of the Jesuit is pointed more to the contemplative vein during this Tertianship period.

One of the Ignatian Spiritual principles is "detachment." Jesuits are not to become too enamoured of anything or anyone except God. This is to make them flexible enough to come and go at anytime for the "Greater Glory of God." It is suggested that this same principle

is also the basis of Pascal's cynical remark that "Jesuits meet without affection and part without regret." In any case Father Joe was soon to know the practice of detachment early in his Jesuit priestly life. Within the next three years he was to be moved three times. He spent the academic year 1936-1937 at Georgetown University in D.C. in special studies and then was transferred to Weston College for a year to teach cosmology to his brother Jesuits. Finally in the summer of 1938 Father O'Callahan was ordered to report to the Jesuit College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts. Here he was to teach mathematics and physics. By 1940 Father Joe was head of the mathematics department at Holy Cross and was instrumental in founding a mathematics library which today carries his name and displays a bronze plaque and a large portrait in his honor.

Joe had excessive energy and always seemed to be on the go; doing something or going somewhere. Teaching at Holy Cross was rewarding and demanding intellectually. Father O'Callahan also ministered as a priest to his students. Father was acting chaplain at the Boston City Hospital and assistant curate of St. Patrick's Church in Wareham, Massachusetts. He was trained to teach but he was ordained to minister. Mass, confessions and the sacraments were an integral part of his Jesuit life and always would be. All else was periphery.

Father O'Callahan was at the Cross a little over a year and the world situation became such that the United States was on the brink of world war. This seemingly inevitable situation reverberated even into the private life of this energetic mathematics professor at Holy Cross. The characteristic energy Father O'Callahan possessed was being channeled by him into the idea of entering the Navy Chaplain Corps. Joe O'Callahan wanted to do his duty as an American. Those who knew him best wanted to dissuade him from his plan. While he continually expressed his desire to

join the Navy Chaplaincy, Father O'Callahan's Jesuit superiors decided instead that it was time for him to pronounce his last vows. This ceremony is the final acceptance of a fully trained Jesuit as a member of the Society of Jesus. So at Holy Cross on 15 August 1939, Feast of the Assumption, Father Joseph T. O'Callahan, S.J. took his final vows seventeen years after his entrance into the Jesuit Order. This final seal of approval indicated that the Jesuit hierarchy determined that Joseph T. O'Callahan, S.J. was prepared to live the rules, ideals and vows of the Jesuit vocation whether his apostolate called him to live within or without a Jesuit community.

Holy Cross was to become one of the top Naval ROTC programs in the United States and certainly Father O'Callahan's talents in physics and mathematics would have been invaluable to the program. Joe and God had other plans, however. Logic would not persuade the good Padre from his patriotic resolution of joining the Navy Chaplain Corps and so on 7 August 1940 Father Joseph T. O'Callahan, S.J. was commissioned Lt (JG) O'Callahan, Chaplain Corps, US Navy. The irony of history is that Lt (JG) O'Callahan's first Navy assignment was teaching calculus at the Naval Air Station in Pensacola, Florida. Father Joe was wearing a Navy uniform but simply traded a Holy Cross classroom for a classroom in Pensacola, Florida.

But the young priest was patient and persistent. He wanted to go to sea and be where the action was; where the men needed a 'padre' and not a mathematics professor. It must have been a trying eighteen months as O'Callahan saw his Pensacola students pass through his classroom and out into the fleet where he so badly wanted to be. The stories of his former students' war efforts and their heroic flying adventures filtered back to Pensacola and only increased Father O'Callahan's determination to be assigned to a sea billet.

While still teaching Lt (JG) O'Callahan was promoted to the

rank of Lieutenant on 2 January 1942. Then finally, after numerous requests, he was assigned to the USS Ranger (CV4) in April 1942. Chaplain O'Callahan was to ride the Ranger for two and a half years until December 1944. It was during this tour on the Ranger that Chaplain O'Callahan claimed his Navy preparation was done for the ordeal he was later to face on the USS Franklin (CV 13). In his book "I Was Chaplain on the Franklin" Father O'Callahan wrote concerning his actions: "But the credit for that work has a two-fold source: priestly credit is due my long years of Jesuit training; Navy credit is due to my life aboard the Ranger under the direction of Johnny Haskins, Executive Officer and Cal Durgin, the Commanding Officer." The Ranger was the first "from-the-keel-up" aircraft carrier. She saw service in the African and Normandy campaigns. The good ship Ranger made few headlines but she sailed from the Atlantic to the Arctic and back to the equator. She played a big part in the invasion of North Africa and made hit-and-run raids against the Germans in Norway. It was a tedious existence on the Ranger but Chaplain O'Callahan was labeled their chief morale officer and with his characteristic Irish wit and bent for fun he bolstered the crew whenever it was needed. Twenty-one years later at Father O'Callahan's wake, a beautiful crucifix was the memento of appreciation from the officers and crew of the USS Ranger. During this tour he was promoted to Lieutenant Commander. (1 July 1943)

These two and a half years, while Ranger was operating in the Mediterranean and beyond, must have been a difficult experience for Father O'Callahan. Jesuits, or religious in general, are trained in modesty, privacy, silence and a type of prayerful existence which puts the inner life first and downplays externals. In no way can one sublimate externals on an aircraft carrier. One is surrounded by noise, people, heat and danger. Father O'Callahan himself once wrote: "an enlisted man aboard a warship has less privacy than any

other known human being.” It was under these circumstances that the ‘padre’ had to maintain a strong inner life by daily meditation, his breviary, Mass and rosary. When one works and lives in a factory environment twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week this can be very challenging. But “By their fruits you will know them.” Chaplain O’Callahan’s Jesuit training had taught him “Non possum dare quid non habeo.” I can not give what I do not possess. Without a strong, vibrant faith and inner life he would not help others. So it is obvious that even under such adverse spiritual circumstances the ‘padre’ faithfully developed his inner life; that communion with God that is sine qua non necessary for the total giving of self. This had to be done by himself. As a priest he was isolated and as such, a good, strong relationship with God would make all the difference in his apostolate. The Ranger experience was for Father O’Callahan the novitiate for his future Franklin ordeal.

