CELEBRATING 48 YEARS OF PRIESTHOOD

By Jim Bradshaw
City Editor

The Diocese of Lafayette this week is paying tribute to Msgr. Alexander O. Sigur in celebration of his 48 years in the priesthood in south Louisiana.

The Crowley native was born Dec. 28, 1921, son of Alexander Sigur Sr., Marshal of the City Court in Crowley, and the former Beulah O’Pry, who served as city marshal after her husband’s death.

He made his minor seminary studies at St. Joseph Seminary in St. Benedict (La.) and did his major seminary studies at Notre Dame Seminary in New Orleans, where he would serve as rector in the early 1970s. He was ordained a priest of the Diocese of Lafayette in 1946 and made a monsignor in 1961.

Those who know him, know Father Sigur as a man of immense energy, extraordinary eloquence, and as one who believes that “wherever one or two of you are gathered in My name; we can surely form a committee. Even before ordination, Father Sigur was active in causes civic and religious and he excelled in this number and variety of which would (and did) stagger lesser mortals. He has been recognized for his extraordinary work with Lafayette’s Civic Cup (in 1985), and a host of other awards.

Father J.W. Matt, pastor of Sacred Heart Parish in New Iberia, remembers that Father Sigur was given the nickname “the golden tongue” even in his seminary days. Father Edwin Bourg, who entered the seminary a year after him, remembers that Father Sigur had always taken a lively interest in Boy Scouting (he holds the Scout Silver Beaver award for his lifelong work with young men). Father Bourg remembers particularly the summer vacation away from the seminary when Father Sigur entertained 40,000 Scouts at the National Jamboree — replacing Bob Hope, who was unable to attend.

Father Sigur’s first assignment after ordination was to St. Peter Church in Gueydan. He left there to complete his doctorate in canon law at Catholic University in Washington, then returned for another year in Gueydan.

In 1952 Father Sigur came to Lafayette to become assistant chaplain under Msgr. Irving A. DeBlanc at the USL Catholic Student Center, where Sigur helped mold the Newman Club into one of national reputation.

Lafayette banker Hubert J. (Red) Dumesnil well remembers Sigur’s introduction to the Newman Club.

“They wheeled this large cardboard box down the aisle of the meeting room, and, when it got to the front, Father Sigur jumped out and greeted us,” Dumesnil remembers.

Father Sigur’s introduction to the Newman Club is the beginning of his work with young men.

It takes little reflection on the people and institutions of the Diocese to see that a single name, a single person, keeps recurring — Monsignor Alexander O. Sigur. There is no part of the life of the local Church that has not been touched by him. This touch has never been superficial. It came from the depth of his being as a human person, blessed and consecrated in priesthood.

It is essential that Monsignor Sigur’s life and priesthood be duly recognized and noted ... (he has left) indelible marks on the hearts and souls of a grateful people.

— Monsignor H. A. Larroque, Administrator, Diocese of Lafayette