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Letter from Fr. Leonard Amrhein to Catherine Amrhein.

Fr. Leonard Amrhein C.P.

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Yuanling
SHENGCHOW, HUNAN, CHINA.

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Dec. 2, 1945.

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Dear Mom - and Everybody at home,

I am going to be late with my Christmas' and New Year's Greetings, but I'll wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year just the same. After all, it is the time when they are sent that counts - not when they are received. I shall offer Mass for all at home on Christmas.

How is everybody at home? Everytime it gets cold, I think of Mom and her rheumatics. The climate here would not help anyone who is bothered with rheumatics. It is too damp. It

doesn't get very cold but it is a penetrating cold. So Mom you better not come to visit me here in Hunan.

What is everybody doing at home? I lost track of everybody for so long a time, that I'm way behind time on every thing. A couple nice long letters would bring me up to date. Ahem! Did you read that carefully Tom?

How is Bill King and the rest of the gang? Tell them to drop me a line when they get a few spare minutes.

Well, we finally had our examination for faculties for Chinese confessions, and we passed it. We haven't heard any confessions yet. At least I haven't. I gave a little talk this A. M. on Advent. My first sermon in Chinese, I expect to preach on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. Don't know where yet. You see, the three of us are living at Yianling awaiting our appointments. There are several outmissions

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near here. We expect to go to there for the feast of the Immaculate Conception. Most likely that will be our first confession call too.

We had quite a celebration here on Thanksgiving. We celebrated the silver Jubilee of Ordination of our Religious Superior, Fr. Raphael. It is the first time since the Passionists came to China, that all the Fathers were able to gather together at the same time. It was a grand reunion. I had charge of the altar boys. I had to train them for a Solemn High Mass celebrated before a Bishop. Some of the kids were about two feet tall. They were never in the sanctuary

before. So you can imagine the job I had - added to that was the language question. Well, they sure were funny. They were like hens in a traffic jam. This was at the practices. They were pretty good during the Mass - although I almost burst out laughing at the Bishop's train-beaver during the Bishop's sermon. He (the train-beaver) sat on the altar steps at the Bishop's feet. He had a pair of white gloves on that were too big. During the sermon, he started to dig into his pocket for a handkerchief. He couldn't feel the handkerchief because of the gloves. When he thought he had a hold of it, he pulled his hand out and looked at it like a monkey grabbing fleas. Afterwards he told someone he was carrying the Bishop's tail.

I'll try to write more frequently now that our exam is over. I hope we get our appointments soon so we can settle down. In the meantime we'll just have to keep our bags packed.

Best wishes to all.
Leonard.

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P.S. Please send me a large jar of Mustersole. I guess that is how it is spelt. It's the stuff Mom used to put on our heads when we had a headache.

Also see if you can get me a pocket copy of the Old Testament. Emphasis on the pocket copy. I met a professor from the Hunan University some time ago. He became friends. Later he wrote and asked me for a pocket copy of the Old Testament. He seemed to insist on the fact that it had to be small. He has a New Test.

If you can't get ~~small~~ a copy of just the Old Testament, maybe you can get a whole Bible (small size). See what you can do about it anyway.

I told the professor would send for one for him.

Leonard.

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CHENGOW, TUNAN, CHINA.