An area which some people tend to forget is that even Chaplains have a private life; a life with personal joys and problems. Although a chaplain’s vocation is to bring solace to others, they too, are human; they too, have heartaches and hurts. Yet they must still carry on and encourage others. It is not uncommon for a chaplain who is consoling someone to have a deeper personal heartache than the person he is consoling.

From December 1944 until March 1945 Chaplain O’Callahan had a short hiatus from the dangers and fast pace of war. He was stationed at NAS Ford Island, Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. His roommate at the time recalls that “Father Joe spent his evenings reading poetry”. He also spent a lot of his time worrying about and praying for his younger sister “La”. La was a Maryknoll nun—Sister Rose Marie—stationed in the Philippines. The O’Callahan family had not received a letter or any word from her in three years. She was imprisoned in a Japanese detention camp in the Philip-

pines. This must have hung heavy on Father O’Callahan’s heart and mind. But he still had to do his routine work and go out to all those who came to him. One could wonder how many men unburdened themselves to Father O’Callahan and received a sympathetic ear without ever knowing the hurt he himself was feeling.

Chaplain O’Callahan was expecting new orders and was hoping that it would be a staff position in the Philippines. If this were so he could try to locate his younger sister. On March 2, 1945 his orders arrived from Captain John Warner Moore, then fleet chaplain of the US Pacific Fleet and Ocean areas.

“To Joseph T. O’Callahan, 087280, Lieutenant Commander USNR; hereby detach from Chaplain duties Naval Air Station, Pearl Harbor, proceed immediately and without delay, reporting for duty to Commanding Officer, USS Franklin.”

So much for sister seeking. A lesser man, not so heavily schooled in Jesuit obedience could have found a case for a change of orders. But this was not Chaplain O’Callahan’s style. An order was an order and personal problems had to be coped with as best one could and the rest left to God. Chaplain O’Callahan paid a farewell visit to Captain Peterson, his Commanding Officer at Ford Island. Then he telephoned Father Maurice Sheehy, the district chaplain; he wanted to bid him farewell and ask a favor. Since Chaplain Sheehy was in a position to learn the news concerning Japanese prisoners, Father O’Callahan requested that if anything was learned concerning the fate of his sister “La” that Father Sheehy be kind enough to inform him. With these things settled Chaplain O’Callahan was now prepared to report to his new command.

II

DEED

The USS Franklin CV13 was the fifth US vessel to carry this name. She was launched on 14 October 1943 by the Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company in Newport News, Virginia. The Franklin was sponsored by Lieutenant Commander Mildred A. McAfee, USNR, Director of the Waves and commissioned on 31 January 1944, with Captain James M. Shoemaker in command.

The Franklin displaced 27,000 tons, with an overall length of 872 feet. Her beam was 93 feet, with an extreme width at the flight deck of 147 feet 6 inches. She was of the Essex Class and had a draft of 28 feet 7 inches and a speed of 33 knots. She was armed with twelve 5-inch guns and carried a full complement of 3,448 officers and men. The Franklin was affectionately referred to as "Big Ben" by the sailors. This floating city was to be Chaplain O'Callahan's new parish.

Both parish and priest had war experience. Father O'Callahan's life on Ranger had initiated him into the real world of live ordnance and enemy attacks. The Franklin, as early as June 1944, had sorties in Iwo Jima, Chichi Jima, HaHa Jima and the Islands of the Paulau Group. By September of the same year Yap was introduced to "Big Ben" but in October 1944 the Franklin took some serious Japanese hits in the Leyte Gulf engagement. The carrier had to be sent to the Puget Sound Navy Ship Yard in November 1944 for battle damage overhaul. She departed Bremerton on 2 February 1945 and after training exercises and pilot qualification joined Task Group 58.2 for strikes on the Japanese homeland in support of the Okinawa landings. It was just before this that Father O'Callahan became a member of the USS Franklin's wardroom.

Reporting to a ship the size of the USS Franklin, or any aircraft carrier, can be a lonely experience. The magnitude of the vessel is overwhelming and sometimes, as in the case of Commander O'Callahan's arrival, the crew were in the midst of loading supplies in preparation for leaving port. The scene resembled a scene from an outdoor market of a major city early on a Saturday morning. It was organized bedlam, coupled with moving vehicles, shouted orders, cranes, gangways loaded with men moving in two directions, and the normal barrage of ship's announcements, whistles and bells. All this inundated the dock area as the new Catholic Chaplain reported aboard for the first time. Father O'Callahan wrote: "I slipped into line at the forward gangway and officially reported aboard the Franklin between two bags of potatoes." The officer of the deck wrote in the log book....."1535 Chaplain O'Callahan reports for duty."

As is Navy custom, the new 'padre' of the Franklin reported to the Executive Officer, Commander Joe Taylor for a short courtesy call. Both the Commanding Officer, Captain Gehres and the XO were no strangers to war at sea. Commander Taylor had previous duty on the carriers "Langley" and "Lexington" and because of his outstanding performance in the Battle of Midway had been awarded a Navy Cross and a Gold Star in lieu of a second Navy Cross. Captain Gehres had likewise been decorated.

