

May 12, 2006

From: Henry Strobel, Member Archdiocesan Historical Commission
To: Members of the Archdiocesan Historical Commission at today's meeting.
Re: This year's news release activity seeking nominations for the Bishop Francis P. Leipzig Award.

At our last meeting I was pleasantly surprised to be assigned the task of getting out the news for the Leipzig award nominations, knowing little about the award (not to be confused with the international Leipzig Award for human rights and religious freedom). With the enthusiasm of the uninitiated I hit the ground running, mindful of the short time available for publicity and submission of nominations. Today I thought it might be appropriate for me to note here some observations and recommendations.

First, thanks to Mary Jo Tully, Chancellor, for her wisdom and efficiency, and to Mary Catherine Cuthill, Commission President, for her patient, and always immediate support, without which I could not have completed the work. Otherwise, there were some delays in response which made it difficult to complete it on schedule. I think this may be related to unclear responsibilities as well as the basic definition of the award. There is a helpful collection of previous news releases, awardees, and background articles in the "Leipzig binder," but a better definition of the award criteria is, I think, in order. Some things that were not evident to me at first were

- Was the award intended only for living historians and not to honor unsung past historians?
- What about ties? How many awards might be made annually? (not currently a problem)
- What is the "Pacific Northwest?" Researching this uncovers many widely varying definitions. Some range territorially as far as Northern California, Nevada, Idaho, and Alaska. It seems everyone thinks he knows what it is until he's asked. "The Oregon Country" was an alternate term used by Dr. James Shand in his 2000 criteria. This is a more restrictive term, hardly synonymous with the Pacific Northwest. This could be a critical question in determining whether a "borderline" nominee qualified for the award. The last award certificate was worded ". . . for achievement in the study, promotion, and living of Catholic history in Oregon," which might seem to limit it to a personally involved historian treating Oregon specifically.
- There seems to be confusion about the territorial limits not only of the historical subject, but of the historian, and even of the nominator. In other words, need the historian have lived and worked in the Northwest? Need the nominator live in the Northwest? Clearly not, but then why should we limit our solicitation of nominations to Northwest media? In order to not rock the boat this year, I only sent publicity to all the diocesan papers, about sixteen, in what I felt could be reasonably considered the Northwest, taking care to address each contact personally. (Only the *Inland Register* of Spokane and the *OCHS* acknowledged my email.) I had set out to try to place notices in some of the "secular" media, but this was more or less ruled out by commission members.
- Yes, these are technical details, but real. The award is, as a rule, to be presented at the Fall banquet of the OCHS, but does the AHC offer to transport the awardee to the banquet? This could be prohibitive in the case of distant (living) awardees.

Perhaps a more serious question is "What is the real relevance of the award in the present day?" We have had no viable nominations in ten of the past twenty-five years. I pray that will not be the case this year. While there are few Northwest Catholic historians with the star quality of a Wilfred Schoenberg SJ, there are surely many lesser known figures that we might recognize, at least to mitigate their obscurity. On the other hand it's an uphill battle now for history, Catholic history at that, and unromantic in the age of bankruptcy. But I'm not a professional historian, and doubtless many of you can provide a more enlightened perspective.

Assuming that the annual Leipzig Awards continue, it appears that we need a better definition and guide for those who award it. For reference here I have appended two key articles along with a list (from the current reference manual) of past awardees, other items for discussion, and a list of "talking points" at the end.

Respectfully submitted,
Henry Strobel

THE ARCHDIOCESAN HISTORICAL COMMISSION AND ARCHIVES

(A summary of an article from U. S. Catholic Historian, Volume 3, No. 1, 1983, source otherwise unknown.)

The Archdiocese of Portland established its Historical Commission in 1972. Many of our historical resources were being lost, especially those originating before 1925. The *Catholic Sentinel* had suggested a Catholic History Society as early as 1895. But other concerns sidetracked the idea until 1945, when Archbishop Howard outlined his ideas for assembling historical data from every parish and mission.

