

# Father Fergus Lawless to be honored, June 26

Father Fergus Lawless, O.F.M. Cap. will be honored by civic and religious leaders, as well as the 1700 families of Our Lady of Angels Parish in Burlingame, on Sunday, June 26.

Father Fergus will be celebrating the 50th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood with a Mass at 2:30 p.m., followed by a reception in the parish auditorium.

Born in 1904 at Swords, Co. Dublin, Ireland, Father Fergus was ordained on June 25, 1933 at St. Eunan Cathedral, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal, Ireland.

Within a year of his ordination he was sent from Ireland to the seven-year-old parish in Burlingame to minister to the approximately 400 families in the area.

Father Fergus has seen many changes in his almost 50 years of ministry in the West. In 1938 he left Burlingame to serve in the Watts area of Los Angeles and later in Hermiston, Oregon.

In 1961 he returned to Burlingame as pastor and in 1962 was elected Superior of the Franciscan Capuchins serving in the parishes and schools on the West Coast.

Since 1968 Father Fergus has served as associate pastor at Our Lady of Angels. His brown robes are a familiar sight at Peninsula Hospital where he regularly visits patients.

Following his return to Burlingame, Father Fergus organized an annual golf tournament, some



Father Fergus Lawless

times known as "The Peninsula Ecumenical Open," to have fun and raise scholarship funds.

While Father Fergus, now 78 years of age, no longer accompanies Our Lady of Angels Boy Scout Troop 101 on camping trips as he did in the 1930's, he maintains an active interest as chaplain of this group.

Having witnessed an untold number of marriages and baptisms over the years, he now officiates at baptisms and presentation of awards to the grandchildren of those he knew as newlyweds or as students at Our Lady of Angels School, the first parochial school in San Mateo county.

Because of the presence of the Irish Capuchins at Our Lady of Angels, many of the parishioners are of Irish heritage. Local artists have arranged to videotape parts of the celebration honoring Father Fergus' 50 years of service and to furnish the tape to Irish TV.

CAPUCHIN FRANCISCAN FATHERS

California Custody  
1721 Hillside Drive  
Burlingame, Calif. 94010

PERSONAL RECORD

Name Fergus Lawless O.F.M. Cap. Baptismal Name Kieran  
 Name of Father REDACTED Name of Mother REDACTED  
 Date of Birth September 3 1904 Place of Birth Swords, County Dublin  
 Date of Investiture October 4 1925 Date of Ordination or Final Prof. October 4 1925  
June 25 1933

WHO IS TO BE NOTIFIED IN CASE OF GRAVE ILLNESS?

REDACTED  
 Name REDACTED  
 Name REDACTED

| Where Stationed                          | From To  | In What Capacity   |
|--|--|--|
| The Friary, Kilkenny                     | June 1933 - Jan 1934   | Member of Community  |
| Holy Trinity, Cork                       | February 1934 - Sept 1934                                      | Member of Community  |
| Our Lady of Angels<br>Burlingame, Calif. | <del>Nov. 1934</del><br>October 1934<br>to<br>October 12, 1938 | Assistant Pastor   |
| St Lawrence, Los Angeles                 | Oct 13 1938 to<br>Oct. 1944                                    | Assistant Pastor   |
| Our Lady of Angels<br>Hermiston.         | 1944 to Oct 1946<br>Oct 1946 - 1951                            | Assistant Pastor<br>Pastor                                 |
| St Lawrence, Los Angeles                 | 1951 - 1961  | Pastor   |
| Our Lady of Angels<br>Burlingame         | Nov 22 1961 - 1962<br>Aug. 1962 - 1965<br>1965-68              | Pastor<br>Pastor and Custos<br>Custos, 1968 Associate Past |

TWELFTH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR

JUNE 23, 1991



It is with deep regret that we announce the death of Fr. Fergus Lawless, O.F.M. Cap. Fr. Fergus passed away early Tuesday morning. Fr. Fergus was born in Swords, Co. Dublin, Ireland September 3, 1904. He was received into the Capuchin Order on October 4, 1925. He was ordained to the Priesthood on June 25, 1933 in St. Eunan Cathedral, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal, Ireland.