As awesome as a ship may be its life blood still resides in the men who man her. From the bilges to the bridge sailors are the ones who make it all happen. And no one knew this better than Franklin's new chaplain. His first priestly act was to perform the "apostolate of presence." That is, like Christ when he went to the market place. Father O'Callahan began to tour the various work centers of the Franklin to observe and meet

the men in their own environment. Speaking of this practice, which he and his Protestant peer Chaplain Gatlin took advantage of daily, Chaplain O'Callahan wrote: "We had the freedom of the ship with restrictions imposed only by common sense. We were careful not to interfere with those at work." On the first day Chaplain O'Callahan ended his inspection of the Franklin by introducing himself to the baker and settling down with a hot cup of coffee and a fistful of fresh-baked Navy bread. The old love adage says, "the way to a man's heart is through his stomach." In the case of sailors "the way to a sailor's soul is through a cup of coffee and a listening ear." Father O'Callahan knew this.

Just after sunrise on the 3rd of March 1945, the carrier Franklin pulled in her lines and sailed from her Pearl Harbor pier and headed for combat. Once again Father O'Callahan continued his silent apostolate, observing the mechanics of getting the ship underway and evaluating the reactions of the sailors and the officers who were his parishioners. In his book *I Was Chaplain on the Franklin* Father O'Callahan gives the following advice. It relates to an incident he and Chaplain Gatlin witnessed in which a phone talker passed the word incorrectly during 'getting underway operations':

"Bowen pass the word exactly as I give it", Robert Downes barked at his talker. I turned to Chaplain Gatlin; "Young Bowen might be down to see us before the day is through. I bet he doesn't realize that he has used different words." This little incident of the phone talker is an illustration of a theory I have about chaplain duties. It is my opinion that much of his work is done out of his office, on tours of the ship. Chaplain Gatlin and myself were not merely spectators on the foc'sle; we were special observers. We were observing the reactions of these men who were our new parishioners. You get to know your parishioners better at their work than in your office. Do this, and when they come to the office the Chaplain can understand them better

for having seen them about the ship. He has a chance to make proper judgments, to know whether to sympathize or correct. There is less danger of giving too much credence to one side of a story, less chance of bringing a boy's plea to official ears when the boy has no cause for resentment.....I don't think that a chaplain does his best work, feet cocked all day on his office desk."

Chaplain O'Callahan lived what he believed. He tells us that these first few days at sea, chaplains' business was slow. The ship's complement had only been aboard a few days and the minor monastic tensions of shipboard life had not begun to develop. So during this time he made a conscious effort to study the men and officers.

There were sixteen carriers in Task Force 58 of which the USS Franklin was one. Eight Battleships, sixteen cruisers and sixty-three destroyers completed this armada whose duty was to launch sweeps and strikes against Kagoshima and Izuma on southern Kyushu. On Saturday afternoon of Saint Patrick's Day, 17 March 1945, Father O'Callahan was to say the most memorable Mass of his priestly life outside of perhaps his ordination day.

Twelve hundred Roman Catholics, more than a third of the ship's complement, gathered in the forecandle of the Franklin for Mass. It wasn't Sunday or a Holy Day of Obligation. Many men had swapped watch with Protestant buddies so each could attend their respective faith's services. Father Dowling, S.J. in his eulogy of Father O'Callahan wrote: "Who would dare to surmise the thoughts of Commander O'Callahan as he, another Christ, pronounced the General Absolution over his kneeling brothers?" Father O'Callahan knew that they were going into battle; he knew that some would possibly die; he knew that he could now be saying his last Mass. Once again through his book we learn of what Father O'Callahan's attitude was toward death, even his own, at this particular time.

"Christ said that for His followers, death is the gateway to heaven. All my life I had been trained to take Christ's teachings at face value. From this viewpoint death did not seem fearful.....but the boys!"

And again we read:

"In our prayers before entering combat these boys and I had not asked to escape unscathed, to come out alive; we had asked Divine assistance to do a good job for God and country. We had reminded ourselves that, should death come, in whatever form, it would be a happy death if we died in the friendship of God."

As Father O'Callahan dressed in the priestly vestments worn at the celebration of the Eucharistic Sacrifice, he later recorded that his worry once again was not over his own possible death but his duty as a shepherd for the twelve hundred men about to face death and who were presently before him waiting for him to begin their worship of the Almighty.

"Twelve hundred about to face death, each a special responsibility of their priest who must hope and pray and work and pray again that each of the twelve hundred may be ready for death."

At a time like this the burden and joy of the priesthood is brought into sharp focus. The priestly vocation is made crystal clear when the angel of death is seen hovering in the wings.

Medical professionals and the clergy normally have a closer relationship with each other than most people. This is no mystery. After all, both these professions deal with the beginning and end of life and share some of the happiest and saddest times their fellowmen may live through. When Father Joe looked around for a server for Mass, Doctor Bill Fox was in the front row and although

a bit hesitant because of unused Latin, Dr. Fox was at Father's side to assist with the celebration of the Eucharist. Quite fitting that physicians of body and soul should team-up for this most important Mass on the Franklin. When Father O'Callahan began the Confiteor, the following thoughts raced through his mind.

"I confess to Almighty God" a reminder that many had not gone to confession yet! But speak about general absolution during the sermon (Am I meditating on the prayers of the Mass or am I wandering into mental distractions? It's sometimes hard to distinguish.) This is perhaps the most important Mass this priest will ever say. I should say it with special devotion. Important? It may well be the last Mass I shall ever say. Strange, isn't it, that one appreciates with abstract clarity that some here present will be dead tomorrow, but one never thinks to include oneself? Perhaps I shall be dead tomorrow. (Now that is a distraction.)

Finally Father O'Callahan read the Gospel and began the sermon.

"As we all know, boys, tomorrow morning the fighting starts. We've known that for ten days. And before combat each one of you should go to confession and receive Holy Communion..... You were warned not to wait till the last day. Well, this is the last day, the last day before action. Too many waited too long."