Again little action resulted, until Archbishop Dwyer called for the support of all pastors in the historical effort in 1969. He urged them to use the Chancery as a proper depository for historical documents, and spoke of an "Archdiocesan Historical Commission" for the first time. He was the first to demonstrate a professional approach to the issue of a centrally located archives. He realized the necessity of having an organization to supervise archival activities.

During the next three years, an informal group of priests met to address the needs and begin the actual work of forming an archives. The most significant development came in the spring of 1972 when Bishop Francis Leipzig of Baker retired and moved to Portland. With his arrival, events moved rapidly. A group of priests met to form a historical society to study the Catholic History of the Northwest. The Archbishop approved of the decisions they made for organization, and the Archdiocesan Historical Commission was born on July 15, 1972.

Bishop Leipzig not only emerged as the leader of the Commission, but he also worked almost every day on the indexing of the *Catholic Sentinel*. He wrote many articles, collected documents for the archives, secured photographs and religious objects from old churches, and researched and answered questions regarding the religious history of the region. He expressed the wish of the Commission to secure sketches of the parishes and priests and to obtain as much as possible of the human interest narratives associated with the history of the Archdiocese.

During the balance of the 1970s, the membership of the Commission began to change, both in size and composition. Several women of religious orders joined. Laymen were soon included. There were significant organizational changes in the Commission, and policies and projects went in new directions. In the Spring of 1978, the Commission produced its first issue of a newsletter as a way of publicizing the body's activities. In 1979, officers were elected and bylaws approved.

The task of the Commission was to collect, preserve and display archival and museum items, and to promote the study and publication or dissemination of diaries, biographies, photographs, and oral histories. Their first priority was to make certain that the Chancery archives received necessary attention. They were concerned about storage, handling of documents and proper use of volunteers in archival projects. The major project for the Archives was not gathering records together, but rather arranging them so they could be used.

The Commission also sponsored a number of smaller projects that helped to encourage parishes and individuals to collect items, to engage in research and to write accounts, and generally to appreciate the religious heritage of Oregon. One of these was a series of articles that appeared in the spring 1982 issues of the *Catholic Sentinel* on the history of the Commission and how it serves as a resource.

Finally, in 2001, a long-time dream was accomplished when workshops were developed and presented for parish historians and archivists. Several workshops have been presented since then, and they have been expanded and improved each year.

THE LEIPZIG AWARD AND THE LAIDLAW LECTURE

by Rev. Joseph Browne, C.S.C (from the OCHS Newsletter for Summer 1989)

In 1982, the Archdiocesan Historical Commission instituted the so-called Leipzig Award to honor the memory of Bishop Francis P. Leipzig, former bishop of Baker, who devoted his retirement years to studying the Catholic history of the Pacific Northwest and the history of the American hierarchy. This research led to numerous articles published in the *Catholic Sentinel* and to several editions of a pamphlet entitled *Longevity and Historical Sketches of the American Hierarchy*. The Leipzig Award is bestowed on those who have contributed significantly to the study and preservation of Pacific Northwest Catholic History.

The award was first presented by the Commission in 1981 to Father John Laidlaw, former pastor of St. Charles Church, whose interest in history caused him to be named the Archivist of the Archdiocese in 1974. The second recipient was Msgr. Edmund Murnane, who succeeded Bishop Leipzig as pastor of St. Mary's Parish in Eugene in 1950, and retired from there in 1969. Both Fr. Laidlaw and Msgr. Murnane were charter members of the Archdiocesan Historical Commission when it was established by Archbishop Robert Dwyer in 1969. The third and fourth Leipzig Awards were presented together to Sister Anne Harold, S.N.J.M., and to Mrs. Harriet Munnick in 1985. Sister Anne was honored for her many years of service as the Archivist for the Sisters of the Holy Names and also for the Archdiocese of Portland; Mrs. Munnick received the award for her painstaking compilation and publication of sacramental records of pioneer Catholic churches in the northwest.