On November 4, 1934, a newly ordained Priest arrived in Our Lady of Angels Parish. Here, in his first home away from home, Fr. Fergus exercised his first ministry until October 12, 1938. On November 24, 1961, he returned to Our Lady of Angels as Pastor. In the intervening years he was at St. Lawrence of Brindisi Parish in Los Angeles from 1938 to 1945, at Our Lady of Angels, Hermiston, Oregon, from 1945 to 1951, first as Assistant, and then succeeding Fr. Cornelius there as Pastor in 1946. In 1951 he was appointed Pastor of St. Lawrence of Brindisi, where he remained until his return to Burlingame in 1961. Fr. Fergus became Custos Provincial of the Capuchin Order from 1962 until 1968. He continued as Associate Pastor until his retirement in 1981, where he has remained in residence until the present.

We ask you to remember Fr. Fergus in your prayers. May he rest in peace.

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Out of respect to Fr. Fergus, Fr. Fintan has postponed the Silver Jubilee reception for Fr. Brian. It will be held on Sunday, June 30th after the 11:30 a.m. Mass.

Brothers,

Could you please fill this form out and return it with your comments on the history? Thank you very much.

Name Father Feegus Lawless

Dates:

Received October 4 1925

Solemnly Professed October 4 1929 (This was invalid so we got a Sanatio

Ordained June 25 1933, St Lunan's Cathedral, Letterkenny, County Donegal.

Came to U.S. Landed New York Oct. 21 1934.

Landed in Burlingame Nov 4 1934

Please list your assignments since ordination and/or coming to the United States. Give dates and other relevant information (positions, ministries, etc.):

After Ordination June 25 1933 I was assigned to St Francis Friary, Kilkenny from June 1933 - January 1934. I was next sent to Holy Trinity Friary, Cork City February 1934 - Sept 1934.

I left Ireland October 14 1934 and landed in New York October 21, and Arrived at my assignment in Burlingame November 4 1934 as Assistant Pastor to Fr Thomas Dowling.

Transferred to St Lawrence of Brindisi Parish, Watts, Los Angeles Oct. 12 1938 as Associate Pastor to the same Thomas Dowling who had been transferred to Watts in 1937.

Transferred to Our Lady of Angels, Hermiston, Oregon October 15 1951, as Assistant Pastor to Fr Cornelius Hyland. Appointed Pastor of Our Lady of Angels, Hermiston 1946 - 51.

Transferred back to St Lawrence, Watts to succeed Fr Thomas as Pastor, February 1951 - October 61.

Transferred back to Burlingame November 23 1961 as Pastor succeeding Fr Cornelius who died.

August 1962 elected Custos-Provincial and remained Pastor and Custos till August 1965.

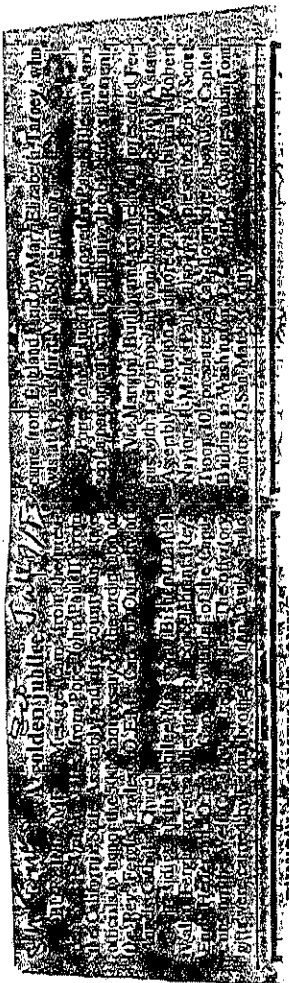
Archbishop Mc Guokin requested that I remain in Burlingame as Custos when I was elected. This was the first time Burlingame became the Provincial residence.

August 1965 Fr Leopold O'Riordan was appointed Pastor of Our Lady of Angels, so I remained in residence as Custos.

In August 1968 Fr Evangelist was elected Custos and I was appointed as Associate Pastor of Our Lady of Angels.

In October 26 1981 I had open heart surgery (double bypass) and developed Hepatitis from the blood transfusions.

January 1982 I retired from regular duty as an Associate Pastor but retained Chaplaincies with Senior Citizens and Boy Scout Troop 101 as well as First Saturday Communion calls and visits to Peninsula Hospital. Appointed in Residence Jan 1982.