These words were from the heart; a priestly concern for each member of his flock. How can you impress upon young men the seriousness of the situation? The gravity of opportunity missed? The price of procrastination being the difference between time and eternal happiness. The priest continued:

"These remarks are not a reprimand; they merely are a statement of fact.....Fortunately, there is available the privilege of General Absolution. Therefore, pay attention now to the

requisite conditions.”

Then Father O’Callahan spoke of sorrow for one’s sins and the intention of going to confession at the next possibility. Then to guarantee the men’s sincerity of sorrow for offending God, Father Joe led all twelve hundred men in saying the Act of Contrition. “O My God I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee, etc.” This was followed by sighs of relief and smiles of peace as Father O’Callahan raised his arm in the sign of the cross over his “boys” pronouncing the General Absolution.

“Ego auctoritate Ipsius vos absolvo a peccatis vestris in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti.”

By His authority I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Father O’Callahan and his boys were ready spiritually for whatever the next few days would bring.

The early morning of 18 March saw Chaplain O’Callahan heading for the Fighter Ready Rooms. All the men were aware that it was the first day of real combat. There were two objectives – in the morning to concentrate in knocking out the Japanese air power by fighting engagements on their airfields, and in the afternoon to search out the crippled Japanese fleet which were hiding at inland docksides. The men needed encouragement so the “Padre” began Ready Room rounds to say a quick prayer with the pilots before their combat missions. First he went to the Marine Fighter pilots and then proceeded to the Navy Fighter pilots. He knew that the pilots would be nervous but he also realized the calming effects prayer would have on them. Naturally, as the priest on board, it would have been thought Father O’Callahan came to pray with the Catholic pilots. But one learns quickly, however, the military life,

especially in the Navy, is lived in an ecumenical atmosphere. No one is asked to compromise their own beliefs yet more often than not the men meet on and share common ground even in religion and prayer.

This is why, even speaking about a situation in 1945, Father O’Callahan could write:

“No matter what the faith of these boys, in the case of some there is little faith, in the case of others there is a sincere adherence to some Protestant sect – all join with their Catholic shipmates in an appreciation of the importance of this moment of prayer.”

There was another incident of a non-Catholic observer of the Saint Patrick’s Day Mass. One young pilot told Father O’Callahan after the battle:

“I don’t know much about your ceremonies nor about this general absolution, but I flew my plane off the deck with a vague realization that spiritual accounts had been properly settled, had fixed everything right with God and therefore everything was all right.

Other incidents which Father O’Callahan relates also show the ecumenical spirit of men in the military. Commander E. B. Parker, the Air Group Commander and a practicing Protestant had asked the ‘padre’ for a Saint Christopher medal. The good commander, along with many of the other pilots had the custom of wearing the medal of this patron saint of travelers. Father came across with the medal but tried to explain that the real patron saint of fliers was Our Lady of Loretto; that, in a sense, St. Christopher was crowding in on someone else’s turf. Commander Parker commonly referred to as Eb, responded:

"Now look Padre, don't get me in the middle.....I'm just a simple Protestant who always wears a Saint Christopher medal. And thanks for this one."

Dr. Sam Sherman, the good Jewish Flight Surgeon, nicknamed Joseph Timothy O'Callahan "Rabbi Joe", another indication that the chaplain was common property. He was there for all men.....whatever their specific denomination or belief. In commenting about religion in the Navy, Father O'Callahan wrote:

"Here there is a camaraderie and an understanding which civilians do not share. It seems to me that civilians are much too ill at ease about religious matters, and particularly about differences of religious faith. I don't like being ill at ease. In the Navy, while we sometimes argued about religion, we did have fundamental understanding and respect for the religious sincerity of our friends. These friends of mine, and many of them are non-Catholic.....know me for a Catholic priest; they know that I am sincere about it, that I don't wear my religion on my sleeve, that I appreciate a little banter which some people might think irreverent. It isn't irreverent. I can banter about heavenly things precisely because heaven is so important to me, as a man banter more about his wife the greater his affection for her. Chaffing the things we love and feel deeply about is not, perhaps, recommended for every occasion, but it is a very old sport and a natural and very human reaction."

During the night of 18 March the Franklin went to General Quarters twelve times. On March 19th, the Feast of Saint Joseph, the day began with a cool dawn. Fighters catapulted off the Franklin deck for a strike at Kobe. Thirty Hell Divers were still warming up on the flight deck. The Franklin had maneuvered closer to the Japanese mainland than any other United States Carrier during the war. They launched a fighter sweep

against Honshu and later against shipping in Kobe Harbor. "Suddenly at 7:07 out of a cloud bank, flashed a Jap Judy Plane, flying 360 miles an hour at a height of seventy-five feet. It dropped one five-hundred pound bomb on the center of the flight deck; then swung around and dropped another aft. The first bomb struck the flight deck centerline penetrating to the hangar deck effecting destruction and igniting fires throughout the second and third decks and knocking out the combat information center and air plot. The second bomb hit aft, tearing through two decks and starting fires by explosions of ammunition, bombs and rockets. Franklin, within fifty miles of the Japanese coast, lay dead in the water, took a 13 degree list, lost all radio communication, and broiled under the heat from enveloping fires. Many of the crew were blown overboard, driven off by fire, killed or wounded. The 106 officers and 604 enlisted who voluntarily remained saved their ship through sheer valor and tenacity. The casualties totaled 724 killed and 265 wounded." The Naval Historian goes on to say that the casualties would have been even higher if it were not for the heroic work of Lieutenant Commander Joseph T. O'Callahan,

Chaplain O'Callahan was in the wardroom with some fellow officers waiting for a cup of coffee when a loud "boom" shook the ship. Within minutes another explosion took place. Father O'Callahan found himself sprawled out on the deck of the wardroom trying to shield his face and head from bits of flying glass. The dreaded reality of a Japanese hit on the Franklin had come to pass. The padre immediately thought of the tons of high explosives on the Franklin and the danger his "boys" were now in. He had priestly duties to perform and so after the initial shock he rose to leave the wardroom. The padre, however, did not get very far.