The fifth Leipzig Award was presented to Rev. Wilfred Schoenberg, S.J., on October 22, 1988. Fr. Schoenberg's recently published *A History of the Catholic Church in the Pacific Northwest* is but the culmination of many years of work devoted to the study of the Jesuit and Catholic history of the region. The award was presented at a banquet following the first annual meeting of the Oregon Catholic Historical Society, at which time Father delivered the first annual Laidlaw Lecture. This lecture series was established by the Society to honor the very first recipient of the Leipzig Award, a priest who had a lively and active interest in history.

For those who are new to the region or who are too young to remember the two pioneers whose names are memorialized in the Leipzig Award and in the Laidlaw Lecture, we append brief fetches of their careers:

Most Rev. Francis P. Leipzig was born in 1895 and ordained to the priesthood in 1920. After a short assignment at the Cathedral in Portland, he was assigned as pastor of St. Mary's church in Corvallis. From there he was sent to St. Mary's church in Eugene in 1929. He served there for more than twenty years, until he was chosen as the third bishop of Baker City in 1950. He served the church for another twenty years, until his retirement in 1971. He retired to Portland and occupied his last years in reading the *Catholic Sentinel* with a view of culling from its pages a history of the Archdiocese. More than ninety historical sketches appeared in the *Sentinel* between 1972 and 1980 over his byline. Another interest of his was firefighting - he had been chaplain to the fire Department in Corvallis during his years there and kept up that interest to the end of his life. He was honored by having a fire truck from the Portland Fire Bureau as part of his funeral procession.

Father John Laidlaw was born in 1898, the son of the British consul for Portland and the Northwest and was ordained to the priesthood by Archbishop Howard in 1927. He served the Archdiocese in many parish assignments including Star of the Sea in Astoria, St. Francis, Immaculate Heart, and the now defunct church of St. Lawrence in Portland, finishing his career as pastor of St. Charles parish from 1950 until his retirement in 1973. He had a lively interest in history, particularly the history of England and the history of the American Civil War. He published two brief monographs of reminiscences: *These Things I Remembered And Poured Out My Soul In Me*, and *The Catholic Church in Oregon and the Work of its Archbishops*. At his death, his extensive library was divided between Mount Angel Abbey and the University of Portland.

It is the plan of the Oregon Catholic Historical Society to make the Laidlaw Lecture a regular part of its annual meeting, with the hope that several of these lectures might be collected and published sometime in the future. It is also the desire of the Archdiocesan Historical Commission to make the Leipzig Award an annual presentation, provided that suitable candidates can be found for the award.

THE ARCHDIOCESAN HISTORICAL COMMISSION'S HISTORY OF LEIPZIG AWARDS

1972 July 15 - Historical Commission Established. Sponsored by Most Rev. Robert Joseph Dwyer, 5th Archbishop of Portland in Oregon.

[Note: Bishop Leipzig apparently "*founded*" the AHC in 1872. HS]

1981 March 13 - First Leipzig Award Presentation. Recipient #1: Rev. John R. Laidlaw.

1982 March 11 - Second Leipzig Award Presentation. Recipient #2: Msgr. Edmund J. Murnane.

1983 & 1984 - none

1985 March 06 - Third Leipzig Award Presentation. Recipients #3 & 4: Sister Anne Harold, SNJM and Mrs. Harriet Duncan Munnick.

1986 & 1987 - none

1988 October 22 - Fourth Leipzig Award Presentation. Recipient #5: Rev. Wilfred P. Schoenberg, S.J.

1989 - none

1990 September 21 - Fifth Leipzig Award Presentation. Recipient #6: W. Baxter Murray.

1991 - none

1992 September 25 - Sixth Leipzig Award Presentation. Recipient #7: Joseph D. McKay.

1993 October 01 - Seventh Leipzig Award Presentation. Recipient #8: Edward F. O'Meara.

1994 October 05 - Eighth Leipzig Award Presentation. Recipient # 9: Rev. Msgr. William S. Stone.

1995 October 13 - Ninth Leipzig Award Presentation. Recipient #10: Dr. James T. Covert.

1996 October 18 - Tenth Leipzig Award Presentation. Recipients #11 & #12: Patricia Brandt & Dr. Lillian Pereyra.

1997 July 25 - AHC 25th Anniversary Mass, Dinner, & Laidlaw Lecture. Eleventh Leipzig Award Presentation. Recipient #13: Mary F. Ryan.