NEWS ITEM

TO: Religious Editor  
San Francisco Chronicle  
5th & Mission Sts.  
San Francisco, Ca.

FROM: [REDACTED]  
Our Lady of Angels Jubilee Committee  
Burlingame, Ca.  
692-3133

GOLDEN JUBILEE FOR OLA ASSISTANT PASTOR

Reverend Fergus Lawless, O.F.M. Cap. will be honored by civic and religious leaders, as well as the 1700 families of Our Lady of Angels Parish in Burlingame, on Sunday, June 26, 1983.

Father Fergus will be celebrating the 50th anniversary of his ordination with a Mass at 2:30, followed by a reception in the parish auditorium.

Born in 1904 at Swords, Co. Dublin, Ireland, Father Fergus was ordained on June 25, 1933 at St. Eunan Cathedral, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal, Ireland. Within a year of his ordination he was sent from Ireland to the seven year old parish in Burlingame to minister to the approximately 400 families in the area.

Father Fergus has seen many changes in his almost fifty years of ministry in the West. In 1938 he left Burlingame to serve in the Watts area of Los Angeles and later in Hermiston, Oregon.

In 1961 he returned to Burlingame as Pastor and in 1962 was elected Superior of the Franciscan Capuchins serving in the parishes and schools on the West Coast.

Since 1968 Father Fergus has served as Assistant Pastor at Our Lady of Angeles. His simple brown robes are a familiar sight at Peninsula Hospital where he regularly visits those in need of his ministry.

Following his return to Burlingame, Father Fergus organized an annual

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golf tournament, sometimes known as "The Peninsula Eccumenical Open", to have fun and raise scholarship funds.

While Father Fergus, now 78 years of age, no longer accompanies Our Lady of Angels Boy Scout Troop 101 on camping trips as he did in the 1930's, he maintains an active interest as Chaplain of this group.

Having witnessed an untold number of marriages and baptisms over the years, he now officiates at Baptisms and presentation of awards to the grand-children of those he knew as newlyweds or as students at Our Lady of Angels School, the first parochial school in San Mateo County.

Because of the presence of the Irish Capuchins at Our Lady of Angels, many of the parishioners are of Irish heritage. Local artists have arranged to videotape parts of the celebration honoring Father Fergus' 50 years of service and to furnish the tape to Irish TV.



## Our Lady of Angels

Capuchin Franciscan Fathers

1721 Hillside Drive  
BURLINGAME, CALIFORNIA 94010

Phone 342-7768

### PRESS RELEASE

Fr. Fergus Lawless, O.F.M., Cap. will be honored by civic and religious leaders, as well as the 1700 families of Our Lady of Angels Parish Community in Burlingame, on Sunday, June 26, 1983.

Fr. Fergus will be celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of his ordination as a priest at a Mass and reception at 2:30 p.m.

Within a year of his ordination, Fr. Fergus was sent from Ireland to the seven year old parish in Burlingame to minister to the approximately 400 families in the area.

Fr. Fergus has seen many changes in his almost fifty years of ministry in the West. In 1938, Fr. Fergus left Burlingame, and in the intervening years served in the Watts area of Los Angeles and in Hermiston, Oregon.

In 1961, he returned to Burlingame as Pastor. A further honor was conferred on Fr. Fergus in 1962 when he was elected Superior of the Franciscan Capuchins serving in the parishes and schools on the West Coast.

Since 1968, Fr. Fergus has served as Assistant Pastor at Our Lady of Angels, and his simple brown robes are a familiar sight at Peninsula Hospital, where he regularly visits those in need of his ministry.

Since his last return to Burlingame, Fr. Fergus organized an Annual Golf Tournament, sometimes known as "The Peninsula's Eccumenical Open", to have fun and raise scholarship funds.

While Fr. Fergus, now 78 years, no longer accompanies Our Lady of Angels Boy Scout Troop 101 on camping trips as he did in the 1930's, he maintains an active interest as Chaplain of this group.

Fr. Fergus has never compiled the number of marriages and baptisms he has witnessed throughout the years but is thankful that he has been able to officiate at christenings and presentation of awards to the grand-





# Our Lady of Angels

Capuchin Franciscan Fathers

1721 Hillside Drive  
BURLINGAME, CALIFORNIA 94010

Phone 347-2119

Fr. Fergus was born in 1904 at Swords, Co. Dublin, Ireland, one of 11 children of [REDACTED]

He was educated at the National Schools until 1916, when he entered St. Enda's School in Rathfarnham. He joined the Capuchin Order in 1922 at the minor seminary at Rochestown, Co. Cork and completed his Theology at the major seminaries at Rochestown and Ards, Donegal.

He was ordained June 25, 1933 at St. Eunan Cathedral, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal, Ireland.

Fr. Fergus has numerous cousins, nephews and neices residing in Ireland. Although a resident of the United States for almost 50 years, Fr. Fergus also maintains interest in political and social events in Ireland through Irish publications.

His father served as one of the early members of the Dail from 1918 to 1922, and his late brother, Colonel [REDACTED] fought with his father at the Battle of Ashbo<sup>UR</sup>rne in 1916. A sister served as secretary to General Michael Collins before she entered the convent and became Sr. [REDACTED].

Because of the presence of the Irish Capuchins, many of the parishiners in this favored area of California, who make up the Parish Community, are of Irish heritage, and local artists have arranged to videotape parts of the celebration honoring 50 years of service by Fr. Fergus to be furnished to Irish T.V.

NEWS ITEM

TO: Irish Press  
O'Connell Street  
Dublin 1, Ireland

FROM: [REDACTED] Jubilee Committee  
(Fr. Fergus, Our Lady of Angels)  
2016 Davis Drive  
Burlingame, Ca. 94010 U.S.A.

GOLDEN JUBILEE IN CALIFORNIA

Reverend Fergus Lawless, O.F.M. Cap. will be honored by civic and religious leaders, as well as the 1700 families of Our Lady of Angels Parish in Burlingame, California, Sunday, June 26, 1983.

Father Fergus will be celebrating the 50th anniversary of his ordination with a Mass at 2:30, followed by a reception in the parish auditorium.

Born in 1904 at Swords, Co. Dublin, Ireland, he was one of the eleven children of [REDACTED]. He was educated at the National Schools until 1916 when he entered St. Enda's School in Rathfarnham.

He joined the Franciscan Capuchin Order in 1922 at the minor seminary at Rochestown, Co. Cork and completed his Theology at the major seminaries at Rochestown and Ards, Donegal.

Father Fergus was ordained on June 25, 1933 at St. Eunan Cathedral, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal, Ireland. Within a year of his ordination he was sent from Ireland to the seven year old parish in California to minister to the approximately 400 families in the area.

Although a resident of the United States for almost fifty years, Father Fergus also maintains interest in political and social events in Ireland through Irish publications. He also has numerous cousins, nephews and nieces residing in Ireland with whom he maintains contact.

His father served as one of the early members of the Dail from 1918 to 1922, and his late brother, [REDACTED], fought with his father at the Battle of Ashbourne in 1916. A sister served as secretary

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Jubilee Sermon, Father Fergus, OFM, Cap.  
Saint Lawrence of Brindisi Church, Los Angeles.  
Sunday, June 22, 1958 and Wednesday, June 25, 1958.

Text: - "By God's grace, I am what I am." -- 1 Corinthians 15:10

Our coming together this morning has about it that which makes it a little bit out of the ordinary. It is true, of course, that this Holy Mass is the regular Sunday noon Mass in this Church of Saint Lawrence of Brindisi. And it is also true that you its faithful parishoners are here attending this Mass in Proper filial obedience to the obligation of Sunday Mass enjoined upon you by our Holy Mother, the Church. Such circumstances as these make this an ordinary Sunday morning.

There are, however, other circumstances that make it a little bit extra-ordinary, for added today to your act of worship of Christ in the Most Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is your act of tribute to him who stands at the Altar of Sacrifice in Christ's place and in Christ's Name and who is himself the humble possessor of a proud title, a Priest of God and another Christ. For, to your beloved Pastor, Father Fergus, this Holy Mass is his Mass of Jubilee, the profound and soul-stirring, yet humble, sacrificial celebration and personal commemoration of his twenty-five Silver Years of Priesthood!

These twenty-five years of service in the greatest and grandest vocation in the world, in the highest and noblest profession on the face of the earth, have borne witness to Father Fergus' constant and untiring efforts to identify his Priesthood with Christ in the same way that Christ is identified with his Priesthood. They are years that have seen him strive manfully and virtuously, zealously and religiously, to have the human characteristics in him take second place to the Divine, to have the man in him bow to the Christ in him, to give humble yet fitting testimony to the awe-full yet wonderful saying of Saint Paul: "I live now, not I, but Christ lives in me."

Since we cannot separate the man from the priest, no more than we can part the Priesthood from Christ, it is my privilege this morning to come into this Sanctuary and to tell you something of the story of the Priesthood and of the part taken in that story by this man who has been touched by the Hand of God and who has been gifted with the sharing of the Priesthood of the Son of God.

In point of fact, the story of these twenty-five Silver Years of Priesthood began

on June 25, 1933, when Kieran Lawless rose from his

prostrations on the marble floor of the Sanctuary of Saint Eunan's Cathedral in Letterkenny, County Donegal, and found himself made over into the image and likeness of Christ as Father Fergus and a Priest forever!

In point of time, however, the story began in the days of his youth when he found stirring within him the first promptings of a desire to serve Christ as one of His Priests. That desire was carefully and tenderly nurtured in the truly spiritual atmosphere of an Irish Catholic home where Almighty God was rendered His due and proper homage, where Christ was accorded His rightful and fitting place, and where the Mother of Christ was given her esteemed and honored recognition as Our Lady of the Irish, the Queen of Ireland.

The tender love and gentle care of a fond mother, the simple pride and gracious dignity of a great father, and the genuine closeness and warm feeling of a devoted family of brothers and sisters, brought that spark of a Priestly vocation to a recognizable flame when this boy who would be a Priest left that lovable and reverential and prayerful atmosphere of an Irish hearthside for his high school studies at the Seraphic School of the Capuchin Franciscan Fathers. In this school, he learned not only about the things that pertain to man but much more about the things that pertain to God, particularly as these things of God were manifested to him in the life and in the example and in the inspiration of the brown-robed, white-corded, sandalled Sons of Saint Francis of Assisi, those stalwart Irish Capuchins of an earlier age and a turbulent time. It was in this school of Catholic Education and of Franciscan thinking that his vocation burned into a full flame and a bright one as a vocation to the Religious Life. This vocation was ultimately expressed in his joining of the Order of Friars Minor Capuchin, was nurtured in his pursuit of Philosophy and of Theology and of the Franciscan Capuchin way of life, and was climaxed on that day twenty-five years ago when he was ordained to the Franciscan Capuchin Priesthood and emerged from that Holy Sanctuary of Ordination truly a Priest of God, really another Christ!

That, in substance--and I'm afraid all too sketchily--is part of the story represented by this present Mass of Jubilee, this present celebration of twenty-five years of Priesthood. The other part of that story would tell of these twenty-five Priestly years of Father Fergus in the service of God, in the ministry of Christ, in the care of souls.

It would tell of heartbreaks and of heartaches, of trials and of difficulties, of frustrations and of disappointments, of anxieties and of sorrows. For, such things as these, such things as human flesh and blood are heir to, are to be expected in the life of a Priest. It would also tell of hard work and of much sacrifice, of blood and tears and toil and sweat. For, these things, too, are the lot of the man of God, the legacy of the Priesthood. But, the record of these twenty-five years of the Priestly life of Father Fergus would also show, and show splendidly and magnificently and graciously, an entry of joys and of delights, of successes and rewards, of graces and of blessings, of happiness and of love. For, it is from such things as these that come the rewards of the life of a Priest.

Through all of his living of these twenty-five years of his Priesthood, Father Fergus has never lost sight of the tremendous fact that it was not he that chose Christ, but that it was Christ Who chose him. Christ took him aside, as He takes all Priests and Religious aside, and taught him, and gave him a sharing in the spiritual powers that up to then had been Christ's and Christ's alone. "By God's grace, I am what I am."

By God's grace, then, the man in him would always seek to bow to the Christ in him.

By God's grace, then, the fact of his Priesthood would dominate every human emotion and feeling, every human weakness and imperfection.

By God's grace, there would be woven into the fabric of these twenty-five years of serving Christ and souls, the splendor of his dedication and the grandeur of his consecration.

By God's grace, there would be mirrored countless times through the looking-glass of his Priestly life, the spirit of zeal and of devotion, of patience and of kindness, of graciousness and of generosity, of understanding and of sympathy, of helpfulness and of charity, that characterizes the man charged with a commission from Christ Himself as a shepherd of souls.

By God's grace, there would be seen standing in the doorway of his daily Holy Mass the figure of the Christ he serves, in Whose place he stands and in Whose Name he acts.

By God's grace, Father Fergus, it is your destiny, your glory, and your life, in the words of the great Lacordaire,

"to live in the midst of the world with no desires for its pleasures; to be a member of every family, yet belong to none; to share all sufferings, all joys; to penetrate all secrets; to heal all wounds; to go daily from men to God to offer Him their homage and petition; to return from God to men to bring them His pardon and His hope; to have a heart of bronze for chastity, and a heart of fire for charity; to teach and to instruct; to pardon and to console; to bless and to be blessed forever! What a wonderful life! And it is yours, O Priest of Jesus Christ!"

By God's grace, you are what you are, Father Fergus: a Priest of God, really; another Christ, truly. And it is entirely fitting and properly appropriate that you should climax twenty-five years of noble and glorious service in the Priesthood with that which is the life-blood of your calling, and of your graces and blessings in that calling, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

In communion with all those of us who have the privilege of humbly sharing with you in the nobility and in the dignity of the Priesthood;

In the name of your beloved family sharing with you the great personal joy of this moment of jubilee across the seas in spirit but represented here today by your cousin, Frank Lawless, and Mrs. Lawless;

In the name of your gracious Mother and beloved Father who are sharing this moment with you from their places in Heaven, close, I am sure, to the Christ you have so well and faithfully and grandly served in these twenty-five years of your Priesthood;

And in the name of your Parishioners here present, of those in the Parish, and of those in distant places in California and Oregon;

In the name of all these people, we congratulate you warmly and prayerfully and wish you many more fruitful and blessed and grace-full years in the Priestly serving of Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

# Reagan Lauds Priest

At the recent celebration of the 50th Anniversary of his ordination, Rev. Fergus Lawless, O.F.M., Cap. received many civic commendations and messages of congratulations from around the world.

President Reagan wrote, "Nancy and I are delighted... send you our heartfelt congratulations and warmest good wishes as you commemorate this milestone in a life of service to God and His people."

In another letter, Garret Fitzgerald, T.C., head of the Irish government, stated that he was "delighted to have the opportunity of congratulating you on this very special occasion."

Pope John Paul II bestowed his Papal Blessing and sent a parchment scroll containing the Statement of Blessing.

Vic Mangini, Burlingame city councilman, presented Father Fergus with a proclamation from the city honoring him upon the 50th anniversary of his

priesthood.

The State Assembly passed a resolution, authored by Assemblyman Robert Naylor, also honoring Fr. Fergus on his golden jubilee.

At the request of Congressman Tom Lantos, a United States flag that had flown over the Capitol building in Washington, DC was awarded the priest. Boy Scout Troop 101 formally presented the flag.

Presiding at the Jubilee Mass at Our Lady of Angels Church was Bishop Daniel Walsh. Father Fergus served as the principal concelebrant. Rev. Enda Hefferman, O.F.M., Cap., Provincial of the Capuchins on the west coast, was the homilist. The Offertory Gifts were carried by Fr. Fergus' brother, Aidan Lawless, who had traveled from England to attend and by Mary Elizabeth Tarpey, who had been present at Fr. Fergus' first Mass 50 years ago.



## Religion Digest

# to speak

1,700 families of Our Lady of Angels parish in Burlingame celebrate the 50th anniversary of his ordination.

A Mass will be said at 2:30 p.m., followed by a reception in the parish auditorium.

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He has seen many changes in his fifty years of ministry in the West. In 1938 he left Burlingame to serve in the Watts area of Los Angeles, and later in Hermiston, Ore.

In 1961 he returned to Burlingame as pastor and in 1962 was elected superior of the Franciscan Capuchins serving in the parishes and schools on the West Coast.

Since 1968, Fergus has served as assistant pastor at Our Lady of Angels. His simple brown robes are a familiar sight at Peninsula Hospital where he regularly visits those in need of ministry.

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**Rev. Fergus Lawless**

Fergus, 78, officiates at baptisms and presentation of awards to the grandchildren of those he knew as newlyweds or students at Our Lady of Angels School, the first parochial school in San Mateo County.