"I started to portside of the Wardroom when someone said there were men trapped and hurt in the passageway. Before being able

to render much aid, I found myself trapped in a compartment with some twenty fellows. Because of the heat, smoke and flames we almost suffocated. Someone else heard one hammering on the hatch, and after what seemed an eternity opened it and let us out."

Father O'Callahan then proceeded to his stateroom to get his life belt (which was defective) and his helmet which he should have had with him. He managed to open his safe and took out the Holy Oils for the Sacrament of the Sick and Dying. His helmet had a large white cross painted on it so the 'padre' could be easily identified.

Upon leaving the stateroom the chaplain first happened upon a junior aviators' bunk room where the "air was close" but there were no immediate dangers or intense smoke. Inside were thirty or so badly burned and mangled bodies. These men had managed to crawl or were dragged by buddies from the forward part of the hangar deck, which was a burning inferno, to this relative place of safety. Chaplain Gatlin was also there. Both Chaplains went from body to body to say a quick prayer and give a few words of solace and encouragement.

Their individual religion? Who knows? And who would ask at such a time."

Father O'Callahan said the Lord's Prayer with some, the Act of Contrition with others.

"And not a few of those boys, so alert as the prayer was recited, at its conclusion looked up, calm wonder shining in their eyes, and died in my arms. When I die, I hope to go to Heaven and I expect to meet those boys."

While some men were dying with a certain internal peace, an infernal holocaust was burning all around them. The hangar deck was a veritable conflagration. The planes now bear-

ing heated bombs and rockets were beginning to explode. The youngsters knew this and were beginning to panic.

Chaplain Gatlin remained with the frightened men in the aviators' bunk room and the Padre decided he had better try to reach the hangar deck. On the way to the hangar deck he met some stunned men who did not fully comprehend the situation. They were trapped in the horror of their surroundings.

"But at the moment, though not wounded, they were helpless, and beyond help, momentarily stunned, paralyzed, not, I believe, with fear but with awe. The noise of explosion following explosion, each blast worse than the preceding because of the cumulative horror of what had gone before; the billowing smoke, a shroud mantling a dead ship; the flames, ...snake-tongued, writhing high into the sky or lashing fore and aft, port and starboard, scourging those who thought themselves safely distant from the center of destruction...all this was truly awe-inspiring."

This is what Father O'Callahan managed to see when he was able to look into the Hanger Bay. It was a massive blaze; air plane engines "glowing white hot" so that to look at them "branded the memory forever." No one was alive in there, the bodies were all consumed. And yet there were still rockets and "Tiny Tims" that had not yet exploded. But at this point in time there was nothing anyone could do about it. Father knew the ship well because of his previous visitations to the men in their individual work spaces. This knowledge was to pay dividends now. The Padre wanted to get to the flight deck so he retraced his steps to his stateroom. He stopped in his room long enough to pick up a flashlight to help him in the blackened passages. He also smeared anti-flash burn paste on his face and put on anti-flash gloves. The padre's helmet with the clearly painted white cross on it would act as his badge of recognition. He now proceeded to work his way to the foc'sle.

Many of the men he met on the way followed him. From the foc'sle the chaplain went up and across an open catwalk and from here was able to reach the flight deck. The majority of the deck was engulfed in flames and smoke blacker than soot was everywhere.

Periodically a clear spot appeared through the dark smoke and Father O'Callahan could see the island and the bridge. Captain Gehres was on the bridge "firm and stern" with Steve Jurika, the navigator right behind him. This brave example of the Commanding Officer at his post set the tone and example for the courage that was to be needed to save the Franklin. In describing the flight deck Chaplain O'Callahan wrote:

"The one hundred feet clear of flame was strewn with bodies; burned bodies, mangled, bleeding bodies; everywhere the stench of burned flesh, the sound of deep groans, the clammy feel of men already dead....."

The doctor, Sam Sherman, was going from man to man and Father O'Callahan was right behind him administering the sacrament. "A prayer, an absolution...an anointing" this was the work at hand. There was extreme cold and hot due to the fire and the weather. For the wounded the cold was a serious threat and they were beginning to go into shock. Immediately Father O'Callahan thought..."they need warmth"...the warmth of blankets. Christ also gave the mandate of the corporal works of mercy. These men needed blankets as much as they needed spiritual ministrations. Father talked some "lads" into going to the gallery bunk room, which could be reached without too much danger and bringing up blankets, mattresses and anything else they could use to cover up the wounded scattered on the flight deck. When everyone in the immediate area was cared for, the good Jewish Flight Surgeon and the Catholic Padre had a few minutes respite and sighed. "Thank

God you're alive", was the unsaid greeting. Sam then patched a slight gash on Father's leg which he received from a piece of flying metal. The two men then said a prayer together. The Old and New Testament were bound together. Meanwhile the ship began to list to port more and more. Hoses crisscrossed everywhere as the survivors valiantly tried to beat back the all-encompassing flames. The stench of burned flesh increased and burned the nostrils. The cries and moans of the wounded and the dying filled the putrid air.

Eventually a destroyer maneuvered her way windward and came to starboard of the stricken Franklin. Since all the communications were down on the Franklin, Captain Gheres, using a megaphone, shouted orders and directed a transfer operation of admirals and staff officers by means of a swinging breeches buoy. The war still continued and the directors of the war operation had to be able to carry on their duties. This could not be done from a burning, listing ship. All the while bombs kept on exploding. In various areas of the burning ship men were trapped and then some were miraculously led out of situations that would have been certain death. Overall 17,000 gallons of fuel were burning. For four endless hours blasts rocked the ship. Communications were lost, fire mains were destroyed, and the power was dead. As Captain Gehres continued to oversee his dying ship from the bridge, the smoke would suddenly offer up a break of light and the captain recorded what he saw:

"From my position on the bridge it seemed that wherever I looked I could see a familiar battle helmet with a white cross painted on it."

Commander Stephen Jurika wrote in the navigator's log:

"O'Callahan was everywhere, leading men, officiating at last rites, manning hoses and doing the work of ten men."

Captain Gehres also related the incident where there were two turrets fore and aft of the Franklin's bridge. These were ammunition handling rooms for five-inch dual-purpose guns. The aft one had blown up in the worst explosion of the morning. As the Captain looked out at the forward turret he could see visible fumes rising out of the top of the hatch. It was ready to blow. The Captain tried in vain to signal the men on the deck. No one comprehended the urgency but Chaplain O'Callahan. The "Padre" recruited two officers and all three of them went down into the "oven hot hole" with a small emergency hose to cool down the ammo that could have blown up in the middle of their attempt. Captain Gehres later wrote:

"A few minutes later O'Callahan's smoke-grimed face grinned up at me from the hatch as he made the OK sign with his fingers. Then he and the other two officers passed out the ammo, still blistering hot, to a waiting line of men who tossed it overboard. I breathed a sigh of relief. If the turret had gone like the other one, the ship probably would have been abandoned and lost."

One would think that the most demanding part of the courage needed to do such a thing would be to control one's fear of the ammo exploding and causing immediate death. But this is not the case with Father O'Callahan. In his own description of the incident he explains:

"It's a queer sensation, pushing through smoke and flame to enter a turret filled with ammunition. The actual dangers didn't cause me much worry, but I have always been a victim of claustrophobia. For me to enter a small closed space such as that turret demands effort of the will, and it is accomplished only at the cost of cold sweat. I did not so much mind the thought of being blown up. I did very much mind being hemmed in. A silly phobia, I realized, but I confess it took an effort to overcome it."

Father O'Callahan asked some of the men to help jettison the wetted-down but still very hot shells that could still blow up while being handled. The padre's philosophy was "You shouldn't ask lads to do what you yourself are not willing to do." So he took his place in the line and helped to pass these five-inch, thirty-eight shells as long as he could physically take it. Luckily, more than enough volunteers and replacements appeared for those too tired to continue. Father O'Callahan later confessed:

"I stayed with whatever gang was working within, and by the time the last bomb was jettisoned my brain and lungs were in need of air."

Danger was everywhere and all hands were needed to do whatever it took to survive. The Padre did whatever had to be done and in addition had to perform his priestly duties and ministerial tasks in the midst of chaos, fear and personal danger. As the death toll mounted, another task both he and Chaplain Gatlin had to begin was the reverent burial of the dead. First they had to extricate bodies from the steel debris and then these same bodies had to be brought together for burial. Chaplain O'Callahan wrote:

"Our burial services were brief but they were reverent. The body of a human being is, by the grace of God, a Temple of the Holy Spirit. However brief may be the ceremony of burial at sea, there is about it something that transcends in solemnity the ceremony of any burial in a graveyard. Perhaps subconsciously the mind grasps a great and natural symbolism. As the body is consigned to the immensity of water, so the soul is consigned to the immensity of a merciful God."

At one point during the burials Father O'Callahan was asked by the Chief Electrician, Chief Phillips, if he could pause for a while and assist him. At the height of the explosions a number

of men were trapped in the main electrical compartment. Knowing the importance of their job these men elected to stay at their post in spite of inevitable death. At the main electrical switchboard four men manning the controls were dead at their stations and two more men were dead on the deck beside them. This electrical station was deep in the depths of the ship. Father O'Callahan went down below with the chief to carry the bodies of these men topside so they could have a decent burial. It was a gruesome task. No one could be forced into doing this work. Father O'Callahan himself wrote that this was a very difficult undertaking and one which caused him problems for the rest of his life.

"Boys don't like to carry burned corpses pick-a-back up steep ladders. I carried most of the corpses. It has been a source of several nightmares since, perhaps because on one trip I was so exhausted that I fell asleep a moment on a step of the ladder. It is disconcerting to awake and find oneself clasping and facing a burned corpse."

Father O'Callahan and Chaplain Gatlin continued the arduous task of burying countless men. Many other men were there to assist. This took its toll physically and psychologically on everyone so periodically they had to stop. It was during such a break that the Padre learned the fate of his altar boy, Dr. Bill Fox. Doctor Fox had been in his office when the first bomb struck. He directed the corpsmen to get topside and he himself went into sickbay to help the boys there. He died with his patients when a second explosion rocked the ship.

While search and rescue parties were going on, burials taking place and clean-up crews working feverishly, the engineers were struggling to get the ship off the tow she was on and underway on her own power. Supply people were looking for uncontaminated food, and the electricians were struggling to repair communica-

tions and electric stove units. In time, they were all successful. Determination and Yankee ingenuity springs alive in crisis situations.

The ordeal went on for three days and three nights. At one point when a Japanese plane strafed the Franklin deck, Father O'Callahan just continued his work with the dying, almost oblivious to the danger around him. Captain Gheres yelled to him, "Why don't you duck?" The Padre grinned and replied: "God won't let me go until He's ready!" This is the type of faith and total abandonment it takes years to achieve and, of course, complete cooperation with the grace of God. This type of grace does not usually come in one bolt. It is accumulated slowly, day by day until it is obvious that God is with you in a very tangible way. Such courage and faith is nurtured through long years of prayer and dedication. It blossoms from thousands of hidden acts of faithfulness to prayer and duty.