1998 - none

1999 October 15 - Twelfth Leipzig Award Presentation. Recipient #14: Rev. Martinus Cawley, OCSO.

2000, 2001, & 2002 - none

2003 October 17 - Thirteenth Leipzig Award Presentation. Recipient #15: Robert Pfohman.

2004, 2005 - none

2006 - ?

CRITERIA FOR THE BISHOP FRANCIS P. LEIPZIG AWARD

This award is named for Bishop Francis P. Leipzig, energetic historian, archivist, and a founder of the Portland Archdiocesan Historical Commission in 1972.

It is awarded annually to a nominated living individual who has made a significant contribution to the knowledge and public awareness of the history of the Catholic Church in the Pacific Northwest (within Alaska, British Columbia, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, or Washington).

Nominations may be made by anyone at any time per the nomination form available for download on the web page of the Historical Commission of the Archdiocese of Portland in Oregon, www.archdpdx.org/ahc/

Every July 1 the Commission will consider the nominations received and announce the award by September 1 to the awardee and the media. It may happen occasionally that no award or more than one is made. Nominations otherwise worthy but not selected for the award will remain on file for possible future consideration.

The award is typically presented at the Fall Banquet of the Oregon Catholic Historical Society in Portland, Oregon. Should the awardee be unable to attend, he/she will be honored in absentia and the certificate, signed by the Archbishop of Portland in Oregon and by the President of the Portland Archdiocesan Historical Commission will be mailed to him/her. (An example of the certificate format is attached here.)



NOMINATION FORM FOR THE LEIPZIG AWARD (on the web - no scale)

Bishop Leipzig Award Nomination Form

This award, honoring historian Bishop Francis Leipzig, is given to individuals who have contributed significantly to the study of Pacific Northwest Catholic History. The material should be available to a large number of people. (i.e. published in some way HS)

Please print this form, complete and submit nomination by 10 May 2006 to

Archdiocesan Historical Commission

Pastoral Center, 2838 E. Burnside

Portland, Oregon 97214-1895

Nominee: Name _____

Address _____

Complete at least *one* of the following:

A. List the nominee's specific historical contributions to Pacific Northwest Catholic History (written, oral, visual). Please include titles, publication dates, periodical dates, citations and any other specific information.

B. List specific historical activities promoting awareness and/or preserving Pacific Northwest Catholic History (lectures, workshops, performances, exhibits...) Please list name of activity, locations and dates.

If you need additional space and/or you have any additional, pertinent information please use the reverse side of this form.

(more space provided here)

Submitted by: Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

THE BISHOP FRANCIS P. LEIPZIG AWARD



A little closer to home, here's another photo of Bishop Leipzig that I found in the St. Boniface parish archives.



1979 - St. Boniface Church celebrated its centennial with an outdoor Mass concelebrated by an Archbishop, three Bishops, an Abbot, its pastor Fr. Hurley and numerous other priests! Left to right are Bishop Steiner (who was to celebrate the 125th anniversary mass - see the 2004 photo below), **Bishop Leipzig**, Archbishop Power, Bishop Waldschmidt, and Abbot Anselm OSB.

“Talking Points”

1. Is the award still relevant? How can we advance it’s relevance and prestige?
2. Should we promote it in a wider sphere - e.g. news releases to all US diocesan media?
3. This is already true, but should we emphasize that the award is not just for academic Catholic historians, but for anyone who has got the “true story” out?
4. How do we define Pacific Northwest? This should be clear on the nomination form. It’s not enough to decide after a nomination is submitted that Santa Rosa CA is in but Fresno is out.
5. Should we change or lengthen the annual nomination time? Now it seems to be timed to miss the quarterly OCHS Newsletter.
6. Is the award only for living historians? What if one died a year ago? Fifty?
7. Should a news release of the award go to all the media who received the nomination request?
Formats of news release.
8. Thank you letter to all nominators.
9. What else?

Notes:
