

Fr. Henry James SMITH, 83 HTI CUBA GB CAM MRT USA

* February 13, 1909 Huddersfield, Yorkshire +Sept. 19, 1992 San Antonio, TX

He attended the Spiritan St. Mary's College, Castlehead,, Lancs., in his native country and found his vocation there to the Congregation. Sent to France, he made his novitiate at Orly, where he pronounced his first vows on September 8, 1926.

For his higher studies he went to Chevilly, where he was ordained a priest October 4, 1931 at the age of twenty-two and a half.

The following year he received his first assignment: to Haiti. It was the beginning of a sixty year long fruitful ministry that would take him to many countries, but the first half of it was spent mostly in Haiti. There he became a teacher and dean at the Spiritan St. Martial College of Port-au-Prince. Five years later we find him back in England for one year of promotional work from London. He returned to Haiti just before World War Two began. During the war years he was British Consul in Haiti, as well as chaplain for interned Italians and Germans, while also being chaplain to American and allied forces in Haiti and Cuba's Guantanamo Bay, just across from Haiti.

After the war, he became interested in the technical training school the government had started at Carrefour but could not staff. In 1950 the Spiritans took over the institute, of which Fr. Louis Le Retraite, a former director of Auteuil, then took charge. When he retired around 1960, Fr. Smith became its director. By then François Duvalier, a.k.a. Papa Doc, had tightened his grip on the island and directed his ire against the Spiritans as his "communist" enemies. One of his early victims was Fr. Smith, whom he expelled from Haiti in 1962. (All the others followed until none were left.)

His superiors transferred him to Rodriguez, an Indian Ocean island, near, Mauritius, there to continue a similar work. But, while en route to his destination, he received a change of appointment and was asked to go to Cameroon: an

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the West Indies, Africa, the Indian Ocean and North America.

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