The human side of Father O'Callahan was ever present in his wit and humor. The Padre was always ready to participate in the fun. After things were more or less under control at about ten in the evening of the third day, the men stopped work and some of the officers were sitting around wishing for a cup of coffee while they engaged in the usual small talk. Somebody openly admitted the need for something to drink and all agreed. Father O'Callahan had a bright idea. He whispered to Dr. Sherman who was seated near him and the doctor immediately got up and left the group. He headed for the medical supply marked "for medicinal purposes only" and returned to the group waving a full bottle of American whiskey. Spirits soared as they opened the bottle to help heal the intense physical and spiritual hurts they had all been subject to for the past three days. "Pass the bottle", was the cry.

"Padre", he drawled, "take the bottle. Hand it to me per-

sonally. I want to be able to tell my grandchildren that aboard ship, where Navy Regs forbid it, the Padre passed me a quart of whiskey and offered me a drink."

The Padre did and with complete justification.

The Franklin, because of the heroic efforts of the remaining crew, limped back to Pearl Harbor under her own steam. Rear Admiral Leslie E. Gehres (Ret) wrote later that Chaplain O'Callahan was the life of the party all the way back to Pearl. O'Callahan had organized a pick-up band with dish pans and tubs and wrote parodies of familiar songs to keep the boys in humor. The Jewish boys on board, who had no chaplain of their own faith, got tired of hearing the Irish boast about their Padre. "He's our padre, too", one of them declared. "To us he's Rabbi Joe, you jerks." Admiral Gehres received a note some years later from Father O'Callahan signed, "Yours in Christ, Rabbi Joe."

The arrival at Pearl brought the best news Father O'Callahan could have heard. Father Sheehy, the district chaplain, had contacted O'Callahan's sister, La, the Maryknoll nun and she was safe and alive in Manila. Perhaps this was God's reward to Father O'Callahan for his many courageous deeds; Father O'Callahan, whose Commanding Officer called "the bravest man I've ever known".

III

CONCLUSION

On January 23, 1946, Chaplain Joseph Timothy O'Callahan, S.J., Commander, USNR, was face to face with the President of the United States at the White House in Washington, D.C. In presenting the Medal of Honor to Father O'Callahan, President Truman said: "You did your duty to God and your country." Father O'Callahan of the Society of Jesus of the New England Province was the first chaplain of the armed forces ever to receive the nation's highest honor.

Present at the ceremony were General Dwight D. Eisenhower, Admiral Chester Nimitz, Secretary of the Navy Forrestal, Admiral William N. Thomas, Chief of Navy Chaplains, Bishop William Arnold, Assistant Military Ordinariate and Former Chief of Army Chaplains, The Rt. Rev. John J. McNamara, Auxiliary Bishop of Baltimore, Rev. Maurice Sheehy, former Navy Chaplain and Father O'Callahan's own mother, family and friends. Father Dowling, S.J. wrote:

"President Harry Truman placed the Medal of Honor around his neck. The student who literally was scared stiff before his final examinations, now wore his nation's highest honor. But his joy was not for his modest self. Rather his eyes keenly watched God's first gift and first teacher to him, his tear-misted mother. His grateful country had glorified him as a symbol of its faith in God and in its citizens. Yet that night the dutiful chaplain returned to his ship, the new air-craft carrier, Franklin D. Roosevelt."

On the 12th of November, 1946, Captain Joseph T. O'Callahan, U.S. Navy Chaplain, was released from active duty and returned to the Jesuit community at the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts. Father O'Callahan wanted to prepare himself to spend the remainder of his life on the Jesuit missions in Japan and the Caroline Islands. His Jesuit superiors were ready to grant his request but it was soon clear that "his yearnings far surpassed his strength."

A year previous to his release from active duty from the Navy, Father O'Callahan had received an honorary Doctor of Science Degree from his Alma Mater, Georgetown University. (17 June 1945) As the commencement speaker Father advised the graduates, "Take life seriously, which means for your happiness, that you live your life as God would have you lead it."

God did not have the Japanese missions in mind for Father Joe at this time. The traumatic Franklin experience made it impossible for Father O'Callahan to be capable of "ever again in life to enjoy adequate health to carry out professional duties." But he would indeed lead the life that God would have him lead. Father Joe accepted with humility and docility whatever God willed for him. He returned to Holy Cross to teach philosophy. At his own request his Medal of Honor was locked in the library safe and was to remain there until his death. Meanwhile, he put all his energies into preparing his classes. His "anguished body refused to cooperate." There was pain and there were nightmares. In December 1949 Father O'Callahan was to suffer his first stroke. This affliction left his right arm paralyzed and necessitated hours and days of therapy to attempt to restore it to "efficient usefulness." Father O'Callahan was in a new stage of spiritual development. God had called him to suffer physically. For a man who possessed so much energy all his life this constant pain was a drain of all his strength. Father Dowling, S.J.

called this period of O'Callahan's life the one in which he became "the hidden hermit of pain." Every summer Father O'Callahan meticulously prepared for the fall classes he never would be strong enough to teach. In fact his physical condition got so bad that he had to receive special ecclesiastical permission to celebrate Mass sitting down. "Some days he literally dragged himself to the altar to share with Christ the infinite sacrifice of love." During this same time Father O'Callahan spent much of his days slowly composing his best-seller book "I Was Chaplain on the Franklin." There were days that he could barely finish a paragraph. But if you were to read this book you would clearly see where the strength came from which Father O'Callahan displayed. His chapter describing his March 17th 1945 Saint Patrick's Day Mass on the Franklin tells it all.

Father O'Callahan had to be hospitalized several times because of "cerebral accidents." Sister Elizabeth Mary of the Sisters of Providence and a nurse who was stationed at St. Vincent's Hospital in Worcester, Massachusetts, where Father O'Callahan was brought, said he always displayed "patient endurance and conformity to God's Holy Will." She further wrote:

"The one and only time that I ever saw Father betray emotion was on the occasion of having a small tumor removed from his forehead. An anesthetic was injected and the surgeon began to cauterize. Instantly Father's pulse changed, a gray pallor came over his face, beads of cold perspiration stood out, tears trickled down his cheeks. With a husky voice he asked the surgeon to please stop, adding: "The stench of burning flesh is more than I can bear; it brings back such horrible memories. Can you not use a knife?" A moment of reverent silence and inactivity passed – then a "considerate" surgeon picked up his scalpel. Meanwhile Father's composure returned."

Sister Elizabeth clearly stated that Father O'Callahan suffered

silently and deeply during the "long days and longer nights" of his hospitalization.

As fate would have it, nineteen years to the day, on 17 March 1964, the anniversary of the Saint Patrick's Day Mass on the USS Franklin, Father O'Callahan was to suffer a stroke. He had read the St. Patrick's Mass with special memories and then went to breakfast with his fellow Jesuits. It was during breakfast that he suffered a "slight stroke" and had to be transferred to St. Vincent's Hospital again. He was not to leave the hospital alive this time. He was conscious and alert to the last moment of his life. He was prepared to die. Late on Wednesday afternoon he took a turn for the worse. His family gathered around his bedside as he raised his hand, blessed everyone present and said: "Why is everyone so solemn? This is a great day for me!" It was ten-thirty in the evening when family and friends left the hospital room.

"About five minutes later he suffered a slight convulsion. Five of his Jesuit priest-brothers, two Sisters of Providence, and his physician were standing beside his death-bed reciting the prayers for the dying. At 10:40 p.m., during the prayers, his noble soul quietly went home to God. It was a wonderful way for a great American, a great Jesuit, and a true priest to die."

Father O'Callahan lived and died in the true spirit of his Jesuit vocation. When his Commanding Officer called him "the bravest man I ever knew" the padre simply stated: "Any priest, in like circumstances, should do and would do, what I did." As Christ, Father O'Callahan was crucified to the world as the world was crucified to him. He was faithful in the smallest of his duties in the exciting times and more importantly in the many more drab and tedious moments of life. All was done

"For the Greater Glory of God" in humility and love. During his wake, on the usual plain Jesuit coffin were placed side by side Father O'Callahan's Jesuit vow crucifix and his Medal of Honor. The ideals of the one led to the deeds of the other.

Mrs. Alice Casey O'Callahan, Father Joe's ninety-year old mother, ensconced in a wheel chair, attended the burial of her Jesuit-sailor son. She was surrounded by numerous high-ranking church, government and military officials. So was Jesuit priest and national hero, Joseph Timothy O'Callahan, on the first day of spring 1964, was laid to rest in the little churchyard nestled in the hills of Packachoag at his beloved College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts.

To this day the Dinand Library at Holy Cross contains the precious parchment issued by the President of the United States which speaks of the heroic deeds of a humble Jesuit priest and dedicated mathematics professor:

"For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty while serving as chaplain on board the U. S. Franklin when that vessel was fiercely attacked by enemy Japanese aircraft during offensive operations near Kobe, Japan, on 19 March 1945. A valiant and forceful leader, calmly braving the perilous barriers of flame and twisted metal to aid his men and his ship, Lt. Comdr. O'Callahan groped his way through smoke-filled corridors to the open flight deck and into the midst of violently exploding bombs, shells, rockets and other armament. With the ship rocked with incessant explosions, with debris and fragments raining down and fires raging in ever-increasing fury, he ministered to the wounded and dying, comforting and encouraging men of all faiths; he organized and led fire-

fighting crews into the blazing inferno on the flight deck'; he directed the jettisoning of live ammunition and the flooding of the magazine; he manned a hose to cool hot armed bombs rolling dangerously on the listing deck, continuing his efforts, despite searing, suffocating smoke which forced men to fall gasping and imperiled others who replaced them. Serving with courage, fortitude and deep spiritual strength, Lt. Comdr. O'Callahan inspired the gallant officers and men of the Franklin to fight heroically and with profound faith in the face of almost certain death and to return their stricken ship to port."

IV

REMEMBRANCE

Great men and classics are cherished in all ages. Time can not confine their influence or attractiveness to one era or place. Over the years many tributes have been paid to Father O'Callahan. The following is a partial list of various memorials and awards in his honor.

1. **Destroyer Escort Named after Father O'Callahan**—USS O'Callahan (DE-1051) now (FF-1051) christened by Sister Rose Marie October 20, 1965, Father O'Callahan's beloved sister "La." The ship was commissioned in 1967.
2. **Movie "Battle Stations"** appeared in 1956 by Columbia Studios. Still available for rental through Bucham Pictures, 254 Delaware Avenue, Buffalo, N.Y. 14202.
3. **Medal of Honor Grove** at Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge, Pennsylvania. Special Chaplains Memorial – dedicated October 6, 1979.
4. **Training Film - *Saga of the Franklin***, September 21, 1956 presented by Captain P.C. Needham, former C.O. of Quonset Point Naval Station (Mass.) An historic recorded sequence of Father O'Callahan's heroic performance of duty aboard the Franklin which was used as an exemplar in the training of Navy recruits.
5. **Induction of Father O'Callahan into the Carrier Aviation's National Memorial and Hall of Fame** sponsored by the U.S.S. Yorktown – CV10 Association and Foundation, Inc. located in Charleston Harbor, South Carolina. He was inducted on October 9, 1983. Monsignor Joseph Moody of Stateboro, Georgia, was the speaker.

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